

KINGSTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES: of the virtual Meeting of Council on 5th May, 2021 commencing at 7.34 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Walker (Chairman), Buckenham, Jolly, Kenning, Masson and Wetherell.

Simon Cross, Clerk to East Preston Parish Council (locum Clerk)

One resident.

36/21 **Welcome** – Cllr Walker welcomed everyone to the meeting.

37/21 **Apologies for Absence**

An apology had been received and accepted from Cllr Joyce.

An apology had also been received from the Clerk to the Council, Mrs Knight.

Apologies had also been received from County Cllr Elkins and District Cllrs Bower, Chapman and Kelly, all in purdah ahead of the Local Elections to be held on 6th May.

38/21 **Election of Chairman** – Cllr Walker was elected Chairman unopposed.

39/21 **Acceptance of office** – On camera, Cllr Walker signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office. Cllr Walker then thanked the council for its confidence in her.

40/21 **Election of Vice-Chairman** – Cllr Wetherell was elected Vice-Chairman unopposed.

41/21 **Urgent Matters Arising** – No matters arising were raised.

42/21 **Declarations and Dispensations of Interests** – Further to declarations held in the Register of Members Interests, in the interest of openness, Cllrs Kenning, Masson and Walker declared membership of Kingston Gorse Estate and Cllr Jolly declared membership of West Kingston Residents Association.

43/21 **Public Opportunity** – No questions were raised by the public.

44/21 **Appointment of Committees and Working Parties** – Cllr Walker led the meeting through the proposed committee and working party membership for 2021/22:

- a) **Finance and General Purposes Committee** – all Members
- b) **Planning Committee** – all Members
- c) **Emergency Plan Working Group** – all Members
- d) **Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group** – all Members
- e) **Conservation Area Working Group** – all Members

(Note: Chairman of Committees and Working Groups remain in post until the next meeting of that Committee or Working Group)

Council agreed the proposed memberships unanimously.

45/21 **Cheque signatories** – Council considered a proposal to increase the number of cheque signatories from the current five (Cllrs Jolly, Joyce, Masson, Walker and Wetherell) to six, adding in the Clerk. Alongside this Council considered a proposal to increase the number of cheque signatories to any three from six; this being an increase from the current any two from five.

Council agreed unanimously to add the Clerk as a sixth cheque signatory.

Council agreed unanimously not to increase the number of signatures required to three, unless there was a good reason they were not aware of.

Council also considered and agreed the council should move to electronic banking.

46/21 **Appointment of Representatives** - Cllr Walker led the meeting through the proposed list of representatives to other bodies for the year 2021/22. The following appointments were all agreed unanimously:

- a) Joint Eastern Arun Area Committee: Chairman and Cllr Masson
- b) JEAAC Highways and Transport Sub-Group: Chairman
- c) West Sussex Association of Local Councils (WSALC): Chairman and Vice-Chairman
- d) Policing and Community Safety Meetings: Cllr Jolly and Cllr Masson
- e) Biodiversity Forum/issues: Cllr Joyce
- f) Flag Officer: Mr John Hickson (a deputy to be appointed if the flagpole is retained)
- g) Emergency Co-Coordinator and Deputy: Cllr Wetherell and Cllr Walker
- h) Winter Management Plan Co-Coordinator and Deputy: Clerk and Cllr Wetherell
- i) Arun District Association of Local Councils: Chairman and Vice-Chairman
- j) Eastern Arun Parishes Group: Chairman and Vice-Chairman
- k) East Preston and Kingston Village Hall matters: Cllr Wetherell
- l) South Strand Community Toilets Group: Cllr Buckenham

47/21 **Minutes** – The council approved Minutes of the Meeting held on the 18th March, 2021.

48/21 **Matters Arising from the Minutes** – There were no matters arising.

49/21 **West Sussex County Council:**

a) **Report of County Councillor** – Cllr Walker reminded the meeting County Cllr Elkins had sent his apologies for this meeting owing to the Local Elections due to take place on 6th May.

b) **Highways and Footpaths** – Council considered employing a contractor to cut back vegetation in three places along Kingston Lane (corner opposite Newcote Farm, corner south of the junction with Elm Avenue – both sides) whilst meeting the criteria set by County, as this would be more economic than paying County’s contractor for a full length cut (£280). This work will need to be completed in the near future.

The contractor would need to have £10m Public Liability Insurance, regardless of whether it was possible to close the road whilst he was working, thus removing the chances of incident with a member of the public, and a temporary works permission would be needed from West Sussex County Council.

Council agreed to employ a contractor and further agreed the Chairman and Vice-Chairman may progress this with the help of Cllr Masson.

50/21 **Arun District Council:**

a) **Report of District Councillors** – Cllr Walker reminded the meeting District Cllrs Bower, Chapman and Kelly had sent apologies for this meeting owing to the Local Elections due to take place on 6th May.

b) **Litter** – Cllr Masson provided the meeting with an update on litter issues predominantly, but not exclusively, at the eastern end of the Greensward.

A Director of the Kingston Gorse Estate board has been in discussion with Arun District Council (ADC) about

- the removal of a litter bin located outside the property Nantucket.
- bins that are currently on the Kingston Gorse Estate could be moved to the Bluebird Café land although the proprietor did not seem willing to consider this at this time.

In addition to the Bluebird Café at the eastern end of the Greensward, there was now a small pizza venture adjacent, Al Fresco, which did not seem to be linked to the café in any way.

There had been a marked increase in the litter problem since the first National Lockdown was imposed in March 2020. Council did not feel this would improve again easily.

Noting council had serious Health & Safety concerns about litter both on land and offshore, the Council agreed unanimously for Cllr Walker to discuss these concerns with District Cllr Chapman.

Additional concerns were members of the public urinating in the tamarisk bushes by Kingston House and the amount of dog mess which was not cleared up by owners, not necessarily wilfully but simply because they were too busy chatting to notice.

Some suggestions were made for improved signage to be implemented by the Kingston Gorse Estate.

There was a further suggestion the Chairmen of the private estates adjacent to the Greensward could meet to discuss the employment of an SIA-qualified dog warden who could impose fines of up to £1,000 which may be self-financing.

There was a general consensus too many dogs were not under control whilst being exercised on the Greensward. The meeting agreed this too could form part of Cllr Walker's discussions with District Cllr Chapman.

- 51/21 **Policing** – Cllr Jolly reported the year-to-February crime statistics were down on the previous year-to-February, sixteen compared to twenty, confirming the low crime rate enjoyed by residents. These were mostly thefts from vehicles.

In light of recent incidents in neighbouring East Preston, the council had written to and received a favourable response from Sussex Police's District Commander, Chief Inspector Carter, on the subject of a high-turnover of Police Community Support Officers in the area, the latest having only stayed in post for between six and eight months. CI Carter confirmed Sussex Police remained committed to having named PCSOs for communities.

- 52/21 **Planning Committee** – Council noted the minutes of the meeting held on 18th March. All present had been present at the committee meeting held prior to this meeting thus a verbal report was not necessary.

- 53/21 **Finance and General Purposes Committee** – Council noted the minutes of the meeting held on 18th March. All present had been present at the committee meeting held prior to this meeting thus a verbal report was not necessary. Arising from this, Council agreed the recommendations made by the Committee including approval of the Accounts Summary, the Certificate of Exemption and the Annual Return for 2020-21.

Council then agreed the Chairman and Clerk to sign these as required for submission to the External Auditor.

- 54/21 **New Code of Conduct** – Council considered whether or not to adopt the new Code of Conduct as recently adopted by Arun District Council.

Council agreed unanimously to adopt the new Code of Conduct. Councillors were aware of the paperwork they needed to complete following the adoption of the new Code of Conduct.

- 55/21 **Working Party re the Environment** – Cllr Buckenham reported the working party had not really had a chance to get started yet. He suggested a coffee morning, once permitted, would be a good informal start to the working party.

Signage about dogs being kept on leads during the April to June breeding season had not been implemented yet and this may have to wait until 2022 now.

It was agreed the working party should look to strengthen the Ferring Rife's status as an SNCI (Site of Nature Conservation Importance).

- 56/21 **South Strand Community Toilets (SSCT)** – Cllr Buckenham apologised for being unable to attend the group's Annual General Meeting on 8th April. This was due to technical difficulties on the SSCT end. Cllr Buckenham did express his gratitude for the great job the SSCT group has done and continues to do. The toilets have been open every day and a defibrillator has been provided.

- 57/21 **Virtual Meetings** – Government legislation does not permit local authorities to hold meetings that are open to the public remotely after 6th May. Council considered whether to subscribe to

the Zoom online meeting application for another year at a cost of £119.90 including VAT. A subscription is only needed by organisations hosting meetings.

As working parties can continue to meet virtually and the next in-person meetings of the council were not until July, Council agreed not to take out the subscription for a further year. Cllr Walker praised the council for its handling of meetings on Zoom over the past year.

58/21 **Clerk's Contract of Employment** – Council considered and agreed unanimously an upgrade to the sick pay provision within the Clerk's contract of employment to bring it in line with the NJC Green Book. As the Clerk has been in post for over five years, this would allow six months' full pay and six months' half pay.

59/21 **Next scheduled meeting of Council and its Committees:** Council noted the next meeting was scheduled for Thursday 22 July, 2021 at 7pm and would likely be held, in person, at Our Lady, Star of the Sea, East Preston.

The Chairman led a vote of thanks to Mr Cross for clerking this evening's meeting.

The meeting concluded at 8.30 pm.

Chairman:

Date: