WICKHAMBREAUX PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 15 SEPTEMBER 2020 on Zoom.

Present: Parish Cllr Robin Treacher
Parish Cllr Faith Wright
Parish Cllr Catherine Holland
Parish Cllr Peter Collinson (from 7.55pm)

Linda Lodge – Playing Field Committee Chairman

Mrs Chenice Howard-Sparkes, Clerk to the Council

1. **CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Parish Cllr Darren Howe (Holiday), Parish Cllr Caroline Rees (Work Commitments) and County Cllr Michael Northey. The Clerk was asked to contact City Cllr Jones-Roberts to encourage participation at future meetings.

Cllr Treacher enquired whether members of the public can request a copy of meeting recordings. The Clerk advised that the Parish Council has previously agreed that recordings are to be used by the Clerk for the purposes of writing up the minutes and will be erased following the official approval of the minutes. The Clerk therefore confirmed she would not share a copy of the Zoom recordings.

Cllr Treacher reported that he receives a large amount of correspondence related to Covid-19 and currently only sends information to councillors relevant to the Parish Council. Cllr Treacher encouraged councillors who wish to receive more information to contact him and he will circulate all additional information.

Cllr Treacher also reported that the new government restrictions relating to not meeting in groups of more than six from outside your household, do not apply to parish councils as long as social distancing is adhered to. However, NALC (National Association of Local Councils) still advises to meet remotely at this current time. Cllr Treacher proposed continuing to meet remotely and this was unanimously agreed.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
None.

3. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 JULY 2020**
Cllr Wright proposed and Cllr Holland seconded, and all councillors voted in favour, that the Minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

4. **INFORMATION FROM MATTERS ARISING**
5(17i) – The Clerk agreed to contact Canterbury City Council (CCC) Enforcement for an update regarding Little Puxton in Stodmarsh.
17(ii) – The Clerk agreed to contact Michelle Weston, Highways Steward, for an update regarding the blocked drains in Stodmarsh.
7(i) – The Clerk agreed to contact Michelle Matthews at KCC for an update on the 30mph sign in Stodmarsh.
12 – Cllr Treacher suggested that future agendas be circulated as a "news item" on the website so subscribers will get automatic notification. This was unanimously agreed.
18(Trees) – Cllr Wright asked for clarification on how many quotations need to be obtained for an arboriculturalist. The Clerk advised that ideally three quotations need to be obtained due to the nature of the works but, depending on the estimate received, two quotations may suffice.
18(Village Hall) – Linda Lodge reported that she will submit the Viridor application once planning permission has been received for the replacement windows and all the quotations are in an acceptable format to be submitted, which Malcolm Withers is arranging.

20(ii) – Cllr Treacher reported that he submitted a comment for the proposed extension of the Allington Integrated Waste Facility (IWAF) on behalf of the Parish Council.

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

County Cllr Michael Northey – KCC (Kent County Council)

The Clerk presented the following report on Cllr Northey's behalf:
Cllr Northey reported that KCC held a full County Council meeting on 10 September 2020 where an in-year budget adjustment had to be agreed to cope with the financial impact of Covid-19. There was widespread public consultation over the new proposals and KCC voted for an extra £36.3 million expenditure for the year. Full details can be seen on their website. Cllr Northey explained that the deficit was caused by extra expenditure on items such as PPE (Personal Protection Equipment), IT equipment and licenses for home working (95% of KCC staff have been working from home) and other support. There has also been a loss of income during lockdown.

Cllr Northey reported that a vast amount of work was undertaken over the summer, in conjunction with bus companies, to ensure there was adequate transport for school children in place for September. Initial reports seem to suggest that there have been fewer problems reported so far compared to previous years.

