

A virtual meeting of the Seal Parish Council was held on THURSDAY 10th September 2020 at 7.30pm

Present:

Mrs F Weston
Mr R Bourne
Mr C Tavaré
Mr T Martin
Mr C Haslam
Mr A Bulleid
Councillor R Hogarth
Councillor J Thornton
Councillor R Gough

Also present the Clerk

Apologises: Mr M Brown, Mr M Penn and Mr J Spencer

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed and signed.

Declaration of Interest - None

KCC Matters – Councillor Gough matters

New and high priority outstanding issues for the PC for discussion

Childsbridge Lane Railway Bridge incident – This is an important priority due to safety. KCC to look at the extension of speed limit through traffic counts. The Parish Council would like to take this forward but due to COVID-19 this is on hold until traffic returns to normal.

ACTION

**Pending CV-19
Traffic count**

Ongoing highway matters

A25 SID column needs to be reinstated; this is currently on hold due to COVID-19 as traffic counts are required.

Mr Bourne to provide SID data for Childsbridge Lane.

The road sign at One Tree Hill has been fixed.

Gulleys cleansed in Underriver House Road on 1st Sept, no defects found but last stretch of pipework not flowing properly and will be investigated further.

**Pending CV-19
Traffic count**

Highway Schemes

KCC have completed re-surfacing on the Tonbridge and Malling end of Bank Lane but they still need to be done on the Seal Parish end. This include surface repairs at the junction of Bank Lane and Mill Lane where the friable surface on a steep slope is dangerous, at Riverhill farm where accumulated debris from running water narrows the road on a blind bend, and on Mill Lane where a utility trench is eroding because of surface water.

Copse Bank/Ashplatt Footpath

The maintenance on Copse Bank footpath still needs attention. Kier will be looking into this in the next couple of weeks and this links with Trinity School work.

Bentleys Meadow

The Parish Council have applied for a cultivation licence which has been approved and expires on 1 August 2021 to maintain planters and home zone ground in between KCC work. Due to the current guidelines with COVID we cannot arrange volunteering at this present time.

RG

A25 temporary relaxation of HGV Vehicles

A resident reported a lot of traffic through the night on the A25 thought to be due to the relaxation of drivers' hours under COVID-19 but is ongoing. Councillor Gough to respond to a letter from Mr Brown on this but he is not sure there is much that can be addressed in terms of vehicle noise.

Strong views were expressed from Parish Councillors on the increasing volume of traffic on the A25. Mr Bullied mentioned that it is virtually grid locked due to the increase in vehicles and more people using their cars. Councillor Thornton mentioned that there is huge criticism coming regarding the lights at Trinity School and why this couldn't be completed in the Holidays before schools go

RG

back. This affects Stone Street, Childsbridge Lane and has a huge impact throughout the ward. Councillor Gough will seek to get that message across. Air quality in Seal is going through the roof and getting any positive proposals through from KCC appears very difficult.

Councillor Gough explained that due to COVID and government guidelines parents have been anxious whether buses will be running. Obviously, the current government guidelines are to only travel on buses if essential and where necessary to use cars. KCC received one quarter of applications and tried to communicate that they would ensure social distancing so that more services could be put in place. The numbers had gone up from 25% to a jump of 50% and then 63% on buses. KCC are trying to respond so that the numbers can increase on buses and he hopes this will continue to grow.

Other Matters Requiring Discussion and Action

Highway Improvement Plan

Mr Brown has changed the HIP and taken out all speed issues. There is now a separate SHIP Speed HIP. In the event of Mr Bineham leaving Councillor Gough will seek advice from Nicola Floodgate on who the Parish Council can discuss this with further.

Councillor Gough will see if he can use his connections with Network Rail to find out who the Parish Council can speak to about a footbridge. In house rail expert, Steven Gash, passenger side network has expertise around timetabling and has further contacts. Mr Haslam has photos of side bridges for railway bridges.

RG

Following a meeting with Sevenoaks Town Council it is clear that they too wish to see a reduction of the speed limit on the A25. There is more development and large numbers of children and young families walking along the road since the matter was last raised Councillor Gough recommended that our Chairman writes to KCC Chairman about this but it was a matter of keeping lobbying to get this change.

Traffic around the Fawke Common entrance to Knole Park

The Parish Council had a meeting with Hannah Key, CE at Knole for the National Trust and Linda Larter of STC on the ongoing matters with parking conditions around the surrounding area. The signs around St Julian area are working well and preventing cars from parking. Knole car park is pre-booked, and this has limited the cars queuing in Sevenoaks considerably. Their charges are comparative with the multi-storey car park in Sevenoaks. It was suggested a meeting should be arranged with Lord Sackville or Knole Estates on the ongoing matters with parking in the wider Parish..

Bridle Lane/Park Lane

It was agreed that double yellow lines were not an appropriate solution. Possibly writing No Parking is and this can be placed on the HIP.

CH

Park Lane

Park Lane, Column 30 is still ongoing, work is to be completed in due course to replace the column and groundworks.

Seal Recreation Ground

A need to replace the basketball/netball facility on the recreation ground led to a discussion about sports and activity provision on the ground. All were agreed that it would be good to review the options to explore if there is something that might satisfy the needs of young teenagers etc. It was agreed that the Clerk would ask Councillor Hogarth, who deals with open spaces in the District, for his view on how to move this forward. Local consultation and a view on what might be needed within the wider area including from schools would be information that would feed into this. Mr Tavare would continue to liaise as appropriate with Sport England.

Clerk

Seal Village

Pedestrian visibility at junction of A25 and School Lane. Crossing the road from the library side towards the village hall can be daunting as the vegetation blocks the view of cars turning into School Lane. The Parish Council will contact our contractor to cut back the shrubs by the library. The flower bed in School Lane belongs to KCC.

Clerk

Seal Allotments

The Parish Council has been asked whether we could repair the northern boundary of the Seal Village Allotments. This is the boundary which runs adjacent with Wibble Way footpath which runs to the recreation ground from Childsbridge Lane and carries on along the back of Zambra Way this is to secure their site from the footpath. The Parish Council are considering work to be done. SVA have had a quote for £1120 for 1.2m of chestnut paling the Parish Council are awaiting another quote as well.

Clerk

Website Accessibility

Mr Brown has prepared a draft of the website accessibility statement; we have had our site tested and minor amendments are required. We are looking for a website developer to upgrade our website or fix the site. Making small amendments to the site could cost around £500 plus. The clerk would investigate what other Parishes are doing and get quotes for a full upgrade to a more modern user-friendly site.

Clerk

ILCA Course – Clerks Training

The clerk proposes for additional 2 hours a week overtime to study for the 5 modules of training, which can take up to a year to study. The Parish Council agreed to pay 25 hrs for 3 months. The was proposed by Mr Bullied and seconded by Mr Michaelides and this was agreed unanimously.

Local Housing Needs

Mr Martin referred to the letter sent on 14th July by Mrs Weston and himself to the Chair of the Finance Committee at SDC, making the case for land behind Sealcroft Cottages to be developed only if for social housing. This had been circulated to Councillors at the time.

A reply had been received on 18th July from Councillor Dickins explaining that the Council is obliged to seek the best value for land to be disposed. A decision by SDC is awaited.

Mr Martin also referred to pre-application plans provided by the architects for the social housing scheme behind Mills Crescent. These had been circulated to Councillors at the time and comments requested. These were passed to the architects on 15th July, and a reply was received on 16th July explaining the materials to be used, parking and the play area.

Lockdown Larder

Lockdown Larder project are currently supporting 7 - 8 Seal households. So far, they have completed over 20 food shops for them at a total cost of just under £500, and they would be very grateful for any contribution that the parish council could make towards this. The Parish Council will discuss at the Finance meeting in October in the context of all the Parish Council's charitable giving for the year.

FREE ONLINE KALC & CPRE Kent Planning White Paper Information Event 11th September at 10.00am

11th September course was sold out the next event is on 18th September and any Councillor who would like to attend is to email the clerk.

Zion Street

A couple of residents have raised concerns about the appearance of Zion Street. Specifically, the concerns regarding the weeds and lack of street foliage/flowers. The Parish Council decision was that this is not a matter for Seal Parish Council.

Items for information only and updates if necessary**Seal Village Hall**

The Parish Council is supporting the Hall Committee to find a solution to reopen the Village Hall with new fresh ideas for the hall. Unfortunately, due to the recent government advice the proposed meeting to take place on Thursday 1 October at 7pm in the Village Hall will be cancelled and rearranged due to COVID-19.

FW/MB

Seal Recreation Ground

Seal Recreation Ground is one of the hotspots for Nitrous Oxide and Police will be keeping a close eye on the area. Mr Haslam also reported Childsbridge Lane had also Nitrous Oxide found in the area. Please report to the Community Safety Unit and provide evidence.

Community Asset

Mr Spencer is dealing with the village hall application.

Verge Cutting and Wildflower

This project is currently on hold due to COVID-19. The Licence has been received and expires May 2021. The site in Underriver will have strict rules which apply to the work party on the road of which all volunteers will be informed. We could find more verges and liaise with KCC on cutting regime. Mr Tavare to update further.

Councillor Vacancy – Seal Ward

At present we have an opportunity to become a parish councillor and have two vacancies available. If you are interested in becoming a parish councillor, please contact the Clerk.

Seal Spring Clean

Due to COVID-19 this is cancelled and to be rearranged.

Greensand Project – Bitchet Common

A walk organised at Bitchet Common will be arranged in the spring subject the COVID-19 restrictions at the time.

Parish Bus Shelter Grant Application for the financial year 2020/21

Kent County Council (KCC) runs a Parish Bus Stop Shelter Grant (PBSSG) scheme. Councillors had been asked to bring any proposals for funding to the meeting and there were none to report at the last meeting. It was noted that the bus stop on the A25 was full of leaves and whether the Parish Council volunteers could clear them up.

Planning

The Council to agree the Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings on 9th and 27 July and 24th August 2020. Mr Michaelides proposed and Mrs Weston seconded and this was agreed unanimously.

The Council to ratify the responses to planning application consultations submitted after these meetings. Mr Tavare proposed and Mr Bourne seconded and this was agreed unanimously.

There will be a short meeting of the Planning Committee after the Council Meeting for which an agenda will be circulated.

Accounts and cheques

Cheques signed August 2020

005961	Mrs C Boland	£86.03	Signs, Stationery and PPE
005962	Kent County Council		Pension Fund
005963	Mrs C Boland	£53.39	Broadband and Zoom Subscription
005964	Inland Revenue		Deductions
005965	Mrs C Boland		Salary
005966	Mrs C Farrow-Ward		Salary
005967	Richard Abel Landscapes	£812.70	Mowing
005968	Mr Brown	£60.00	Website Accessibility Course
005969	Spy Alarms Limited	342.00	Emergency Lighting Repair
005970	Siemens Financial Services Limited	£117.60	Photocopier Rental
005971	Action with Communities in Rural Kent	£80.00	Membership
005972	Kent County Council	£210.15	Cleaning Materials
005973	Castle Water	£2,620.46	7 Month period
005974	Contract Signs Systems	£1,668.12	Signs
005975	Sevenoaks District Council	£271.10	Refuse, Dogs Bins and Sacks
005976	Playsafety Limited	£189.60	Playground Inspection
005977	Mr R Crouch	£693.28	Fencing
005978	UK Power Networks	£2,638.80	Streetlights Groundwork

Cheques signed September 2020

005979	Sevenoaks District Council	£65.60	Refuse Collection
005980	Richard Abel Landscapes	£319.27	Mowing
005981	K C Davies Limited	£45.00	Window Cleaning
005982	Mr A McFadyen	£167.00	Plumbing
005983	Mrs C Farrow-Ward		Salary
005984	Mrs C Boland		Salary
005985	Inland Revenue		Deductions
005986	Mrs C Boland	£53.39	Broadband and Zoom
005987	Kent County Council		Pension Fund

AOB

Mr James Boland has been appointed holiday caretaker.

Seal Football have asked for a reduction in costs for this season due to the play cut short last season. The Parish Council has agreed for a reduction of one quarter off the price for this year's season.

A meeting was organised between Kier and Mrs Stapley on the condition of the pathway near the recycling area. The path is in poor condition and has washed away, it was agreed that they would lay tarmac in this area. They will also tidy up the debris by the chestnut tree and seed it.

The Parish Council agreed that Sevenoaks Juniors could use the senior pitches on Sundays on a temporary basis from September to December.

The Parish Council will not give permission for anyone to use Metal Detectors in Seal Recreation Ground as this causes lots of holes and can be dangerous for anyone walking or playing in the field.

Matters for Information Only

Please see website for further information on health advice, financial advice for residents and waste and recycling services and residents who are vulnerable <https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/info/20069142/>

KCC advice on Coronavirus updates

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/health/coronavirus>

Main source of advice for Coronavirus

www.gov.uk/coronavirus

A reminder to report all Highway issues direct to KCC 03000 41 81 81

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem> –

A reminder to report problems on PROW to 03000 41 7171 8am-8pm Mon-Friday.

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/waste-planning-and-land/public-rights-of-way/report-a-problem-on-a-right-of>

Please report street light outages in Seal (other than on the A25) to the Parish Council.

Meeting closed at 9.30pm

The meeting was closed for the Clerks Salary Review which was accepted and approved.

Planning meeting followed