

SARRATT PARISH COUNCIL  
Parish Office, Village Hall,  
The Green, Sarratt, Rickmansworth  
Hertfordshire. WD3 6AS



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**MINUTES OF THE SARRATT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN SARRATT VILLAGE HALL  
TUESDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2023**

Present:

Councillor Iain Christie  
Councillor Michael Lowry  
Councillor John Gell  
Councillor John Rugg (Vice Chairman)  
Councillor Angela Coakley  
Councillor Flora Garvey

In attendance: Lena Mortimer, Clerk to Council  
District Councillor Ciaran Reed  
5 members of the public

Meeting commenced at 19:30pm

**28/23 APOLOGIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Sarah Dobson, Cllr Lee Farman and Cllr Simon Diggins. Cllr Garvey had indicated she would be late to the meeting and arrived at 19:50pm.

The Vice-Chair Cllr John Rugg chaired the meeting.

**29/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

**30/23 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions from members of the public

**31/23 PREVIOUS MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

The Minutes of the meeting on the 10 January 2023, we approved and signed by the Vice-Chair Cllr John Rugg.

Proposed: Cllr Iain Christie. Seconded Cllr Flo Garvey.

### **32/23 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES WHO HAVE ATTENDED MEETINGS ON BEHALF OF THE COUNCIL.**

Cllr Rugg attended a meeting with Julian Thornton HCC ROW Officer and Andrew Whitewood at the Parish Office followed by a site visit to a number of footpaths. A copy of his report had been circulated prior to the meeting.

### **33/23 CLERK'S ACTIVITIES**

The Clerk gave a summary of activities occurring during the last month and updated the meeting on:

- The use and servicing of defibrillators
- Successful tree works at Bottom Lane and Springfield
- Received the finger posts for the Green on 15 February 2023
- Training of Parish Warden – going successfully
- Footpath signage and gates being approved by Julian Thornton
- BT refurbishing the box on The Green
- Fly tipping and the purchase of No Littering signs
- Defibrillator training for SPC and residents by former Cllr Peter Thorp
- RPA - chasing grant submission
- SPC Copier and the high price of cartridges. Entering into a monthly subscription.
- Completion of Internal Audit
- Repairs to KGV play equipment as required by ROSPA completed.
- Bell Cornwell account reconciled for Neighbourhood Plan invoices.
- Rescheduling of the May Fair so as not to clash with the Coronation Event
- Kissing Gate between Dawes Woods and a horse paddock adjoining Moor Lane - the landowner has accepted responsibility for making the repair

The Ukrainian Flag will be raised on 24 February 2023 in acknowledgement of the anniversary of the war against Russia, and Ukraine's part in keeping us safe. It will be flown for a week and taken down on 2 March.

### **PLANNING**

#### **34/23 TO RECEIVE THE LEAD COUNCILLORS REPORT**

Cllr Christie presented the planning report for the four planning applications to be considered and commented that the Planning Officers' decisions are predominately in line with SPC's observations as can be seen in 36/23.

A list of current Enforcement investigations had been circulated prior to the meeting but it was noted this omitted to include the Bottom Lane Agricultural Building issue.

#### **35/23 PLANNING APPLICATIONS CONSIDERED:**

**23/0194/PDE Doggetts, Penmans Hill, Chipperfield, Kings Langley Herts. WD4 9DJ**

Prior Approval: Single storey rear extension (depth 8 metres, maximum height 4 metres, maximum eaves height 2.40 metres)

*SPC Noted:*

*We note that this property is listed on the LPA system as a "locally important building" and was described in a recent sales brochure as "a charming period property dating in part from the 17th century and extended in 1920s, 1960s and 1980s to form a lovely family home of great character."*

*Although nothing is noted in the application it would appear, therefore, that it has benefitted from previous grants of permission which may have utilised some of the permitted development rights. The proposed extension is of considerable size and we therefore urge the LPA to consider the history of the property carefully and take into account any previous permissions which have been granted. In any event, we recommend that officers undertake a site visit to ensure the development is in keeping with the character of the historic building and plot.*

**22/2228/FUL. The Grove, Grove Mill Lane, Herts. WD3 4TG**

Erection of two storey Conference Facility with basement level car parking, external parking and changes to access arrangements and landscaping

*SPC Noted:*

*Whilst recognising the important role that a large conference centre might play in enhancing the attraction of The Grove as a venue for incoming business and local employment, we note that the site is nevertheless in a Green Belt area where there is a presumption against development. We urge the LPA to ensure that the case for exceptional circumstances has been made for such a significant construction in modern materials out of keeping with surrounding buildings. We are also concerned about disruption to the football field which is currently available to hire as a much-needed outdoor amenity.*

**23/0195/FUL. Hollymead Bucks Hill Kings Langley Hertfordshire. WD4 9AT**

Variation of Condition 2 (Plan numbers) of planning permission 22/2042/RSP (Substantial demolition of existing dwelling and construction of single storey three bedroom bungalow with access, parking and associated works) to allow alterations to rear roof, front porch canopy, garage door and alterations to fenestration.

*SPC: No Objection*

**23/0105/RSP. Land At Rear Of 47 Church Lane Sarratt Hertfordshire WD3 6HN**

Retrospective: Change of use of land and associated buildings as a commercial wholesaler.

*SPC Noted: No objection. We note that this land is already being used for commercial wholesale and has been for in excess of 20 years.*

**36/23 RECENT TRDC PLANNING DECISIONS:**

**22/2009/FUL: Heather Cottage, Penmans Hill, Chipperfield, WD4 9DJ - [Construction of first floor side extension, alteration to existing dormers, insertion of side dormer and front window](#)**

*SPC: As this extension results in more than 40% increase in size we would be minded to*

*oppose this application as over development in Green Belt. However the fallback permitted development extension option would cause more damage and impact on Green Belt, so we would not oppose this application in an effort to avoid the worse fallback option being implemented. If this application does go ahead we would strongly request that the applicants take the opportunity to improve the insulation, rain water management and energy use of this dwelling, significantly better than what is required by current building regulations.*

*TRDC: Approved*

**22/1978/FUL: The Old Dairy, Micklefield Hall, Sarratt Road, WD3 6AQ - Construction of single storey extensions; internal alterations and alterations to fenestration extension of driveway and landscaping alterations**

*SPC: No objection on the basis it appears the additions match the materials and design of the current building*

*TRDC: Refused (“...disproportionate addition...harmful to Green Belt”)*

*22/1979/LBC (for same site) - Withdrawn*

**22/1952/FUL: Micklefield Hall Farm, Sarratt Road, WD3 6AQ - Demolition of the existing marquee and construction of single storey pavilion building**

*SPC: We acknowledge that replacing a tent with a building will provide some benefits on energy consumption, reduction in sound disturbance and support to a local business.*

*However we also want to express concern regarding development of a new permanent building in a Green Belt area and on a Listed site. On balance we do not object to this application but we request that any available protection measures are put in place to prevent an outcome of granting of this permission directly leading to future temporary or permanent structures that would over develop this historic site in a Green Belt area.*

*TRDC: Refused (“...overly modern and unsympathetic design...impact on the character and appearance of the site...”)*

**22/1953/LBC: Micklefield Hall Farm, Sarratt Road, WD3 6AQ - Listed Building Consent: Demolition of the existing marquee and construction of pavilion building**

*SPC: We acknowledge replacing a white tent with a darker building will provide some benefit to the look of the site. However the materials and proposed design do not match those of the surrounding listed buildings. We do recognise that modern materials have energy use advantages and we generally support that approach. We also recognise that well executed modern design can work in a historic settings. So on balance we have no objection to this application.*

