



**Minutes of the Sarratt Parish Council meeting held remotely at 7.30pm on
Tuesday 8 December 2020**

Present: Councillor S Dobson - Chair
Councillor C Bloom
Councillor J Gell
Councillor N Mortimer
Councillor D Rees
Councillor J Rugg
Councillor A Soothill
Councillor P Thorp
Councillor S Diggins

In attendance: 4 members of the public

251/20 APOLOGIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

It was noted that the Parish Clerk was still on sick leave; otherwise all Councillors were in attendance.

252/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- Cllr Rees declared an interest in respect of the planning application for Crestyl, Dimmock's Lane.
- Cllr Bloom declared an interest in respect of one of the Enforcement Notices

253/20 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 10 November 2020 were accepted.

Proposer: Cllr Nick Mortimer

Seconder: Cllr Peter Thorp.

There were no Matters Arising; any outstanding issues been included in the Agenda.

254/20 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES WHO HAVE ATTENDED MEETINGS ON BEHALF OF THE COUNCIL.

The following were reported on.

- a. TRDC Climate Change Strategy meeting (Cllr Bloom). Full meeting with many excellent ideas: more parking for bikes; Village Hall to be insulated; electric charging points for cars; installation of solar panels for properties in Sarratt Conservation Area; 'wilding of Chess Valley', increased charges for water to reduce wastage. It was recognised that many of these were complex and needed to be taken forward in conjunction with TDRC, Herts CC and for 'wilding', local landowners. Nonetheless there was evident enthusiasm and desire to change. Cllr Dobson recalled that together with Cllr Bloom, SPC had begun to create an action matrix, identifying environment projects and responsible persons and/or organisations who could help and would send it to Cllr Rugg.

- b. Village Hall. Cllr Soothill reported that he was to attend the AGM on 4 Jan 21 and, linked to the Sustainable Sarratt initiative, would investigate insulation. He planned also to discuss grants available for sustainable initiatives, but noted £7K for consultation is required before an application can be submitted. Joint initiatives with other parish councils could be considered.
- c. KGV Playing Fields (Cllrs Rees and Rugg). Three main items:
 - The planning application for the pavilion reviewed by SPC at their November meeting has been withdrawn. A sub-committee, including Cllr Rees has been set up to develop a new application. It has been requested this is reviewed by SPC prior to submission to TRDC.
 - Skateboard Pipe. Agreed in principle, and now examining options around location, especially with a view to minimising disruption or noise to residents; costs and choice of material - principally a choice between wood or cement. Both issues are being actively pursued by Cllr Rugg. It was agreed Cllr Dobson would write to the young resident who put forward this proposal to let him know the outcome of the KGV meeting.
 - KGV Clubhouse was broken into recently. Further examination reveals that many of the window frames are in very poor condition; an estimate of the repair bill is £10k. Cllr Rugg, together with 2 members of the KGV committee have agreed to investigate a lottery grant of £10K for the work.

255/20 THE CLERK'S REPORT

Nothing Substantive to Report (NSTR); all items are included elsewhere on the agenda.

256/20 ACTION PLANNER

Only outstanding action was the defibrillator at Chandlers Cross. Cllr Diggins reported that the old telephone box was suitable, and it had been confirmed after November's meeting that SPC owned it. There was some discussion as to whether residents still wanted one and Cllr Gell had volunteered to ascertain views; the response was still awaited. Cllr Diggins' recommendation, and he is a Chandlers Cross resident, is that we should go ahead.

ENVIRONMENT

257/20 LEAD COUNCILLORS REPORT

The following were discussed:

- 1) KGV New Play Equipment (Cllr Mortimer). In process of being installed (AFTERNOTE: now completed). The concrete plinth came up with the help of volunteers from the litter picking group as well as others. Congratulations and thanks were offered to all those involved. Cllr Dobson discussed options around the format of the 'formal' opening on 18 Dec under the current restrictions, and it was agreed to liaise closely with the family, whose kind generosity have made this possible, over the arrangements.
- 2) Dog Poo Bins (Cllr Mortimer). The Dimmock's Lane/Deadman's Ash Lane corner has become a 'doggy toliet' and this is creating a public nuisance. Options for installing a new bin have been examined. A new bin from the poo bag supplier was considered too expensive (£540) and as the relocation of one of the bins from KGV is not an option due to its poor state, Cllr Mortimer will look into sourcing a £129 bin he has found from another supplier. Cllr Dobson to confirm whether the poo bag supplier, who also empties the bins, would be prepared to empty a bin purchased independently by SPC. (AFTERNOTE: positive confirmation received).
- 3) Oak Tree 666, Sarratt Green (Cllr Mortimer). SPC concluded that the recommendation to fell this particular tree remained the best approach. This has now been approved by TRDC and so it was decided to go ahead, as soon as possible. Councillors wanted to know if it was possible to sell the timber and, if yes, it was agreed this should be done. Cllr Dobson also reminded

Council that it had also been agreed that, if possible, a wooden seat should be made from the tree.

