

MINUTES of a Meeting of Tatsfield Parish Council held on the 11th September 2023 in the Meeting Room, Aileen McHugo Building, Westmore Green, Tatsfield TN16 2AG commencing at 8.00 p.m.

Present: Ms Kim Jennings (in the chair)
Mr David Pinchin Mr Jason Syrett Mr Martin Elmer Mr Dave Mitchell Mr Simon Cook
Mr Andrew Moore

In Attendance: Samantha Head (Clerk)

And 10 parishioners and PCSO Stuart Wren and PCSO Amy Ord

The meeting commenced at 8.01 pm

1. APOLOGIES

None

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (relating to items on the agenda)

3839/0923 Jason Syrett declared an interest in item 11a – Tatsfield Green, Boundary Dispute. He took no part in the discussion or decision on this item.

3. Approve and sign the MINUTES of the previous meeting held on 7th August 2023

3840/0923 It was resolved that the minutes reflected a true and accurate record of the meeting held on 7th August 2023. They were duly signed by the Chair.

At this point in the meeting, item 10g, Police report, was brought forward to enable PCSOs Wren and Ord to leave the meeting early. The original order of the agenda items is maintained here for ease of reference with the published agenda.

4. Receive and accept the MINUTES of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meeting held on 16th November 2022

3841/0923 It was resolved to receive the minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meeting held on 16th November 2022.

5. Public Participation

- A local resident noted that the ASB at the MUGA had improved. There were still a couple of incidences but not at the same frequency. There is sometimes a smell of marijuana being smoked. Another resident queried if it was just cannabis being smoked or were other drugs being used. Confirmed cannabis only.

6. Officer's report

- Unity Trust Bank had notified that there had been an interest rate increase to 5.25% (effective 4th August 2023).
- Due to the insurance policy being renewed, the Clerk had been able to add the mower at no additional increase on the premium.
- The VHMC had asked if the legionella monitors for the AMB would be able to help out carrying out monitoring at the VH.

7. PLANNING:

(a) Planning Team for September: Jason Syrett and David Pinchin

3842/0923 It was resolved that the planning team for September would be Jason Syrett and David Pinchin.

(b) To determine the Parish Council's position on Appendix A:

TA/2023/917/NH Palfreys, Ricketts Hill Road, Tatsfield TN16 2NA

Demolition of an existing smaller rear extension, and a small rear conservatory. Erection of a single storey rear extension which would extend beyond the rear wall of the original house by 6 metres, for which the maximum height would be 3.351 metres, and for which the height of the eaves would be 2.869 metres. (Notification of a Proposed Larger Home extension)

Tatsfield Parish Council objected to a previous application in June 2023 which added around 70% volume to the house – this was then granted permission. This is now for a further large rear extension to the ground floor.

'Prior Approval will not be required' was issued in a decision notice by TDC on 08 September 2023.

3843/0923 Comment: No action – TDC have already issued their decision.

TA/2023/962 The Beeches, Old Lane, Tatsfield TN16 2LH

Erection of an open car port.

Plans for a three-sided (one side open) car port to this house on Old Lane. It is tucked back from the road frontage behind existing trees/shrubs.

3844/0923 Comment: No objection

TA/2023/938 The Grasshopper Inn, Westerham Road, Tatsfield TN16 2EU

Demolition of the existing building and erection of a new 64-bedroom care home.

This proposal is to demolish the Grasshopper pub on the A25 and replace it with a new building proving a care home. The location and height is broadly similar to the existing though the footprint is larger, extended to the east. The design is referred to as contemporary with white render, zinc, bronze panels and some reclaimed stone from the old building. Currently, there is a part-built steel frame and a churned-up car park. Some objections have already been registered, including one from the SCC AONB officer. Whilst it is positive that something is happening to the site, there are many issues that need to be addressed before the PC would be prepared to remove its objection.

The Chair then invited several parishioners to speak as they wished to express their concerns over the application. The following comments were made:

- No provision for staff parking.
- The application states that this is medium sized care home. However, the largest care home in the country has 77 beds and an average sized care home is 31 beds. That would make this proposal fit the large care home category, at more than double the average.
- There are concerns for road safety, staff parking, noise and disturbance.
- It contravenes policy DR7 and harms the amenity of neighbouring properties.
- A sensible solution to mitigate the harm to the amenity of neighbouring properties would be to reverse the east and west wing, thus moving the 'noisy' services further away from the neighbours.
- Bats have been seen in the property as recently as one week ago.
- A tasteful nearby development is Moorhouse Farm (opposite The Grasshopper Inn).
- The suggestion by the applicant for staff to use public transport is not practical as the bus service is very infrequent.
- Could an operating schedule be imposed re noise disturbances, deliveries etc?

