

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
ELMSTED PARISH COUNCIL ON 10th SEPTEMBER 2020 HELD VIA SKYPE**

Present: Cllr Argar (Chair) Cllr Bevan
Cllr Burge Cllr Castle
Cllr Francesconi Cllr Phipps
Cllr Stanley

In attendance: District Councillor Hollingsbee and the Clerk

		To be actioned by
1	To receive and approve apologies for absence	
	Apologies for absence had been received from County Councillor Carey.	
2	To receive declarations of interest (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests). The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared.	
	There were no declarations of interest.	
3	To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 14th May 2020.	
	The minutes of the last meeting were agreed and signed.	
4	To discuss matters arising from the above minutes not covered by the agenda.	
	The rough bit of road on Elchin Hill is still on-going. The sign at top of Stone Street is still not in situ. A better sign was requested. Clerk to follow this up.	TB
5	Report from District/County Councillors	
	<p>Cllr Hollingsbee had sent the following report ahead of the meeting:</p> <p>More and more services have been moving online and the pandemic has underlined the benefit of being able to be in contact without needing to be face to face. In line with this trend, your District Council has introduced 'my account' on its website so that residents can see information directly relevant to them and not have to search through the whole website. 'My account' shows which bin collections are made and when to your property, who your elected representatives are and information on your council tax bill. 'My account' is designed to be 'mobile friendly' and more services will be added to it. You need an email address to sign up to 'my account' and information from your council tax bill to access the full range of services. It takes just a few moments to register and should make it easier for you to find information and report problems. Do give it a try.</p> <p>We've reported before about how our council meetings have moved online. We've had Cabinet, Planning and Overview & Scrutiny meetings by zoom and now <u>on 16 September</u> we will be holding a Full Council meeting to consider the <i>Places and Policies Local Plan</i>. Without such a plan our district is open to development taking place anywhere and, whilst people sometimes complain there is too much development, there would be far more and in far worse places without these council policies. The Government currently has two consultations under way about changes to the way areas are designated as suitable for development but in the meantime we need the <i>Places and Policies Local Plan</i>. If you are interested, you can view the papers for the meeting on the council website and the meeting itself is webcast live.</p> <p>Age UK Hythe & Lyminge has re-opened the Lyminge Centre but clients are attending by invitation only on a Tuesday and Thursday. They hope to expand this soon.</p> <p>At the conclusion of a tender process the District Council with Dover District Council have awarded the new Recycling and waste collection to Veolia. This process started over a year ago and the new 8 year contract starts in January 2021. The new contract will see the introduction of a number of initiatives to help the district councils achieve their objectives of being carbon net zero by 2030, including a new green fleet of vehicles and electric sweepers, and redesigned collection routes to minimise travel times and the environmental impact of the service. The key elements of the service will remain unchanged.</p>	

Finally we are sad to report the death of Robert Bliss who became leader of the District Council at what was probably its lowest point in 2004 when the previous short-lived administration had left the council finances and services in a ruinous state. Robert led the council with courage, good humour and shrewdness. Our district owes a great deal to Robert and our thoughts and prayers are with his family.

Susan Carey and Jenny Hollingsbee

Susan Carey had sent the following report ahead of the meeting:

I am sorry I can't be with you tonight, but I am committed elsewhere.

The last time I was with you I was asked why there are large Highway signs from Stone Street showing Stowting school. I have checked and they were put up by Kent Highways at the request of the headteacher at the school. The Highways Engineer concerned is new to Kent and did not realise that it is against Kent Highways policy to show schools this way. A village/town should always be given the most prominent signing and any sign to a particular school should be much nearer the school and clearly subsidiary to other signs. These signs will be changed when they are next due for replacement unless this becomes a big issue with other schools who feel disadvantaged in which case the signs would be removed sooner. Let me have your views.

A surprising number of KCC services were able to continue during lockdown with many staff able to switch to working from home. My meetings are now all held online and today all 81 County Councillors from across Kent met online to agree changes to our budget for 2020/21. It is unprecedented to change our budget in-year, but our income has been hit and our costs increased by the pandemic. Whilst we have received support from the Government it is not enough to meet the expected gap. There are only a few areas where we can find such short-term savings. Looking ahead to our budget for 2021/22 the challenge is even greater. Social services now account for over half our spending and with those over 85 the fastest growing age group in the country we expect demand for social care will continue to grow.

There are still some reasons to be cheerful. On the Environment front which is my own area of responsibility at KCC we are making progress on reducing carbon emissions and cost. We have two targets. For our own services and estate, we have an accelerated target of Net Zero by 2030 and for Kent as a whole we are aligned with the Government's commitment of Net Zero by 2050. A district heat project (using heat from the River Medway), solar panels on our own buildings and a switch to LED lights in our buildings and for highways bollards and signs are all saving money and reducing carbon emissions. We have just launched a group buying scheme for Kent householders and community buildings called Solar Together which uses KCC's procurement expertise to get the best price from reputable Kent solar panel businesses. We also have an Electric Vehicle Charging Point scheme (you should have received a letter about this) for community buildings/car parks. There's also a scheme for business to have free use of an electric van for up to two months to assess whether they could make a switch to all electric.

Also in my area of responsibility, I'm pleased to report that we are raising the number of reservations each household can make at a Household Waste Recycling Centre from two per household per month to four and increasing the slots available at our busiest sites (including Folkestone). Please remember you still need to book online or through the call centre.

You will have seen in the news that KCC is in breach of its statutory duty to care for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children. The numbers arriving in Kent this year have used up all available social workers, foster parents and accommodation. (The UASC numbers are nearly 500 under 18s and over 900 UASC care leavers for whom we have financial responsibility till they reach 25. This is in addition to around 1,000 citizen children in care). We will continue to care for those already in our care and for citizen children in Kent who need taking into care, but we have told the Home Office that we can no longer safely take any further UASC arrivals.

KCC is working with partners – Kent Police, Kent Fire & Rescue, Highways England etc. on plans for traffic management this winter. Bad weather, industrial action in France and Brexit all have the potential to cause problems.

There's more information at www.kent.gov.uk and do contact me if there's anything you'd like to discuss further.

	<p>Susan Carey Member for Elham Valley, Kent County Council District Councillor, North Downs West, Folkestone & Hythe District Council</p> <p>The only issue is the signs that point to Stowting School. Clerk is to write to Susan Carey to say that we feel that the Stowting School signs should be removed.</p>	TB
6	Public session: To receive questions and comments from the public on any agenda item.	
	There were no members of the public present.	
7	Financial matters:	
	<p>a) To note/authorise the following:</p> <p>i. To note the Parish Council's financial position, Chair to initial bank statement. The Parish Council noted that the balance of account as at 31st August 2020 is £2,410.67</p> <p>ii. To authorise any payments: There were no payments to be made.</p>	
8	To consider any changes to the Risk Assessment.	
	There were no changes to be made to the Risk Assessment.	
9	Planning matters: to approve the responses to any recent planning applications.	
	<p>Maxted Street application – this application has been approved. Little Holt – this application has been approved.</p>	
10	To consider documentation circulated in May from Elevation Space (circulated again on 2nd September)	
	<p>There had been some communication from Elevation Space. The Council felt that this was the wrong place, there is no bus service. The Parish Council did not feel that this was something they could support and it is currently a green site. The Clerk is to reply and explain that the Parish Council is not supportive of this. The Clerk is to send the email to Stelling Minnis. Cllr Hollingsbee was asked if she had seen this? She had not.</p>	TB TB
11	Any Other Business (for information purposes only):	
	<p>Website is now up and running. The Clerk was asked about website traffic but was unable to answer at this time. The Clerk needs to set up new email address. Cllr Hollingsbee was pleased to see the Council and hoped that all Councillors are keeping well.</p>	TB
12	Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.	
	<p>Thursday 10 December 2020 Thursday 11 March 2021 Thursday 13 May 2021</p>	
	Date of next meeting – 10th December 2020	
13	The meeting closed at 8.00pm	

Signed:

Date: