

Goudhurst Parish Council



MINUTES OF A VIRTUAL ANNUAL MEETING OF GOUDHURST PARISH COUNCIL

By Zoom Conference call on Tuesday 04 May 2021 at 7.30 pm

PARTICIPANTS

Councillors Antony Harris (Chairman), David Boniface, Craig Broom, Chris Ditton, Alan Foster, David Knight, Barry Noakes, Mrs Caroline Richards, Mrs Jayne Russell, Guy Sutton and Mrs Alison Webster. Claire Reed, Clerk and Anthony Farnfield, Deputy Clerk and RFO. One member of the public.

ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR 2021/22

037/15 **Resolved** unanimously that Cllr Antony Harris be elected Chairman. It was agreed that he will sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office when face to face restrictions are lifted.

CO-OPTION TO FILL A VACANCY

038/21 **Resolved** unanimously that Mrs Alison Webster be co-opted to fill a vacancy in the Goudhurst Parish Ward of the Parish Council. It was agreed that she will sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office when face to face restrictions are lifted.

STATUS OF THE MEETING

039/21 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 and is the last to be so held.

NON PARTICIPATION IN THIS MEETING

040/21 It was noted that Cllr Philip Kirkby was absent. Borough Cllr Dr Linda Hall joined the start of the meeting but almost immediately her internet connection failed.

DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

041/21 There were none.

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

042/21 It was **resolved** that the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12 April 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

043/21 There was none.

REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILLORS

044/21 Borough Cllr Barry Noakes reported that the Town Hall is in purdah pending the 06 May 2021 Borough Council elections.

COUNCIL'S STANDING ORDERS

Appointments of Members to Council's Committees and Other Appointments

045/21 It was **resolved** that these appointments be made:

Cllrs Phil Kirkby and Mrs Caroline Richards to continue as Vice Chairmen.

Cllr Mrs Alison Webster to join the Amenities, Highways, Planning and Youth Committees.

Cllr Guy Sutton to move from the Planning to the Amenities Committee.

Cllr Chris Ditton to join the Burial Board.

Cllr Antony Harris has resigned from the Goudhurst Parish Hall Trust. Cllr Alan Foster will continue to be 1 of 2 nominative Trustees that Council should appoint and he will endeavour to find a volunteer replacement (does not need to be a Parish Councillor).

Cllr Mrs Caroline Richards will fill the vacant Hon Tree Warden Role. **Action Clerks**

Review of Committee Responsibilities

046/21 The published responsibilities of these Parish Council Committees remain unchanged:

Amenities (incorporating Footpaths (PROW) and Police & Neighbourhood Watch);

Burial Board;

Business & Communications;

Highways with Public transport;

Planning;

Policy & Staffing;

Youth & Housing.

CLERK'S REPORT

047/21 *Councillors Responsibilities.* The Clerks reminded Members of two important issues:

1. Members are legally summoned to meetings (LGA 1972, sched 12, para 40). Parish Council meetings are formal events, not social occasions. If you are unable to attend you are required to give the reason to the Clerks. Council may or may not accept your reason for non-attendance;
2. It is every Members' responsibility to Declare their Interests in any Council discussion or decision. To not do so may be an infringement of The Code of Conduct. When in doubt please take advice from the Clerks.

048/21 *E-newsletter update.* It was **agreed** that in the next (June) edition of the e-newsletter, local organisations would be given the opportunity to advertise any volunteering opportunities they may have. **Action Clerk**

049/21 *Grant to the West Kent Neighbourhood Watch Association.* It was **resolved** to approve an annual grant of £100 under the Local Government and Rating Act 1978 s.31. **Action: RFO**

050/21 *Delegation of responsibilities.* It was **resolved** to delegate the performance of Council's statutory and legal responsibilities, as detailed in the attached terms of reference, to the Clerk as Proper Officer under s.101 of LGA 1972. This will begin on 07 May 2021 and be reviewed at the Council meeting on 12 July 2021. **Action Clerk**

AMENITIES COMMITTEE with POLICE & NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH and FOOTPATHS

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

051/21 *Metal structure on the Village Green.* It was **noted** that a junior football player had suffered a head injury having run into the metal structure on the south side of the Village

Green. Whilst some Councillors were in favour of removing the structure it was **agreed** that the structure should be left for the time being but safety barriers should be put in place to prevent further injury. **Action: Cllr Chris Ditton.**

