

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY 20 MAY 2024
AT CAPEL PARISH HALL**

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Ball, Mr McLachlan, Mrs Schryver, Mr Ashwood, Mr Salter, Mr Cox, Mrs Taylor and the Clerk.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr James Baguley, District Councillors Clayton Wellman and Dineke Van Den Bogard.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Mrs Dale and Mrs Watson. Surrey County Councillor Hazel Watson.

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN: Mrs Dale was nominated to continue as Chairman. This was proposed by Mrs Schryver and seconded by Mr McLachlan. No other nominations were put forward. All Councillors voted in favour. Mrs Dale was absent from the meeting but had indicated she would accept the position of Chairman if proposed and nominated. Her proxy acceptance was noted.

ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN: Mr McLachlan was nominated to continue as Vice-Chairman. This was proposed by Mr Ball and seconded by Mr Ashwood. No other nominations were put forward. All Councillors voted in favour.

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF PLANNING COMMITTEE: Mr Ball was nominated to continue as Chairman of this Committee. This was proposed by Mr McLachlan and seconded by Mrs Schryver. No other nominations were put forward. All Councillors voted in favour.

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF FINANCE COMMITTEE: Mr Salter was nominated to continue as Chairman of this Committee. This was proposed by Mrs Schryver and seconded by Mr McLachlan. No other nominations were put forward. All Councillors voted in favour.

APPOINTMENT OF PLANNING ADVISOR TO GUIDE COUNCIL ON ALL MOLE VALLEY LOCAL PLAN MATTERS: The Council elected Mr Paul Garber to continue to as the Planning Advisor to the Parish Council. This is a non-voting position, with no authority to undertake anything other than advise the Parish Council when appropriate.

APPOINTMENT OF PARISH COUNCIL COMMITTEES:

Executive: All members of the Council and the Clerk

Finance: Mr Salter, Mr McLachlan, Mrs Schryver, Mr Ball, Mrs Dale and the Clerk.

Planning: All members of the Council and the Clerk.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Mole Valley District Council Standards Committee: Mr McLachlan

Surrey ALC: Mr McLachlan

SUB COMMITTEES:

Beare Green Pavilion Management Committee: Mr Salter, Mr Cox, and the Clerk

Beare Green Village Hall: Mrs Watson

Beare Green Playground: Mr Cox, The Clerk

Beare Green and Capel Grounds Maintenance Committee: Mr Cox and Mr Chris Anderson

Capel Burial Ground: Mrs Schryver and the Clerk

Surrey Waste and Minerals: Mr McLachlan, Mr Ball

Capel Sports Pavilion Management Committee: Mrs Schryver, the Clerk

Footpaths, Bridleways and Byways: Mr McLachlan, Mr Cox, Mrs Dale

Capel Village Memorial Hall: Mrs Schryver, Mr Ashwood

Emergency Planning: Mr Ball, District Councillor Dineke Van Den Bogard, the Clerk

Capel Playground: Mrs Schryver, the Clerk

Capel Allotments: Mrs Schryver, the Clerk

Coldharbour Playground: Mr McLachlan, the Clerk

Cycling: Mr McLachlan, Mr Salter

Surrey Hills Working Groups: Mr McLachlan, Mrs Dale

Appointment of Auditor: The Parish Council will continue using the services of Mulberry and Company for the half-year and end of year audits for 2024/2025. Conditions of the current arrangements with Mulberry and Company will be reviewed at the Finance Committee meeting to ensure the Parish Council receives full and complete information from Mulberry and Company regarding payments relating to Employers NIC.

Dates of Full Council and Committee Meetings for 2025:

Details of all meetings have been published on the Parish Council website and on notice boards.

2 TO APPROVE THE ACCURACY OF MINUTES OF THE FULL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 15 APRIL 2024

The minutes were regarded as a true record of the meeting. All Councillors voted in favour of accepting the records and the minutes were signed by the Vice-Chair.

3 TO APPROVE THE ACCURACY OF MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING 7 MAY 2024

The minutes were regarded as a true record of the meeting. All Councillors voted in favour of accepting the records and the minutes were signed by the Vice-Chair.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

None.

5 PUBLIC QUESTIONS:

None.

6. CLERKS REPORT:

- The ditches outside properties in the vicinity of 154 The Street, Capel will be cleared. They are full of brambles and rubbish. Once this work has been carried out Surrey Sports have been asked to take extra care when strimming this area in future.
- The tree outside Knoll House, Horsham Road needs to be cut back as it is resting on the overhead telegraph line. Treeline have been instructed to carry out the work. They will liaise with BT.
- The area outside 17,18 and 19 Carterdale Cottages needs to be cleared. It is a walkway and is being obstructed by overgrown bushes, brambles and a partly fallen tree.
- Treeline have been asked to look at the ditch at the rear of the Beare Green Pavilion. Trees and roots are obscuring the free flow of rainwater causing flooding.

7. MR JAMES BAGULEY, HEADTEACHER, THE WEALD SCHOOL, BEARE GREEN

Mr Baguley addressed the meeting with a view to discussing the ongoing problems with parking along Newdigate Road, Beare Green. These problems are worsened during school drop off and pick up times. Mr Baguley confirmed that there had been complaints from residents and that a solution that would eliminate the problem and ensure pupil safety needed to be found.

Mr Ball mentioned that double yellow lines along Newdigate Road had been suggested previously, but this would need authorisation from the Police and Surrey County Council Highways. The problem seemed to be that cars parked continually along Newdigate Road without leaving any passing places. Traffic from the direction of the A24 and Newdigate would then have to “run the gauntlet” past the parked vehicles and if vehicles met part way, one would have to reverse, sometimes having to reverse back onto the A24 which was an exceptionally dangerous manoeuvre.

Suggestion was made that parents be allowed to use the school playground to drive in, drop off their children and drive out. However, with school coaches coming in, this was not considered an option.

It was agreed that Mr Ball would meet Mr Baguley on site to view possibilities, and that County Councillor Helyn Clack would also be invited to attend.

8 PLANNING APPLICATION:

MO/2023/0335 - Hurst, Vicarage Lane, Capel:

This application has been discussed as amended drawings have been submitted. The Parish Council had commented that they were disappointed affordable housing had not been “pepper potted” throughout the site, on-site parking had been reduced and no single-storey properties within the site. However, a letter supporting this application had been forwarded to Mole Valley District Council.

9. HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY:

A Housing Needs Survey is being prepared by Surrey Community Action. When the Capel Neighbourhood Development Plan is updated, this essential Information will be included. Councillors have viewed the questionnaire which will be delivered to all properties in the parish. The covering letter has been reviewed and agreed but there are some questions on the questionnaire which the Councillors consider to be too personal and need to be reviewed. There were also concerns that the questionnaire requires contact details. The Clerk will contact SCA and ask for questions 18 to 20 to be rephrased.¹

The covering letter which will be forwarded with the survey was discussed and agreed and information relating to the survey will be published on the Parish noticeboards and website.

The cost of the survey was discussed, and it was agreed that the Clerk would try to establish if a grant was available.

10. TO APPLY FOR CONTINUING COMMUNITY ASSET STATUS, THE CROWN INN, CAPEL:

The Parish Council successfully applied for The Crown Inn, Capel to be approved as a community asset in 2018. The asset remains on Mole Valleys list for five years, after which time the protection expires. The Parish Council unanimously agreed a re-application should be made.

It was also agreed that an application to have The Plough Inn, Coldharbour approved as a community asset. Scott-Broadwood CofE Infant school, Capel was mentioned, and it was agreed that Mr James Baguley should be invited to a future meeting to discuss this proposal.

11. DONATION REQUEST KSS AIR AMBULANCE:

A grant application has been received from the Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance. This is a Charity the Parish Council had donated to previously and agreed unanimously to donate £500.00.

12. TO ADOPT THE TRANSPARANCY CODE FOR SMALLER AUTHORITIES:

All Councillors unanimously agreed to adopt the code.

13. TO CONFIRM CONTINUED ENTITLEMENT FOR GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE:

Councillors were advised that the Council is qualified to continue with this Competence. The Council unanimously agreed to continue with this entitlement.

14. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS:

(a) Finance

(i) To review the end of year Internal Audit Report

The Internal Audit Report had been circulated to all Councillors. This will be uploaded on the Parish Council website. The Executive Summary of the report indicated that during the interim audit in November 2023 the Parish Council was made aware of an error on the payroll in respect of erroneously claiming the “employment Allowance” which had spanned several years. The auditor had advised the Council to contact the payroll provider and HMRC and pay the amounts due as soon as possible. The Councillors had reviewed the information and made the decision that no payments would be made until HMRC indicated exactly how much was owing. The auditor specified that this action was in full breach of its statutory obligations and by putting in writing (formal Council minutes) to take no action is wilfully commits a crime. The Councillors contested the phrase “take no action” as the decision was made to wait for a demand from HMRC. There was never any question of the Council not paying, it was a matter of how much was due.

¹ SCH have confirmed questions 18 to 20 will be modified and that any personal information provided on the survey will not be available to the public.

The Councillors also asked why this under payment had been allowed to accrue for so long and why Mulberry, who have been the Parish Council's auditors since 2018 had not brought this underpayment to the attention of the Parish Council before.

The auditor also commented that funds have not been earmarked for specific projects. Councillors confirmed that the Parish Council is trying to consolidate funds to pay off the Public Works Loans, pay HMRC when the demand is received, install solar panels on the Parish Hall and contribute toward the Trig Street project which is currently being discussed with Newdigate Parish Council.

