

Queenborough Town Council

Minutes of the Queenborough Town Council held on **Monday 13th March 2023**

at the Queenborough Guildhall at 19:00 Queenborough Guildhall

ALL MINUTES ARE WATERMARKED 'DRAFT' AND REMAIN A DRAFT COPY UNTIL THEY ARE AGREED AT THE NEXT RELEVANT COUNCIL OR COMMITTEE MEETING.

Present: Councillors Ashley Shiel (Mayor), Jackie Constable, Peter Marchington, Janet Flew, Paula Telford, Sue Simpson, Richard Darby, Zoe Swarbrick, Zoe Stockbridge, Sandra Fowle.

Seven members of public (inc. five members of Castle Connections)

1. Emergency Evacuation – The Mayor made all aware of the Council procedures in an emergency on exiting the building and the meeting point across the Road.

2. Apologies and grounds for absence – None

3. Declarations of Interest – None

4. Public questions

Mr Butcher Trustee at Castle Connections.

Asked why the Town Council would not be renewing the lease for the Old School Building and if the letter sent by the Trustees had been read.

The Mayor reported the lease will be renewed at the renewal date and the letter had been received and read by the Councillors.

Mr Butcher reported that the Centre could not get a jubilee grant of £15,000 because the lease is so short. The lease and Council are stopping the centre from progressing, the mayor reported this was a harsh comment when the Town Council had paid for new fire doors last year and rent reduction for numerous years in supporting the community. QTC paying to have the lease renewed would not be sufficient for the Council.

The brickwork outside had been surveyed and the largest crack has been reported by the surveyor to be fine.

Valuation of the property will be carried out, but the valuation agency is behind, when this can go ahead the Trustees will be informed, so the centre can be opened.

New toilet facility plans can certainly be discussed but a survey would have to be conducted before any works went ahead. Mr Butcher was asked to submit a plan on where the toilets will be going and what building works it entails at the Old School Building.

Footpath Thompsett Way/Rushenden Road

Public member asked when the footpath will be open.

The Mayor reported this was a sticky situation for KCC, as owner of the land.

The gate has been seen to be open sometimes and closed at others. The public member continues to contact KCC for answers and will forward emails to the Clerk to keep her up to date with his perusal of the closure of the footpath by a local business.

5. Policing Matters – None

6. Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Monday 30th January 2023

The minutes were reviewed and adopted as a true copy, and signed as a true copy by the Mayor, Cllr Ashley Shiel.

7. Review of Matters arising from previous meeting held on Monday 30th January 2023

None

8. Mayors remarks

The Mayor thanked everyone for coming, which might be his last meeting as Mayor. Thanking everyone for their support last year. Reporting on Town Council activities, with the loss of Cllr Cameron Beart, the water crisis, the passing of HM the Queen and battling through the other side of covid.

9. CCTV in Queenborough Park

The report from the Clerk's correspondence with SBC had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting regarding the CCTV at Queenborough Park.

A public member had reported the removal of the CCTV camera from Queenborough Park to the Clerk. Swale Borough Council reply was that the Queenborough camera was only a temporary deployment, and they only have a small pool of these temporary mobile cameras and they have been required to move multiple of these cameras to new locations recently, based upon need. Swale Borough Council's understanding from the Police is that the ASB issues experienced in Queenborough last summer have diminished greatly and therefore it is not felt that this temporary camera is currently needed, but SBC have more pressing areas of concerns elsewhere in the borough.

Should SBC see an increase in issues, either because of the camera being removed, or with the return of warmer weather, SBC will seek to redeploy another mobile CCTV camera, or consider if there is now the justification of a permanent deployment.

The Mayor reported this was also reported by SBC Cllr Simon Fowle at the recent SAC meeting.

The Town Council agreed to continually monitor the situation moving forward.

10. Local Elections in May

The Clerk reported on the upcoming elections, she had sent out nomination packs with accompanying information to Councillors prior to the meeting.

The Clerk will be happy to assist councillors with hard copies of the packs and in delivering to SBC Offices in Sittingbourne, in bulk.

Reporting members of the public wishing to stand can contact the Clerk for a link to the information.

11. Queenborough Town Council Annual Meeting

By resolution it was agreed to keep the Annual Meeting date in line with the elections regulations and the meeting to be held on 24th May 2023. The Annual Town meeting will also be held on this date.

With regards to committee meetings of the Environment Committee and Finance and General Purposes Committee during the period after election and 24th May 2023, the Clerk asked that both Chairpersons for the said committees contact her to re-arrange or cancel the meeting dates already proposed, failing this the Clerk will add to the appropriate committee agendas for discussion.

12. Financial reports

i) Cashbook and Bank Reconciliation

The Cashbook and Bank Reconciliations for January 2023 as approved by the Finance & General Purposes Committee, was approved by Full Council with no matters arising.

ii) Review of payments made between the Finance and Full Council meetings and authorisation of proposed payments due

Payment reports were approved for payments made between the meetings.

Authorisation of payments due were approved for members allowances second payment, HMRC, Nest Pension, Viking Stationery and Amethyst.

13. Committees and Working Party Reports

(i) Environment Committee

Draft minutes of the previous Environment Committee meeting had been circulated to all councillors by the Clerk, prior to the meeting.

The Cllr Fowle as Chair reported on a good meeting.

The Council approved the actions of the Environment Committee

(ii) Environment Committee working parties:

a) In Bloom

Cllr Paula Telford as Chair reported on exciting projects in hand and completed over the past month.

RHS Sustainable Grant had been obtained.

Eighty-five plants have been planted in Queenborough Park.

7 fruit trees have been planted at Park Avenue Allotments.