BURIAL BOARD

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

- 052/21 *Victorian Cemetery Wall.* It was **noted** that repairs to the damaged wall on the north side of the Victorian Cemetery had been completed.
- 053/21 *Yew tree pruning.* It was further **noted** that TWBC Tree Officer has not raised any objection to the heavy pruning of six yew trees in the Victorian Cemetery as part of the ongoing maintenance works. These works will be carried out later in May.
- 054/21 *Repairs to the wall at St Mary's Church.* There was a lively discussion regarding repairs and the proposed redesign of the wall outside St Mary's church at the top of the High Street. It was **noted** that Council have received an email from Ali Williams, Church Warden at St Mary's, regarding a contribution to the costs of the repairs. Under an Order in Council (Privy Council) on 8th February 1994, St Mary's Goudhurst was declared a closed Churchyard. It was agreed at the Council meeting on 14 April 1994 that Goudhurst Parish Council (GPC) rather than Tunbridge Wells Borough Council should '*maintain it by keeping it in decent order and its walls and fences in good repair*'. (Local Government Act 1972 s.215 (1)). It was **resolved** that Clerk should reply to the email explaining that whilst Council does have a responsibility for maintenance costs, GPC does not accept that it is responsible for major repair works. It was **noted** that Council has no budget to meet large costs in this case. It was **agreed** that Council would consider contributing a reasonable grant towards repair costs but no firm decision was made on that. **Action Clerk**

BUSINESS AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The Chairman of the Business and Communications Committee, Cllr Craig Broom, reported:

- 055/21 *Destination Goudhurst.* It was **noted** that the Business & Communications Committee are hosting a working group to bring together interested parties including the Friends of St Mary's, Social Club and Parish Hall Committee. It was **noted** that working groups are exempt from legislation preventing virtual meetings. **Action: Cllr Craig Broom.**

HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE

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

- 056/21 *A21 Safety improvements.* It was **noted** that Highways England have updated their proposed A21 Safety Package. The Highways Committee will ask Greg Clark MP to obtain further details. **Action: Cllr David Boniface**
- 057/21 *Electric Car Charging Points.* It was **noted** that the Highways Committee are investigating alternatives to the current electric car charging points on Balcombes Hill which would allow the Parish Council to charge for the electricity used. **Action: Cllrs David Boniface and David Knight**

PLANNING COMMITTEE

- 058/21 *20/00131 The Pump House, North Road, Goudhurst.* It was **noted** that the appeal for the change of use of The Pump House to a separate dwelling was upheld by the inspector. The conditions suggested by the Parish Council have been included in the decision.

- 059/21 Council **noted** the following Representations from GPC and Decisions from TWBC:

App. No.	Address	Proposal	GPC	TWBC
20/02631	Nursery Farm Oast	Two storey linked extension	Approve	Granted
21/00131	The Pump House, North Road	Change of use of ancillary building to single dwelling house.	Refuse - Over development of site	Granted
21/00139	Grove Place, North Road	Erection of a 9.75kw ground mounted photovoltaic array	Approve	Granted
21/00150	Dovecote Barn, Smiths Lane	Demolition of existing garage; proposed rear two storey extension; associated landscaping works.	Approve	Refused
21/00065	Dovecote House, Smiths Lane	Proposed construction of carport and balcony, home office, swimming pool and associated pool house	Approve	Granted
21/00487	High Views Ballards Hill	Demolition of existing bungalow and detached garage; proposed replacement two storey dwelling with associated landscaping enhancements and biodiversity gains.	Approve	Granted
20/03330	Windy Ridge Lady Oak Lane Flimwell	Erection of a shepherd's hut in the garden of Windy Ridge for use as extra accommodation and as a holiday let.	Approve	Granted
21/00431	Cedar Cottage, Clayhill	Demolition of an existing lean to element, replacement single storey extension, associated internal alterations and external material alterations; alterations to porch	Approve	Granted
21/00596	Blossom House, 4 Market Place Close	Addition of three roof lights to the home office in the roof of the existing detached garage (Part-Retrospective)	Approve	Granted
20/03588	Brandfold Farm, North Road	Conversion of redundant barn to create one new dwelling with associated annex and change of use of land including landscape and biodiversity enhancement.	Refuse - Access onto the Highway, damage to trees with TPOs.	Granted
21/00693	Stable Cottage Cranbrook Road Goudhurst	Demolition of an existing ground floor extension; Replacement two storey side extension with associated internal alterations; Alterations to southern boundary treatment. Close board fence to be replaced with 2m high brick wall (Part Retrospective).	Refuse - exceeding rules on total enlargement.	
21/00617	Rose Cottage, Clayhill	Extension to rear of existing building and small detached summerhouse.	Approve	
21/00647	Willow Cottage, Lidwells Lane	Demolition to hammerhead flat roof portion to the back of property; construction of new two storey side and rear extension.	Approve	
21/00508	Century Wood, Old Park Wood, Cranbrook Road	Existing modest cabin structure (Part Retrospective)	Approval with conditions	

21/00704 /LBC	Lime Tree House, Cranbrook Road	Listed Building Consent: Rear extension and provision of open porch.	Approve subject to conservation officer	
20/03024	First Floor Flat, Goudhurst House, High Street	To extend the existing steel balcony by adding a 1.5m steel plate supported by additional steel posts.	Approve subject to conservation officer	
20/03025 /LBC	First Floor Flat, Goudhurst House, High Street	To extend the existing steel balcony by adding a 1.5m steel plate supported by additional steel posts.	Approve subject to agreement of the conservation officer	
21/00881	Baan Mai, Beaman Close	Single storey side extension.	Approve	

YOUTH and HOUSING COMMITTEE

060/21 *Garages at Mary Day's, Goudhurst.* It was **resolved** to purchase the nine garages at Mary Days from Town & Country Housing Group for the agreed price of £68,000.

061/21 It was **resolved** to seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities & Local Government to apply for a Public Works Loan Board loan of £48,000, over the borrowing term of 20 years, for the purpose of purchasing the nine garages at Mary Days. The annual loan repayments will come to around £3,300. It is not intended to increase the council tax precept for the purpose of the loan repayments. It is planned that the cost of the loan, maintenance costs and insurance will be covered by the rental of the garages.
Action: Clerks.

ACCOUNTS

The Deputy Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer reported.

062/21 It was **resolved** that these payments be made from Council's UTB account in May 21:

DD	TWBC	Village Green NNDR May 2021	£62.00
DD	TWBC	Public Toilets NNDR May 2021	£106.00
U750	Groundscare & General	Burial Grounds maint contract Apr 21	£1325.28
U751	Capel Ground Care	Grounds maint contract Apr	£1,497.90
U752	John Fermor Landscapes	Grounds maint contract Apr	£400.00
U753	Tenterden Twilight	Cleaning contract Apr	£1155.92
U754	Pearson's Landscapes	The Plain grounds maint Mar	£111.60
U755	Microshade Business Consultant	Citrix Inv 14485	£156.74
U756	Tate & Tonbridge	Gate for Village Green NE corner	£892.91
U757	Archer Stone	Wall repair Victorian Cemetery	£2,970.00
U758	Paul & Eileen Landon	War Memorial Garden maint Feb - Apr	£110.00
U759	Mr & Mrs Robert Hillier	Hop Bine rent May	£400.00
U760	Pear Technology	Adding additional software	£51.00
U761	Pear Technology	Mapper Pro support & updates	£168.00
U762	Goudhurst Parish Hall	Energy used electric car charging	£1,603.81
U763	m:power accounting	Payroll services 2021-22	£216.00
U764	Envirocure	Legionnaires monthly check Cheq Pav'n	£60.00
U765	Envirocure	Legionnaires check Toilet block	£60.00
U766	Communicorp	Clerks & Councils subscrip 2021-22	£12.00

U767	Kent Assoc Local Councils	Planning training Cllr Alison Webster	£60.00
U768	West Kent Neighbourhood Watch	Grant 2021-22	£100.00
U769	Weeks Bakery	Meeting refreshments Highways	£23.50
U770	AVB Farnfield	Salary May 2021	£1,932.20
U771	CL Reed	Salary May 2021	£1,642.94
U772	HM Revenue & Customs	PAYE & NI Apr 2021	£1,249.88
U773	Elaine Bright	War Memorial & Water Trough maint	£40.50
U774	CL Reed	Expenses	£39.04
U775	Glasdon UK Ltd	Replacement Litter Bins at The Plain	£1,658.66
U776	The Living Forest	Felling cypress tree growing out of a grave	£595.20
U777	AVB Farnfield	Expenses	£23.00
U778	Society Local Council Clerks	CL Reed, Clerk SLCC Mem'ship 2021	£208.00
U779	The Living Forest	Yew tree maint Victorian Cemetery	£1,484.40
DD	EE	Clerk's GPC sim card	£13.12
DD	Castle Water	Balcombes Hill Toilets water	£278.91
DD	Infinity Technology Solutions	Office phones and broadband Apr	£133.80
DD	Veolia	Burial Grounds bin	£151.92

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

064/21 Due to this meeting being held so early in the calendar month, the RFO could not submit as full a report as usual. However, these figures were available;