- 4) Parking on The Green (Cllr Mortimer). Residents and visitor parking on Sarratt Green, especially around the Morton's Pond area, and opposite The Boot is causing considerable damage to stretches of the Green. SPC would write to the residents opposite Morton's Pond, and Cllr Mortimer undertook to look at "no parking" signage to discourage this.
- 5) Power on The Green (Cllr Mortimer). Following the request to hold the Christmas Crib service in front of the Village Hall, the idea of a Christmas tree on The Green put forward at the November meeting, plus possible EV charging points in future, the issue of the availability of power on the Green was raised. No firm conclusions were reached, but all agreed that this was a sensible possible development to investigate further (Cllr Mortimer).
- 6) Dawes Lane Enforcement Notice (Cllr Mortimer). No change as gates are still there with a horse box behind it. Cllr Mortimer noted that, as at 14 Nov (date set by TRDC for removal of the new gates and reinstatement of the hedgerow), no Case Officer had been assigned by TRDC and agreed to chase it up.
- 7) 10 year Woodland Management plan (Cllr John Rugg). Council were briefed in outline on the plan. There was further discussion on the helpful role that volunteer groups could play (see above). The next step will be a further visit from Richard Young at HCC to walk through the woodland areas, potentially with the Wildlife Volunteers and other volunteer groups in attendance, COVID restrictions permitting.
- 8) A request for a large rubbish bin in Commonwood has been received due to the rubbish generated by take-aways from the Cart & Horses.
- 9) An email has been received from Julian Thornton at HCC regarding a section of footpath 64A / Bridleway 75 in Buck's Hill being blocked by the landowner. Julian has visited the site and Cllr Rugg will also discuss with him the poor state of the footpath.

POLICY & RESOURCES

258/20 LEAD COUNCILLORS REPORT (Cllr Thorp)

- (1) Audit. SPC's AGAR has been approved by the external auditors, which was noted with pleasure. Cllr Dobson offered Council's thanks to Cllr Thorp for his efforts, noting especially that he had completed the work alone due to the unavoidable absence of the Parish Clerk. The approval will now be displayed on the SPC noticeboard for the next month.
- (2) Website. The new SPC website is up and running and the 'click through' from the village website now activated. Again, there was much praise for this. Cllr Thorp also highlighted that new email gov.uk addresses, for all Councillors, were now available and it was agreed that Councillors would transition to using these by 30 Dec 20. It was agreed to retain the support of Mike Edmunds to manage updates for the next 3 months whilst the Clerk is absent. Councillors were asked to submit any further comments on the new website, and also ensure their photo and profile was on the site.

259/20 APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS

To approve the internet banking transactions to the sum of £6,480.77; this was agreed:

Proposer: Cllr Mortimer

Secunder: Cllr Rugg

260/20 2021/22 BUDGET AND GRANTS

Cllr Thorp referred to the 21/22 budget circulated in advance of the meeting. Whilst SPC has kept its total budget flat as agreed at the November Council meeting the actual proportion of residents' Council Tax that contributes to the SPC precept has gone up by 40p per annum (on a Band D base) due to slightly fewer household now in the Parish (842). There was one question on

SPC's contribution to 'panic alarm' costs; Cllr Thorp explained that this was on a 'shared cost' basis with SCCF and was regarded as a 'common good' that we should continue to support, and this would now be a line item on the budget rather than a grant application. There were no dissenters to the proposed budget and it was passed:

Proposer: Cllr Soothill

Secunder: Cllr Rugg

HIGHWAYS

261/20 LEAD COUNCILLORS REPORT

Cllr Diggins explained that he no longer intended to list all road closures but would, instead, provide a link to the Herts CC website here: <https://one.network/custom/hertfordshire/> and a written brief for Spotlight. In addition to the agenda items below, he was also in contact with Herts CC over:

- Safety on Sarratt Rd, especially at the entrance to York House School.
- HGV usage on Church Lane, New Rd and North Rd (within Chorleywood PCC area), following a complaint and two accidents suffered by a resident.
- General road maintenance and flood 'hotspots'

A meeting is planned for 9 Dec with Herts Highways to discuss these and Quiet lanes (263/20) below; this will be reported back on in Jan 21.

262/20 WHEATSHEAF ACCESS ROAD MAINTENANCE

Following a request by residents for SPC support for the maintenance of the Old Wheatsheaf Rd, and a site meeting with residents, September's Council Meeting, had directed Cllr Diggins to ascertain: the legal position regarding Council's responsibilities towards the maintenance of 'parish roads' in general; and Old Wheatsheaf Rd in particular, as Council did not wish to create precedents that might be unsupportable going forward. Cllr Diggins had done as directed and reported as follows:

- The lawyers instructed had made no progress and indeed had proven to be pretty useless; he therefore had sacked them.
- Regardless, he had received informal legal advice. From this, it would appear that there is little general legal advice on the subject and, as regards Old Wheatsheaf Rd, the deeds, while referencing 'parish road', do not specify what this means, nor delineate Council responsibilities, if any.

Cllr Diggins had, therefore, two questions of Council:

- (1) Given that the desire for legal certainty might be chimeric, how did Council wish to proceed?
- (2) What other approaches might be possible?

On the first, there was discussion as to whether accept the uncertainty and proceed on that basis, or continue? The issue was resolved when Cllr Soothill pointed-out that, having made a decision, SPC cannot revisit that decision for 6 months; therefore pursuing legal certainty was to continue. Cllr Rugg helpfully pointed-out that TRDC had legal resources and we should use them; Cllr Diggins undertook to do so and will report back. (AFTERNOTE: in February).

On the second, Cllr Diggins proposed an alternative approach. It was the case that the Green was being worn away; as that was SPC's responsibility to maintain, indubitably, should Council therefore simply focus on that: repair and make good current erosion; and limit further damage. Cllr Diggins had an indicative quote of £3600 but would obtain others and revert.

263/20 QUIET LANES

There was to be a meeting on 9 Dec with a representative of Herts CC; results of this will be briefed in Jan 21.

264/20 FINGERPOSTS (Cllr Gell)

Cllr Gell had obtained two quotes from reputable companies. Cllr Dobson asked Cllr Gell if he could forward the quotes received, and also the priority order for replacing the 7 fingerposts.

PLANNING

265/20 LEAD COUNCILLORS REPORT - NSTR

266/20 TRDC LOCAL PLAN. (Cllr Soothill)

It was noted that publication of this has been delayed further, pushing back our need to formally adjust our Neighbourhood Plan. Nonetheless, it was agreed that we would refresh our thinking and remind ourselves of our current Neighbourhood Plan; Cllr Dobson agreed to schedule that for the New Year, date tbc.

267/20 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE

See above.

268/20 TO COMMENT ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The following planning applications were discussed, and recommendations made as follows:

Petherick Pastures, Bucks Hill, Kings Langley.

Application No: 20/2233/FUL

Demolition of existing buildings and manège (sic) and erection of a 3-bedroom detached single storey dwelling with associated landscaping.

COMMENT: Objection as it represents inappropriate development in the Green Belt with no special circumstances demonstrated to justify a new dwelling. SPC respectfully request that this is called into Committee if the planning officers are minded to approve.

Barn At Dellfield Farm, Plough Lane, Sarratt, WD3 4NL

Application No: 20/2266/FUL

Change of use of land to residential and construction of single storey ground floor extension.

COMMENT: Objection. No material change from previous applications that were refused (eg 15/0606/FUL) on the basis that the application would constitute inappropriate development within the Metropolitan Green Belt. SPC respectfully request that this is called into Committee if the planning officers are minded to approve.

Cherry Tree Cottage, Finches Avenue, Redheath, WD3 4LN

Application No: 20/2376/CLED

Occupation of Cherry Tree Cottage for a continuous period in excess of 10 years in breach of the agricultural occupancy condition.

COMMENT: Noted.

Hartfield, Fir Tree Hill, Chandlers Cross, WD3 4LZ

Application No: 20/2351/FUL

Two-storey side extension.

COMMENT: No objection.

Nasus, Dunny Lane, Belsize, WD4 9DE

Application No: No: 20/2458/FUL

Two storey front and rear extensions, loft conversion including increase in ridge height, roof extension over existing garage, front, side and rear dormer windows and side rooflights, front porch and front steps and alterations to patio to rear.

COMMENT: No objection

2 Greatwood Cottages, Sarratt Road, Croxley Green, WD3 6AH

Application No: 20/2606/CLPD

Loft conversion including rear dormer and front rooflights.

COMMENT: Noted

Crestyl, Dimmocks Lane, Sarratt, WD3 6AR

Application No: 20/2442/PDT

Enlargement of the dwellinghouse by the construction of one additional storey (2.74m in height) to result in an overall height of 8.14m (Class AA).

COMMENT: Objection. The Parish Council has information to suggest that construction of the bungalow was started in 1946 and completed in 1947. If the property was constructed before 1 July 1948 it is ineligible for Class AA Permitted Development (AA.1(c)).

Barley Cottage & Honeycomb Cottage, The Green, Sarratt, WD3 6AY

Application No: 20/2558/FUL

Conversion of two existing dwellings into one single dwelling including associated external and internal alterations and demolition of existing rear extension and construction of a new single-storey rear extension.

COMMENT: No objection.

Mulberry Bush Farm, Dawes Lane, Sarratt,

Application No: 20/2603/FUL

Variation of Conditions 11 (Agricultural Occupation) of planning permission 17/2169/FUL to amend wording of the condition to as follows 'The occupation of the dwelling shall be limited to a person solely or mainly working, or last working, in the locality in agriculture or in forestry, or a widow or widower of such a person, and to any resident dependents'.

COMMENT: Objection. The Parish Council strongly objects to this application. Agricultural use and associated occupation was a key tenet of the original application and subsequent approval. Variation to the condition to include "or last working" has the effect of nullifying the agricultural tie and hence justification for the permission. Additionally, widening the scope to include 'or in forestry' potentially allows a small scale enterprise that would never have justified the need for an onsite presence per the original application for the management of a chicken farm. The Parish Council would also like to point out that in considering this application, there are currently breaches to condition 8 of the existing permission (17/2169/FUL), specifically Part 1 Class F ([no development of] any hard surface) in respect of the laying of tarmac driveways (20/0100/COMP) [and Part 2 Class A (erection, construction, maintenance or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure) with regards to the enlargement of the entrance onto Moor Lane and the installation of a new gate to the Dawes Lane entrance]. SPC respectfully request that this is called into Committee if the planning officers are minded to approve.

Planning Decisions

- High rising, Sarratt - refused by TRDC, SPC had no objection
- Penrose, The Green - refused by TRDC, SPC had no objection
- Sarratt School extension – approved by TRDC, SPC had no objection, but had objected to the new 'industrial' style gates (AFTERNOTE: the application was updated to remove the request for the new gates prior to its approval).

270/20 ENFORCEMENTS

The following enforcements for Sep and Oct 2020 have been advised by TRDC and were noted:

16/0178/COMP: The Old Boot Public House - Unauthorised Works: Extension of car park into adjacent field (David Heighton)
Planning permission granted, works currently underway and substantially completed. Site visit required before closing case.

17/0151/COMP: Land to the Rear of Green End Business Centre - Material change of use of field to car park (Matthew Roberts)
Enforcement Notice served and appeal dismissed on 5th June. Works required to be removed in 8 months.

18/0178/COMP: Coltspring Riding Stables, Sarratt Road - Material Change of Use: Conversion of stable block into residential dwelling (David Heighton)
Monitoring, previous 18/2531/CLED considered that dwelling was ancillary to the wider use of the site and therefore was not a material change of use.

18/0097/COMP: Three Ways, Poles Hill – Material change of use from single dwellinghouse to two dwellings (converted garage) (Scott Volker)
Planning Contravention Notice issued. 19/2294/CLED then refused. Further PCN to be issued to clarify use as it's not clear if used as two separate dwellings.

19/0118/COMP: Blacketts Nursery, Rousebarn Lane - Unauthorised Material Change of Use - business in operation (David Heighton)
Further site visit required.

19/0177/COMP: Silverfields, Bucks Hill - Replacement outbuilding (not for a purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling) and alterations to garage (Aaron Roberts)
Assessment being undertaken, unclear if works require planning permission.