After further discussion, it has been agreed:

- It was agreed that in the role of Auditor Mulberry does not have to give advice on tax payments. As Mulberry is a Tax Advisor, it was agreed the Parish Council ask them, in that capacity, to advise on this matter providing the cost is not prohibitive.
- It was agreed that a new payroll provider should be sought, a company who has dealings with Parish Councils and who is aware of regulations relating to Local Government.
- The Clerk will obtain the HMRC Gateway information.
- HMRC will be contacted by telephone and asked for a full breakdown of outstanding Employers NIC payments.²
- HMRC will be asked when it becomes necessary to pay Employers NIC as this does not apply to smaller Councils.
- It was unanimously agreed that all Employers NIC payments from December 2023 to May 2024 inclusive will be made immediately. This equates to a payment of £2,058.06. The November 2023 payment had already been made.

The Clerk will formally write to Mark Mulberry stating that the Parish Council is very disappointed that Mulberry and Co published potential inflammatory statements about the actions of the Parish Council without consultation. The auditor is fully aware that we have ample funds in our reserves to cover any monies due and there was never any intention NOT to pay the outstanding money. Damaging the Council's reputation in a public document without any 'right of reply' was totally unnecessary.

(i) To sign audited AGAR for 2023/24:

The accounts to 31 March 2024 had been audited by Mulberry and Company, and the Annual Governance and Return signed off, ready for the Parish Council to approve. The Return was approved unanimously by all Councillors. The vice-Chair signed the statement which will be forwarded to Littlejohn and then uploaded onto the Parish Council website.

The notice of Exercise of Public Rights will be posted on the notice board, with dates as follows: commenting on Monday 3 June 2024 and ending on Friday 12 July 2024.

(iii) To agree and approve accounts to 20 May 2024:

Mr McLachlan highlighted the spending for April and May to date and details of payments were circulated to all Councillors.

The current account balance on 20 May 2024 was £428.63 and the balance of the reserve account £117,222.02. The balance of the NS&I account was £610.89.

(iii) To approve and authorise payments of outstanding invoices:

Payment Received

Hall Hire	£	172.50
Ashes interment	£	280.00

Payments

		VAT	TOTAL
PWLB Parish Hall	£2,712.54		£2,712.54
Lindsay Quirk Hall Cleaning	£48.00		£48.00
Waterscape and Wildlife Gardens	£330.00		£330.00
Naturescapes Wes Attridge	£540.00		£540.00

² After several attempts, it has not been possible to speak to HMRC. A second recorded delivery letter was forwarded on Thursday 30 May but no response has been received as yet (13 June 2024).

Mulberry & Co Invoice 0150	£224.75	£44.95	£269.70
Printerland	£268.95	£53.79	£322.76
EDF Energy Beare Green pavilion	£45.17	£2.26	£47.53
EDF Energy Bowls Club Capel	£41.85	£2.09	£43.94
Bradley Pearce. Gas Safety Certificate	£160.00	£32.00	£192.00
Fred Evans Ground Works Capel and Beare Green	£649.00		£649.00
Helpdesq Invoice 16144	£55.04	£11.01	£66.06
Surrey Sports and Turf Invoice 3609	£802.00	£160.40	£962.40
J Russell May salary	£2,594.80		£2,594.80
HMRC Clerk's Income Tax	£648.80		£648.80
Capel and Beare Green Magazine	£100.00		£100.00
Donation KSS Air Ambulance	£500.00		£500.00
Donation Beare Green Football pitch Verti-draining	£360.00		£360.00
OPUS Energy Gas DD	£51.51	£2.58	£54.09
	£10,132.41	£309.08	£10,441.61

(b) Ward Matters for discussion

Coldharbour - (i) Mr McLachlan mentioned that although the Parish Council had paid to have the road leading to the cricket club resurfaced, Surrey County Council had now carried out further works to improve the surface. This has been financed by Surrey County Councillor Hazel Watson which has used up her entire allocation for this financial year.

Capel – (i) Mrs Schryver asked if the solar powered speed sign at Seamans Green could be refurbished as it was not working. A new solar powered sign has been installed in the centre of the village which is appreciated. (ii) Work is required on the copse at Markham Park and Clay Griffin will be asked to deal with this.

Beare Green – (i) Mr Cox mentioned that electric bikes are being used on Beare Green recreation ground. It was agreed this matter would be discussed further at the next meeting. (ii) Mr Cox is meeting Treeline later this week to view the condition of the ditch behind the pavilion which is causing flooding problems. (iii) The request for a donation toward verti-draining on Beare Green football pitch was discussed and Councillors unanimously approved funding of £360.00. (iv) The Beare Green village sign was mentioned. This will be included as an agenda item for the next meeting.

15 CORRESPONDENCES:

A request for a donation had been received from the Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance charity. All Councillors agreed to support a donation of £500.00.

16 URGENT MATTERS AT DISCRETION OF CHAIRMAN FOR NOTE OF INCLUSION ON A FUTURE AGENDA:

Scott-Broadwood CofE Infant School.
Electric vehicles on Beare Green Recreation ground
Beare Green village sign

Dates of Next Meetings:

Planning Committee: Monday 3 June 2024

Finance Committee: Monday 3 June 2024 immediate after the Planning Committee

Full Parish Council: Monday 17 June 2024 at John Venus Hall, Coldharbour