*TRDC: Withdrawn (conservation officer expressed concerns on this application)*

**22/1956/FUL: Griffins, Flaunden Lane, Belsize, WD3 4NS - Demolition of existing conservatory and construction of single storey rear extension; loft conversion including increase in ridge height, hip to gable roof extension, front/side dormers and rear rooflights; side juliet balcony and rear solar panels; front porch extension, alterations to front steps and alterations to external materials.**

*SPC: No objection on the basis that this application has minimal extension to the existing footprint. We do want to raise a concern regarding the significant increase in overall floor space which removes another moderate 3 bed house from the overall housing stock. We are pleased to see extensive use of solar panels and would encourage the applicant to use this opportunity to improve the building insulation and rain water management, significantly more than that required by current building regulations.*

*TRDC: Withdrawn*

**22/1947/FUL: Commonwood Cottage, Commonwood, WD4 9BA - Demolition of existing stables and erection of detached outbuilding for use as home gym/office**

*SPC: No objection on the basis that this application effectively replaces an existing built space. We request that restrictions are added that remove further development rights and ensure that this outbuilding remains ancillary to the main dwelling.*

*TRDC: Approved (ancillary use only restriction applied)*

**22/1918/CLED: Land at rear of 47 Church Lane, Sarratt, WD3 6HN - Certificate of Lawfulness Existing Use: Change of use of land and associated buildings as a commercial wholesaler**

*SPC: Noted*

*TRDC: Refused (still considered insufficient evidence to approve)*

**22/1805/FUL: Paganella, The Green, Sarratt, WD3 6BH - Substantial demolition of existing dwelling and construction of part-single storey, part-two storey side extensions including extension to roof; single storey rear extension; front porch; internal alterations and alterations to fenestration**

*SPC: No objection on the basis this application has minimal extension to the existing footprint. Although there is some concern on the significant increase in floor space for a dwelling in a Green Belt area, we recognise that this application will also tidy up the layout and look of the building. We strongly encourage the applicant to ensure the front visible parts of the building fit the historic character of the Sarratt architecture that surrounds the Green.*

*TRDC: Approved*

**22/1519/CLED: The Grove, Grove Mill Lane, Grove Mill, WD3 4TG - Certificate of Lawfulness Existing Use: To confirm commencement of planning permission 19/0829/FUL for Four storey side extension to north west of existing building to provide 76 additional bedrooms, leisure and conference facilities, associated landscaping, and provision of replacement car parking spaces throughout the site**

*SPC: Noted*

*TRDC: Approved*

**37/23 APPEALS**

No further updates

## **ENVIRONMENT**

### **38/23 TO RECEIVE THE LEAD COUNCILLORS REPORT**

#### **Rights of Way**

A meeting was held at SPC between Cllr Rugg, Contractor Andrew Whitewood and Julian Thornton, Access Projects Officer at Herts County Council.

Many footpaths and gates were inspected, and signage issues discussed. It was agreed to replace two stiles leading to the public highway with kissing gates (Footpath 49 Bottom Lane – Goslings and Footpath 58 Coltspring) as well as investigate making the steep downhill section of Footpath 49 below KGV safer, by installing a series of steps.

#### **Ponds.**

The 5 Year Greenspace Conservation Action Plan produced by Herts CC Countryside Management Team for the Parish Council has been costed and Cllr Lowry has submitted a CIL Application to TRDC for funding to cover this.

#### **Woodlands**

A successful inspection of Commonwood with Rhiannon Barton of HCC who is chasing the Forestry Commission to progress the Woodland Improvement plan and associated grants. She was impressed by the work undertaken on Trees by SPC contractors.

The Clerk had received notification from the Rural Payments Agency that our claim for £1K was about to expire as they had not received authorisation to release the payment from the Forestry Commission. It was agreed that the Clerk would urgently contact Lee Tyson at Herts CC to intervene at a higher level with the FC as our local contact of the Herts FC Regional Officer (Holly Rogerson) has been transferred to Northumberland.

