

MINUTES OF WHATLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 20th MARCH 2025 IN THE VILLAGE HALL FOLLOWING THE PARISH ASSMBLY WHICH STARTED AT 7 PM

PRESENT:- Councillor Fisher in the Chair

Councillors: Clarkson, Davis, Sullivan and White

District Councillor Burton, District and County Councillor Field

10 Members of Public

OPEN SESSION / LATE ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Cllr. Field reported that ESCC would be raising their council tax by 4.99% for the 25-26 year. (notes on how ESCC spend their budget included with item 12e)

Jeffrey Bridges raised the issue of “temporary” fixes on potholes and fixes where other road defects in the immediate vicinity were ignored.

The Royal Oak had now reopened and the tenancy had been taken over by someone called Del who has 3 other tenancies in Herne Bay. It was likely that he would arrange a manager to run the pub. Although the short-term future of the pub seems secure it may be necessary in the long-term for the community to acquire the pub under a Community Asset Transfer. Cllr. Fisher expressed a preference for the community to lead this supported by the council. In the meantime, a check was required to ensure that the Royal Oak had been registered as a community asset. *Action: Clerk to research successful applications for assets of community value (ACVs) locally as the pub is not currently registered.*

1) APOLOGIES None

2) DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Cllrs. Sullivan and Davis declared a non-pecuniary interest in the grant application for Community Connectors (Item 6a) and would not vote.

3) MINUTES. Minutes of the council meeting held on the 16th January 2025 (previously circulated) were agreed by council and signed by the chair.

4) MATTERS ARISING

a) Update on the Royal Oak – addressed in open session above

b) Large Leylandii trees at Woodman’s Oak (incorrectly referenced as Lime trees in January minutes). Cllr Sullivan was still chasing RDC over the report.

c) Defibrillator at Royal Oak. Cllr Clarkson had tested the machine and it was operating correctly. An agreement would be required with the new tenant of the pub as the electricity supply is sourced from there. The light on the machine is on full time and although a sensor could be installed, this may negate the warranty. *Action: Clerk to liaise with supplier regarding warranty issue and Cllr Clarkson to arrange fitting of sensor if acceptable to supplier.*

5) CORRESPONDENCE None.

6) GRANT REQUESTS.

a) An application by Community Connectors for £250 was approved by a quorum of 3 Cllrs.

b) An application by the PCC for £300 was approved.

7) PARCELS OF LAND UNDER ESCC AND RDC OWNERSHIP. Further investigation was agreed. *Action: Clerk to contact RDC Estates officer.*

Minutes agreed by Council and signed as a true record by on

8) PERMANENT TRIBUTE TO VALERIE BENNETT MBE.

The church warden pointed out that the gate into the church already bore a commemoration. Councillors also agreed a civic recognition of parishioner John Tunstall's 100th birthday. Additional ideas for Valerie's memorial included the following:

- Renovation of the spring and enclosure outside the village hall with a plaque there.
- Replacement bench outside the village hall with a plaque.
- An internal plaque (blue plaque style) within the village hall on the horizontal ceiling section facing the stage.

Actions: 1) Cllr White to consult the Village Hall committee on the proposals. 2) Cllr Clarkson would investigate the flow of the spring and determine a costing for the stone and wooden surround to be refurbished. 3) Chair would liaise with Cllr Sullivan regarding costings for ceramic plaques (thought to be between £100 and £200), both for Valerie and John Tunstall. 4) Clerk to investigate costings for a replacement bench (plus fitting).

9) PLANNING

The following decisions by RDC were noted:

- a) RR/2024/1940/P Wood's End Cottage TN33 OND. Agricultural Building - granted
- b) RR/2024/2116/TN/DN Footland Wood B2089. Transmission Dish. Permitted development refused.
- c) APP/U1430/W/24/3352916. Hillside Nursery, Woodmans Green Rd. 5 dwellings Outline permission dismissed.
- d) RR/2025/69 Leeford Place Provision of staff accommodation. Granted

10) FINANCES

Direct debits

Hugo Fox. Silver Service quarterly fee Jan-Mar	£71.97
Fasthosts Email Fee Jan-Mar inclusive 3 months @ 2.88 p.c.m.	£ 8.64
H.P. Instant Ink- Photocopying Jan-Mar inclusive	£ 16.47
Cheque for Locum Clerk Phil Burgess (fees to date)	£1900.60
All agreed and signed	

11) BUDGET PROGRESS. Figures were noted.**12) MINOR MATTERS.** Noted as below. *Please note additional item f.*

- a) A21 closure to north of Whatlington overnight 22-23 March (Scotney to Flimwell).
- b) Devolution Consultation. To note the invitation to contribute from RDC.
- c) Devolution Consultation. To note the invitation to contribute to a national consultation.
- d) To note NALC response to consultation regarding the Royal Mail Universal Service Obligation.
- e) ESCC newsletter – details of services covered by council tax.
- f) Cllr Field advised that Battle High Street would be closed overnight (7pm to 6am) between the 7th and 15th of April. Businesses would be open as normal.

13) NEW CLERK. Tracy Dixon was introduced to the meeting and would take over the position from 1st April.

14) **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS NOTIFIED TO THE CHAIRMAN.** None.

15) **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday May 15th 2025.

The meeting closed at 8.20 p.m.

Minutes remain in draft format until approved at the next Meeting of the Council