3845/0923 Comment:

Tatsfield Parish Council OBJECT to this application.

- Tatsfield Parish Council are pleased to see that finally something positive will happen at the Grasshopper Inn site which has fallen into a poor state of disrepair with failed incomplete previous extensions/alterations over recent years. However, the Parish Council object to this application and raise the following considerations which need to be addressed before further consideration:
- The site has a long history and is located in the Surrey Hills AONB. Though unlisted, the Inn dates back to 1271 with history linking it to the Titsey Estate. In the early 1950s the Grasshopper Inn was restored and extended using old material including Oak panelling and wrought iron from the Houses of Parliament and the vestry doors from Coventry Cathedral, which can be found among the leadlight windows and beamed ceilings of the Tudor Ballroom. It is a significant shame that this long rich history and character will be lost.
- We do not object to the principle of replacement of the existing use with a care home use. This would seem reasonable now looking at the poor state of the site. However, in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (a nationally protected landscape setting), replacing a character building of local interest and in a prominent location adjacent to the old market town of Westerham, the replacement building MUST be of outstanding design and reflect local distinctiveness. It should also set benchmarks in terms of good urban design, site planning, responsiveness to

surrounding neighbours and high levels of sustainability to be approved. The proposed design fails in the following areas:

- There is a lack of commitment to sustainable design and renewable energy. The scheme should submit an Environmental Performance Statement demonstrating how it will use low energy design and produce a minimum of 10% renewable energy on site through renewable sources (e.g., PV panels). This is a requirement of TDC Core Strategy Policy CSP14. Though this is hinted at in the submitted Energy and Sustainability Statement, no commitment is made and no PV panels are shown on the drawings.
- The proposal represents poor design quality/materials/detailing for a building in an AONB and is significantly inferior to the original public house. The use of white render and very shallow window reveal depths will deliver a building that will weather very badly (particularly with its exposure to the North Downs and the number of mature trees around it) and does not reflect local distinctiveness. The elevations lack any character and do not have good robust detailing. We would like to see the design reconsidered with high quality brickwork character detailing, deeper window reveals and good architectural articulation – as an example of another project with the similar use see here: <https://www.prp-co.uk/projects/later-living-and-care/new-lodge-556>
- The proposed building is around 2m taller than the existing and will affect overshadowing of the neighbouring house.
- The proposal is not compliant with TDC Policy DP7 (Design of Development): *'The proposal respects and contributes to the distinctive character, appearance and amenity of the area in which it is located'*.
- The proposal also conflicts with Surrey Hills AONB Management Plan Policy P3 which reads: *"Development proposals will be required to be of a high-quality design, respecting local distinctiveness and complementary in form, setting, and scale with their surroundings, and should take any opportunities to enhance their setting."*
- The proposal further conflicts with policy P2 of the Surrey Hills AONB Management Plan which sets out the following requirements: *"Development will respect the special landscape character of the locality, giving particular attention to potential impacts on ridgelines, public views and tranquillity. The proposed use and colour of external building materials will be strictly controlled to harmonize within their related landscape and particularly to 2 avoid buildings being incongruous. In remoter locations, with darker skies, development proposals causing light pollution will be resisted."*
- The design has located the servicing access/yard next to adjoining residential neighbours and will cause disruption to them with deliveries and collections of refuse. The service yard also appears to be of insufficient size to manoeuvre service vehicles in and out in forward gear. On the existing building, servicing was undertaken to the east/rear away from existing neighbours. This should be relocated to a different part of the site away from the neighbours' boundary. The site should be re-planned to reduce the dominance of the servicing area and the car parking area on the street scene – additional tree planting and hedge planting to minimise visibility of these.
- The application has not defined an area or number of spaces for staff car parking. Due to very poor public transport accessibility, it is inevitable that many staff will drive to the home.
- A Transport Assessment needs to be produced setting out the provision of staff and visitor parking, number of vehicle trips and setting out times for deliveries and refuse collection.
- A mechanical noise and plant filtration statement should be submitted to demonstrate how the noise and smells from what will be commercial scale kitchen will be mitigated so as not to affect neighbours. The site is of ample size for this to be addressed through good design. Refer to TDC Policy DP7, Safeguarding Amenity.
- A condition should be agreed requiring the submission of the design of external lighting. We would ask that any necessary external lighting is designed to protect wildlife and adjacent residential amenity. Refer to TDC Policy DP7, Safeguarding Amenity.
- An area of the site (formerly part of the car park area) has been left outside of this application and outlined in blue. This should be brought within this application and landscaped as a wooded/garden area for residents to increase biodiversity net gain and protect the openness of the Green Belt. It should not be left as car park/tarmac and must not be considered as a potential future development site. Further development must not be supported on this land and therefore appropriate landscaping proposals should be submitted by the owners with any application for redevelopment.

