

**WICKHAMBREAUX PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 26 APRIL 2023 AT  
WICKHAMBREAUX VILLAGE HALL, THE STREET, WICKHAMBREAUX, CT3 1RJ**

Present: Parish Cllr Darren Howe  
Parish Cllr Robin Treacher  
Parish Cllr Peter Collinson  
Parish Cllr Theresa McRobbie  
Parish Cllr Caroline Rees  
Parish Cllr Martin Twyman

County Cllr Mike Sole

Mrs Chenice Howard-Sparkes, Clerk to the Council

2 Members of the Public

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

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for apologies for absence. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Faith Wright (Holiday). It was noted that the Annual Parish Meeting was well attended on 18 April 2023 and thanks were recorded to Cllr Collinson for stepping in as guest speaker and all the volunteers who provided refreshments.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 MARCH 2023**

All councillors voted in favour that the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2023 be accepted as a true record of the meeting and the Chairman duly signed them.

**4. INFORMATION FROM MATTERS ARISING**

4(9) – Cllr Treacher reported that he and Cllr Wright checked with CCC whether advertisement consent is required for the village sign. CCC confirmed that advertisement consent is required under national planning legislation for all signage 1.55m<sup>2</sup> or over.

9(15ii) – The Clerk confirmed that the assessments have been undertaken for Wickhambreaux and the Clerk is chasing for an update on assessments in Ickham.

7 – The Clerk was asked to check with Cllr Wright whether the EA (Environment Agency) has decided to take any further action on Land to the West of Grove Road.

10 – Cllr Rees advised that the footpath map will be installed shortly, with final positioning to be agreed on site during installation.

13 (Flooding) – Cllr Treacher reported that the beavers previously reported have not been active in the past few weeks.

13 (Footpaths) – Cllr Treacher reported that the EA has replaced the capping on the footpath by the Mill.

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

County Cllr Mike Sole

Cllr Sole reported that he has been working with the campaign group S.O.S Save Our Seventeen Bus, working to get the evening service reinstated along the Elham Valley. A positive meeting was held with Stagecoach, and it is hoped that by working with the bus operator and encouraging greater bus use, there may be a good outcome shortly.

This month, Cllr Sole attended parish council meetings/annual parish meetings in Kingston, Lower Hardres, Bishopsbourne, Petham, Ickham, Barham and Wickhambreaux. Cllr Sole also attended the final full council meeting of CCC before the upcoming elections, Kent & Medway Fire & Rescue Authority Audit and Governance Committee, and the re-opening of the Revival Food and Mood Mental Health and Wellness Café in Whitstable.

KCC is currently trialing a new version of their highway fault reporting tool, which will enable accurate location of issues when reported from a phone. This may help identify locations, but additional funding is required to bring roads up to the expected standard.

Cllr Sole attended a catch up meeting with the KCC Highway Improvement team to review the status of all Highway projects in the 16 parish councils in Canterbury South, and also unparished Wincheap. As a result of this, KCC will be working with Bridge School to see what can be done to improve road safety around school times. Potential 20mph schemes were also discussed for Ickham, Barham and Petham.

## **6. HIGHWAYS**

### **(i) A257 Update**

Cllr Twyman reported that the A257 Group is currently focusing on planning application CA/23/00484, for 300 houses on Bekesbourne Lane in Littlebourne. Cllr Twyman has been asked to convey Wickhambreaux Parish Council's view to the Group.

### **General Highways Matters**

Cllr Twyman advised that the recent poor weather has contributed to the worsening condition of roads, in particular potholes. Cllr Twyman reported that he had to re-report three locations where patching works have failed within a week. Cllr Sole advised that Highways Stewards are undertaking emergency patching repairs, which may account for some of the quick failure rates. The Government has pledged to provide additional funding to repair potholes, which KCC will allocate in its budget accordingly in due course.

Cllr Twyman also reported that the edge of the carriageways along Grove Road continue to be in poor condition. Hazard cones have been in place since January 2023 to warn motorists and cyclists, especially after heavy rainfall which obscures the depth of potholes. Cllr Twyman is chasing KCC for action but as the problem areas are outside KCC's responsibility, it falls to the local landowners owners to facilitate repairs.

The Clerk was asked to contact KCC's Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) team to ask for an update on the filling in of informal laybys.

## **7. PLANNING**

### **CA/23/00434 – Wickham Court, The Green**

The Parish Council has no objections to the proposed single storey side extension to Garden Room.

### **CA/23/00317 and CA/23/00605 – Little Green, Wickham Road**

The Parish Council has no objections to the erection and display of 1no non-illuminated village sign.

### **CA/23/00663 – Wisteria, The List**

The Parish Council has no objections to the proposed single storey ground floor side extension together with first floor side extension to existing dwelling.

### **CA/23/00484 – Land at The Hill, Bekesbourne Lane, Littlebourne**

An outline planning application has been submitted for up to 300 residential dwellings (including affordable housing and older person accommodation), a new community hub, introduction of structural planting and landscaping, informal public open space and children's play area and surface water flood mitigation and attenuation.

The Parish Council was unanimously in objection to the development and echoes concerns expressed by Littlebourne Parish Council. It was further agreed Cllr Twyman should convey Wickhambreaux Parish Council's views to the A257 Group. Cllr Collinson agreed to draft a response and circulate to councillors for comment prior to submission.

CCC has granted the application for a single storey rear extension following demolition of conservatory.

**8. MAINTENANCE TO VILLAGE GREENS**

Cllr McRobbie reported that she has obtained one quotation to date and is waiting on a further two companies to provide comparison quotations. The current contractor who mows the greens has declined to provide a quotation due to work commitments. It was agreed to defer this item until additional quotations have been obtained.

**9. CLLRS' REPORTS**

**Village Hall Committee**

The most recent Village Hall Committee was held on 22 March 2023. Main items of discussion included the small capital works and potential for a more extensive refurbishment project, King Charles III Coronation, hall bookings and utility bills. Cllr Treacher advised that the Village Hall Committee launched their next public consultation on potential improvement works in the Village Hall at the Annual Parish Meeting. Cllr Rees reported that she met with the Chairman of the Village Hall Committee today (26 April 2023) and had a productive discussion on potential improvements. The Parish Council agreed to underwrite a substantial portion of the cost associated with the village hall toilet roof repairs, up to a maximum of £15,000, at its meeting on 20 February 2023. Should the Village Hall Committee wish to undertake a more substantial refurbishment project and require additional funding, a further request will need to be made to the Parish Council as part of a three-year plan for consideration.

**Playing Field**

Cllr Rees advised that whilst the 'cash for clothes' incentive introduced for St Andrew's Church, which brings in 50p a kilo in fundraising, has been successful, the quality of the clothes donated could raise more than this if sold separately. Cllr Rees has spoken with the Playing Field Committee, St Andrew's Church and the Village Hall Committee and all organisations are in agreement with a suggestion to have a second-hand clothes stall to coincide with alternate community coffee mornings in the village hall. Ickham Church has volunteered to store clothing and funds will be split equally between the three organisations.

**Village Greens**

Cllr Rees reported that the railings on one side of the white bridge in Wickhambreaux are in poor state of repair, both in terms of rotten timbers and deteriorating paint work. Cllr Rees agreed to send photographs to the Clerk to report to KCC for further inspection and action.

**Flooding**

Cllr Twyman reported that he attended the second meeting hosted by the Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership (KSCP) discussing issues caused by beavers on waterways. 35 people attended the first meeting, but only seven attendees attended the second. There are approximately 20-30 beavers on the Great Stour, but very little action can be taken. Cllr Twyman also reported that he will be attending an online meeting with representatives from Southern Water and other water authorities on Friday 21 April 2023, to discuss the future of water supplies.

Cllr Twyman also reported that the Little Stour Nailbourne and River Group held their annual meeting on 01 April 2023. Of the 13 parish councils members of the group, nine were able to send representatives. Southern Water did not send a representative but the Environment Agency did. The main point to note from the meeting is the Nailbourne is now flowing faster following recent rain, but is still not flowing through all areas yet.

A family in Wickhambreaux contacted Cllr Twyman with concerns regarding higher water levels, which Cllr Twyman has discussed with them in detail.

## 10. FINANCE

The expenditure totalling £1,241.15 was authorised, made up of:

- Eyelid Productions – Annual website support - £100.00
- Majestic Garden Care – Playing Field maintenance March 2023 - £90.00
- KOMPAN – March 2023 Annual Play Area Inspection - £300.00
- KALC – Annual Subscription 2023-2024 - £282.12
- Parkers Digital Print Ltd – Printing of revised Emergency Plan Cards - £72.00
- Cllr Caroline Rees – Reimbursement for APM Expenses - £14.38
- Chenice Howard-Sparkes - Clerk Salary April 2023
- HMRC - Employee and PAYE April 2023

The following interim payment was authorised between March-April 2023:

- Ben Anker Photography - Services in relation to Village Sign - £500.00

## 11. CLERK REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE

Nothing to report not previously discussed.

## 12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (i) Cllr Treacher reported that the noticeboard notices are out of date and require updating.
- (ii) Cllr Rees advised The Rose Public House is due to open under new ownership mid-May 2023.
- (iii) Cllr Twyman advised that a local farmer lost 30 sheep, the majority lambs, last weekend due to a dog attack.
- (iv) Cllr Twyman advised that St Andrew's Church is holding a working party on 13 May 2023 for vegetation clearance works. All are welcome to attend.
- (v) A member of the public reported a parishioner has approached them to ask whether there is any street cleaning in the village. Councillors were not aware of any formal street cleaning.
- (vi) For the benefit of the new Parish Council, the following ongoing projects were identified to be progressed; joint Speedwatch group with Ickham Parish Council, Procurement Policy, Village Sign, improvement works to village greens.
- (vii) Councillors wished to record thanks to Cllr Howe and Cllr Treacher, who are standing down at the May 2023 elections, for all their hard work since joining the Parish Council.

The meeting closed at 9.11pm

Signed..... (Chairman)

Date.....