**WEALD PARISH COUNCIL**

MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 18th December, 2024

AT 7.15 P.M. in the Wesleyian Chapel

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs L Harris (in the Chair), Mr S Brennan, Mr R Trapp, Mrs R Hewett and Ms J Humphreys.

Also attending were County Councillor McArthur, District Councillors Thornton and Hogarth, the clerk and fifteen members of the public.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE –** Mrs R Wood and Mrs C Beddoe
2. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST** – there was none.

**MEETING HELD ON the 20th November, 2024** – these were approved and signed by the Chairman.

1. **MATTERS ARISING**

The members of the Parish Council sent their best wishes to Cllr. Mrs Beddoe following her recent operation.

* + - 1. **Children’s Play Area – Report on on-going works**

e first stage of the agreed works has been completed. The contractor will return to complete the works in mid-January, 2025.

* + - 1. **Recreation Ground – usage fees review – update**

Feedback from some of the groups currently using the Recreation Ground is still outstanding.

* + - 1. **Bank Mandate – update**

The bank mandate has been updated as requested. Further information is being provided to the bank to establish online banking.

* + - 1. **gov.uk domain and email accounts**

The clerk advised that Hugo Fox ,an Approved Registrar, has been appointed to process the above. It should be completed within 6-8 weeks.

**(5)Weald Speedwatch Group -News**

The clerk advised that only two residents have so far registered with Kent Police to join Weald’s Speedwatch Group. Details of how to register will be re-posted on the Parish website and facebook page.

1. **CORRESPONDENCE**

Circulated to members.

1. **PLANNING**

Details of current planning applications are available on the Parish Council website.

The outstanding enforcement issues (Bull Pit, Marchants Yard) were raised with Cllr Thornton who will follow these up. Cllr Thornton also agreed to raise Pitfield, White House Road, with SDC’s enforcement team. This site appears to be used as a storage area.

1. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

The Meeting adjourned at 7.45 p.m.

The Meeting resumed at 7.55 p.m.

1. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Cllrs Hogarth and Thornton briefed the Parish Council on the Government’s White Paper proposing a major reorganization of local government. In particular, if implemented, this could lead to the abolishment of Sevenoaks District Council and its replacement of a large unitary authority covering over 500,000 people, based in Maidstone. This is seen as a challenge to the delivery of services that match the needs of local communities, such as Parish Councils, as decision-making will be more centralized.

The higher housing targets also set by the Government will result in a 63% increase in houses being built in the SDC area which presents a particular challenge as 95% of the district is Green Belt land which is supposed to be protected from development.

Cllrs Hogarth and Thornton will continue to brief the Parish Council on the above matters at future meetings.

Cllr. McArthur also briefed on the challenged faced by Kent County Council in balancing its budget.

 The Meeting closed at 8.10 pm