- Adjacent neighbours are aware of the presence of bats at the property and these have been seen even in the past week. They have advised that the submitted survey is not representative of the situation on site and should be reviewed as to whether the survey was taken under the right conditions.

*The Clerk would also request Martin Allen to call the application in should it look as though it would be approved at delegated level. The Clerk would also forward a copy of the PC's comment to Westerham Town Council.

3846/0923 The Clerk was requested to inform Tandridge Planning Department of the Council's decisions.

8. Finance:

(a) Finance Team for September: Jason Syrett and David Pinchin

3847/0923 It was resolved that the Finance Team for September would be Jason Syrett and David Pinchin.

(b) Authorise payments (including authorisation of Internet banking) detailed in Appendix B

3848/0923 Members approved the Clerk's request. Items on Appendix B were duly approved. Payments and supporting invoices were checked and signed by members of the Finance Team for September.

9. Notified Items

(a) Furze Corner

TDC has sent over a draft lease. The PC is seeking a legal representative to read through the draft. Jason Syrett had spoken to the PFA who confirmed that they were still paying the water rates and electricity. Any balance remaining will be donated to the PC towards the maintenance costs of the site.

(b) Speedwatch

This item was discussed under item 9c.

(c) Tatsfield Parish Council Risk Assessments and report

The risk assessments were carried out on 14th August. There is a number of actions arising from the risk assessment:

VH, AMB, MUGA – action required to request police to redo signs saying car park is monitored.

Continue with redecoration of AMB and finish the fire risk assessment actions.

Roads – old bus shelter needs cleaning.

Speedwatch volunteers? This is not a PC initiative but run independently by a group of volunteers. There was an active Speedwatch but the organiser has moved away from the village and there are not enough volunteers to run sessions. The conclusion would be to not proceed with Speedwatch but look into the possibility of extending the speed humps in the village centre. It was suggested that the PC approaches Becky Rush. The two VAS had recorded 19313 activations (VH side) and 11575 activations (pond side) in a five-week period leading up to 11th July. This should be useful material to argue for speed hump extensions.

Tatsfield Green – action fallen branch – to be cleared.

Woodlands – no action at present.

Proposal to add an ASB page to the RA. To be reviewed at the October meeting.

(d) Local Government Boundary Commission for England – Surrey consultation

The PC had been notified that the consultation had launched. It appeared that none of the proposals would affect Tatsfield. No further action.

(e) Remembrance Service

It was proposed this would be held on Saturday 11th September. Kim Jennings confirmed that St Mary's would provide a representative to speak at the service. Jason Syrett had contacted the Scouts and Cadets and would be operating the sound system at the service. Martin Elmer would be designing the order of service. Andy Moore would be creating posters for the A boards and Tatsfield Talk. Kim Jennings would contact wreath layers but would be limiting this to village groups only. Ian Hayman had offered to bring chairs and barriers to the village centre. Paul Stainer would be giving the reading. Ian Hayman and TIB volunteers would be dealing with traffic management. Andy Moore to ask the new TPS headteacher to attend. Simon Cook to ask for a flag bearer.

3849/0923 Members approved all the above proposals.

(f) Christmas Lights service

Kim Jennings had held a meeting with Ian Hayman and Tina from The Ship. It was proposed that this service would move into The Ship garden. The proposal would be to have a Christmas lights switch on earlier in December.

3850/0923 Members approved the above proposals.

(g) SALC Chairmans' meeting

David Pinchin gave the following report:

I attended a remote Chairs Forum of the Surrey ALC on 21 June. Current Chair of SALC is Christine Howard and CEO Ann Bott.

