WICKHAMBREAUX PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 OCTOBER 2013

Present: Parish Cllr Anthony O'Sullivan (Chairman)
Parish Cllr Martin Twyman
Parish Cllr Christine Le Jeune
Parish Cllr Angela Hamilton
Parish Cllr John Joice
Parish Cllr Faith Wright
Miss Chenice Sparkes, Clerk to the Council

1. **CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
Cllr O'Sullivan welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from County Councillor Michael Northey.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
Cllr Joice declared an interest in the tree works at Seaton Cottages because the trees in question back onto his property.

3. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 SEPTEMBER 2013**
The minutes were signed as a true record of the meeting with two amendments; Item 14 under Village Hall Committee the figure received should have been £1054 not £1154, and Item13 (viii) it should read "this" year not "next" year.

4. **INFORMATION FROM MATTERS ARISING**
4) Cllr O'Sullivan reported that the two tables on the Village Green, owned by the Rose Inn, have now been removed in accordance with the signed agreement. Cllr Joice and Cllr Twyman agreed to speak to the owners regarding the possibility of sprinkling fresh grass seed on the damaged grass to help it recover.
7) Cllr O'Sullivan reported that he had sent off the response to the applicant of the possible Pear Orchard application on Wednesday 18 September 2013 and received an acknowledgment stating that the Parish Council's comments will be taken onboard and he will be seeking advice.
8) Cllr O'Sullivan reported that no draft of the Parish Charter has yet been circulated before the Rural Areas Member Panel (RAMP) to be held on Wednesday 13 November 2013.
10) Cllr O'Sullivan reported that there is a workshop being held on Monday 21 October regarding the Local Boundary Review which he will attend on the Parish Council's behalf.
11(i) Cllr Twyman reported that the finger posts on the sign are actually held in place by large screws, not angle brackets like previously believed. He also reported that the base is made out of Oak which takes a long time to fully rot so the Parish Council may have more time than previously thought before the base needs to be replaced. The Clerk was asked to write to Mr Bodimeade and thank him for his work in the community following the repair to the finger posts.
11(iv) Cllr O'Sullivan reported that the top of the bank on the blind bend in Stodmarsh has been kindly cleared by the Birts to make it safer for all road users. Cllr O'Sullivan agreed to thank the Birts on the Parish Council's behalf.
(vi) Cllr Twyman reported that the kerb on the corner of Spicer's Place is again damaged despite a number of repairs from Kent Highways. The Parish Council agreed to monitor the situation and if it gets any worse to report the damage to Kent Highways for another repair.
11(ix) Cllr Hamilton reported that the planters on the bridge will be replaced and replanted in the near future.

5. **PLANNING**

Tree Works:
Seaton Cottages, Seaton Road – The Parish Council had no objection to reducing the height of three variegated Maples, growing on ground opposite Seaton Cottages, by no more than a 30% cut back to lower branches away from the drive.

6. **SEATON MEADOW VILLAGE GREEN APPLICATION**
Cllr Le Jeune reported that the decision on the Village Green Application has not yet been made. She also reported that a response was sent to another request made under the Data Protection Act for information. The Parish Council also agreed to appoint Cllr Le Jeune as Temporary Data Protection Officer.

7. **PARISH COUNCIL RECORD KEEPING AND STORAGE**
Cllr O'Sullivan and Cllr Le Jeune reported that the Parish Council is now a registered data holder. The Parish Council agreed that a Data Protection Policy should be put into place. Cllr O'Sullivan undertook to make enquires to the Kent Association for Local Council's (KALC) as to whether they have a model to use as a template. The Clerk was asked to investigate what courses are available to become a certified Data Handler. Further consideration on the matter will be made at the next meeting.

The idea was raised whether to purchase another filing cabinet to hold additional documents currently not stored in the Village Hall, with the possibility of in the long term uploading all the correspondence electronically on a disk to minimise the holding of paper.

8. **HIGHWAYS**
Nothing to report.

9. **REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND CITY COUNCILLORS**
City Councillor Brian Staley
Cllr Staley reported that despite 95% of responses to the Local Boundary Review being against a decrease in of the number of Councillors from 50 to 38, the reduction is still going ahead. The majority of responses were against the Leader and cabinet style model of governance which is outside the scope of the Boundary Commission's consultation. The next stage now is to review the pattern of ward boundaries within the Canterbury district.

Approximately every 15 years a boundary review needs to be made. Currently only 11-12 years have passed, so this review has been called early to save £60,000. The Boundary Commission tends to always support the ruling Council's recommendation, which in this case is the reduction. The 'magic number' to try and reach per new ward Member is 2900 electorate, with a 10% margin either side. Cllr Staley suggested joining with Bekesbourne or Adisham as possible options to reach this number.

Cllr Staley also reported that his fight to keep new residents for Ellen Court in Littlebourne to be drafted only from applicants in the local area has been lost. Five places at the oversubscribed Ellen Court have gone to residents outside the local ward under the Equalities Act despite contradicting the Localism Act, to give local people first priority when it came to available spaces.

