

**HOLMWOOD PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 04 JANUARY 2024**

Present: Mr Keith Carter Chairman
Mr James Afford Vice Chairman
Mrs Mary Mansell
Mr Ian Fairbrother
Mrs Rachel Snook
Mr Robert Jordan
Mrs Jan Russell Parish Clerk

In attendance: District Councillor Hobbs

Apologies: Parish Councillor Lester. Surrey County Councillor Stephen Cooksey. District Councillors Malcomson and Wellman.

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 NOVEMBER 2023.

The Council agreed the minutes of the Full Parish Council meeting to be a true representation of the meeting and were approved by all Councillors. Proposed by Councillor Afford and seconded by Councillor Fairbrother.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM 16 NOVEMBER 2023.

Mill Road Junction/A24: The Councillors discussed the junction and that accidents are still happening due to the confusing layout of the intersection. Surrey County Councillor Stephen Cooksey has agreed to fund this survey, but it will not take place until the 2024/25 financial year. Councillor Afford raised a concern that if no funding is available this financial year for the traffic survey, that there will be no action or improvement until April at the earliest, which is unacceptable. With the confusing road layout leading to regular accidents at the junction, Councillor Afford asked for SCC to be contacted and a cost for the traffic survey obtained. It is the Parish Council's understanding that the traffic survey will be funded fully by Surrey County Council in the new financial year. It was agreed that the Chairman would write again to Surrey County Council Highways reiterating residents continued concerns.

Electric Vehicle Charging Station: A majority decision was made, and no further action will be taken at this time.

War Memorial: The condition of the War Memorial had been mentioned at the last meeting and Councillors made aware of the reasons for its dull appearance. Councillor Mansell confirmed that she had contacted the specialist cleaner (Archer Stone) and they had recommended that any cleaning should at least wait until the summer and then consider whether further action should be taken. It was agreed that this would be an agenda item for the July 2024 meeting.

3. VILLAGE HALL.

Councillor Carter informed the Council that he had attended a meeting with the Village Hall Trustees and Mrs Kathryn Tupper. This was to discuss whether the Parish Council should still be maintained as the Managing Agent. It was agreed that this arrangement should be left unchanged at present but there was concern that the Parish Council was not represented at Trustee meetings. It was proposed that Councillor Lester be elected as the representative, and it would be his responsibility to report back to the Parish Council after each quarterly meeting.

The Trustees will continue to be wholly responsible for organising maintenance. At present the kitchen hatch still needs attention and Councillors were informed a re-quote had been obtained and accepted. The cladding/rendering to the outside wall had been completed. The repairs to the flooring in the kitchen are still outstanding.

Councillor Afford mentioned that he has updated and circulated the Fire Safety Project Task List to all Trustees and removed items which are now complete. There were still some minor issues which the Trustees need to attend to.

4. REPAIRS TO BUS SHELTER

The shelter outside the Holly and Laurel on the north side of the A24 needs to be repaired. The Clerk will contact Mole Valley and ask for this to be done.

5. CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND

Replacement seesaw.

Since the last meeting, further quotes for the removal of the existing seesaw and the installation of new equipment have been received.

- Wicksteed had provided a revised quote at a cost of £8,350. The safety surfacing around the equipment will only be patch repaired.
- KOMPAN had provided 2 separate quotes.
 - (i) To instal KOMPAN seesaw with for Four with Tyres and patch repair with black wet pour around the footing at a cost of £5,220.00.
 - (ii) To install KOMPAN Seesaw for Four with Tyres and relay black wet pour at a cost of £10,190.00.
- Sovereign quote was for a new Contempo seesaw at a cost of £8,770.00 which included full wet pour safety surface replacement.

Sovereign are also offering a 5-year playground inspection service, at a cost of £400 which includes 2 site inspections each year. The one-off payment includes 2 on-site visits each year for the duration of the contract.

The Chairman outlined all options to the Council, and it was agreed that any replacement equipment should offer value for money and durability. The Chairman also mentioned the five-year contract for the playground inspection. The Chairman proposed that Sovereign equipment be purchased and accept the new inspection contract. The proposal was put to the vote and the motion was carried 4 votes to 2. It has since been agreed that before placing the order, assurance will be obtained that the equipment will meet all criteria regarding contract requirements (quality, value for money, maintenance back-up etc).

6. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- MO/2019/1641 - Carpel House, Horsham Road, South Holmwood. Importation of material to increase level to unused land to create benefit and to cover exposed sewer pipe. Refused by Mole Valley District Council. Appeal Lodged. Mole Valley and Holmwood Parish Council responded to PINS. REFUSED (AND DISMISSED ON APPEAL). Enforcement issues continue.
- MO/2023/1654 - 9 Heads Up, Holmwood Post Office, Warwick Road, South Holmwood. Garage conversion to office, storage and a library, ancillary to main house. Refused.

7. COUNCILLOR TRAINING:

All Councillors were reminded that they can attend any training sessions being offered by Surrey ALC or Mole Valley District Council.

8. PARKING RESTRICTIONS BETCHETTS GREEN ROAD

The Councillors were advised that a resident of Betchetts Green Road had asked if Surrey County Council Highways could be contacted asking for the hatching adjacent to the playground be repainted and have a "no parking" sign erected to restrict parking in this area and assist residents accessing their own driveways. The suggestion has been logged with Highways and an enquiry reference received.

9. NATIONAL TRUST AND I D VERDE

The Chairman confirmed that he has received confirmation from the National Trust that they will accept all the changes to the Licence recommended by the Parish Council. The Schedule of Works for the upcoming year will now be updated and forwarded to interested groundwork contractors. The contract will cover the year April to October 2024.

The fencing around the pond still needs to be reinstated. The lack of fencing is considered a serious hazard especially when the road freezes in this area. It was also mentioned that the National Trust had still not agreed to the Parish Council installing a bench on Holmwood Common to commemorate the Coronation of King Charles III. Councillor Hobbs agreed to discuss both issues with the National Trust when she meets with them.

The contract with I D Verde has now been terminated due to breach of contract. In accordance with the terms of the contract, the company was given 3 months' notice of the termination.

Invoices are still outstanding to a total of £6,446.59.

9. FINANCE

(i) To agree the precept for 2024/2025

The precept for the financial year 2024/2025 was discussed. The Councillors considered the costs needed to run the Council for the next year, outstanding invoices for I D Verde and the purchase of the new seesaw. Councillors were reminded of the balances of the Unity Trust Current Account, the NatWest Reserve Account and VAT to be reclaimed. It was unanimously agreed not to increase the precept for 2024/2025. Therefore £12,500 would be requested from Mole Valley District Council. This was proposed by Councillor Mansell and seconded by Councillor Fairbrother.

(ii) Financial Statement and bank reconciliation

Copies of the Budget Analysis were circulated which showed invoice payments and balances of the Parish Council's bank accounts.

Unity Trust Current Account balance is £18,542.60.

The NatWest Reserve Account balance at 02 January 2024 was £15,626.90.

To date there is £309.76 VAT to be reclaimed.

This month there were no invoices to be passed for payment.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Council will meet again on 07 March 2024 at 7:00pm.