

Queenborough Town Council

Minutes of the Queenborough Town Council held on **Monday 18th March 2024**

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), Sandra Fowle, Peter Marchington, Sue Simpson, Mick Constable, Zoe Swarbrick, Janet Flew,

KCC Councillor Mike Whiting

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 – Cllr Telford (unwell), J Constable (unwell), Darby (family matter) and Vicky Mcwhinney (working).

3. Declarations of Interest – None.

4. Visitors and Public Questions –

a) Public questions - None

b) Kent County and Swale Borough Councillors questions/reports

KCC Councillor Mike Whiting had submitted a report prior to the meeting which the Clerk had circulated to Councillors.

Cllr Whiting gave an update on the Blackburn Lodge open consultation.

Cllr Whiting will speak to KCC about the possibility of installing Milton pipes at the entrance to the layby along Rushenden Road, where there is currently a vandalised caravan fly tipped. He reminded that the cost for bollards would be £6,000 and there was no funding available for these.

Cllr Marchington replied that by closing of the entrance, grab lorries would not be able to remove future fly tipping.

There is a meeting with Southern Water on Thursday where Cllr Whiting, Telford and Shiel will be attending in Rushenden, in relation to sewage flooding.

5. Policing Matters – PC Maybank of Kent Police report had been circulated by the Clerk to all Councillors, prior to the meeting and read out by the Mayor.

Further reports on anti-social behaviour from youths in the Town during recent weeks was discussed. There will be two new PCSOs bought back to the Isle of Sheppey in the coming weeks.

6. Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Monday 5th February 2024

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 5th February 2024.
None.

8. Mayor's remarks

The Mayor thanked everyone for coming to this evening, reporting this will be a busy year for the Council, with a lot happening in the summer months.

9. Letter from the Hollinshead Family

The letter was read out by the Clerk in relation to the closure of Queenborough Post Office as follows:

On behalf of the Hollinshead family - Janet, Angeline (now Sanders), Christine (now Kirk) and Robert, I would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the mayor and Queenborough Town Council for their visit on the post office's last day of trading today, 28th February 2024. We did not expect your visit or kind gifts and would like to thank you for being so thoughtful in giving your time to mark such a big change in our lives.

I ask that this message is added to the agenda for your next meeting to stand as a record of the council's support of our family and the community at this time.

Our family moved to Queenborough in 1996 when Jan and her husband Chas decided that they wanted to start a career with the Post Office. They looked at branches across the country and decided on Queenborough after meeting with the previous owners, Sonny and Jackie, and hearing what wonderful things they had to say about the community here. Over the years that this town has been our home, they were proven right in every way.

Thank you for your support through the decade we have worked to find a new home for the post office in Queenborough. It may not be the right time at present, but we hope that should the opportunity arise - perhaps through future developments or new retail premises that might open - councillors will be first to make it clear to those people that there is an opportunity to have a post office if they apply.

We are all overwhelmingly happy for the chance to make donations of materials and artefacts from the post office to the town museum. With Chas's passion for history and a teacher in the family, we love the fact that there will be an opportunity to teach our future community about what used to be daily life in the town.

Thank you again.

The Hollinshead family.

10. Swale Borough Council proposed traffic regulation order.

The Borough of Swale (off street parking places) (Variation 6) Order 2024, for the part in relation to Queenborough Car Parks' at Park Road and the Library.

a) report outcome of the traffic regulation order

The Mayor reported it was the outcome that was wanted for Queenborough in the Library and Park Road Car Parks remaining free, but reported this would be short term.

b) notification of the order to Queenborough Town Council from the authority.

Councillors reviewed the fact that Queenborough Town Council had not been contacted or consulted by Swale Borough Council on the order. It was agreed a letter to be written by the Clerk to this effect, asking why the Town Council had not been consulted.

c) response from the authority to Queenborough Town Council's letter of objection

The response received was an almost generic response with no answers to any questions raised in the Town Council's letter of objection. It was agreed to include the lack of response and ask for answers to questions, in a letter to Swale Borough Council

d) response to resident FOI request from Swale Borough Council on the order –

Councillors had been circulated correspondence from a resident regarding their disappointment at the response received from the higher authority on the order. Reporting on parts of the response from Swale Borough Council in relation to the Town Council dialog with the authority, it was stated that.

