

Goudhurst Parish Council



MINUTES OF A VIRTUAL MEETING OF GOUDHURST PARISH COUNCIL

By Zoom Conference call on Monday 08 March 2021 at 7.30 pm

Participants: Councillors Antony Harris (Chairman), David Boniface, Craig Broom, Chris Ditton, Alan Foster, Philip Kirkby, David Knight, Barry Noakes, Mrs Caroline Richards, Mrs Jayne Russell and Guy Sutton.
Claire Reed, Clerk and Anthony Farnfield, Deputy Clerk.
Three members of the public.

STATUS OF THE MEETING

422/20 Following Minute 001/20, on 04 April 2020 HM Government brought The Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Meetings) (England) Regulations 2020 into force to allow local authorities to conduct meetings remotely. This meeting was held under those Regulations.

APOLOGIES FOR NON PARTICIPATION IN THIS MEETING

423/20 Were received from Borough Cllr Dr Linda Hall (no reason was given).

RECORDING OF THIS COUNCIL MEETING

424/20 The Chairman announced that a Council Member will be making an audio recording of this meeting as permitted by Openness of Local Government Regulations 2014. The Member had given prior notice to The Clerk.

DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

425/20 Cllr Chris Ditton declared an interest in matters relating to flood relief at Kilndown Quarry Pond where his company had carried out some work recently.

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

426/20 It was **resolved** that the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 08 February 2021, copies of which had been previously distributed to Members via Board Intelligence, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record; the actual signing will take place at a later date.

QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

427/20 There were none.

REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILLORS

428/20 Borough Cllr Barry Noakes reported that there is no significant news from the Town Hall. No face to face Committee meetings are being held due to COVID-19 restrictions. Meanwhile Borough Council elections will be held on 08 May 2021.

CLERKS' REPORT

- 429/20 *E-newsletter update.* It was **noted** that the e-newsletter is now being sent to 460 local residents. Clerk is receiving calls from people wishing to be added to the distribution list.
- 430/20 *Training.* It was **noted** that Clerk had attended the SLCC National Conference as well as a session on creating accessible word and PDF documents. Cllr Caroline Richards and Clerk attended the KALC course on the Green Agenda. The Clerk and Deputy Clerk/RFO will be attending a virtual webinar on new legislation that will affect the preparation of Council's end of year accounts. 4 Members are to attend the forthcoming KALC Planning Conference.
- 431/20 *Land Dispute on The Plain.* Following Minute 396/20, it was **noted** that the landowner has removed the locked gate and has reinstated the parcel of land to its previous condition.
- 432/20 *Status of Future Parish Council meetings.* Following Minute 422/20. The Clerk briefed Council. The existing legislation that permits Council to hold virtual meetings (by Zoom) expires on 06 May 2021. It may be that the current COVID-19 restrictions that do not permit face to face meetings will not have been lifted by then. The Chairman reported that other parish representatives attending a recent meeting of the KALC TW Area Committee had rearranged their calendar of meetings so as to hold crucial ones by Zoom before 6 May 2021. The Chairman reported that KALC, NALC and TWBC are all seeking Government guidance on this. It was **agreed** that the Chairman and the Clerk will monitor the situation and that this will be an Agenda item for this Council's meeting on 12 April 2021.

AMENITIES COMMITTEE with POLICE & NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH and FOOTPATHS

Chairman of the Amenities Committee, Cllr Chris Ditton, reported:

- 433/20 *Cess Pit on the Lower Glebe Field.* Following Minute 397/20. It was **noted** that the work contracted by the Diocese to erect fencing around the cesspit has been poorly done. The Clerk will raise the matter with the Diocese to seek improvements. **Action: The Clerk.**
- 434/20 *Kilndown Pond.* Following Minute 398/20. It was **noted** that the Clerks have reported to Kent Highways the problem of excess water following down Riseden Lane northwards from Kilndown Quarry Pond area. **Action: The Clerks.**
- 435/20 *Management Plan for the Lower Glebe Field.* Following Minute 399/20. It was **noted** that the Clerks are evaluating the comments and quotes relating to the draft management plan for the lower Glebe. **Action: The Clerks.**
- 436/20 *Fly Tipping Posters.* It was **resolved** to place a 'No Fly Tipping Poster' in a prominent position on the south wall of the Balcombes Hill toilets adjacent to the car park. It was **noted** that the Clerks can provide additional copies if Members wish to display them elsewhere in the Parish. **Action: The Clerk.**

BURIAL BOARD

The Chairman of the Burial Board, Cllr Caroline Richards, reported:

- 437/20 *Trees in St Mary's Church Yard.* It was **noted** that Council has received permission from the Diocese to introduce the replacement cherries on the south side of St Mary's.
- 438/20 *Removal of the evergreen Cypress tree from the Victorian cemetery.* It was **noted** that Council has received permission from the Diocese for the removal of the mature Cypress tree growing out of a grave. The Clerks will instruct our tree contractor accordingly. **Action: The Clerks.**
- 439/20 *Yew Trees in the Victorian Cemetery.* It was **resolved** to approve the expenditure of £992 for the pruning of six yew trees in the Victorian Cemetery, this being part of Council's 3 year rolling plan to improve the appearance of the Yews. **Action: The Clerks.**
- 440/20 *Yew trees by the west door of St Mary's Church.* It was resolved to approve expenditure of £496.00 for the necessary pruning of the two yew trees by the west door of St Mary's
- 441/20 *Damage to the wall of the Victorian Cemetery.* Having considered the two quotations received, it was resolved to approve expenditure of £2,250.00 for the repair works. **Action: The Clerks**
- 442/20 *Trees outside the boundary of the western hedge to Goudhurst Burial Grounds.* It was **resolved** that Council will write to the relevant land owner to request that the evergreen

trees on the western boundary of the Burial Grounds be reduced to a height no greater than the adjacent Burial Ground hedge and maintained at that lower height in the future.

Action: The Clerks

BUSINESS AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Vice Chairman of the Business and Communications Committee, Cllr David Knight, reported:

443/20 *Update on Broadband in Kilndown.* Following Minutes 407/20 and 408/20.

It was **noted** that Cllrs David Knight and Guy Sutton have signed a contract with openreach on behalf of the Kilndown Community Interest Company for £182,000 for the Kilndown ultrafast broadband scheme. This will now move into delivery stage, and should be complete within 12 months. The scheme includes the village hall, quarry centre and Christ church.

444/20 *Update on Broadband in Goudhurst.*

It was **noted** that on 19 February 2021, openreach agreed that Goudhurst project A (northern Goudhurst) can proceed without the need for project B (southern Goudhurst) to have a 100% voucher commitment. The gigabit vouchers should have been emailed to project A residents at the end of February 2021 but this has still not happened. It was further **noted** that all Goudhurst postcodes have been approved for the new Government voucher scheme which starts from 01 April 2021, however there is no detail on the voucher value as yet. **Action: Cllr David Knight** to follow up appropriately and to report progress to Council.

HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE

Chairman of the Highways Committee, Cllr David Boniface, reported:

445/20 *A21 Traffic.* It was **noted** that the Parish Council had written to Greg Clark MP on 27 January 2021 about the current and future plans for the A21 (much previous correspondence refers). He had replied confirming that he will be attending a forthcoming meeting with all the A21 constituency MPs and Highways England. It is his intention to hold a meeting with local stakeholders after his meeting with Highways England. It was **noted** that Mr Bennett had sent Greg Clark the list of issues that local residents believe need to be addressed by Highways England on the A21 stretch through Goudhurst Parish.

446/20 *Flooding at the junction of Rosemary Lane and A21.* Council had received a message with photos from a local resident about this recent flooding of the Highway at this junction. It was **agreed** to ask the Clerk to contact Kent Highways (responsible for Rosemary Lane) and Highways England (responsible for A21) for a remedy. **Action: Clerk**

447/20 *Kent Highways Vision Zero Consultation.* A supporting paper was the section of the KCC draft most relevant to Goudhurst. The Committee considered a few pointers to highlight areas of problems which are particularly relevant to Goudhurst.

- Pressing the government to reduce the national default 60 mph speed limit on single carriageway rural roads. (Section 3.4)
- Establish a Safer Walking and Cycling program to identify where the demand for more walking and cycling is greatest and what interventions are required to support this safely (section 3.6)
- Proposal to move away from the exclusive use of the “cluster-site” approach. Currently this limits KCC attention to places where there has been a cluster of 4+ collisions involving injury or death within a 50m diameter. (section 3.7)
- Building safer routes to schools. (Section 3.8).
- Seek ways to allow expansion of the deployment of speed cameras (section 4.2)
- Explore the opportunity to pilot a route-based approach for average speed cameras, for example between the entry to and exit from a village. (section 4.2)

- Community Speed Watch. Enforcement of speed limits also includes community speed watch, where members of the public go out with police officers to measure vehicle speed. We will support this approach. (section 4.2).
- 20 mph limits - Kent County Council will subsequently consider proposals from Town, District and Parish councils to introduce lower speed limits in urban areas and villages where there is an identified demand for safer travel for vulnerable road users. (section 4.3).

Chairman asked the Committee and Advisers to read this and submit brief notes of what they think are good and what is not so good. Cllr David Boniface will then draft a response on behalf of Goudhurst Parish Council. Responses to the KCC Consultation have to be submitted by 15 March. **Action: Cllrs, Advisers and Chairman Highways Committee.**

448/20 *Cranbrook Road: Traffic Calming with a crossing at the A262/Beresford Road junction.* It was **noted** that Council had written on 08 February 2021 to Kent Highways on behalf of GTAG and Goudhurst & Kilndown C of E Primary School requesting a 20 mph flashing sign coupled with a pedestrian crossing for the school children on the busy Cranbrook Road. This item is now included on the Goudhurst Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) and therefore will be an item on the Agenda for the next Parish Council/Kent Highways liaison meeting. **Action: The Clerk.**

449/20 *B2079 North Road junction with B2084 Chequers Road: Traffic calming and safety.*

- Mr Rose and Mr Raycraft attended this meeting to represent a number of local residents in this area. Issues include:
- Excessive speed on B2079 North Road in both directions;
- Southbound traffic taking the curve into B2084 Chequers Road without reducing speed;
- Problems for drivers at the Give Way lines into North Road from Chequers Rd and Lidwells Lane;
- Recent tendency for HGVs causing delays when exiting Chequers Rd and turning left in North Road at an acute angle (to avoid Goudhurst High St?);
- Dangerous situations at the sharp and narrow bend on Chequers Rd with HGVs.

It was **noted** that these items are included in the Goudhurst Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) and the will be Agenda items for Council's next meeting with Kent Highways planned for March 2021. **Action: The Clerk**

450/20 *B2079 North Road: Beware pedestrians and children in the road signs at Brandfold Tennis Club.* It was **noted** that this project has been outstanding for 2 years but Kent Highways has now informed Council that they are unable to find suitable places to install the signs. Council has asked for the reasons for this decision and a site meeting. **Action: Chairman Highways Cttee.**

451/20 *Winter weather conditions.* It was **agreed** to put a note in the Parish Magazine and in the Council's e-newsletter asking for comments from local residents on how effective the local procedures were for dealing with the February snow and ice conditions.

452/20 *Unsuitable for Long Vehicles' – Blue signs.* Council understands from Mr Colin Wilson's (GTAG) report to this committee's meeting of 15 December 2020 that Highways England are going to re-word the 'Unsuitable for Long Vehicles at Goudhurst' signs near to the junction of A21 and A262. Mr Wilson will report when he has further news about this.

453/20 *The status of Beresford Road, Goudhurst.* Chairman Highways Committee will investigate the legal status of Beresford Road which is known to be a private road. **Action: Chairman Highways Cttee.**

YOUTH and HOUSING COMMITTEE

454/20 *Play Area in Back Lane.* It was **resolved** to approve expenditure of £1,764.00 to purchase and install a new gate for the play Area. A Play Area inspection has identified the present gate as being an entrapment risk.

455/20 *Community Garden Proposal at Lurkins Rise.* It was **noted** that Mr Romilly Wallis-Hosken, from the Community Garden Steering Group, had presented the latest proposals to

this Committee on 09 February 2021. It was **agreed** that the following points need to be investigated:

- Is there access to water on the site? **Action: Clerk to investigate.**
- Due to the existing lack of available parking places near the proposed site, where will users of the garden park? How will equipment be brought to and taken off site. **Action: Steering Group.**
- Are the residents of Lurkins Rise and surrounding areas behind the project? **Action: Steering Group**

Whilst Council is broadly supportive of the proposed project, Council has subsequently learned that the Deed of Transfer of the relevant parcel of land from private ownership to the Parish Council has a restricted covenant which would preclude the establishment of the proposed Community Garden. It was **resolved** to inform the project steering group accordingly and to suggest that they look for alternative sites in the parish. It was **agreed** that Clerk will create an email chain so that members of the Steering Group and Committee can share ideas.

It was further **agreed** that Cllr David Knight will support the Steering Group with ‘reaching’ residents adjacent to the proposed site. **Action: Cllr David Knight.**

456/20 *Sale of Garages at Mary Days.* It was **resolved** that, due to the commercially sensitive nature of the matters to be discussed, this item would be considered in a closed session with the Press and Public excluded. LGA 1972, Schedule 12 refers.

Following Minute 413/20. It was **noted** that Cllr Antony Harris and the Deputy Clerk & RFO met with the Director of Lambert & Foster on-site at the Mary Day’s garages on 03 March 2021. The purpose is to help the residents of Mary Day’s. The 9 garages in question are now all empty. They are well built and apparently free of asbestos. It was **resolved** to draw up a viability proposal based on the advice received from Lambert & Foster and to explore further the possibility of funding the purchase of the property from Town & Country Housing. **Action: Cllr Antony Harris with the Clerk.**

It was **resolved** that, having dealt with the Sale of Garages at Mary Day’s, this meeting reverted to normal Council meeting procedures.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

457/20 Council **noted** the following Representations from GPC and Decisions from TWBC:

App. No.	Address	Proposal	GPC	TWBC
20/02594	Apple Tree Farm Jarvis Lane	Erection of 3 sheds to be used by the small-holding for the purposes of housing goats, chickens and implements (Part-retrospective)	Refuse	Granted
20/03646	Etchinghill Farmyard, Gore Lane	Proposed greenhouse	Approve	Granted
20/03628	Paynetts Farm, Cranbrook Road	Erection of a single storey games pavilion	Approve	Granted
20/03729	5 Popes Row Chicks Lane Kilndown	Re-site and enlargement of garage approved under 18/02541	Approve	Granted
20/03823	6 Balcombes Cottages, Balcombes Hill	Proposed two storey side extension with roof conversion including rear dormer.	Refuse size, mass & scale, fenestration	Granted
20/03801	High Views, Ballards Hill	Demolition and replacement of an agricultural building	Approve	Granted
21/00139	Grove Place, North Road	Erection of a 9.75kw ground mounted photovoltaic array	Approve	
20/03588	Brandfold Farm North Road Goudhurst	Conversion of a redundant barn to create one new dwelling with associated annex.	Refuse – over development of site, annex, traffic etc	

20/03801	High Views , Ballards Hill	Demolition and replacement of an agricultural building	Approve	Granted
21/00131	The Pump House, North Road	Change of use of ancillary building to single dwelling house.	Refuse - Over development of site	
21/00106	Mouseden Cottage, Hastings Road, Lamberhurst	Addition of a ground floor window	Approve	Granted
21/00107/LBC	Mouseden Cottage, Hastings Road, Lamberhurst	Addition of a ground floor window	Approve - sub. Con Officer	Granted

ACCOUNTS

The Deputy Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer reported.