19/0179/COMP: Wingfield Farm, Dawes Lane - Unauthorised works to stable building (Matthew Roberts)
Planning permission granted, case to be closed.

19/0208/COMP: Newton Cottage, Poles Hill - Construction of front boundary walls and alterations to ground levels to frontage including the extension of the driveway (Aaron Roberts)
Works require planning permission. Applications submitted, most recent refused (20/0461/RSP) which has been appealed but has been dismissed. Officers to serve enforcement notice if works not removed.

19/0230/COMP: Micklefield Hall Farm, Sarratt Road - Breach of planning conditions - outdoor events and erection of marquee (Matthew Roberts)
Site visit required.

20/0005/COMP: Ainsworth Cattery, Bucks Hill - Installation of gates, fencing and hardstanding (David Heighton)
Assessment on-going.

20/0042/COMP: The Mulberry Bush Farm, Dawes Lane - Retention Of Polytunnels In Breach Of Condition 3 of Planning permission 07/1496/FUL (Scott Volker)

Poly-tunnels repaired, photographs to be provided to show they are back in use. No current breach.

20/0057/COMP: The Mulberry Bush Farm, Dawes Lane - Unauthorised Insertion of Rooflights to Chicken Shed (Scott Volker)

Works are permitted development, case to be closed.

20/0077/COMP: Grove Lodge, Fir Tree Hill - Unauthorised works in the Green Belt (David Heighton)

Site visit required.

20/0100/COMP: The Mulberry Bush Farm, Dawes Lane - Works To Existing Track From Moor Lane (Laying Of Tarmac) (Scott Volker)

Assessment on-going, legal advice sought as works may be permitted development via Part 9 of the General Permitted Development Order 2015 (as amended).

20/0171/COMP: Fir Trees, Dawes Lane, Sarratt - New access and erection of gates

The LPA consider that the soil embankment and hedgerow are reinstated and the gates and fencing removed as the works required planning permission. Timescale until 14th November given.

20/0219/COMP: Poachers Retreat, Penmans Green, Sarratt - Works not in accordance with 18/1408/PDA - Alleged demolition of building (David Heighton)

Site visit required.

20/0224/COMP: Moonpenny Farm, Bucks Hill, Kings Langley - Change of use from agriculture to equestrian and associated works (Matthew Roberts)

Site visit undertaken, a few field shelters have been erected which may require planning permission although more information is required. As it stands, the use still appears to be agricultural as animals grazing on the land.

20/0227/COMP: Tudor Loft, Commonwood, Sarratt - Use of outbuilding for commercial gym (Scott Volker)

Site visit required.

271/20 UPDATE ON DONATION BY A LOCAL RESIDENT

See 257/20 (1) above.

272/20 VE DAY AND VJ DAY COMMEMORATION

Cllr Diggins briefed on outline proposals as follows:

- (1) Two commemorative trees to be planted on Sarratt Green, adjacent to the War Memorial: one each for VE, and VJ, day.
- (2) A memorial ride to be created on Commonwood, leading to a Peace Grove, with a substantial tree to be planted for every name on the War Memorial.
- (3) Support to Sarratt School, to create something of lasting memory and value.
- (4) Residents had also expressed an interest in some form of service in 2021; Cllr Diggins was in touch with the individuals to discuss dates.

There was some discussion on the suitability of the proposed site for the VE and VJ Day trees but no firm decisions were taken. Cllr Diggins undertook to return with detailed costed proposals and a planned date for the commemoration.

273/20 2021 CENSUS

Cllr Dobson briefed on what was known about the 2021 Census to date scheduled for 21 March. It is understood that the preference will be online data entry but provisions will be made for those who do not have access to computers; details will be put into the February and March editions of Spotlight.

274/20 CORRESPONDENCE

None

275/20 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Gordon Harold asked whether it would be possible to see draft minutes, via the SPC website, as well as the Spotlight article, in advance of Council Meetings. It was explained that this would not be possible as Minutes are draft until approved at the subsequent month's meetings.

276/20 COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

Cllr Gell advised that he was still part of the Green Belt Plan Committee but he had NSTR at this stage.

277/20 DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND ITEMS REQUESTED TO BE PUT ON NEXT AGENDA

The date of the next meeting will be Tuesday 12 January 2021, to be held via Zoom.

Meeting closed at 22:40