"There has been no dialog between Swale Borough Council and Queen Borough Town Council in relation to this matter. Publicly elected representatives from Sheerness and Queensborough were present at the meeting. The link shows all of the attendees and the decisions that were made surrounding this matter. Queensborough Town Council was not contacted prior to this as the land is controlled by Swale Borough Council. If there are concerns about the decisions being made, then we would recommend contacting the locally elected members.

The link is the only information that is held in relation to any dialog retaining to this matter. Once the proposal was put forward Queensborough Town Council was contacted separately in order to provide any support, objections and comments to the proposal."

The link was for the agenda for Policy and Resources Committee on Wednesday, 29 November 2023, 7.00pm at Swale.gov.uk.

On viewing the meeting there were no Queenborough Town Councillors present and they are not members of this SBC Committee. Cllr Mike Whiting for Queenborough and Halfway was present and Cllr Dolley Wooster from Sheerness being publicly elected members present. These Councillors would not normally report to the Town Clerk of Queenborough Town Council with whom the proper officer works for the eleven Town Councillors of Queenborough Town Council. So, this response from Swale Borough Council was inaccurate.

Town Council members were not invited to speak at the Community Committee meeting but two public members who had collected petitions were, this was not being open.

The response relates to 'Queensborough' this is not the correct spelling for the Town.

The matter caused much frustration and extra work for the Town Council.

Draft letter to be sent to Cllrs Darby, M Constable, Shiel and Fowle for review.

11. Camera Club

Members could not agree, and a date was not set for the next photo opportunity in the Guildhall.

12. Utility Charges and Insurance for 44 High Street, Queenborough 2023/2024

Utility charges were compared to previous years and reviewed. With the rising costs of energy prices and minimal increase in the insurance premium, it was agreed by resolution that the invoice from Swale Borough Council be paid.

13. Review reserves – deferred to another meeting.

14. Donation to the RNLI Sheerness

In Celebration of the 200 years of the RNLI by resolution agreed to donate £200 from the discretionary grant fund.

15. Ted Pye Fund

a) Queenborough Bowls Club had highlighted the need for further bowling sets for the Children, by resolution agreed to donate funding for four sets of children's bowls at £180 per set.

b) Queenborough School and Nursery had still not submitted costs for items, Swale Borough Council had still not confirmed costs to fix the climbing wall at Wildfire Park.

16. CCTV in the Community

Quotations were circulated and reviewed from Swale Borough Council for the placement of cameras around the town. With funding from CCTV Budget 2024/2025 and Environmental Projects 2023/2024 by resolution agreed to initially purchase two cameras at locations 1 and 3 on the quotation being outside the Church to link with the deployment camera at Queenborough Park and the other at the roundabout junction with Rushenden Road, Railway Terrace and Main Road.

Agreed for the Clerk to further inquire to the costs of a deployment camera.

Apply to the Queenborough Fishery Trust for funding towards further cameras.

17. Purchase of OWL speaker

It was agreed not to purchase as this time but to investigate cheaper alternatives, which Cllr Simpson will investigate.

18. Financial reports

i) Cashbook and Bank Reconciliation

The Cashbook and Bank Reconciliations for January 2024 as approved by the Finance & General Purposes Committee, was approved with no further questions.

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

Swale Borough Council Invoice 7220277782 £1,893.82 (insurance and utility charges 2023/2024,

Swale Borough Council Invoice 7220271125 £154.07 invoice was reviewed for payment of electoral services in May 2024 and agreed for payment.

Swale Borough Council Invoice 7220271116 £2,027.30 it was agreed to pay this October invoice for electoral services for payment by this budget year end and to query the KCC element as pointed out by the Clerk.

