

# PARISH OF POSTLING

## ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2018

Minutes of Postling Annual Parish Meeting held at Parish Village Hall on Wednesday 23 May 2018 starting at 7.30pm.

### **PRESENT:**

Cllr Frank Hobbs (Chair), Cllr Christine Hobbs, Cllr John Patrick, Cllr Charlie Wilkins, Jo Maher (Clerk), County District Councillor Susan Carey, District Councillor Jenny Hollingsbee and 1 member of the Public.

**1) APOLOGIES:** Cllr Helen Calderbank, Cllr John Elphick, Gill Dixon

### **2) MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:**

The Minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 24 May 2017 were approved and signed by the Chair. This was proposed by Cllr Christine Hobbs, seconded by Cllr Patrick and unanimously agreed.

### **3) CHAIRMAN's REPORT:**

Your Parish Council has had another interesting year with some good news and some bad news.

Locally we have had more planning applications than ever before, but they have all been non-controversial.

The good news is that the sand extraction site has been removed from the Kent Mineral Plan, however the lorry park is still in the pipeline. The government has announced that in the short term they will implement a contraflow system if needed but will be announcing plans for a permanent scheme soon.

Otterpool Park continues on its way. We have met with Council staff on a couple of occasions as part of their consultation process, and they plan to look for a planning application in the next 12 months. The Masterplan has been approved by the District Council

Last year we had complaints about the flying activities at Pent Farm, we have none this year, so presumably the restraints put in by the owner are working.

The state of local roads is a continuing problem, and I suspect will always be so. Traffic gets more frequent as well as being heavier and wider than our lanes were designed to take. The County Council does not have enough money to do a proper job.

The broadband position has not changed yet, although there are a few ideas floating around, we will continue to look for a reasonable solution. We are also planning to acquire a defibrillator which will be placed at the village hall.

The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) come into force later this month and has meant some changes in the way the clerk works, at the moment Parish Councils have to follow the rules, although there is suggestion of an amendment to the bill which would exempt us, however for the time being we have to assume we are subject to the Act.

Lastly the bad news. Jo is giving up her job as Parish Clerk at the end of this month, due to work and family commitments, we have had no local volunteers to date in spite

of adverts in the Parish Magazine and the Lyminge Newsletter. If no one comes forward then we will have to take on a Clerk from elsewhere, which will cost us considerably more than at present, and will therefore mean a large increase in the precept.

Jo has done an excellent job and we will miss her cheerful face at our meetings, we wish her well for the future.

***Frank Hobbs, Chairman Parish Council***

#### **4) POSTLING NEW VILLAGE HALL ASSOCIATION REPORT:**

The committee has only met once for our AGM.

It is quite difficult to maintain the balance between a steady income stream from our regular nursery user and yet keep the Hall looking reasonably inviting for members of the Village to use when required.

We have redecorated the kitchen, entrance hall, stairs and landing this year and also fitted new floor coverings to those areas. Many thanks to Chris Clark for organising and overseeing that work.

Unusually, due to works being undertaken in the Church, this year the Hall hosted the village Easter Day service. This was well attended and as Stephen Dougal said at the time, was how Christians in early times would have worshipped using whatever facility was available.

***Chris Reynolds, Chairman, Postling New Village Hall Association***

#### **5) APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES to the Village Hall Association**

Cllr Christine Hobbs proposed Chris Reynolds, Chris Clark and Gill Dixon as representatives to the PNHVA, this was seconded by Cllr Wilkins and carried unanimously.

#### **6) DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORT:**

Susan Carey and Jenny Hollingsbee represent North Downs West ward which includes the communities of Bodsham, Elmsted, Etchinghill, Lyminge, Postling, Sellindge, Stelling Minnis, Stanford, Stowting and all points between.

This is their report of the highlights of the year for their ward and the District Council.

One of the principal duties of your district council is to allocate sufficient land for building homes and employment sites through a Local Plan. The Objectively Assessed Need for our district is 633 new homes every year until 2037. You can see the detail (open for comment till 18 May 2018) on the council's website at the Civic Centre or in a library.

We both support the District Council's plan for a Garden Town. We need homes and jobs for the future particularly for our young people and young families and a Garden Town enables us to have these together with the infrastructure needed to support them. New medical facilities, schools, parks, improvements to the local road network and better public transport will be delivered in advance or in step with growth of the Garden Town. The District Council is working in partnership with Cozumel (the Folkestone racecourse owners) and Homes England (the Government's housing agency) with most of the land needed for the project now secured.