10 September 2020 was World Suicide Prevention Day. The KCC Suicide Prevention Programme recognises the particular impact lockdown has had on mental health as people feel more isolated and distressed. Release the Pressure received more funding from KCC for the 24/7 helpline and between April and July there were over 10,500 calls, an 18% increase above the same period last year. A new easy to use mental health text messaging service, free on all major mobile networks, has been launched. To start a conversation with a trained and experienced volunteer who can give support at any time, text the word "Kent" or "Medway" to 85258. Over 700 conversations have taken place already. KCC recognizes that this important issue is an ongoing one, and that lockdown has caused extra problems. Information on all these services, and links to other organisations which support mental wellbeing, are available on the KCC website.

6. **HIGHWAYS**

(i) Highways Improvement Plan
Cllr Treacher reported that there has been no further progress on the other items of the plan.

(ii) A257 Update
Nothing to report.

7. **PLANNING**

CA/20/01560/FUL – The Quaives Retreat, Seaton Road

Cllr Wright advised that the proposed outdoor heated swimming pool is planned to be located some distance from the house towards the end of the garden area, which is currently unlit. Cllr Wright advised that she met with the Applicant who confirmed the pool would be for private use only and no external lighting is proposed, except for the pool lights themselves. The garden is currently listed in the Kent Compendium of Historic Parks and Gardens.

The Parish Council has no objections, although requested a condition relating to external lighting to limit potential light pollution. A comment was also made regarding the possibility of restricting use of the pool to limit any noise disturbance and the Kent Compendium of Historic Parks and Gardens entry.

CA/20/01468/FUL – Bradley Farmhouse, Grove Road

The Parish Council has no objections to the change of use of detached garage to self-contained holiday chalet together with dormer to rear and 2no balcony windows to front. Cllr Holland reported that since the closing date for comments, a neighbour of the property has expressed concern that the proposed dormers may overlook their property.

CA/20/01566/FUL and CA/20/01567/LB – Teedleham Farm, Grove Road
The Parish Council has no objections to the proposed single storey rear extension with 2no dormer windows to the side roofslope to allow accommodation in the roofspace, internal alterations and photovoltaic panel installation.

CA/20/01647/FUL – Rowan House, Stodmarsh Road
The Parish Council feels that the provision of solid timber gates at 1.8m high would be too dominating and not in keeping with the rural setting. A suggestion was put forward for a five bar field gate, which is lower and more traditional in appearance.

CA/20/01830/LB – Stodmarsh Court, Stodmarsh Road
The Parish Council has no objections to the retrospective application for internal alterations including the removal of a utility room stair that connects ground floor to first floor. Cllr Holland reported that she understood the Applicant was previously advised by CCC that planning permission was not required, but CCC has since been determined that permission does need to be obtained.

CA//19/01798/FUL – The Pear Orchard, Hawthorne Bungalow and Altona, The List
Cllr Wright wished to thank all councillors for contributing to the final submitted comment, in particular Cllr Holland and Cllr Collinson for their assistance. Cllr Wright reported that the submitted comment focused on the previously submitted reasons for objection and requested the Planning Inspector look at the application in its entirety, not just CCC's reasons for refusal as outlined in the minutes dated 16 June 2020.

Although it was noted in the comment that the Parish Council would be willing to attend the site visit with the Planning Inspector, Cllr Wright understands a site visit has been undertaken and the Parish Council was not invited to send a representative.

CA/20/01053/VAR – Quaives Farm, Grove Road
CCC has granted permission for variation of condition 2 (restrictions to polytunnel covers) of planning permission CA/09/00931/FUL for the erection of polytunnels; to allow the retention of the polytunnel covers all year round.

CA/20/01108/FUL – Bradley Farmhouse, Grove Road
CCC has refused permission for a two storey dwelling, cycle/bin store together with associated parking and landscaping following demolition of existing agricultural building. Cllr Wright reported that the reasons for refusal were that the proposed development is located outside of any identified settlement, giving rise to an unsustainable and harmful form of development, and that the proposed development would have a harmful urbanising impact.

Cllr Treacher reported that it was highlighted at the KALC Area Committee meeting held on 28 July 2020 that the number of planning breaches increased during lockdown across the Canterbury District. Cllr Treacher encouraged councillors to be vigilant for any suspicious development in the parish.

CCC Local Plan Review
Cllr Wright reported that she checked the relevant chapters in the new Landscape and Character Biodiversity Assessment relating to Wickhambreaux for factual accuracy. Some small errors were highlighted in the response to CCC.

Cllr Wright also reported that she responded to the Local Facilities Audit, checking whether the current list of facilities is accurate. Additional information was also requested for village halls as part of the consultation.

Planning White Paper

Cllr Wright reported that she attended the joint KALC/CPRE (the countryside charity) event on the Planning White Paper on 11 September 2020. Cllr Wright proposed putting this as an agenda item for the next meeting and this was unanimously agreed.

Cllr Collinson wished to thank Cllr Wright for all her work on planning matters on behalf of the Parish Council in the interim period.

8. **MANSTON AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT**

Cllr Wright wished to thank all councillors for contributing to the final submitted comment, in particular Cllr Collinson for assisting with graphics and formatting. The consultation responded to relates to proposed flight paths.

In summary, the Parish Council objected to the use of the proposed southerly departure flight paths for environmental and ecological reasons, especially in relation to Stodmarsh NNR (National Nature Reserve). The northerly flight paths were identified as being the most preferred route over the sea but the easterly departure flight paths over Ramsgate were also supported in principle, as long as this is alternated with the northerly sea routes to offer some mitigation for the town.

Cllr Wright reported that she has been liaising with Natural England to establish why the developers have purposefully avoided proposing any routes over Sandwich and Pegwell Bay NNR, which has the same European and international designations as Stodmarsh, but not avoided Stodmarsh NNR.

The Case Officer at Natural England who participated in the original inquiry, reported that an Agreement of Common Ground was reached between Natural England and RSP (RiverOak Strategic Partners) who own Manston. As part of this agreement, the important wildlife sites around Kent and the coast were discussed and Stodmarsh was identified as a site that would not be affected by the proposal. This conclusion was reached based on the alignment of the runway running west to east and the old northerly and easterly routes being utilised

There is no specific agreement in place not to fly over Pegwell Bay, but an agreement was reached to use the previous northerly and easterly routes, which would result in Pegwell Bay not being intruded upon any more than it was previously. A sum to Natural England has been agreed for mitigation for Pegwell Bell in the region of £100,000. Approximately one fifth of this will be spent monitoring any new flights but the majority will be spent on various projects to minimise disturbance to birds.

Cllr Wright explained that Pegwell Bay also has recreational and leisure users as well as bird watching, which results in a certain level of disturbance to wildlife already. Proposed projects will be put in place to lessen this impact to offset any impact from aircraft. This would not be possible at Stodmarsh NNR as it is a better managed site focussed on wildlife as opposed to leisure and tourism.

Natural England has advised that should RSP deviate from the agreed use of the northerly and easterly routes, the consultation process will need to start again with Natural England for a new agreement to be reached.

Cllr Treacher reported that at the KALC Area Committee meeting held on 28 July 2020, there was no common view of the parish councils in attendance.

Manston Airport Development is currently the subject of a Judicial Review, submitted by the Ramsgate Coastal Community Team, so all further consultation will be put on hold until after the Review has been concluded.

Cllr Treacher wished to thank Cllr Wright for taking the lead in responding to the consultation.

9. **APM (ANNUAL PARISH MEETING) PREPARATIONS**

The APM had to be postponed due to Covid-19 in line with government advice. Cllr Treacher advised that the legal requirement to hold an APM this year has since been removed and proposed not to hold the APM until April/May 2021, subject to government advice closer to the time. This was unanimously agreed.

10. **STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

The Clerk previously circulated draft Standing Orders and Financial Regulations prior to the meeting. No changes were proposed to the Standing Orders but it was proposed to make an addition to the Financial Regulations to allow committees of the Parish Council to have debit cards at the discretion and resolution of the relevant committee.

Although there is existing provision in the regulations to allow the Clerk to have a debit card, this had not been extended to committees and the Village Hall Committee has expressed an interest in obtaining one to purchase items such as cleaning supplies.

Cllr Treacher clarified that it is important that the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations also cover committees where appropriate as they are governed by the same regulations as the Parish Council. Both documents are in place to protect members and Cllr Treacher suggested the Clerk provide a brief outline of both regulations highlighting the main points the committees need to know to ensure they are compliant. As part of this exercise, any further amendments required to the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations to ensure committee members are covered in their daily duties can be identified. This was unanimously agreed.

The Parish Council unanimously approved the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

11. **LOCATION OF NEW BENCH IN STODMARSH**

The Clerk reported that she is liaising with KCC to establish whether they are the landowner of the proposed location at the top of the hill by the Stodmarsh sign. If this is confirmed, the Clerk agreed to submit an application for permission to install a bench.

12. **IMPROVING BROADBAND PROVISION IN THE PARISH**

Cllr Holland reported that she attended a virtual meeting with a representative from Openreach, who has approved a scheme in principle to run a fibre connection to all properties in Stodmarsh, minus two properties which are on the outskirts of the parish due to cost.

Detailed costings are due to be received next week following on-site assessments but this may be delayed due to Covid-19. Initial costs given indicate it would cost approximately £3,821 per home, but residential properties receive a discount of at least £2,500 per home and businesses £3,500 per home. The figures quoted may however change substantially depending on the outcome of the on-site assessments.

The figures quoted will be based on every property identified for the project signing up, which will be the decision of the homeowners. Cllr Holland reported that there may be an increase in the discount available for Kent properties but this has not been confirmed.

Cllr Holland enquired about adding Wickhambreaux to the project but the representative advised keeping Stodmarsh separate as it meets all of Openreach's criteria for a rural project. If successful, Cllr Holland suggested submitting a separate project request for Wickhambreaux in due course.

13. **CLLRS' REPORTS**

School Report

The Clerk reported that Patrick Duffy advised there were no specific points to note this month.

Cllr Treacher reported that there has been an increase in the number of incidents of inconsiderate parking since the government advised all school pupils should return in

September. As a number of new pupils have just joined the School, Cllr Treacher suggested the Clerk contact the School to propose a note be circulated to parents asking them to be mindful of parking considerately for local residents. This was unanimously agreed.

School Liaison
Cllr Collinson reported that he needs clearer direction from the Village Hall Committee what items they would like to have as part of a formal agreement with the School. Once this has been established, Cllr Collinson will enter into discussions with Lisa Crosbie, Acting Head Teacher. Cllr Treacher agreed to liaise with the Village Hall Committee.

Cllr Treacher advised that there was a recent incident where the hall was left unlocked by the School when not in use at the end of the day. Lisa Crosbie, who was in the school at the time, has since apologised and the Village Hall Committee has advised the School to ensure the hall is locked after use for security and insurance purposes. Locking the hall when not in use would need to form part of a formal agreement for use with the School.

Tree Report
Cllr Wright reported that since the last meeting there have been three notifications to fell trees in the parish that have been either dead or dangerous, which are exempt from requiring permission.

Law and Order
Cllr Holland reported that the bug hotel in the playing field has been vandalised. Cllr Holland expressed her reluctance to report minor incidents of vandalism and antisocial behaviour to the Police as it is unlikely to get a response. Cllr Holland was also cautious of the Parish Council becoming known for reporting lots of isolated minor incidents, which may result in less action for more pressing issues. Instead, Cllr Holland felt that it would be better to only report urgent incidents that require action to resolve.

Cllr Treacher acknowledged the Police are unlikely to send resources to such incidents but favoured reporting to the PCSO, whose duties include taking informal action against incidents of antisocial behaviour locally. The Clerk confirmed she has reported the bug hotel vandalism to the PCSO who has formally logged the incident.

Cllr Wright suggested inviting PCSO Eleanor Castle to the next Parish Council meeting to give an overview of her role within the parish, or provide a written outline of her role if unable to attend. The Clerk advised that PCSO Castle's shift patterns may make it difficult to attend meetings but agreed to invite her. The Clerk also agreed to copy in Cllr Holland to ensure she has the correct contact details.

KALC
The most recent KALC Area Committee meeting was held on 28 July 2020. Main points to note include the election of Barbara Flack as Vice Chairman, who is both Chairman of Blean Parish Council and a city councillor. Best practice tips for virtual meetings were shared and discussion topics included the Manston Airport consultation and the Parish Charter/Handbook, where it was agreed to set up a small working party to enter into further discussions with CCC to progress the review further.

An update on the consultation on the future of Concurrent Function Funding was also discussed in some detail. Parishes in attendance expressed their disappointment that no option was given for the retention of the funding and were unanimously in agreement that parish councils should be given another opportunity to comment on CCC's recommendation. The Covid Emergency Committee agreed on 06 August 2020 to recommend a meeting be arranged for parish councils to express their views before CCC makes its final decision. CCC has not set a date for the virtual meeting. A final decision will be made by CCC in advance of precept and budget setting deadlines.

Cllr Treacher reported that the next KALC Area Committee meeting will be held in October 2020 in advance of CCC's virtual meeting on Concurrent Function Funding, date to be confirmed.

Village Hall Committee
Cllr Treacher reported that the Village Hall Committee met on 04 and 13 August 2020 via Zoom to discuss the new Covid-19 guidelines and have produced a risk assessment. This risk assessment is under constant review to ensure that the hall remains compliant with changes in government guidelines. The School has provided a copy of their own risk assessment with regards to use of the hall to the Committee.

CCC has confirmed that the Committee is entitled to the £10,000 Covid-19 grant received. The Committee subsequently reimbursed the School for the spring 2020 term rent as they had not used the hall during Covid-19, which the School has thanked the Committee for.

Cllr Treacher also reported that the new stage curtains have been ordered but will not be hung until after the windows have been replaced due to dust.

Linda Lodge reported that she attended a socially distanced workshop in the Westgate Hall on 20th August 2020, held by Red Zebra, to discuss how community halls can move forward during Covid-19. Compared to other village halls in attendance, Wickhambreaux is in a strong position being owned by the Parish Council who can step in if required, and having its main hirer the Primary School bringing in guaranteed income at a time of uncertainty for most halls. Hersden and Thanington Community Centres for example have had to furlough staff and a number of halls are on the brink of bankruptcy.

Mrs Lodge also reported that she was contacted by a representative from the Kentish Gazette following the meeting as they have since published an article highlighting the struggle of village halls during Covid-19. Wickhambreaux did not feature as it is in a more favourable position.

Playing Field Committee
Linda Lodge reported that the School approached the Playing Field Committee with a copy of their risk assessment and requested permission to use the field at lunchtime and for organised games. The benches and play equipment will not be used and pupils will not be mixing with the general public due to the pupils being in "bubbles".

A resident bordering the playing field has contacted the Committee questioning the use of the field by the School due to the signage advising no more 15 persons in the playing field at any one time. The resident will be contacted to clarify the permission given to the School.

Additional signage will be placed at the entrances to the playing field advising of the change in government guidelines that no more than six people from different households are to socialise together. The School will be exempt from this rule under government guidelines. The Playing Field Committee will continue to monitor government guidelines and take any necessary action.

The resident also wished to draw the Committee's attention to witnessing a school pupil urinating on the playing field near their fence and an incident involving four unknown males drinking one evening, possibly from one of the local farms. The School and local farms will be approached regarding these incidents. Mrs Lodge commented that a change in weather is likely to reduce use of the playing field and resolve a number of the issues highlighted.

Mrs Lodge reported that Majestic Garden Care has submitted a complaint regarding hedge trimmings being left on the playing field by a resident bordering the field. The Playing Field Committee will be contacting the resident to ensure this is cleared in future.

Mrs Lodge also reported that the recent quarterly maintenance inspection report produced by KOMPAN has highlighted a few minor issues but nothing requiring urgent attention.

Footpaths
Cllr Treacher reported that the raised plastic capping on the riverbank by The Mill appears to have been removed entirely following the grass being cut by KCC. Cllr Treacher agreed to contact the Environment Agency.

Website
Cllr Collinson reported that there have been approximately 2-3 visitors to the website each day, except in August where 364 visitors were noted. The majority of these visitors viewed the website between the 23 and 30 August 2020, which coincided with the parish leaflet drop.

Following an update to the new webmail system, Cllr Collinson created a video guide for councillors to explain the new changes. Cllr Treacher wished to thank Cllr Collinson for creating the tutorial videos.

14. **FINANCE**

The expenditure totalling £696.79 was authorised, made up of:

- KALC – Clerk's Conference 24 September 2020 - £60.00
- Majestic Garden Care – Playing Field Maintenance August 2020 - £132.00
- Chenice Howard-Sparkes – Clerk salary September 2020
- Lyssi Varghese – Village Hall Cleaner Salary September 2020
- HMRC – Employee and PAYE September 2020
- KOMPAN – Quarterly maintenance playing field inspection - £96.00

In the interim period, the following cheques were signed:
August 2020 Interim Payments:
Majestic Garden Care – Playing Field Maintenance July 2020 - £132.00
DM Payroll Services Ltd - Payroll services first half of 2020-2021 - £54.00
CCC - Printing parish website leaflet - £55.00
Chenice Howard-Sparkes – Clerk salary August 2020
Lyssi Varghese – Village Hall Cleaner Salary August 2020
HMRC – Employee and PAYE August 2020

The Clerk reported that the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) has agreed the new pay scales for 2020-2021, to be implemented from 01 April 2020. The Clerk is on spinal point 06 which has an hourly rate increase from £9.96 to £10.24.

15. **CLERK REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE**

(i) KCC has funding for the year 2020-21 to install electric vehicle charge-points in Parish and Town Council locations. This project is aimed at Parish and Town Councils who have ownership or use of village/town halls and community buildings. KCC will favour locations where multiple charge-points can reasonably be installed, providing there is a local need, which must be reserved solely for the use of electric vehicles.
It is most likely that Fast (7-22kW) charge-points, using Type 2 connectors, will be the most suitable for this project because they provide the most appropriate speed for communities looking to serve visitors and local residents. Type 2 connectors are industry standard and will connect to the greatest number of vehicles. Charge-points will either be wall mounted, which is typically the lowest cost, or located on a pillar or post.

Charge-point costs vary. The units themselves are approximately:

- £500 - £1000 for a single charge-point at 7kW
- £800 - £2,000 for a double charge-point at 7kW
- £2,000 - £3,000 for a single 22kW charge-point AC.

However, the installation costs and connection to power will vary with each location. It is likely that up to £4,000 per Parish or Town Council will be used for Capital costs of installing a charge point/s.

KCC will fund and retain ownership of the charge-points. KCC will therefore arrange for maintenance, servicing and deal with any issues that may arise. If the units are vandalised or accidentally damaged then KCC will arrange for the repair. A maintenance and repair fee will be taken from the revenue generated by selling electricity before profit share is split out. Profits will be split 70/30 between KCC and Parish/Town Councils (70% for KCC).

The Clerk has contacted KALC for advice and can confirm that the Parish Council has the power to install charging points on Parish Council owned land under S111 powers of the 1972 LGA (Local Government Act). The Parish Council can also utilise S137 expenditure, but this is capped at £8.32 per elector for each financial year. Parish Council's interested in the project have until 18th September 2020 to express an interest. The Clerk was asked to express an interest.

16. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
None.

The meeting closed at 9.53pm

Signed……..... (Chairman)

Date…….....