

PLUCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 5th September 2023 at 7.30 pm in Pluckley Village Hall

Present : Cllrs Taylor (in the Chair), Breach, Washer, Cahill & Dilley

In attendance : Mr. G Eaton, Clerk to the Council, ABC Cllr Bell, Peter New Neighbourhood Watch, and five members of the public

Action by:

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Albon (nee Sargent)

2 Declarations of Cllrs interests in items on the Agenda

There were no declarations of Cllrs interests in items on the Agenda

3 Minutes of the last Meeting & Matters arising

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 4th July 2023 were amended and approved

4 Public discussion and Parishioners questions

There was a discussion regarding planning application 2023/1338, Accord House, Lambden Road, and a number of objections and concerns were considered

There was a discussion regarding planning application 2023/1298, Starvenden, Station Road. The applicant explained the proposed works and a general discussion followed

Peter New, Neighbourhood Watch, spoke to his monthly report which had been circulated by email and there was a brief discussion

5 ABC Cllr Bell's report

ABC Cllr Bell presented her report -

1/ ABC has welcomed the announcement by the Government that it intends to legislate in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill to make Natural England's rules on nutrient pollution advisory rather than mandatory, and that funding will be available to help tackle pollution in waterways. Building much needed homes in the borough has been held up over the last 3 years by the ongoing deterioration of lakes in the Stodmarsh nature reserve. We await further details of the proposals but we hope these measures will help address the issue and get our Local Plan back on track

2/ Work has started on the new Local Plan to 2040. A new evidence base is being prepared to help shape the policies that will be in the plan and a Call for Sites will be issued very shortly

3/ An online portal called 'MyAshford' has been launched to give residents the ability to view multiple council services in one place, including recycling and waste collection dates, council tax and business rates accounts, look up rent balance and report repairs, find your local Councillor and their contact details, information about local GP surgeries, pharmacies and dentists as well as primary and secondary schools

4/ ABC is consulting on a proposed move from the Civic Centre in Tannery Lane to International House, opposite Ashford International Station. Hybrid working has reduced the need for so much office space to deliver council services. Reducing the size of office space will save money and help maintain the council's financial position. The council owns International House

6 Planning & Enforcement

New Planning applications

2023/1338 – single storey rear extension and rear garden room
Accord House, Lambden Road, TN27 0RB

The Parish Council objects to both the garden room and the proposed extension to the property. In our opinion the garden room is excessively large and high for the plot and neighbourhood. At 4.5m high it seems far beyond what is traditionally accepted for a garden room and it appears excessively large for the plot hence suggesting over development. We are also concerned about the impact the proposed skylights will have on dark skies - something we are keen to protect and enhance – and we are aware of a colony of bats living in the immediate vicinity. We note that neighbours have objected and cited planning regulations which they believe the development would contravene and we would ask ABC to consider the points they make as well as the potential loss of amenity value they may suffer given the size and scale of the proposed garden room. We are also concerned at the impact that the "single" storey extension will have on the amenity value of Victoria cottages and it is our impression that the way the proposed new roofline is configured means the cottages will lose light. It also appears that the way windows are being proposed for the extension will mean the cottages are overlooked. We would ask ABC to look at both the roofline and the proposed inclusion of additional windows and perhaps consider the impact this will have on the neighbouring cottages

2023/1507 - variation of conditions 1 (Storage of refuse and material for recycling), 5 (Vehicle parking facilities), 6 (Bicycle storage) & 9 (Approved Plans and documents) of planning permission 17/00331/AS for "Reserved matters application for details of layout, scale, landscaping and appearance, and revision to approved access arrangement, pursuant to outline permission granted under 14/01116/AS"; to allow for revisions to plot 8 to include alterations and enlargement to dwelling, changes to building height, elevations and floor plans