The Framework Masterplan for the Garden Town has just been issued taking on board many of the comments during the first round of consultations. A planning application is expected by the Autumn. This is a very long term project with building expected to start in 2021 and delivery over the next 20 – 30 years. See [www.otterpoolpark.org](http://www.otterpoolpark.org)

Local Government continues to bear the largest share of reductions in the Government's efforts to balance the nation's finances. Whilst we have had Government grants to help with planning costs for Otterpool Park Garden Town our Revenue Support Grant from Government has sharply declined and is expected to be completely withdrawn by 2020.

Your district council has been working hard to reduce costs by using technology and we are very pleased that we were awarded first prize for 'Transforming Through Technology' at the iese national awards. Putting benefit claims online has made the process simpler, more accessible to clients, freed staff to help more complex cases and saved money.

### **News about your District Council**

Our annual audit letter from independent auditors Grant Thornton concluded the council was both efficient and effective in managing its resources and delivered value for money.

We will be continuing to move more services online and have a smaller workforce dealing proactively with problems such as flyposting and litter rather than waiting for them to be reported. Our top team will also be smaller with our Chief Executive, Alistair Stewart taking redundancy. In his 13 years at Shepway he took the council from 'Requires Improvement' to 'Good'. Dr Susan Priest is our new Head of the Paid Service.

We have been very pleased to see the efforts of many partners to regenerate Folkestone bear fruit. The Harbour Arm has become a popular venue for leisure and entertainment and the homes, retail and more leisure developments will begin to be built this year. The Folkestone Book Festival and the Folkestone Triennial both broke records for attendance and drew many people to the town. Building work has begun on the new indoor skatepark by the De Haan Foundation and the District Council opened a new playpark at Radnor Park. The District Council has also been successful in winning £2.5m of funding from the European Union for local projects to help employment and businesses in East Folkestone and this money will be matched by public and private sources to £5million for projects that will run till 2022.

Your district council has also embarked on a £30m programme to build 200 council houses across the district. It remains our policy that any development of 15 or more houses should provide 30% of these as 'affordable' (council, housing association, 'help to buy' or shared ownership).

The District Council is progressing with plans for a new Leisure Centre on Princes Parade to replace the Hythe Swimming Pool which is well past its useful life and costing considerable money to patch up. The Leisure Centre will offer gym facilities as well as a pool on the site of the former municipal waste site. The plans also include new homes, a restaurant and small hotel and the current walk way along the sea front for pedestrians will be nearly doubled in width.

In November 2017 Highways England announced they would not defend the Judicial Review against their proposal for a vast Lorry Holding Area beside Stanford. Highways England are evaluating options for dealing with Operation Stack which may still involve

one or more lorry holding areas. There have been no further updates by Highways England.

Nuisance lorry parking remains an issue across the district and enforcement officers have been going out at night to issue fines. Most of the offending vehicles are not UK registered and the council is using bailiffs to collect fines with around 45% collected. We would like to wheel clamp but do not have the powers to do so. The Government is reluctant to grant these until there are sufficient lorry parks available.

Jenny continues in her role as Cabinet Member for Communities and Deputy Leader of the District Council. Her responsibilities include the Community Safety Unit which has representation from the Police, Community Wardens, Environmental Services, Mediation and East Kent Housing. She is on the Otterpool Park Collaboration Board and represents the District Council on the Armed Forces Covenant Board, the South Kent Coast Health & Wellbeing Board, the Local Children's Partnership Board as well as the local Citizens Advice Bureau, Age UK Hythe & Lyminge and the Volunteer Bureau. Jenny serves on the Planning & Licensing Committee and Susan on the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Our district has been called Shepway since its creation in 1974. The name is widely misunderstood outside our area with people mistaking it for the Isle of Sheppey or the Shepway estate in Maidstone. This matters when we are trying to attract investment and promote our area. On 17 January your District Council held a debate and the required two thirds majority of councillors voted to change our name from Shepway to Folkestone & Hythe. The change took effect from April but logos on uniforms, stationery, vehicles etc will only be changed when they need renewal to minimise the cost of the change.

The new web address is [www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk](http://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk) and emails to departments or people within the council will end with @folkestone-hythe.gov.uk. Email and domain forwarding will be in place for six months. Any payments made by direct debits will automatically be transferred.

Our work as your district councillors covers the whole district and you will see from our report some of the major projects under way. We are also involved in many events in our ward from parish council meetings to village events and individuals who come to us for advice and help.

### **Keeping in touch**

We write a monthly update in the village newsletters of Lyminge, Sellindge and Stelling Minnis and an annual report to all the parish meetings in our area. Our contact details are at the foot of this page and you will also find us on twitter as @susanjcarey and @jennyHollingsbe

### **Our ward grants**

District councillors are each able to allocate £3,000 for community projects. Here are the projects we supported in 2017/18. If you have a project you think would benefit from our support, please contact us.