5 trees have been planted at Park Avenue Allotments with the funding from Npower at the allotment site.

The Train Station planting looks promising working with Sheppey College and possibly AAM Gardening.

The Act Team have offered to paint the bollards along North Road, QTC will have to provide the paint for the works.

b) Allotments

Cllr Paula Telford reported on two allotments being given up in the future.

c) Christmas Lights

Minutes of the working party had been circulated to all councillors by the Clerk, prior to the meeting.

The Mayor reported, once again, on the new sockets required for this year.

d) Community Crisis Plan – None.

e) Emergency Food Bank

Cllr Darby reported numbers were up and they sometimes struggle.

The Council approved the actions of the working parties.

(ii) Finance and General Purposes Committee –

Draft minutes for the previous F&GP Committee meeting had been circulated to all Councillors by the Clerk, prior to the meeting.

Cllr Marchington reported everything was good.

The Council approved the actions of the F&GP Committee.

(iii) Planning Committee –

Draft minutes for the previous Planning Committee meeting had been circulated to all Councillors by the Clerk, prior to the meeting. There were no further matters discussed.

The Council approved the actions of the Planning Committee.

14. Local Community bodies

a) Queenborough Town Community Centre – None.

b) Queenborough Fishery Trust –Cllr Constable reporting there is a grant meeting tomorrow and local organisations applying for grants can find information is on their website.

c) Queenborough Harbour Trust – Cllr Fowle reported on this being a quiet period for looking at repairs.

d) Queenborough School and Nursery – Cllr Stockbridge reported on meeting with Mr Howard the Headteacher and her report was circulated to Councillors. Mr Howard being in attendance tonight, joined in the discussion.

Litter picking days, street art in an area to be proud of in the Community, flower planting and a history of Queenborough are all planned projects to bring the community together.

Term 5 Coronation including decorating for QTC Kings Coronation Event.

Term 6 History stories, listing 7 different stories i.e., the Elephant Park etc., to educate in our area. My Island and beyond, whole community with different groups. Pride in Queenborough by local people.

The park shelter at King George's Park was reported by Mr Howard who has sufficient evidence on anti-social behaviour occurring there. Swale Community Partnership had been contacted and he suggested it would be ideal to remove the shelter. Children being photographed, jumping on the shelter roof, with bad language.

Cllr Constable reported on the repeated issue of parking along Main Road at School drop off and collection times, vehicles parking on the pavement and up to the traffic lights.

A suggestion of planters or bollards on the path was an idea brought forward.

Mr Howard reported this was heightened by Ambulance Training Days. Cllr Constable appreciating that stopping the parking here could push it elsewhere.

The walking bus idea from Cllr Stockbridge, Mr Howard reported would not collaborate with those parents driving to work. Sheppey Hall Car Park is now half closed for parents use. The PCSO has been out on numerous occasions.

The Clerk asked if the school travel map was now up to date, Mr Howard confirmed it was, as she reported KCC will not be able to help with funding etc., until the 2018 plan is updated.

- e) **Rushenden Community Hall Association** – Cllr Marchington reported that the works to the back of building were now completed with a new kitchen and another 35 people can be accommodated at the Hall.
- f) **Rushenden Community House** – Cllr Fowle reported on holes in the perimeter fence, she had continued to visit the house to find someone to talk too but it had been closed.

Swale Area Bodies

- g) **KALC Swale Area Committee** – Cllr Swarbrick reported she could not attend meetings as they were on a Tuesday. There was on another representative now present on the committee since Cllr Beart's passing.
- h) **Local council's Liaison forum of SBC** – No updates.
- i) **SBC Swale Area Committee**– Cllr Shiel spoke about the KCC public consultation, closing vast amounts of centres was not good. Queenborough Library will become a community hub. There are no direct bus routes to us.
- j) **Swale Joint Transport Board** – Since Cllr Beart's passing there was no representative at present, The Mayor did not attend the previous meeting.
- k) **Swale Rail** – published wrong date for the last meeting.
- l) **VEL Surgery PPG** – Cllr Telford reported there are now 9,000 patients registered in Sheerness and Queenborough and Health Care Assistants working alongside the Doctor.

15. Correspondence

- a) The Clerk reported on receiving reports of litter at Alsager Avenue, the Mayor reported he would organise a litter pick through the Environment Committee. It was noted that the

recent operations by Kent Police had been successful with off road bikers, referring to the previous Full Council meeting.

16. Late inclusions previously notified to the Mayor - None

17. Any other Business

Cllr Telford reported on the Beart Family's thanks to the Town Council for attending the funeral and the respect shown over the last few weeks. The family would like to plant a tree in Queenborough Park, this would be around November 2023 time now in tree planting season.

Cllr Stockbridge asked about the riverbed at Gordon Avenue/Harold Street since being asked by a member of public, Cllr Constable replied that Queenborough Fishery Trust are auctioning it off. The auction being on the 22nd of March. Cllr Constable reported she believed that it will possibly be purchased for a leisure facility for residents, but the legal pack would need to be read to establish if this were true.

Cllr Swarbrick reported on the library Lego club, she will put up leaflets in the noticeboards and send the clerk a copy for the website.

The Clerk reported on two invoices received from Swale Borough Council for buildings insurance, she has raised queries on both invoices, one had already been invoiced and paid in March 2022 and the other appeared to be for the Guildhall. This was for information at this stage.

The Clerk reported on the map/brochure/board after meeting with Handy Prints last week. Councillors were asked if they could pop into the office ahead of the next Environment meeting to review.

There being no further business the meeting was declared closed at 20.10.

Date of next meeting – 24th April 2023