

SARRATT PARISH COUNCIL  
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**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE SARRATT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN SARRATT  
VILLAGE HALL – TUESDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> August 2023**

Present: Cllr Sarah Dobson – Chair  
Cllr Angela Coakley – Vice Chair  
Cllr Flora Garvey - Sustainability  
Cllr Michael Lowry – Policy and Resources  
Cllr James Alder – Deputy Planning  
Cllr Simon Diggins – Highways

In attendance: 8 members of the public including former Cllrs Mortimer and Soothill  
and

District Cllr Phillip Hearn

**23/184 APOLOGIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Apologies were received from Cllr Farman in advance of the meeting for his absence. District Cllr Reed also sent his apologies, advising District Cllr Hearn would attend in his place.

SPC was saddened to hear the news that two valued Sarratt residents had recently passed away: David Clough and Natalie Morris. In recognition of all the work undertaken by David Clough over many years in the Parish, the flag would be flown at half mast on the day of his funeral which is taking place on Friday 18 August at 12:30 pm.

**23/185 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS**

None were declared.

**23/186 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

A member of the public attended to raise a particular matter which was going to be covered under Planning. He was happy to wait to address the Council at that point in the meeting.

**23/187 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING.**

It was resolved the minutes of the meeting on 11 July 2023 were a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.

Proposed: Cllr Garvey; Seconded: Cllr Lowry

It was noted that the link on the SPC website which should take you to the minutes was not working. The Clerk will inform the webmaster when the minutes of the July meeting are sent for uploading onto the site.

The Chair asked Cllr Diggins to liaise with Steve Goldsmith to coordinate the flying of the Ukrainian flag during the week of Ukraine's Independence Day on 24 August.

**23/188 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES WHO HAVE ATTENDED MEETING ON BEHALF OF THE COUNCIL**

Cllr Diggins attended the Three Rivers Highways Liaison Meeting (to be covered under Highways)

**23/189 KGV PLAYGROUND UPDATE STEVEN BAILEY**

The Chair summarised the history behind the idea to replace the existing playground equipment at the KGV Playing Fields.

- Approximately three years ago, a 14-year-old boy asked SPC if it was possible to install a skate park alongside the existing playground to provide a facility for teenagers in the village. SPC approached 3 suppliers for quotations and then conducted an online survey and held 2 public consultation meetings. Whilst some residents were opposed to the idea of skate park, there was overwhelming support for a recreation facility in the village for teenagers, given the existing playground equipment is only suitable for primary school children.
- In parallel the existing, 25-year-old play equipment continues to require increasingly levels of maintenance and increasing amounts of money to repair. The Chair thanked former Cllr Mortimer and Andrew Whitewood for their work to maintain the equipment. In addition, the annual ROSPA reports have identified one of the climbing frames and the swings are non-compliant with current safety standards.
- It was therefore decided to investigate building a new, multi-age facility with modern, safe equipment that would appeal to children of all ages from toddlers to teenagers.
- An updated quote was obtained and SPC applied to TRDC for a grant from the District CIL funds (monies paid by developers to the District Council). The request received unanimous support from the TRDC Planning & Resources Committee at their meeting on 17 July for the £170,000 SPC had applied for. The Committee also approved a 10% buffer to allow for increased costs given the current economic climate. The meeting was attended by former Cllr Peter Thorp, Steve Bailey, as the Project Manager for the project, and Cllr Sarah Dobson who spoke to the committee about the project.
- Thanks were extended to District Cllr Reed for his tireless support of this project within TRDC.

- As TRDC required SPC to also provide funding, £10,000 of SPC's own CIL funds will be used on the project and we await the outcome of an application to the National Lottery for a further £10,000, which should be known by the end of September.
- On completion of the new playground a plaque will be installed to recognise TRDC's contribution to the project.

Steve Bailey then updated Council on progress since the TRDC meeting on 17 July.

- Lisa Cook from TRDC's Leisure Team visited the existing playground at KGV, and reviewed the plans proposed by Caloo who have been appointed to design and install the new playground. Lisa recommended some small changes to the original drawings, which included improving accessibility for very young children and those with additional needs and changes to the seating design that will dissuade rough sleepers. These changes will incur a further cost of £1,000.
- Steve advised a follow up meeting was held with Caloo who are now preparing an updated design and quotation.
- It was noted that former Cllr Thorp has recommended we share the final design with the children who originally proposed the project as recognition of what their original request would now achieve.
- A legal agreement will be signed between SPC and TRDC for the provision of the monies. Works will commence as soon as possible after a permitted development planning application is approved. Caloo has provided the diagrams to support this application. The Chair recommended SPC speaks to Planning Officers prior to submitting the application to ensure all the necessary information is provided to them. It was agreed Steve should ask Caloo to extend their usual quote validity from 1 month to 3 months while the planning application was under consideration by TRDC.
- Steve advised that payment to Caloo is required on completion of the project, not in advance. This is aligned with when TRDC will release the funds. This will be 95% of the total costs, with the remaining 5% paid to Caloo 6 months later following completion of a survey to confirm the work is fully up to standard.

The Chair thanked Steven Bailey for all his hard work with the project and his time for coming to present the update to the meeting.

Andrew Whitewood asked that during the construction process, it be borne in mind that he has to access the site with a tractor and trailer. Steve will meet with Andrew to confirm there is no access issue. Andrew also asked what would happen to the memorial bench to Anita Coe in the playground. It was proposed this be repositioned within KGV following consultation with the family.

Former Cllr Mortimer noted that when the old play facility is dismantled, the valuable timber recently used for some of the repair work should be reclaimed and used for other projects within the Village.

Cllr Lowry advised an annual £1,000 maintenance estimate will be included in the Budget for the first four years and the SPC insurance policy will need to be updated on completion of the project to allow for the increased value of the new play equipment. Clarification should also be made about cover for vandalism.

### **23/190 CLERK'S ACTIVITIES**

- The Clerk noted that SPC are currently in breach of the Localism Act 2011 as the Register of Councillors' Interests is not published on the SPC website. This will be remedied within the month.
- The Police Speed Aware Van will be positioned in various speed sensitive places around the Green over the next month. Thank you to our local Police Officers for including Sarratt in their itinerary.
- The new fingerposts at the Green will be erected when the weather is more predictable.
- Smith's Fair will be contacted in January '24 re: next year's fair on the Green.
- The Flagpole is mended and in working order and was remediated and paid for by David Buckler – thanks to him from the Council.
- Two water leaks have been mended in Sarratt this month.
- Work on the Willow at Morton's Pond will hopefully commence soon once the TPO permission has been obtained.
- A survey of the health of some trees in Commonwood with Ash die back will be undertaken by the Clerk, and a local arborist, giving a timescale for the urgency of works to be undertaken. SPC may be able to employ a woodland contractor, who would be cheaper. It was noted only trees posing an immediate danger should be addressed with any urgency and less critical work should come under the Woodland Management Plan currently under review by the Forestry Commission.
- A meeting between the Clerk and the Herts CC Rights of Way officer resulted in a visit to New Hall Farm, repairs to the Bridge at the Chess and discussions on footpath maintenance.
- As a result of wild campers on Commonwood in July, the Clerk will research the topic to see if signage is required, and whether Sarratt has been recommended as a good place to wild camp, online.
- Cllr Garvey confirmed she'd not yet had chance to progress the Information Board on the pump and wildlife & fauna for the north end of the Green but would progress this as soon as she was able.

### **HIGHWAYS**

### **23/191 TO RECEIVE LEAD COUNCILLORS REPORT**

A useful meeting was attended by Cllr Diggins and the Clerk with the Hertfordshire Road maintenance team. The system employed by them is reasonable, and emergency repair work is carried out promptly. However, less urgent maintenance throughout Herts appears to be placed in an extensive queue, resulting in delays to these lesser repairs. Cllr Diggins will continue to update the self-reporting site as the more 'hits' they have, the higher they progress in order of priority. He encourages us all to do the same, as the roads are deteriorating, and this will help place our works at the top of the agenda.

### **23/192 ROAD SAFETY**

Cllr Diggins has engaged with our MP Gagan Mohindra, and County Cllrs Richard Roberts, Paul Bibby and Phil Williams and hopes to have contact with David Lloyd, our Police Commissioner, on the dangerous corner at Coltspring Riding Stables and the adjoining house belonging to Mrs Karry Ford.