Cllr Staley advised 250 people turned out to the recent meeting regarding the Westgate Towers Traffic Scheme options, hosted by the Kentish Gazette. Stodmarsh Road saw an increase of 40-50% increase in traffic under the old trialled scheme, which had no support at the meeting. In addition a new UKIP member has been welcomed to the Council after winning the Whitstable and Seasalter bi-election following the death of the existing Councillor.

Cllr Staley reported that the Rural Transport Scheme he is heading has been very successful in the New House Lane areas and is now underway, thanks to access to a number of funding

streams and fundraising events. The scheme has received lots of positive feedback with the next goal to bring together all the entertainers in East Kent to gain access to a section in the Marlowe Theatre that holds 140 people for future use of subsidised trips.

County Councillor Michael Northey
The Clerk reported in his absence that he is working to save the children's centre at Littlebourne, which may have a bearing on Wickhambreaux. He invited Cllr Jenny Whittle, the Cabinet Member concerned, to a visit there and she met mums and saw the situation on site. Jenny is in the unenviable situation of having to find £1.5 million savings from the children's centres -- the proposals are to close 23 of them but this number is flexible if alternative ways of working can be found, and it may be possible to save some of the 23.

Children's services will not close down, but the way of delivering them will alter. Cllr Viv Spratt (Chairman, Littlebourne parish council), local people, Cllr Northey and Cllr Jenny Whittle are considering ways to keep services in the Littlebourne village hall and just possibly outsourcing some services to outlying villages. Nothing has been decided yet.

He also reported that KCC pupils did very well in GCSEs this summer -- the gold standard is to get a minimum of 5 subjects at Grade A* to C, including English and Maths. This year 65% of candidate achieved this, a rise of 4% over last year -- at a time when national standards of marking are getting stricter. National figures are not in yet, but the national average is expected to have gone down, not up, to around 59%. So Kent is around 6% above national average. Well done to those students, teachers and parents.

10. **CLLR'S REPORTS**
Tree Warden – Cllr Wright reported that the replacement tree for the one felled in Spicers Place will be a hornbeam, as requested, with the old stump being ground out sometime in November. The possibility of a ceremony for the planting of the new tree was discussed but no decision made.

Cllr Hamilton reported the replacement Red Oak tree will be very similar to the previous one in the village being replaced with some slight differences. The tree will be 7-8 feet high with a thin trunk which will be need a stake, ties and protective mesh. Total cost will be £100 for the tree, stake, ties, protective mesh and planting. The Parish Council approved the expenditure for the tree. Cllr Twyman agreed to ask the Birds if they wished to coincide the replacement of the Lime tree on the Green with the replacement Red Oak.

Cllr Wright reported that Jon Lambourne, Canterbury City Council's tree expert, agreed that the horse chestnut on the Green may have a type of bark disease but advised that the tree only be pruned and monitored at this stage. The Parish Council agreed the work needs to be carried out and asked Cllr Wright to locate someone to carry out the necessary work.

Cllr Wright also reported that the owners of the Old Rectory have claimed ownership of the verge outside their property with Yew trees on that proposed to be felled. Cllr Wright passed this information to Richard Clifford in the Kent Highways Vegetation Team who has passed it onto the decision team. The Elder tree by Grove Road Cottages will also be removed and the damaged pavement repaired.

Cllr Wright reported that she, Cllr Le Jeune, Cllr Joice and Cllr Lodge attended a meeting on the playing field to assess the condition of the trees. A number of saplings were removed from the playing field, but three Ash trees overhanging the path need to be pruned which will require permission. The Clerk was asked to write to Mr Perkins, whose land the trees are on, to inform him that the Parish Council is proposing to cut them back. The Parish Council also agreed to postpone starting an annual tree inspection until the next financial year, where provisions in the budget have been made.

Flood Protection – Cllr Twyman reported that he attended a meeting on 18 September in Bridge Village Hall when Southern Water gave an update on the sewage problem. A demonstration was assembled outside the hall to show how Southern Water proposes to fix the problems. Repairs in the local area are already underway and should take approximately four months to complete. The majority of the problems found could be put down to fat discharges in the system. A new initiative will soon be introduced where hundreds of fat filter systems will be issued and the waste accumulated in the provided containers will be collected with normal household rubbish.

Cllr Tywman also reported that the water levels in the Great Stour are quite high and he is still fighting for action to be taken on the poor state of the river between Fordwich and Grove Ferry. An assessment of the condition of Black Hole Dike will occur around November.

11. **FINANCE**

The expenditure totalling £255.98 was authorised made up of:

- Chenice Sparkes – Clerk Salary October 2013 - £154.98
- HMRC – Employee and PAYE for October 2013 - £31.00
- Stripy Lawns – Mowing of the recreation ground 07 and 21 September - £70.00.

12. **CLERK REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE**

(i) The Clerk reported she had received a letter from the Local Government Boundary Commission informing of their decision to reduce the number of councillors from 50 to 38 and inviting the public to 'draw' their own proposed boundaries for the remaining 38. A poster was also sent to put on the notice board.

(ii) The Clerk reported she had received the fourth addition of the Good Councillors Guide to be circulated after the meeting.

13. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Nothing to report.

The meeting closed at 9:28 p.m.

Signed……..... (Chairman) Date…….....