Pluckley Brickworks, Station Road

While the Parish Council doesn't have any objections to the reconfiguration and internal changes to the property, we do object to the addition of an upper/additional floor. When the brickworks development was approved it was on the basis that it would be well screened and not visible from other parts of the village. This is no longer the case and adding an additional floor to an already large dwelling will make the development even more visible, prominent and detract from the long views enjoyed in the surrounding area. The development is already visible from footpaths (AW149) and this situation will only worsen as the trees lose their leaves and a property this high will be clearly visible and intrusive. In addition, while other houses in the development might not yet be occupied, we are concerned that the additional floor will provide sight lines into neighbouring properties and impact on the residential amenity they enjoy

2023/1298 – erection of two storey rear extension with balcony, existing gable walls glazed, erection of detached garage with office space above following demolition of existing garage
Starvenden, Station Road, TN27 0QX

The proposed development to Starvenden is complicated and represents the further enlargement of what was originally a small bungalow. We are not able to ascertain the percentage by which the original property has been increased (or the percentage increase this new development would represent) but are concerned by the scale of the development. We are also concerned by the use of a flat roof in the proposal which will be more visible and intrusive in an area, Malmains Road, that we have specifically sought to preserve in the Neighbourhood plan and subsequent revision. Our objection to the flat roof seems to be in line with ABC's own guidance on the use of these (see your 2004 SPG10) and the 2030 Plan seems to suggest that they are not appropriate for two storey extensions in sensitive/conservation areas. We are also concerned about the size and scale of the proposed new garage and office. It looks as though the original garage is being incorporated into the proposed development and being replaced by a garage/office building on the perimeter of the plot which is 4.6m high. We feel that this will be intrusive and visible

7 Finance Matters & Accounts for payment

The following accounts were approved for payment:

	£
J Johns, recreation ground tidying	45.00
D Heasman, street cleaning	90.00
EDF Energy, electricity in pavilion	141.76
Napier Technical Services, PAT testing in pavilion	40.00
Playsafety, play park annual inspection	111.00

Print Junction, printing Pluckley Post	234.75
D Breach, distributing Pluckley Post	140.00
Arkass, door repair at pavilion	222.00

The Clerk's salary/expenses of £548.54, paid by monthly Standing Order was noted and approved

Internal Audit Report 2022/2023

There was a general discussion regarding the Internal Audit Report 2022/2023 and the 4 medium risks in particular. The auditor's findings were noted. It was agreed that the July Minutes should be posted on the website in draft form to be confirmed at the September Meeting

Clerk

Other Finance Matters

It was agreed to make a donation of £100 to Tim Moreton for maintaining the planters at the Station

Clerk

8 Communications

There was a discussion about the Pluckley Post. Cllr Taylor thanked all those involved in its production. There was a brief discussion regarding the inclusion of advertising for local businesses/tradesmen or having some form of 'approved list' of suppliers

9 Traffic & Highways

There was a brief discussion regarding the Public Meeting to be held on Thursday 7th September to consider the Transport Plan and the Chambers Green area in particular and parking issues

10 Pluckley Station

There was a brief discussion regarding Pluckley Station and it was confirmed that it was not a listed building. Cllr Washer kindly offered to investigate whether it might be possible to have it listed

Cllr Washer

11 Recreation Sport & Leisure

There was a discussion regarding the recent RoSPA report which highlighted the poor state of repair of much of the equipment. To be considered further at the October 2023 Meeting

12 AOB and items for future consideration

Cllr Taylor updated on progress with the new Village Noticeboard which would be installed in The Street

It was agreed that the 'Carols around the Tree' would take place on Friday 8th December at 6.00 pm. As Cllr Taylor would be away a volunteer was sought to order the Tree and make all the necessary arrangements. Cllrs Washer & Cahill kindly offered to assist

13 Date of next Meeting

It was agreed that the next Meeting would be held on Tuesday 3rd October 2023 at 7.30 pm at Pluckley Village Hall

There being no other business the Meeting closed at 9.20 pm