It has been discovered that of the 5 serious incidents occurring on this corner necessitating ambulances and in one case, an air ambulance, none of them had been recorded or reported. This would go some way to explaining why there has been no action by HCC Highways to take any action such as installing signage on the corner warning of the dangerous bend. It is easy to see how a fatal accident could occur at this location. Cllr Diggins is to continue to pursue this matter.

### **23/193 SPEED MATTERS**

Cllr Diggins proposed some measures and alternatives for the consideration of the Council:

- A blanket 30mph speed limit throughout the Parish.
- Several areas, where the limit would change to 20mph (for example, at the loop road on the Green) versus 30mph elsewhere.

Whilst there was support to a 20mph in certain areas such as the loop road on the Green past the school and shop, there was also concern that the 20mph zones would require too much intrusive signage and that although the creation of good behaviour is a laudable aim, the environment would soon become too urbanised. Perhaps signs on the loop road saying '20 is plenty' and discouraging idling could be a compromise.

With regard to a 30mph blanket speed limit, Councillors commented that whilst some drivers would take note of the reduced speed limits, they were doubtful that it would alter the behaviour of those drivers who already deliberately break the existing speed limit, and to be more successful at reducing in vehicle speeds greater levels of enforcement would be needed. Would there also be unforeseen consequences in terms of a 30mph speed

limit throughout the Parish delineating the edge of the Village, which could otherwise challenge edge of settlement development?

It was agreed that:

- a) Cllr Diggins would investigate what signage is the minimum required for transitions between a 30mph to 20mph limit, and
- b) Councillors would give some thought over the next month to the 30mph speed limit throughout the Parish.

The issue would then be on the agenda for the September meeting to discuss again and agree a way forward. Cllr Diggins was thanked for his research into the potential options.

## **PLANNING**

### **23/197 LEAD COUNCILLORS REPORT**

The Lead Councillor for Planning was absent, so Planning Deputy Cllr James Alder led the meeting through Planning matters.

#### **Clovercourt Development - 20 houses to the rear of 76-78 Church Lane, Sarratt.**

It was a shock to the Council that TRDC's refusal of this Outline Planning Application was overturned at Appeal and that the rationale given by the Inspector placed little weight on current planning policies and the fact that the affordable housing mix is not aligned to the standard formulae, and as such TRDC's decision was overruled on the basis that the need for affordable housing outweighed development of greenfield Green Belt. A full planning application from the developer is now expected. Whilst TRDC have the opportunity to refuse this, it's likely that they will only be able to request certain amendments to the plans rather than an outright refusal.

On the back of the Clovercourt decision a member of the public spoke about a previous application by the owner of Fir Trees, Dawes Lane, who had sought to develop the existing plot for affordable housing in 2018, but the planning application was refused by TRDC, although SPC had no objection. The owner is now looking to sell the property at Fir Trees which is a designated traveller site and one of the reasons why the application for affordable housing was refused. They have therefore emailed and tried to speak to TRDC on a number of occasions regarding whether they would reconsider development of the site for affordable housing, but TRDC have repeatedly refused to respond. The member of the public therefore asked whether SPC could contact the planners at TRDC and endeavour to commence a conversation on next steps in this matter. It was agreed Cllr Farman should attempt to speak to the Planning Officers when he is back from leave to discuss this issue on behalf of one of the Parish's residents. Council thanked the member of the public for their help in understanding this matter.

### **23/198 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

- Challoners The Green Sarratt Rickmansworth Hertfordshire WD3 6AY Ref No: 23/1207/CLPD – NO OBJECTION
- Corner House Redhall Lane Chandlers Cross Rickmansworth Hertfordshire WD3 4LX Ref No: 23/1192/FUL – NO OBJECTION
- Great Westwood Bucks Hill Kings Langley Hertfordshire Ref No: 23/1166/1167/FUL and LBC – NO OBJECTION

### **23/199 PLANNING DECISIONS**

- Nasus Dunny Lane Belsize Kings Langley Hertfordshire WD4 9DE Ref No: 23/0864/FUL – APPROVED (SPC comment/response: NO OBJECTION)
- Hillview The Green Sarratt Rickmansworth Hertfordshire WD3 6BH Ref No: 0832/FUL – APPROVED (SPC comment/response: NO OBJECTION)
- Langdale Bucks Hill Kings Langley Hertfordshire WD4 9AT Ref NO: 23/0813/FUL – APPROVED (SPC comment / response: OBJECT to this application and raised some questions about the size of the extension. TRDC planning officers noted in the decision - this extension is a 54% increase in floor space which is more than the guidance limit of 40% for developments in Green Belt, however identifies that the neighbouring property gained 60% extension on appeal and “small dwelling (defined as 110 sqm floor area or less) with limited basic amenities may be allowed larger extensions to allow upgrading to contemporary living standards.”

### **23/200 PLANNING APPEALS**

- Land to the Rear of 76 and 78 Church Lane Sarratt WD3 6HL Ref No: 22/0025/REF: (Clovercourt development referred to above)  
Appeal allowed with conditions, which include the creation of a footpath from the rear of the development onto FP 50 that cuts across the 3 fields behind the Village Shop.
- Burlington Property Development – it had been understood that this was scheduled to commence on 5 September, but as no date is showing on the Planning Inspectorate website it seems unlikely that this is the case. Cllr Farman will approach the Planning Officer, Suzanne O’Brien, for an update. It was also noted HCC Highways have now recommended the application be refused due to concerns over the walking and cycling access from the site via FP 34, and that the proposed new doctor’s surgery will serve the wider Sarratt area and an analysis of traffic impact needs to be provided.

### **23/201 PLANNING ENFORCEMENTS**

There were no Enforcement Cases on the current list from TRDC that required highlighting. A full list of the current Enforcement Cases can be found on the SPC website.

Cllr Dobson advised Council a new Deed of Variation for KGV had been received from TRDC. Cllr Dobson noted that some of the amendments SPC requested to the previous DoV had been incorporated in the new version. Cllr Farman and Cllr Dobson will give a formal response. Cllr Dobson also advised Council she had received a copy of the planning application from the KGV Management Committee for the renovation and small extension to the pavilion. She would be reviewing this with Cllrs Farman and Alder.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

### **23/194 LEAD'S REPORT**

Cllr Dobson advised there was nothing further to update Council on since the July meeting and that we were still waiting to hear from the Forestry Commission on their review of the 10-year Woodland Management Plan. She then invited Cllr Garvey to update Council on the progress of the 5-year Land Management Plan following the recent meeting of the LM sub-committee.

Cllr Garvey advised good progress had been made on the Land Management Plan and it was now largely completed, thanks to John Rugg and Stephen Morrill. Cllr Garvey highlighted the following that had emerged from work on the plan:

- Meeting booked with Tim Hill, Conservation Manager at the HMWT, to look at all the ponds in the Parish, especially Pound Pond with a view to the type of remedial work that would be acceptable.
- Cllr Garvey has constructed a Hedgerow Cutting Schedule with the help of Hedgelinek.org.
- There appears to be 2.5 hectares of woodland which has been fenced off opposite Dawes Woods. This is believed to be Common Land and further investigations will be made.
- The LM sub-committee has drafted a route for the King Charles III Coronation Walk across existing footpaths in the Parish and encompassing the local pubs, and key points of interest. Signage and possible information boards will be funded by money raised from the Village Coronation Event on 8 May, together with a booklet on the route available in the Village Shop and local pubs. Opportunities for sponsorship to be considered.

Cllr Garvey agreed to arrange for the final draft of the LM Plan to be circulated to Council and the Coronation Walk will be presented to Council at their September meeting.

Cllr Garvey advised she had been in contact with District Cllr Chris Lloyd regarding assessing what could be done to join up footpaths that don't quite



meet where they cross major roads through the Parish, and this would be progressed in September.

**23/195 DRIVEWAY ACROSS THE GREEN – PERMISSION TO RENOVATE**

Sarratt Hall Cottage has requested permission to construct a gravel driveway of 20m x 3m across the Green, to access the field adjoining their property. This would be a new driveway across a section of the Green, which is currently laid to grass.

SPC noted the majority of properties with gravel drives across the Green are to access homes and represent the only traverse of the Green into the property.

SPC also felt there was the possibility within the confines of Sarratt Hall Cottage itself, to provide an access point into the adjacent field. SPC therefore agreed to refuse the request and the Clerk will write to the owner of Sarratt Hall Cottage accordingly.

**23/196 NATIONAL LOTTERY GRANT – CRICKETERS POND**

Disappointingly, this grant application was not successful. The reason cited was a lack of evidence as to how the project would make a difference to the community, and that we had not sufficiently involved people from our local community in developing the project in comparison with other applicants. SPC felt this was somewhat unfair, but it would also appear that the Lottery Fund is overwhelmed by applications. The Clerk will reapply with a strengthened case and also make applications to other grant sources. Cllr Dobson suggested whether we could look to the Thames Water Strategic Water Catchment Project for one of their £5,000 grants.

**SUSTAINABILITY**

**23/202 LEAD COUNCILLORS REPORT**

Cllr Garvey advised the allotments were currently in reasonable order. She also noted a token of SPC's appreciation was given to Elisabeth Smith, to thank her for 45 years of service to the community in her role as receptionist and dispenser at the Sarratt Surgery.

**POLICY AND RESOURCES**

**23/203 TO RECEIVE LEAD COUNCILLORS REPORT**

Cllr Lowry took the opportunity to thank former Cllr Anthony Soothill for helping with the bank communications between SPC and Santander.

Cllr Dobson asked that a formal complaint be made to the Cooperative Bank detailing their extremely poor performance and service on a number of matters dating back several months.

**23/204 BANK TRANSACTIONS FOR JULY 2023: £8,881.61**

- Cllr Lowry commented that July had proved to be an average expenditure month. SPC had earned extra revenue in rental of the Green by Tom Smith's Fair, of £1,650.
- The large invoice for Sign of the Times for the fingerposts may well be paid next month.
- We have submitted our VAT return and will shortly receive the refund.
- We have not yet been contacted by the External Auditors, and this we await.
- The first date for the half year accounts is October.
- Cllr Lowry asked for approval of the July bank transactions.  
Proposed: Cllr Coakley; Seconded Cllr Alder
- Copies of the bank statements were signed by Cllrs Coakley and Diggins.

### **23/205 GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS**

A deadline of Friday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2023 was agreed for Grant Applications for the 2023/24 financial year. A notice would be placed in Spotlight and reminders sent to previous Grant recipients.

### **DISTRICT COUNCILLORS UPDATE**

#### **23/206 TO RECEIVE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REED'S REPORT**

As District Cllr Reed was unable to attend the meeting, District Cllr Hearn attended in his stead.

District Cllr Hearn spoke about TRDC's draft new Local Plan and that the current position going forwards is that sites included in the plan for possible development will be brownfield sites, and sites with low to moderate harm to the Green Belt. This is unless they are 'strategic sites', which qualify for extra infrastructure. This is to be reviewed on the 24 September and will form part of a new Reg 18 consultation later this year. Cllr Hearn confirmed currently none of these sites are within Sarratt. However, there is nothing to stop additional sites being added at a later stage, and it's possible developers whose planning applications have been refused may seek to include these in the new Local Plan.

The Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan is out for consultation and has received significant negative feedback, particularly around the proposals for Chorleywood shared at the last SPC meeting by District Cllr Reed. Cllr Hearn suspects that it will be reviewed and edited many times before it becomes acceptable. Cllr Diggins commented that urban models of cycleways are not appropriate for rural areas. Cllr Hearn agreed that what has been suggested is so radical, it will probably never come to pass.

District Cllr Hearn commented that the TRDC CIL pot is still taking applications for grants and that we should apply for funding for the works to the Pavilion extension and refurbishment.

**23/207 CORRESPONDENCE**

- SPC received a letter from Mr and Mrs O'Malley at New Hall Farm, in response to a visit from Hertfordshire Rights of Way Manager Mr Thorton.
- A complaint was received from a parent whose child was hit by the swinging gate on the playground.

**23/208 COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS**

There were no questions or comments.

**23/209 THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING is September 12<sup>th</sup> 2023**

Meeting ended 10:00 pm