### **Supported jointly by Susan and Jenny**

£1,000 to Sellindge Village Hall towards the cost of new chairs for the Durling Room.

£1,000 to Shepway Sports Trust towards the cost of a minibus to transport people to sports facilities.

£500 to Postling Village Hall towards the cost of new flooring.

£500 to All Saints Church, Stanford towards the cost of a new boiler.

£500 to St Mary and St Radegund church for works to enable the church to host more community events.

£400 to 1<sup>st</sup> Sellindge Scouts for a new noticeboard.

£400 to St Mary's Church, Stelling Minnis towards the cost of the new car park and fencing.

£375 to Elmsted Parish Council for new noticeboard.

**Susan supported**

£168 to Etchinghill Residents' Association for outdoor catering equipment

£492 to 1<sup>st</sup> Lyminge Scouts towards heaters and furniture for their new training room.

**Jenny supported**

£200 to 1<sup>st</sup> Gurkha Brigade for a Christmas event.

£465 to Strange Cargo towards the cost of the Light Festival

**Susan Carey District Councillor**

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***Susan Carey and Jenny Hollingsbee, District Councillors, North Downs West, Shepway District Council***

**7) KENT COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

Dear Resident,

Kent is a great county and my Elham Valley division is one of the very best parts of Kent for beauty, heritage and of course the people. Last year you re-elected me to Kent County Council with the largest vote, biggest majority and the highest share of vote among the KCC candidates in our district. Thank you for your support.

'What do I get for my council tax?' is a question I'm often asked and inside this report you will see some of what KCC does on your behalf.

Most of you will be concerned about speeding, dog mess and litter. Speed enforcement is the job of Kent Police but I am a big supporter of Speedwatch which helps the Police identify persistent speeders and trouble spots. Last year, I invited Kent's Police and Crime Commissioner, Matthew Scott to meet the Speedwatch volunteers in Lyminge Parish and press the case for more action. Please respond to Matthew's regular consultations on priorities for Kent Police and think about giving some time to one of our local Speedwatch Groups.

Both tackling dog mess and litter are District Council matters which I support through grants for litterpicking equipment for community clean ups (both adult and child size kits) and the Keep Kent Clean campaign. Community litterpicks and stream cleans in both Elham and Lyminge make a real difference to our environment thanks again to volunteers.

The cold and snowy weather has left many potholes so I am very pleased with the news that the Government has allocated Kent an extra £0.9m to help fix these. Together with our own resources we now have **£7.5m for the pothole programme.**

Please report them at [www.kent.gov.uk](http://www.kent.gov.uk) (search for 'potholes') or ring 03000 41 81 81 in office hours or 03000 41 91 91 for emergencies.

Improving access to broadband and better mobile service for our rural areas is dear to my heart. At a time of great financial pressure KCC has invested £16m to matchfund the Government's funding to extend broadband to rural Kent. 94.6% of Kent households now have access to superfast broadband. KCC is now working on a subsidy scheme to help the remaining households connect. Our MP Damian Collins has also been of great help in getting the mobile phone companies to look at solutions for the 'not spots' in this area.

*Susan*

### **A message from Paul Carter, Leader of Kent County Council**

Kent County Council has three clear ambitions for Kent which were agreed in 2015 and remain our priorities. We want –

- **children and young people in Kent get the best start in life**
- **Kent communities to feel the benefits of economic growth by being in-work, healthy and enjoying a good quality of life**
- **older and vulnerable residents to be safe and supported with choices to live independently**

Each of these aims has measurable targets and for the majority of measures I am pleased to report our performance is maintained or improved.

The welfare of children and young people is the Council's top priority and our 'good' Ofsted judgement of our children's services is the result of a 7 year journey and recognition of the hard work of all our staff. This puts Kent's children's services among the top 30% in the country. I was particularly delighted to see Ofsted acknowledge that the vast majority of young people enjoy strong and constructive relationships with our staff and that senior and political leaders are proud to be the corporate parents of Kent's looked after children and care leavers. We will work hard in the coming year to build on these positives and address those areas for improvement highlighted in Ofsted's report. Other good news is that 92% of pupils in Kent are attending schools rated as 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted.

We remain committed to encouraging independence through enablement and advice to ensure older and vulnerable people are confidently equipped to live independently in their own home for as long as possible. We have worked to advance the integration of health and social care across Kent, as we seek more effective and efficient use of both our own and health partners' resources. We recognise the national challenges which health and social care face but also the local opportunities to redesign our health and social care system around the needs of our people and deliver much more integrated ways of working wherever possible. We have played an important role in Kent and Medway's Sustainability and Transformation Partnership which will further advance service integration.

