



Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of Ruckinge Parish Council held on Thursday 13th July 2023 at 7.30pm in Bromley Green Hall.

Present, Councillors; S Hewison (Chairman), D Archer, T Cliffe-Harrison, M Pepper and P Sillibourne.

In attendance: Peter Setterfield PSLCC, Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer.

Also present: Cllr L Harman (ABC), P New (Neighbourhood Watch) and 1 resident.

316. **Apologies for absence:**

Cllr T Bennett and Cllr D Robey (KCC)

317. **Declarations of interest:**

There were no declarations of interest.

318. **Kent County Councillor's Report:**

- KCC is to approach the Government about getting a County Deal for Kent, and setting up a Mayoral County Authority (MCA), with KCC and Medway Unitary Council, under a directly elected Mayor. This would not involve a re-structure of Local Government, or significant extra costs, but would allow Kent geographically to access significant extra devolved powers and funding, which we would control in Kent, for the benefit of all Kent residents. We are at an early stage in this process, but I believe that it is the right thing to do and fully support the plan, which was formally endorsed by the KCC Cabinet on 29th June.
- At the same meeting, the KCC Cabinet also endorsed plans to work to introduce Small Modular Nuclear Reactors (SMRs) or Advanced Modular Nuclear Reactors (AMRs) to Dungeness. The Project Team is now working hard to pull together specific proposals to put to Government. We found out last Monday, that Andrew Bowie, the Energy Minister, can visit the site on 17th July and we are pulling together the arrangements for this at the moment.
- The KCC Budget remains under very serious pressure, with a knock-on impact on all services, and there is no easy answer to this.
- Operation Brick has been put in place again, to help handle holiday traffic, once again a problem that requires a permanent solution, with no easy answers.
- There are two important KCC consultations out, or to go out, at the moment, one on Family Hubs and one on Community Wardens and it is important that we get as much comment and input on the proposals as possible.

319. **Neighbourhood Watch:**

Report attached.

320. **Ashford Borough Councillor's Report:**

Cllr Harman reported that the first Cabinet meeting had taken place attended by many of the opposition councillors. At this stage the Borough is running in deficit, this will be covered from reserves however this will not be sustainable going forward. There is no definitive answer to the Stodmarsh issue which is causing a block on many applications in the Borough which will lead to speculative developers applying in inappropriate areas. Ashford is not unique in this as there are 70 councils affected across the country.

321. **Minutes:**

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 8th June 2023 were submitted, agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

322. **Public Participation:**

There were no public submissions.

323. **Chairman's Report:**

The Chairman commented on the apparent lack of progress with Project Gigabyte and that all planning applications, even householder, were expected to comment on how they were going to achieve high speed fibre connection.

In the current time is it still necessary to publish a printed notice of meeting to be placed on the noticeboard as many have gone paperless. The Local Government Act does stipulate this and was only relaxed for the duration of the pandemic.

324. **Planning:**

Planning application PA/2023/1113 – The Factory Rear of Hampden Farm, Hamstreet Road, Ruckinge – Erection of a two storey steel fabrication workshop and three two-storey self-contained commercial business units including access road and parking.

Resolved: The Parish Council supports the application.

Planning application PA/2023/1197 – Wychwood Cottage, Stonegate Lane, Ruckinge – Single-storey side extension and attached garage.

Resolved: The Parish Council supports the application.

325. **Finance:**

Schedule of payments

Clerk's salary	£438.68
Clerk's expenses	£16.20
HMRC	£108.20
Harmer & Sons	£204.00
SLCC	£47.04

Resolved: To authorise the payment of the items in the schedule.

326. **Bromley Green Road – drainage issues:**

Nothing to report.

327. **Ruckinge Village Hall:**

An advert for placement in the Parish Magazine is to be prepared shortly.

328. **Bromley Green Hall / Carters Field:**

Nothing to report.

329. **Items for Future Meetings:**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9:30pm