Receipts in April 2021

Burial Board	£130.00
Kilndown Fishing Club	£15.00
Government Covid Support Grants	£9,716.86
Precept 1 st half 2021-22	<u>£97,500.00</u>
Total	£107,361.86

Payments in April 2021

UTB	£19,563.39
NatWest	<u>£0.00</u>
Total	£19,663.39

Cash balances at Bank 31 April 2021

UTB	£131,496.37
NatWest	£33,808.03
CCLA PSDF	<u>£20,572.00</u>
Total	£185,876.40

RFO is still expecting a reclaim of VAT for April to September 2020 amounting to £12k. He will now submit a further reclaim of VAT for October 2020 to March 2021.

The Clerks encourage Members to visit the Hop Bine to view and ask questions about the Accounts.

- 065/21 **Insurance.** It was **resolved** to approve payment of £1,583.17 to Zurich Municipal for Council's insurance cover for 01 June 2021 to 31 May 2022. RFO will arrange for Council's Fidelity Guarantee to be increased from £100k to £250k for 2021-2022.
- 066/21 **Audit.** In the BI supporting papers for this meeting, pages 43 to 51, Members noted the detailed Audit Plan of 21 April 2021 from David Buckett on our 2020-21 Accounts and Governance. He works on a 'traffic light' system of assessment and your Clerks are pleased that all his comments are in green. Members unanimously **noted** and accepted the report.
- 067/21 **The AGAR (Annual Governance and Accountability Return).** Since Council's turnover has exceeded £200,000 for the past 3 years, we are now required to report our annual accounts by Income and Expenditure rather than Receipts and Payments. Responsible Finance Officer has reset the 2019-20 and 2020-21 Accounts to Income & Expenditure with helpful advice from Rialtas who provide our Accounts software. Council has to submit the 2020-21 AGAR to the external Auditor, PKF Littlejohn, by 02 July 2021. The AGAR has to be approved in detail and physically signed off by Council. Currently we are hampered by not being able to hold face to face meetings. Council approved the Clerks' proposed extra-ordinary one item Council meeting in the week of 21 June so as to meet the Littlejohn submission deadline. It was **noted** that this arrangement may be changed by Government legislation on face to face meetings.

NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

- 068/21 Ordinary Parish Council meeting on Monday 12 July 2021 at 7.30 pm in the Parish Hall.
Action: The Clerk

The meeting closed at 21.27 hrs.

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

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

Goudhurst Parish Council



STANDING ORDERS

COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS – Terms of Reference for the delegation of powers to the Clerk

Revised May 2021

1. On 06 May 2021, legislation allowing Parish Councils to meet virtually will cease. The following terms of reference were adopted by a Council resolution at the Council meeting held on Tuesday 04 May 2021, via Zoom. Minute reference 050/21. That Resolution (under the powers of LGA 1972, s.101) established:
 - a. There will not be any further formal scheduled meetings (face-to-face) of the Parish Council until after 21 June 2021 although this is subject to review and Government guidance.
 - b. Council has delegated to the Clerk and Proper Officer the power to deal with Council's day to day business whilst she maintains close liaison with the Chairman of the Council and the Chairmen of the appropriate Committees. The Clerk is appointed Proper Officer under Council's Standing Order 15 (a).
2. To enable Council's business to continue as normally as possible, and within the already agreed 2021/22 budgets and precept, the Clerk will seek the input of at least two members before making decisions. This may be done via a telephone call, by email or via a fact-finding zoom meeting with members of the relevant Committee. These consultations can be on any date that is convenient to the relevant members.
3. An example can be the Amenities Committee.
 - a. There may be a need to make some decisions on tree maintenance following the safety inspection.
 - b. The Clerk, having sought quotations for the work, seeks confirmation from the RFO that there is adequate budget to cover the proposed works.
 - c. The Clerk consults with the Chairman of the Amenities Committee and Chairman of the Council. If the decision is likely to be controversial or result in an expenditure of over £1,000, the Clerk will request a zoom meeting so that the views of as many Committee members as possible can be taken into account. File notes on any consultation will be kept.
 - c. The Clerk makes a decision taking into account the views of Committee members and any material considerations. The Clerk has delegated expenditure of up to £5000 under this s.101 terms of reference.
 - d. The decision made by the Clerk and the justification for the decision are recorded. Clerk and RFO will report to Council on decisions made and any budget implications.
4. This Standing Order will be reviewed at the Parish Council Meeting on 12 July 2021.

Claire Reed, Clerk