458/20 It was **resolved** that these payments be made from Council's UTB account in March 21:

U650	Capel Ground Care	Grounds maint contract Feb	£1,340.89
U651	Tenterden Twilight	Cleaning contract Feb	£789.78
U652	Pearson's Landscapes	The Plain grounds maint Feb	£111.60
U653	Microshade Business Consultant	Citrix Inv 14223	£156.74
U654	Hurstway Construction	Kilndown Quarry Pond flooding	£298.80
U655	Hurstway Construction	Kilndown Pond excavate land drain	£499.20
U656	RJ&L Hillier	Hop Bine Rent Mar	£400.00
U657	Envirocure	Legionnaires treatment Cheq Pav	£103.20
U658	Kent Assoc Local Councils	Zoom training deputy Clerk	£30.00
U659	Lisa Gartshore	Flowers for the late Cllr Peter Wood	£50.00
U660	Lisa Gartshore	Flowers for Cllr Jayne Russell – Covid	£50.00
U661	Lambert & Foster	Consultancy services Mary Days project	£720.00
U662	Stuart Mason	Winter gritting extra to KCC Highways	£60.00
U663	HM Revenue & Customs	PAYE NI	£1,191.06
U664	AVB Farnfield	Salary Mar 2021	£1,1932.20
U665	CL Reed	Salary Mar 2021	£1,703.14
U666	Capel Groundcare	Safe gate for Back Lane Play area	£1,764.00
DD	Southern Electric	Energy Balcombes Hill toilets Qtr 4	£478.70
DD	Southern Electric	Energy Chequer Field Pavilion Qtr 4	£116.80
DD	NEST	Clerk's pension	£107.63
DD	EE	Clerk's GPC sim card	£12.00
DD	Castle Water	Balcombes Hill toilets water Feb	£260.91
DD	Lloyds Bank (UTB)	UTB credit card: minor purchases	£85.58
DD	Infinity Technology Solutions	Office phones and broadband Jan	£133.80
DD	Veolia	Burial Grounds bin Feb	£142.87

There were no payments from Council's NatWest account in March 2021.

459/20 Receipts in February 2021 were noted:

Burial Board	£3,030.00
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460/20 *Bank reconciliation.* It was **resolved** to accept the RFO's explanation of the reconciled accounts at 28 February 2021 with account reconciliation statements and copies of the bank statements and it was **noted** that Council's cash book balance was:

Unity Trust Current a/c	£57,314.99
Nat West Current a/c	£33,808.03
CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund	<u>£20,571.59</u>
Total	£111,694.01

461/20 *Local Internal Audit check.* It was noted that Cllr David Knight has volunteered to carry out a basic check. (Post meeting note: Cllr Knight carried out the check on 11 February 2021 whilst implementing appropriate ant-Covid19 precautions).

462/20 *Accounts procedures.* Deputy Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) briefed Council. Since Council's turnover is now over £200,000.00 annually we can expect that our External Auditor PKF Littlejohn will require our accounts to be presented as Income and Expenditure rather than Receipts and Payments. This may apply to the 2021-22 Accounts. RFO is researching with our Internal Auditor and others on how best to make this change. There will be some costs involved e.g. change of accounting software and training. **Action: RFO to report on progress**

NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

463/20 Monday, 12 April 2021 at 7.30 pm. Members should expect that this will be a Virtual Meeting via Zoom conference call. **Action: The Clerk**

The meeting closed at 21.20 hrs.

Claire Reed, Clerk and Anthony Farnfield, Deputy Clerk and RFO

These Minutes are subject to approval at the next meeting of Council