These successes have been achieved against a backdrop of unprecedented budget pressures. We face considerable and increasing challenges including growing demand, rising costs and reductions in government funding. Over the last year we have prioritised those services which will achieve our strategic outcomes and matter most to Kent's residents and businesses. We have a strong track record of good financial management and are in a strong position to further improve services, address the challenges we face and deliver our ambitions for Kent.



Paul Carter Leader, Kent County Council

PS You can see the full report – *Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes* – on the KCC website and see both where performance has improved and where we need to do more.

### **Susan Carey - My work for you and for Kent**

At Kent County Council I am Cabinet Member for Customers, Communications and Performance which includes responsibility for our call centre, website, consultations, internal audit, risk and performance management.

[www.kent.gov.uk](http://www.kent.gov.uk) has over 3,000 webpages covering over 300 KCC services. It receives over 900,000 page views a month from over 200,000 people. Our Contact Point deals with phone calls, correspondence and email and receives over 700,000 calls a year. Both the website and Contact Point are highly rated and we benchmark our services against the best in the public and private sector.

As well as the Cabinet meetings I am involved with Policy & Resources Cabinet Committee, Governance & Audit Committee and the full County Council meetings which are all webcast. I also chair the Youth Advisory Group for the Folkestone & Hythe and am a member of the Joint Transportation Board. As the County Member for Elham Valley I am a trustee of both the Sir John Williams charity in Elham and the Robert Thompson Charity in Saltwood.

I write a monthly report for several village newsletters and post stories on the excellent online Hawkinge Gazette. I opened a twitter account (susanjcarey) and am tweeting about my work as a councillor. I attend as many of the local parish and town council meetings in my division as I am able as well as the annual meetings. I love the round of village fetes and events where our community comes together to raise money for good causes and to enjoy themselves.

One of the most important parts of my role is helping residents with individual problems and I am easily contactable by emails or phone. I am also pleased to help many local projects through my KCC Member Grant. Each Kent County Councillor had £22,000 to allocate to projects for 2017/18. Here is how I've allocated mine.

The largest grant is £5,000 to Hawkinge Town Council towards the conversion of the Community Centre lights to LED. Switching to LED will save energy, carbon emissions and cost which in turn helps everyone who uses the Community Centre.

£4,000 for a new bus shelter at Yew Tree Cross in Lyminge. There's never been a shelter at this bus stop but a villager pointed out how well used it is and the Parish Council has agreed to meet the remaining cost and the ongoing maintenance.

£2,000 to Sellindge Parish Council for the renovation of a red telephone kiosk and the installation of a defibrillator in a case inside.

Yew Tree Cross in

£2,000 to install reflective road studs (cat's eyes) on the B2068 Stone Street along the stretch that's prone to fog near Farthing Common. This work will be done at the same



time as planned maintenance in the summer to minimise disruption and cost.

£1,500 to St Mary's church in Stelling Minnis for the car park and fencing,

£1,000 to Elham Village Hall towards a new dishwasher for the kitchen.

£1,000 to St Mary and St Radegund's church in Postling for tables and chairs.

£1,000 to Shepway Sports Trust towards the cost of a minibus fleet to get people across the district to sports facilities.

£665 to the KM Charity for their school road safety project in all the primary schools in Elham Valley.

£650 to Swingfield Parish Council for a defibrillator.

£635 towards the Keep Kent Clean campaign – extra cleaning and repair of signs.

£500 to the Shepway Brass Academy for instruments.

£500 to Selsted Schools Trust towards the cost of fencing their new playing field.

£500 to Folkestone Youth Project which also does youth work in Hawkinge and Lyminge for computer equipment.

£500 to St Nicholas church Newington for urgent repairs to their stone boundary wall.

£300 to Hawkinge Hurricanes for high visibility tabards for keep fit runners.

£250 to Swingfield Parish Council towards new Speedwatch Equipment for use in Densole and Hawkinge.

The KCC Member grant for 2018/19 will be £20,000 and I already have a queue of worthy projects but do please let me know if you have a local project which I can support.

**Susan Carey Kent County Councillor - [susan.carey@kent.gov.uk](mailto:susan.carey@kent.gov.uk) 01303 670561**

***Susan Carey, Member, Elham Valley, Kent County Council***

#### **8) PRE-PLANNING ENQUIRY WESTBURY HOUSE**

The prospective owner informed those present of her plans for the business use at Westbury House.

**9) ANY OTHER BUSINESS:** Postling Parish Council would like to thank Cllr Carey and Cllr Hollingsbee for their support over the past years.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm