WICKHAMBREAUX PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 MARCH 2017

Present: Parish Cllr Martin Twyman
Parish Cllr Faith Wright
Parish Cllr Caroline Rees
Parish Cllr Linda Lodge
Parish Cllr Gary Bradford
Parish Cllr Catherine Holland
Parish Cllr Robin Treacher

Kent County Cllr Michael Northey

Miss Chenice Sparkes, Clerk to the Council

4 Members of the Public

1. **CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr Twyman welcomed everyone to the meeting and reported an anonymous complaint has been received by Canterbury City Council against Cllr Treacher which is currently undergoing investigation. Cllr Treacher has opted to stand down as Chairman until the matter is formally resolved, although Canterbury City Council have advised this measure is not necessary. Cllr Twyman reported he has agreed to stand in as Chairman until the investigations have been concluded. The Parish Council understand and respect Cllr Treacher's decision to stand down at the present time and wish to offer their full support. Cllr Twyman called a Vote of Confidence in Cllr Treacher which was unanimously supported.

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from City Cllr Stuart Walker.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Twyman declared an interest in the planning application CA/1700369/FUL and CA/17/00370/LB for Undertrees Farm in Stodmarsh as a neighbour and previous landowner. Cllr Bradford also declared an interest in the planning application for Undertrees Farm as an employee of the owner.

3. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28 FEBRUARY 2017**

The Minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting with one minor amendment.

4. **INFORMATION FROM MATTERS ARISING**

5(4.6,i). Cllr Twyman reported that the Grove Ferry Bridge road surface has been repaired since the last meeting.
5(4.7,ii). Cllr Twyman reported that Kent Highways has not yet rectified the misspelling on the new metal signpost at the corner of Wickham Court Lane and Hollybush Lane. The Clerk was asked to formally report the issue.
5(17,iv). The Clerk reported she had chased Kent Fire and Rescue for the information pack following the Fire Hydrant Initiative meeting on 02 February 2017 but had not received a response. The Clerk agreed to contact them again.
ADJOURNMENT. Cllr Wright raised what terminology should be used to refer to members of the public present at meetings if they are not residents. It was agreed that all residents and non-residents present at meetings shall be referred to as "members of the public" in future minutes to avoid confusion.
ADJOURNMENT. Cllr Treacher reported that a meeting was held with representatives from the School, The Rose and the Green Light Taxi Company to discuss ways of alleviating the parking problems in the village. Cllr Treacher was present at the meeting but did not participate in

discussions. The Chairman of the meeting, Mr Matt Collins, unfortunately could not attend the Parish Council meeting to report back but requested Cllr Treacher mention that the meeting was very productive, with some fresh ideas suggested that need looking into further. It was also noted that for any substantial change to the current parking situation, the whole village would need to be supportive of any implemented proposals. The group will approach the Parish Council at a future date if they wish to implement any suggestions that require input from the Parish Council. Cllr Twyman wished to thank Cllr Treacher for organising the meeting.

7(iii). Cllr Lodge reported that a large tanker has carried out some clearing of the drains outside Frognall Cottages in Grove Road in an attempt to improve surface water drain off. Cllr Lodge agreed to monitor the drainage situation.

8. Cllr Wright reported that a number of residents in The List approached the owner of Quaives Farm, regarding application CA/17/00210/FUL for the erection of polytunnels, with some concerns. Following a meeting with the owner and the residents, the owner has agreed to move the proposed location of the polytunnels further back in line with the boundary line, leaving more of a "buffer zone". The owner has also agreed that workers on the farm will not commence work before 8am and will finish by 5pm and that there will be no dumping of organic or inorganic waste on the buffer zone. It is expected that a raspberry nursery will be grown in the larger buffer zone instead, linked to the main farm's irrigation system. Cllr Wright wished to thank the resident in The List for orchestrating the meeting and also to the farm owner for listening to local residents' concerns and being willing to make concessions.

11 (Trees). Cllr Wright reported that all of the tree notifications have expired except the proposed works to trees on the Playing Field. Cllr Wright reported that Canterbury City Council has commented on the Playing Field proposals, remarking that the trees provide a landscape and screening value between Seaton and Wickhambreaux but that the proposed removal of deadwood and pruning is acceptable.

11 (Village Greens). Cllr Treacher reported that some of the grass seed sown following the replacement drain on the Village Green undertaken by Kent County Council has not taken properly. Cllr Bradford agreed to monitor the situation and arrange for some more grass seed if necessary.

5. **REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND CITY COUNCILLORS**

County Councillor Michael Northey

County Cllr Northey reported the individual budget for each County Councillor is to increase from £20,000 to £22,000 in the new financial year (beginning April 2017). Recently Wickhambreaux has benefitted from a grant towards the Queen's birthday celebrations and also for a new piece of play equipment.

County Cllr Northey also reported that the Government has announced a national funding rise in social care. At the moment social care amounts to approximately 40% of Kent County Council's budget, with anticipated spending for this financial year amounting to £364 million.

County Cllr Northey reported that he recently attended a skills conference for young people which was very encouraging. It is estimated that by 2022, approximately 11 million people will be chasing 5 million unskilled jobs compared to 11 million people chasing 14 million skilled jobs. To close this gap, the Government and Kent County Council has been pushing apprenticeship opportunities to young people with the aim of increase the national skill level from 2.3 (GCSE equivalent) to 3.0 (A Level equivalent).

6. **HIGHWAYS**

(i) Cllr Twyman reported that he attended the A257 meeting on Saturday 18 March 2017 with the main focus of discussions being on reducing the speed limits of villages along the A257 and surrounding areas.

(ii) Cllr Twyman reported that he has recently been filmed by ITV in connection with fly tipping in the area, in particular areas along Wickham Court Lane, Swanton Woods and Swanton Road

were highlighted in the film piece. Cllr Twyman reported he has now been asked to film another piece for the national news as part of a wider story.

(iii) Cllr Twyman reported that Canterbury City Council has confirmed that it would not encourage litter picking events in the parish because their insurance would not cover any volunteers as the speed limit is too high and there are no pavements.

(iv) Cllr Wright reported that the "Wickham Court Lane" sign on the corner of Wickham Court Lane and Grove Road has still not been repaired. It appears to have been roughly pieced back together as a temporary repair, presumably by a resident, but a replacement sign or more thorough repair is required. The Clerk agreed to chase Kent Highways.

(v) Cllr Holland reported that a restriction sign at the top of Elbridge Hill needs replacing. The Clerk agreed to report this to Kent Highways.

(vi) Cllr Wright reported that a number of pot holes have been marked up in The List for repair.

7. **PLANNING**

CA//17/00369/FUL and CA//17/00370/LB – Undertrees Farm, Stodmarsh

Cllr Wright reported that she had been out to the visit the property and confirmed that the barn is in a poor state and requires a lot of work to bring it up to an acceptable standard. A number of professional reports have been produced including a Flood Risk Assessment, Ecological Report and Archaeological Report, all of which have not objected to the proposals. A number of flood risk measures have also already been incorporated into the proposals following the Flood Risk Assessment and advertising the barn for agricultural or storage purposes for over a year has been unsuccessful.

The Parish Council has no objections to the proposed conversion of a Grade II listed barn to a residential dwelling and erection of a car barn following the demolition of an un-listed outbuilding. The Parish Council would however like to see the roof reinstated to thatch as this was the most probable roofing material when first constructed. Cllr Wright agreed to contact Canterbury City Council with comments.

(i) Cllr Wright reported that she had spoken with the Planning Officer today and was informed that the application for the expansion of Wickhambreaux School has been withdrawn. In the letter signed by Marissa White, Area Education Officer for East Kent, the main reason for withdrawing the application was cited as the "sustainability of the proposal under planning policy and the National Planning Policy Framework".

Cllr Wright reported that the School cannot proceed with the expansion of the building premises as a separate application due to lack of funds. In addition, the developer contributions from the proposed development at Littlebourne cannot be transferred to Littlebourne School instead. County Cllr Northey confirmed that the money could not have been earmarked for Littlebourne School originally as, at the time of the Littlebourne application, the school was marked as "requiring improvement" which does not meet the criteria for expansion. As Wickhambreaux was the nearest school to the application site, the money was earmarked for Wickhambreaux instead. Now that Littlebourne School is rated as "good", they can now apply for funding from developer contributions for future developments. The Parish Council agreed to write to Kent County Council to express its dismay that no funding was forthcoming to expand the facilities at the School at this current time.

In the letter signed by Marissa White, it also stated that the proposal would not have been brought forward had it "not been for informal officer advice received in the early feasibility stages… which indicated that due to the very low numbers of additional pupils involved…no serious issues were identified that were likely to lead to a refusal of the application". Cllr Wright asked County Cllr Northey why the issues with planning policy and the National Planning Policy Framework were not identified at that early stage. County Cllr Northey responded that the advice given was likely only from a purely educational

perspective, not in terms of planning law. In addition, as the Local Plan is open to interpretation, it was deemed not likely to come up against any fundamental issues.

Cllr Twyman wished to thank Cllr Wright for all her hard work during the application process and expressed the Parish Council's desire to move on from this and create a better working relationship with the School.

A member of the public asked what options are available to School now that funding is not forthcoming. Another member of the public added that the overall feeling in the village is that residents would like to assist the school in ensuring its success but that improved communication with the village would be key. Cllr Treacher commented that it would be a good opportunity for the School and Parish Council to work together to discuss other alternatives to improve the buildings once the School have revaluated its options.

The Church Warden wished to say that the Church is closely linked to the Church of England school and it takes an active interest in the School and wishes to offer support in its efforts to continue to thrive.

Cllr Treacher also wished to say that he was very heartened by the energy from the School that has gone into mitigating the travel impact in the village recently, especially when the replacement drain was being installed on the village green by Kent County Council, and hoped to see this continue. The Parish Council agreed that the focus needs to move away from the planning application and efforts re-concentrated to improving the current situation.

8. **ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

The Parish Council discussed the necessary arrangements for the Annual Parish Meeting and an agenda for the meeting will be distributed to all households by Councillors in due course.

Cllr Treacher suggested that an invitation be extended to the School to enquire whether it would be possible for some of the children to take part in a small performance at the start of the evening. Cllr Lodge explained it may be difficult due to the timing in the school year as well as being able to arrange adequate cover outside of the main school hours. The Parish Council agreed to make the suggestion to the School and Cllr Treacher agreed to contact the head teacher on the Parish Council's behalf.

9. **CLLRS' REPORTS**

Tree Representative

Cllr Twyman reported that he has arranged for a tree surgeon to examine the large oak tree on Wickham Court Lane as there have been some concerns over the possibility of an unsafe limb. The tree surgeon has reported that generally the tree appears safe and that there are no signs the limb is in immediate danger of falling. The tree will however need attention in the near future. In the past, a nearby landowner has taken responsibility for the tree but this is currently in doubt. Cllr Twyman agreed to ensure the work is undertaken in the autumn and will continue discussions with the adjacent land owner.

Cllr Wright reported that she had received three quotations for all the tree works highlighted in the last tree survey as follows (excluding VAT):

- Quote A - £1196.25
- Quote B - £980.00
- Quote C - £1200.00

A separate breakdown was provided for each particular area of the village but Cllr Bradford explained that the quotes should not be seen as "pick and choose" as the quotes have most likely been made on the basis of "all or nothing". The Parish Council asked Cllr Wright, as the

tree representative, what option she would recommend. Cllr Wright reported that she would prefer Quote A as she was most impressed by the representative that came out to give a quote. The Parish Council unanimously decided to choose Quote A and Cllr Wright agreed to contact the company to book in the works.

The Parish Council also decided to instruct Mark Jones to undertake a survey of the trees at the village hall for £100.00 plus VAT.

Law and Order
Cllr Lodge reported that she attended the Canterbury and District Neighbourhood Watch annual conference on 18 March 2017 with speaker Chief Inspector Mitchell Fox, District Commander for Canterbury and Dover. Chief Inspector Fox reported that Canterbury area is below the national crime average and that the budget has been cut back for the area.

The Church Warden reported that there have been a number of lead thefts in the local area recently and unfortunately the Church roof was targeted twice in the week beginning 13 March 2017 over two consecutive nights. Despite there being an alarm system in place on the roof, thieves managed to cause considerable damage to the roof on the first night either without the alarm going off or without the alarm company notifying anybody. The thieves were cut short on the first night but they returned on the second night to collect the lead they had left on the floor by the Church.

The alarm company has since fixed a possible fault with the alarm on the roof and have installed additional sensors to prevent a similar occurrence in the future. Vigils have also now been put into place by Church volunteers. Although the thieves were not able to obtain much lead, the damage to the roof is likely to amount to £10,000. The Church Warden is in contact with the insurance company who will hopefully assist in meeting this cost.

In addition, the Church Warden also reported that there have been two attempts to break into the small safe inside the Church. Both of the attempts did not succeed but have resulted in new locks having to be fitted costing approximately £120.00 and £150.00 consecutively.

Cllr Lodge reported that a garage in Littlebourne was targeted by lead thieves over five consecutive nights. Despite CCTV, nightly vigils and calls to the Police, it has not been possible to identify the thieves to date.

KALC
Cllr Treacher reported that a long overdue review of proposed revised Parish Charter is to be discussed at the next KALC meeting on Tuesday 11 April 2017. Although the report containing the proposals has now been produced, it has not been well received by Parish Councils. Canterbury City Council has been dismissive of the role Parish Councils play in communities and have failed to identify key personnel as point of contact should any problems arise. In addition, the request that comments on the revised proposals were required within a week has been viewed as unacceptable and Canterbury City Council have since extended this deadline. Cllr Treacher reported that he and Cllr Rees cannot attend the meeting due to other commitments and asked whether any other councillors would be available to attend. Cllr Wright offered to attend if able to.

RAMP
Cllr Treacher reported that the meeting to discuss whether Canterbury City Council wish to participate in the proposed merger of four district councils into one ‘East Kent Coastal’ Council is to be held tomorrow (Wednesday 22 March 2017) which Cllr Treacher will be attending.

Cllr Wright reported that her ID card is incorrect, stating her name as “Fran” instead of Faith. The Clerk agreed to enquire whether a replacement card would be possible and to also enquire about obtaining one for Cllr Holland.

Village Hall Committee
Cllr Lodge reported that the annual jazz evening was very successful, raising £480.00 in profit Cllr Lodge also reported that the next Village Hall Committee meeting will be held on Monday 27 March 2017.

Cllr Treacher wished to reiterate that the Parish Council is not trying to stop the School from using the village hall and that the Village Hall Committee will decide whether the current agreement between Kent County Council and the Village Hall Committee needs to be reviewed.

Playing Field Committee
Cllr Rees reported the Playing Field Committee is still waiting for the £1400.00 grant from RAMP to be paid. Hopefully this will be soon and before the end of the financial year, so that £2800.00 can be transfer to the main Parish Council bank account and the end of year financial returns completed. The current bank balance £1835.40.

In relation to the Classic Car Show and Church Fete, Cllr Rees would like to thank Peter Kajtar who has kindly created the Playing Field Committee a web page and given Cllr Rees a quick lesson of how to make alterations to it. He has also promised to remain on standby to assist in the future. The Committee agreed to have the website set it up in Cllr Rees’ name so the web site is owned and controlled by The Frank Montgomery Playing Field.

Christopher Paine from Canterbury City Council has arranged for the Committee to only be billed £250.00 (net) for the installation of one of the bins, although the bill should have been twice this. He kindly did this as there was a delay in the installation. The total bill amounted to £573.00.

Village Greens
Cllr Bradford reported that the mower is due to be repaired tomorrow (22 March 2017).

A member of the public raised that the noticeboard on the Village Green appears to be oozing a green substance that is effecting all of the notices inside. When the noticeboard was first installed, a self-sealing coating was chosen to close over holes made by pins which may the cause. Cllr Rees agreed to speak with the noticeboard provider.

10. **FINANCE**
The expenditure totalling £529.49 was authorised, made up of:

- Martin Twyman – Reimbursement for grass cutting carried out by Inside Out Services from 01 January 2016-31 December 2016 - £145.00
- Open Spaces Society annual subscription - £45.00
- Chenice Sparkes – Clerk Salary March 2017 - £217.21
- HMRC – Employee and PAYE March 2017 - £50.00
- Liz Jones – Reimbursement for costs incurred in mowing the Village Green - £72.28

11. **CLERK REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE**
(i) Clerks Direct March 2017 magazine was received
(ii) SLCC March 2017 magazine was received
(iii) The Clerk reported she had received an email from Canterbury City Council advising on guidance in relation to the Purdah/pre-election period before the Kent County Council elections. Although the advice is aimed primarily at candidates standing for Kent County

Council, the same rules apply for Parish Councils during their election period and Canterbury City Council requested that Parish Councillors be made aware.

(iv) The Clerk reported that "The Better Broadband Subsidy Scheme" has been launched in relation to the Government's commitment to provide every home and business in the UK with access to a basic broadband service. A subsidised broadband installation, worth up to £350.00, is now available if households or businesses cannot access an affordable broadband service with a speed of at least 2Mb per second. Further details on how to apply can be found on the Parish Council's website.

12. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

(i) Cllr Twyman reported he would be attending Littlebourne Parish Council's Annual Parish Meeting tomorrow (22 March 2017).

(ii) Cllr Treacher suggested that the Village Hall Committee may want to look into the possibility of providing wi-fi in the village hall for use by both the School and other users. He agreed to raise this at the upcoming Village Hall Committee meeting.

The meeting closed at 9:50pm

Signed……..... (Chairman)

Date…….....