New strategic plan for the county being led by Sally Harman, Chief County Officer and consultant

David Carden. Matters discussed included:

1. Developing a Towns Approach across the county to obtain better collaboration between districts and parishes, also residents' groups. Some towns already started including Caterham and Redhill. Objectives of the Towns Partnerships to provide leadership and to work with all local partners to improve services.
2. SALC established a new Parishes Highways Working Group. Several PCs have already met with Surrey Highways to hopefully improve relationships with County Highways Officers who currently have a poor reputation for engagement with Parishes and giving little feedback. Lots of comments about lack of consultation about diversions/alternative routes for road works etc and bad timing. General agreement they should consult with Parishes more.
3. Recent local elections, some really unpleasant campaigns, at least 5 clerks lost as a result.
4. Long discussion about the importance of new councillor training, apparently some don't want it and some don't think they need it. Need to understand respective roles, especially the clerk. Bespoke training available for individual councils or even as a cluster, and can be done on-line.
5. Negotiations on-going with NALC about the possibility of 'remote' Zoom-type meetings being allowed as during COVID.
6. Climate change contingency planning, more emergencies these days, Parishes encouraged to 'Be Prepared' for flooding, storm damage, extreme weather etc. All should have emergency plans with contact lists and available in hard copy.
7. Discussion about speed limits and the '20s Plenty' Campaign. Reminder that whatever we may think about speed limits, the PC is not a campaign group and should not contribute as some have done apparently. Any councillor joining such a group must declare an interest. Working with Campaign Groups to be a topic of the next forum meeting.

(h) SALC AGM voting approval

3851/0923 Members approved the Clerk to vote at the SALC AGM.

(i) Airspace Change Proposal Consultation for 21 RNAV ACP ACP-2019-86

David Pinchin gave an update on this consultation. This was for the implementation of a modern instrument approach procedure to replace the old one. There is no suggestion of changes in approach. David Pinchin offered to speak to Colin Hitchens and report back to the PC.

10. Reports from County Councillor, District Councillor, Village Organisations and External Organisations

a) County Councillor

Becky Rush had sent her apologies and no report was given.

b) District Councillor

Martin Allen was not at the meeting and there was no report.

c) Neighbourhood Plan

Jason Syrett gave the following update: there had been lots of comments from TDC. These were under review.

d) Fairtrade

Simon Cook gave the following report:

Simon Cook attended the above meeting on 14th August as the Parish Council Representative. The following items were discussed.

Renewed Status for the Village: It was confirmed that the Fairtrade status has been renewed until June 2026. The certificate is displayed in the village hall.

Finance: A copy of the finance report was read.

12 Month Plan: The group have a five-point 12-month plan to work towards, details below:

1. Boosting Fairtrade. Encouraging more people to choose Fairtrade products.
2. Connecting Fairtrade. Connecting with other groups, activists and businesses.
3. Fairtrade Changemakers. Growing political support for Fairtrade in our local area.
4. Fairtrade Ambassadors. Deepening our own and others understanding of why fairer trade is needed to take on the climate crisis, address the legacy of colonialism and build a fairer future.
5. Fairtrade Influencers. Growing support for fairer trade in the digital space using social media to reach even more people.

Social Media: The above are what the group are looking to focus on over the next three years and are looking to increase their profile by more use of the following social media platforms:

X (formally Twitter): @TatsfieldFT

Facebook: Tatsfield Fairtrade

Instagram: tatsfield_fairtrade

Fairtrade National Fortnight 2024: The Foundation have decided to shift the national Fortnight to 2024 September 9 – September 22 2024. This is to allow enough planning time for the big 30 year celebrations. Theme to be announced shortly at the end of August 2023.

Date for next Tea Tent: Saturday 7 October meeting at 9am.

Influence in the Village: There will be an increase in the amount of Fairtrade products in Sheree's and the group will also be approaching the Club and the Ship to see if there is any potential there.

It was agreed that Barbara would contact Louise Knock at Tatsfield School to ask when she would like to hold a FT event in the coming academic year. Hilary agreed to welcome the new headteacher Mrs Jewett. Hilary H agreed that the group wish to run a village event at the same time as the school's event. We await their decision and aim to decide on plans at the next meeting.

Next Meeting Tuesday 14 November at 7pm.

e) Airport

David Pinchin gave the following report:

The Airport Consultative Committee met on 27th July.