Members Allowances – 2nd payment 2023/2024, Swale Borough Council In Bloom contribution 2023 £1,750.00,

Agreed March Payroll to be paid a few days early on 26th March, due to the Easter Holiday.

19. To adopt Queenborough Town Council Policies

4 no. policies circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting, item deferred to next Full Council as Councillors had not had time to read/review draft policies.

20. Committees and Working Party Reports from the Environment Committee and adoption of recommendations.

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

The Council approved the actions of the Environment Committee

i). Environment Committee Working Party Reports and adoption of recommendations.

a) In Bloom

Cllr Fowle reported how lovely Queenborough Park looked as Blenwood had been out and cut the grass and de-weeded.

b) Allotments

Cllr Flew reported that the recent allotment inspection had been postponed due to the weather conditions.

c) Christmas Lights and Annual Event

A meeting had been held this evening where five new public members had joined the working party.

d) Community Crisis Plan

The Mayor reported he will be working on this in the Easter School Holidays and arrange to meet with the Clerk.

e) Emergency Food Bank

Cllr Simpson reported they had lost the Morrisons Community Champion who had been a great support for the food bank and would now be using donated funds.

The Council approved the actions of the working parties.

21. Finance and General Purposes Committee reports and adoption of recommendations.

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

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

22. Planning Committee reports and adoption of recommendations.

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

There was no further update this evening.

i) Planning Committee Working Party

Queenborough and Rushenden Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

No updates.

The Council approved the actions of the Planning Committee.

23. Local Community bodies

- a) **Queenborough Town Community Centre** – None
- b) **Queenborough Fishery Trust** – Cllr Simpson reported on a grant meeting where applications had been received from all over the Isle of Sheppey.
- c) **Queenborough Harbour Trust** – Cllr Fowle reported the on a quite winter.
- d) **Queenborough School and Nursery** – None
- e) **Rushenden Community Hall Association** – None
- f) **Rushenden Community House** – Cllr Fowle reported on them working from AGE UK Sheerness.

Swale Area Bodies

- g) **KALC Swale Area Committee** – Cllr Simpson and Cllr Marchington confirmed they will be attending the next meeting.
- h) **Local council's Liaison forum of SBC** – None

- i) **SBC Swale Area Committee**– Cllr Simpson reported on the recent meeting and the good public attendance at the Sheppey Rugby Club.
- j) **Swale Joint Transport Board** – None.
- k) **Swale Rail** – None.
- l) **VEL Surgery PPG** – None.

24. Correspondence –

Correspondence had been circulated and was reviewed from.

Report from KCC Councillor Mike Whiting,

Office report from Clerk – resident report of torn flags – update Cllr Marchington removed. Update new flags have been ordered.

Anonymous letter received by post this was not read.

Request to post on the Town Council Facebook page, update from the Mayor that this was a War Grave Commonwealth Society and would be Swale Borough Council.

Green Grid newsletter March 2024.

No further actions were required by the Town Council.

25. Late inclusions previously notified to the Mayor –

Cllr Marchington reported on the Independence Day, he has put in for a road closure for the Committee. Making it a Queenborough Event which involves everybody.

The Clerk asked about the Council being invited to a meeting, response was that Cllr Swarbrick was the Council's representative, but she had not attended any meetings' as they clash with her Swimming Club meetings, which meant the Town Council are not getting updates.

A market day was discussed which is a conversation for a future Environment Meeting, as the idea of a market was previously squashed by the Mayor last year. Maybe the Council could investigate one for 2025.

26. Any other Business

Cllr Simpson reported on an invoice required by the Fishery Trust for the archive storage, the Clerk will action.

The Clerk updated the Council on the Jet Ski meeting held this week.

Cllr Peter Marchington reported on control of the Jet Skis, Harbour, Causeway and the work he is conducting as commodore of the Queenborough Yacht Club.

It was agreed to invite Larissa Reed CEO Swale Borough Council to the next Full Council for conversation regarding Swale Borough Council assets and the future of them.

There being no further business the meeting was declared closed at 21.15.

Date of next meeting – Monday 29th April 2024

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