#### **Chilterns Boundary Review**

There is to be a consultation review of the boundaries of the Chilterns area of AONB. SPC has already indicated a wish to make submissions as has District Councillor Reed who is suggesting the area be greatly extended to include the three SPC owned woodland areas and the Green but probably not extend beyond the M25 boundary.

### **39/23 UPDATES ON KGV PROJECT**

The CIL application for funding to cover the expansion and renovation of the playground, was submitted by Cllr Lowry. Cllr Rugg expressed his thanks to Cllr Lowry for his continued hard work on this project and to District Councillor Reed for his help and support.

There is still work to be completed on the final design for the renovation of the pavilion to provide separate female changing room facilities and extra storage for sports equipment. A CIL application will be progressed and once the final costings are available and will be submitted to TRDC.

### **40/23 GAS MAIN CONTRACTOR'S COMPOUND**

SQS Ltd., Scratchwood have been contracted to undertake gas main repair work in Alexandra Road and Dawes Lane. They requested permission to erect a compound with heavy machinery and a site office, upon the Green. Cllr Rugg and the Clerk pointed out to them, that the Green is protected in many ways, both historic, legislatively and through biodiversity and that a compound was out of the question. SPC suggested that SQS Ltd., contacts the Church Commissioners who may be willing to allow them to rent an area of the church field at the end of Downer Drive for their purpose or contact the owner or tenant of the land adjacent to Dawes lane .

## **SUSTAINABILITY**

### **41/23 TO RECEIVE THE LEAD COUNCILLORS REPORT**

Cllr Garvey will be making an allotment inspection in the near future. Cllr Garvey would like to work with the Clerk to create a digital mailing list for Allotment holders.

The fruit trees, (apple, plum and quince) for which Cllr Garvey obtained a grant of £180, have arrived and are being planted in three locations around the Village.

The trees at the land at the junction of Downer Drive and Dawes Lane have been removed after a meeting with the TRDC Biodiversity Officer will be resituated at Micklefield Green.

### **42/23 ROSEHALL GREEN**

Cllr Garvey has been keen to determine who is the landowner of Rosehall Green the registered and protected common at the western end of Sarratt Village on the boundary with Belsize. Two enquiries conducted by the Chief Commons Commissioner in 1973 and 1985 found that no landowner could be identified and therefore the land would remain under the protection of the Commons Registration Act 1965. This was despite a submission at the time that SPC had been maintaining this area of grassland since before 1973, but that was not accepted as sufficient evidence to demonstrate ownership.

It had been resolved previously that SPC should plant two Oak trees, one at each end of the Village and Rosehall Green is the ideal site for the western end. It was suggested a single tree is unlikely to interfere with the enjoyment of this Common. The Parish Council gave their approval to Cllr Garvey to plant an Oak Tree on this spot. Mr & Mrs Dudley have kindly offered to water it, in its early stages. SPC would like to express its thanks to the Dudley's for their participation. County Councillor Phil Williams has been asked to inform the County Commons Registration Unit of the decision.

## **HIGHWAYS**

### **43/23 TO RECEIVE THE LEAD COUNCILLORS REPORT**

Although Cllr Diggins was absent, he sent a report for discussion, and this was presented by Cllr John Rugg.

**Pot hole reporting:** <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/report-a-problem/report-a-highway-fault/what-type-of-fault-are-you-reporting.aspx> or, contact the Parish Office.

**SUSTRANS** will be submitting their report to the River Chess Smarter Water Catchment Programme by the end of February. This may provide valuable additional evidence to support proposals to make our roads safer. Cllr Diggins therefore recommends that we postpone a decision on a potential TRO until we have seen this report.