A significant proportion of the meeting was taken up by a discussion about the Committee's constitution, the final outcome of which was to defer consideration of it until a further revised draft was prepared by the airport for the next meeting in October. The main issue of concern was getting the balance of membership right including adequate community representation from parts of the Borough of Bromley not currently represented but without favouring any one particular organisation including Bromley Borough itself as the airport's landlord.

The Noise and Safety Sub Committee reported on complaints received during the second quarter of 2023 and specifically in relation to Tatsfield, there were only three complaints received from the village. One of these turned out to be a compliant flight, one received a first infringement minor occurrence warning and one was still being investigated. So, the number of complaints from the village was now reassuringly very low. However, there were also six auto-detected track violations, two of which resulted in first occurrence minor warnings. There is little doubt that our negotiations with the airport have improved adherence to the local NSA and, as observed by the CEO, the preferred route just south of the village is now being more consistently observed. However, the CEO is now also 'committed' to implementing a more formal amendment to the current NSA slightly further south of the village centre for which Martin and I have been pressing for a long time. That is really good news

Overall, the airport continues to perform well, it attracts a lot of new business and is a major employer in the area. The Landing Hotel has established an excellent reputation locally, occupancy levels already exceeding 70%.

f) VHMC

There was no formal report.

A new secretary had been appointed: Peter Greenwood. The VHMC had chased the PC re the weeds outside the VH. The clerk had notified the VHMC earlier in the summer that that these would be removed before the end of the summer holidays and this had been actioned. The Clerk had written to the VHMC Chair to request that the unused / broken toys piled up next to the green metal storage shed been removed.

g) Police

PCSO Stuart Wren and PCSO Amy Ord attended the meeting. PCSO Wren gave the following updates:

Crime figures for August: 14 incidences, including x1 theft of a bicycle and 1x RTC. The rest include several ASB – trespass on field behind school, 2x youths on Westmore Green, 1x burglary (complaint not official report), 1x report of a suspicious vehicle, x3 missing children (from a garden, found shortly after). Circa. 120 calls in relation to Clacket Lane MSA. Plus, 1x report of a cat being shot with a pellet gun.

There have been reports of youths with catapults which are categorised as offensive weapons and all incidences should be reported.

Key points: report any suspicious activity via 101, online or Facebook (best option). Photos, names, descriptions all help with intelligence gathering.

The police have been patrolling in cars.

The PC raised the issue of drug dealing in the village centre, deals being made in the car park of The Bakery and drugs left in the bookshare. Cases have been reported in recent days. The Police agreed to look into this and would appreciate any further details being passed along.

The Chairman thanked PCSOs Wren and Ord for attending and providing lots of useful information.

11. Parish Council Land/Property

a) Tatsfield Green

- Boundary Dispute (Under Part 2)
There was no update.

b) Westmore Green

- Playground project – Kim Jennings offered thanks to Dave Mitchell for all his work in helping install the new fencing. Kim Jennings and Ian Hayman had been to purchase hedging, trees and plants for the area and they would be delivered on 6th October. She asked for volunteers for a work party on 6th and 7th October. The wigwam and totem poles were being painted. Funds have been transferred from The Roseheath Foundation (courtesy of the Beer Festival) and also an additional donation from the Roseheath Foundation.

c) MUGA

- Opening / Closing times – David Pinchin and the Clerk held a meeting with Derek Rose on 24th August. He had noted that the new MUGA locks were already beginning to seize and it was felt that new locks with longer hasps and the combinations underneath to provide a little more protection from the rain. It was agreed that the Chairman would meet with the new headteacher to discuss arrangements for the MUGA but it was felt that the MUGA should not be opened after school during the winter months.

12. Meetings to attend/ correspondence

- Thanks to Ashley Clifton for the donation of the bench for Tatsfield Green. Thanks also to Martin Elmer for painting it.
- Thanks to Rob Webber for the beacon which he had gifted to the village. Thanks to Dave Mitchell for painting it. Kim Jennings had delivered a thank you gift to Rob Webber.
- Fairtrade meeting on 14th November 7pm – Simon Cook to attend.

13. Matters for reporting or Inclusion in a Future Agenda

None

Final public participation:

- Do the cars involved in the drug dealing in the village centre belong to local residents?
- The hedge between Bassetts and the MUGA is very high – could it please be trimmed.

The meeting closed at 9.58pm

The next Parish Council meeting would be held on Monday 9th October 2023 at 8pm.