

Reports for Full Council Meeting on Wednesday 20th November

6) PC Mayers

For the lovely East Peckham we had a total of 46 calls made to Kent Police between 14th October – 16th November 2024. For your note these consisted of nuisance vehicles, suspicious events, theft and fraud.

I have issued fraud advice before and again, this was an isolated incident and was over the phone, so I am not overly concerned at this stage. I shall re-iterate my advice from a couple of months ago:

‘be mindful of anyone calling and asking for money or personal details. Very often people call using all kinds of personas however they are not to be taken at face value. It has also been known for some fraudsters to call a line, wait for the victim to hang up and dial police whilst the fraudster remains on the line, then pretend to be police answering the call. If in doubt do not give over any information or money at all and call a loved one for assistance. If not, speak to a neighbour or report online.’

The suspicious events and theft were linked. I would say that this again appeared to be an isolated incident, however I have attached advice above for awareness and I would always encourage anyone witnessing suspicious activity to please report it so that thefts and such like can be dealt with before they occur.

The nuisance vehicles are the result of more people calling in about the A228 gatherers, so I thank those that have got in touch. I have been liaising with Matt Boughton and Sarah Hudson over this and we are trying to work out the best way forward having received a response from KCC. Myself and my colleague have patrolled the area this evening and will be looking to go out again the next weekend shift in order to deter these meetings. Tonight whilst out on patrol in the area we have located and processed someone for possession of cannabis after they were spotted driving in a hasty manner. We look forward to carrying out more patrols over the coming weekends.

As usual I hope to catch up with you at some stage and please let me know of anything I should be aware of.

Community Warden Diane Wakeling

I continue to support several vulnerable residents in East Peckham. I am pleased to report there were no major incidents brought to my attention during Halloween and fire works nights. As you are all aware we start the new model of the warden provision from the 2nd December 2024, and I am pleased to say I remain in east Peckham and will be available every Tuesday moving forward, obviously I can still be contacted by phone at any time.

Looking forward to joining everybody on 6th December for the light switch on. I would also like to remind the parish councillors that we have our coffee and carols on Tuesday 17th December between 10-12 where we will be supporting our residents with dementia.

7.1) Borough Councillor Matt Boughton

Developers have asked Tunbridge Wells Borough Council for a scoping opinion on Land north west of Paddock Wood, between the A228 and Maidstone Road. TMBC has been asked for a view on this planning application and we are working with the TMBC Planning Department to articulate this. TMBC has consistently objected to the level of development Tunbridge Wells BC have allocated in and around Capel

Yesterday was the first day the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol was used this winter. Please let us and TMBC Housing know of any vulnerable person who is rough sleeping and we can ensure they have a roof over their heads

I have met with the developers for Grove Farm, following their latest planning application after the Planning Inspectorate upheld the previous rejection of their plans by TMBC. They would also like to engage with the Parish Council and we will be in touch to help facilitate this, but are dependent on the Decision Notice publication for the existing application

We have been asked for a view on whether a speed camera would be necessary on the A228 Branbridges Way between the Branbridges roundabout and the Hop Farm roundabout. My view is that any speed enforcement between the wheelbarrow roundabout and the Hop Farm roundabout would be welcome as it would help prevent nuisance, speeding vehicles late at night, but we would appreciate the thoughts of the Parish Council

The Planning Enforcement case into the land west of Hale Street has been closed. This is the area where the fence had been erected just north of the traffic calming measure by 80-82 Hale Street. On inspection there is no building work taking place behind the site so there are no grounds for Planning Enforcement action

A few weeks ago 50 tyres were fly-tipped by St Michael's Church. While TMBC Waste Services removed the tyres, sadly there was no evidence available from the fly-tip to identify who had been responsible for leaving the tyres there, so sadly no further action has been possible

7.2) Correspondence from Residents

Message received from a resident regarding lack of lighting along the footpath between the Jubilee Hall and the school and not feeling safe. Plus suggestion of lighting and CCTV needed at the green shelter / basketball court due to issues with teenagers in the summer.

Resident reported that the hedge has not been cut back along Hale Street, just past The Red Fort, making the pavement very narrow without room for people to pass without walking in the road. Upon checking with KKC, they had already contacted the owner and are awaiting action – resident informed.

Email received complaining about the parking at the Jubilee Hall and surrounding roads on a Sunday morning and concerns over lack of access for emergency vehicles if required. All teams have been contacted regarding the need to park appropriately and respectfully when using the playing fields. Matches have been staggered to try and alleviate the parking requirements, with some teams asked to park along Pound Road and walk up to the fields.

8) Clerk's Report

New office house are working well so far; whilst we appreciate it means that drop-in hours are reduced for residents, it has enabled us to focus on admin much more efficiently and deal with contractors on a Thursday without having to continually lock and unlock the office. We are happy to arrange times for residents to pop by outside of the 10am-1pm time period and of course if councillors who wish to stop by please just ring the office so we can open the door for you, assuming we are onsite.

The Parish Office has been busy with recent works taking place – the maintenance works on the trees at the playing fields have been completed, as has the deep clean of the Jubilee Hall, public toilets and Defib booths. The full electrical service is taking place all day on Wednesday 20th November and the Christmas Light and Christmas Tree will be installed on Monday 25th / Tuesday 26th November.

The recent internal audit went well and I was impressed with the newly appointed Mulberry. The report has been shared for your perusal, with only 3 minor points to note.

There have been several road closures recently in / surrounding the village that the office has not been informed about or found out last minute. Sarah Hudson is following this up with KCC as there are some she has not received either. Also, as she and Matt Boughton are unable to access the EP Residents Facebook page, she is unable to post the ones that she does receive. I have asked if she can pass them on to the Parish Office so we can then post them.

A reminder that the Parish Council-run Community Light Switch On is taking place on Friday 6th December and I'm sure the events Committee would appreciate any and all support on the night.

Finally, just to note that although it was stated at last month's meeting that the office phone line and broadband had been renewed for 36 months at £33.95 per month, this has had to be done with an alternative supplier due to misinformation on the supplier's part. The renewal has now been done via BT direct at £40.95 for 24 months, having negotiated a lower rate than they had previously quoted.