## **POLICY & RESOURCES**

### **44/23 and 47/23**

#### **TO RECEIVE THE LEAD COUNCILLORS REPORT AND REPORT ON INTERNAL AUDIT.**

An Internal Audit is required to be conducted twice a year, in January and May/June and then followed by an external audit. Cllr Lowry talked briefly of the Interim Internal Audit and reported this was completed, successfully. The Auditor was happy with all the financial controls and routines SPC has in place to ensure the safety of Precept money. Areas that were observed for improvement and one that required clarification are as follows:

- 1. Designation of RFO (see below)**
- 2. Approval of the Risk Register and Policy**
- 3. Keeping deposited funds at more advantageous interest rates.**

**1** - The audit revealed that much of the current work of the RFO is being undertaken by the Lead Councillor for Policy and Resources who was assisting the Clerk whilst she is under training. However, this does not align with the SPC Policies on the role of the Clerk clearly defined as being responsible for all the activities undertaken by the RFO.

It was proposed and resolved that the following definition shall be accepted to address the audit finding and reflect the current methods of working:

*“The Clerk to the Parish Council is The Responsible Financial Officer within the meaning of the Local Government Act 1972. Section 112(5) and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003. The RFO is responsible for all the financial records of the Council and careful administration of its finances in accordance with the Policies and Regulations of Sarratt Parish Council. The Clerk as a new appointee is to undertake the necessary training for the appropriate SLCC qualifications and during this period shall be mentored and assisted in both the performance of the role and the undertaking of operational duties by the Lead Councillor for Policy and Resources.”*

Proposed: Cllr Garvey. Seconded: Cllr Christie

**2 & 3** - Cllr Lowry will investigate options available to address these points above and bring proposals to Council.



#### **45/23 BANK TRANSACTIONS FOR APPROVAL £5,329.65**

Cllr Lowry review spending and receipts for the month and concluded that January was a low spending month, and a good receipts month as our VAT refund was received (SPC reclaims VAT). However, there are some very large invoices to pay in February, including large tree works charges. Transactions as listed were approved.

Proposed: Cllr Garvey. Seconded Cllr Christie

It was noted that access to the Santander account necessitates the signature of the former Clerk, Mrs Janice Dawes, who has left the area but we have some contact details. Work is underway to resolve the current impasse.

#### **46/23 SPC POLICY REVIEW**

Cllr Lowry requested approval to the motion to defer the review of the five policies on the agenda to the March meeting of Council and to review instead the three alternative policies previously circulated.

Proposed Cllr Lowry. Seconded Cllr Christie.

- Policy on Risk Management 2022- 2023.
- Financial Risk Register 2022 – 2023.
- Risk Register (non-financial) 2022-2023.

Council proposed en-bloc the approval of the three policies and accepted the minor amendments.

Proposed: Cllr Rugg. Seconded Cllr Gell.

#### **47/23 REPORT ON INTERNAL AUDIT see 44/23 above.**

#### **48/23 SEPARATION OF CIL APPLICATIONS**

The original combined CIL application for the KGV Playground and Pavilion Upgrade has been replaced by two separate applications (see 39/23 above).

#### **49/23 CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence.

#### **50/23 COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS**

District Councillor Ciaran Reed reported on a meeting he attended about the Local Plan. (Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012 requires that various bodies and stakeholders be notified that the council is preparing a plan. It invites them to comment about what that plan ought to contain.) Regulation 18 sites are now published on the TRDC website. Officers have been presented with these sites by landowners and developers, for their decision.

Developers had selected four sites within Sarratt Village (two in Church Lane, one in Dawes Lane and one in Belsize) and although, in comparison to the size of the Village they are large and intrusive, they were represented by the Planning Officers as small. District Councillor Reed protested again this and has prevailed. The sites are going to be removed from further consideration. TRDC will consider an amendment to the Local Plan. District Cllr Reed wished to thank his colleague Philip Hearn for his hard work. SPC will send its thanks to Cllr Hearn. District Cllr Reed's efforts were applauded by residents and Council members who thanked him for his support of Sarratt.

**51/23 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING AND ITEMS REQUESTED TO BE PUT ON THE NEXT AGENDA FOR 14<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2023**

The meeting closed at 21.20pm.