MINUTES of the ONLINE MEETING of ARKESDEN PARISH COUNCIL
held via Zoom on
Monday 15th February 2021


1. Apologies: None
2. Public Speaking: None. The chairman introduced the new clerk – Amy Cook – to the councillors and residents present. Amy had agreed to sit in on the next few meetings before taking charge in May.
3. Declaration of Interests: Rod Higgins declared an interest in item 6.1.3 – friend of applicant.
4. Minutes of the meeting of 18th January 2021: Agreed
5. Matters arising from the minutes of 18th January 2021
5.1 New Clerk
The Parish Council had interviewed two prospective candidates for the position and agreed to appoint Amy Cook. It was agreed that she would take over completely after the May meeting as this would give time for the AGM to take place in April (possibly two AGMs as last years was not possible due to the pandemic) and also the appointment of new chairman and vice chairman – as always at the first meeting after the AGM.
5.2 New Councillor
Following the resignation of Rupert Bull at the last meeting, the position had been advertised on the notice boards and two excellent candidates had come forward. Once past the final date of Feb. 16th for electors to call an election, the Parish Council will be able to co-opt a new councillor at the following meeting. Both prospective candidates were attending the meeting to get a “feel for the job”
5.3 Website progress
Satu Lawrence reported good progress and was hoping to have the website up and running by the time of the next meeting. The Parish Council is hoping that this new edition of the website will involve the residents in more than just the Parish Council News, with the website becoming the go-to place for information and village news.
5.4 Village Plan refresh
After considering the path that other villages had taken in updating their plans, it was agreed that this would become a priority once the Covid 19 restrictions were lifted. A Parish Plan steering group would be formed, as last time, with a representative from the Parish Council. This group would formulate a questionnaire for the village regarding all aspects of village life, which would then be independently assessed, and the findings would form the basis for the revised plan.

6. Planning matters
6.1 New Applications
6.1.1 UTT/21/0098/FUL Mulberry House 9 new houses
Chairman reported that there had been over 110 responses on the UDC website for this application from both residents and other road users. There were over 100 letters of objection and only 8 letters in favour of the development.
Three residents then spoke in objection to this application, mainly on the grounds of the majority of objections, namely the increased traffic, the dangerous access, the impact on the countryside and the lack of a need for nine large houses in this location.

One resident spoke in favour of the proposals saying that the village needed more housing, the existing barns were an eyesore and that access was no more difficult than in other places.

One councillor spoke in favour of the development.

Chairman proposed that the Parish Council would object to the application in support of the vast majority of residents.

4 votes in favour and one abstention.

6.1.2 UTT/21/0308/HHF 2 The Old Barn, Wood Hall External works
UTT/21/0309/LB 2 The Old Barn, Wood Hall “
UTT/21/0310/LB 2 The Old Barn, Wood Hall Internal works

The Parish Council had no objections to the external works and no comment on the listed building internal works.

6.1.3 UTT/21/0411/CLE The Beehive Certificate of lawful use
The clerk explained that this was a matter of regularising the existing use of part of the garden as garden. It had been used as such for more than 10 years following the purchase of a piece of agricultural land. Part of this had already been granted a change of use to garden and this application was merely to confirm the existing use of the remaining land.

The Parish Council had no objections.

6.1.4 UTT/21/0365/DOC Land South of Quicksie Hill Discharge of condition 12
This application was to satisfy one of the conditions (No.12) applied when planning permission was granted. The condition required a Biodiversity Enhancement Plan. Although there were no problems with the enhancement proposals the PC was concerned that this condition was being addressed before the main application to discharge condition 1, which was for approval of all of the reserved matters i.e. design and layout of the buildings, garaging and parking and most importantly the landscaping proposals. Clerk agreed to find out why this application for discharge of condition 1 had not yet come forward.

6.2 Determinations
6.2.1 UTT/20/3319/HHF Reubens, Wicken Road Change of use of annexe Refused

7. Report from District Councillor
Cllr Oliver reported that the councils accounts had not yet been signed off due to the Governance statement not being accepted.

UDC was embarking on a programme of investment, £300 million, whilst interest rates are low, but of course this money has to be repaid eventually and this could prove difficult with an annual turnover of only £15 million.

With the Local Plan scrapped, developers are making plenty of applications and both Arkesden and Wicken Bonhunt have current applications for houses.

The Stansted Airport Enquiry has begun and it appears that UDC is moving towards an acceptance with conditions. It could well cost UDC in excess of £1 million.

8. Playing Field Report
The new shed had been erected and the clerk reminded Cllr Oliver about the grant payment.

9. Village Hall report
There had been a meeting to discuss the drains problems but no further news.

10. Highways
Clerk had reported the erosion of the stream bank at Reeds Cottage and Long Thatchers, both of which were causing highways problems. The rivers authority had promised to inspect in spring
and the clerk would try to arrange a highways visit at the same time so that responsibility could be apportioned.

11. Correspondence
   Sent via email as usual

12. Finance
   12.1 Balance
       Current Account balance £6399.69
   12.2 Invoices
       The following invoices were agreed for payment:
       Parish Council’s Websites (deposit 30%) £ 233.64
       CPRE membership £ 36.00
       EALC course (Ted Buttling) £ 60.00

13. Further Discussion Points
   13.1 Chris Coady was concerned that the application to discharge condition 12 on the Land south of Quicksie Hill (see item 6.1.4 above) contained a plan showing the southern part of the hedge removed even though this was not agreed and should form part of the landscaping agreement. Clerk agreed to look into this anomaly.

14. Date of next meeting.
    Scheduled as another Zoom meeting for Monday 15th March at 7.30pm.