

**WICKHAMBREAUX PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 17 JANUARY 2023 AT
WICKHAMBREAUX VILLAGE HALL, THE STREET, WICKHAMBREAUX, CT3 1RJ**

Present: Parish Cllr Darren Howe
Parish Cllr Robin Treacher
Parish Cllr Faith Wright
Parish Cllr Peter Collinson
Parish Cllr Theresa McRobbie

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 and accepted from Cllr Martin Twyman (Holiday) and Cllr Caroline Rees (Illness).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 NOVEMBER 2022

All councillors voted in favour that the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2022 be accepted as a true record of the meeting, with one correction to amend the date of the meeting, and the Chairman duly signed them.

4. INFORMATION FROM MATTERS ARISING

4(9) – Cllr McRobbie advised that the Village Sign Working Group have facilitated discussions between an artist and a designer, taking on board the comments made on the previous proposal, and have decided on a final design. A copy of the final design will be displayed in the noticeboard outside the village hall. The Parish Council will post a news item on the website once a copy of the final design has been received. The Village Sign Working Group has been reminded the deadline for spending the CCC (Canterbury City Council) Capital Grant funding is 31 March 2023.
4(5) – Cllr McRobbie confirmed that the KCC (Kent County Council) Drainage Team has rectified the drainage issue in Stodmarsh.

4(9) – The Clerk confirmed that CCC has approved the application to list The Red Lion in Stodmarsh as an Asset of Community Value (ACV).

10 – Cllr Wright reported she submitted the Parish Council's numerous comments on CCC's draft Local Plan via CCC's online consultation questionnaire.

13 (Village Hall) – Cllr Wright commented that there are daffodil bulbs planted underneath the weed suppressant matting outside the village hall. Cllr Treacher agreed to check with the Village Hall Committee whether the matting is to be lifted soon.

5. REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND CITY COUNCILLORS AND PCSO

County Cllr Mike Sole

With assistance and financial support from Womenswold Parish Council and Cllr Sole's KCC Combined Members Fund, Cllr Sole reported that the Traffic Regulation Order to reduce the speed limit in Woolage Village from 60mph to 30mph has been issued. Cllr Sole also continues to work with other parish councils on their Highway Improvement Plans.

Cllr Sole reported he continues to raise the significant concerns from residents and businesses regarding the unpopular Wincheap Gyrotory scheme with KCC and other councillors. KCC say that they were only involved five years ago as a statutory consultee (from a safety perspective) on the developer's scheme prepared to comply with the current CCC Local Plan. If changes are to be made at this late stage, it would have to be as a result of CCC first agreeing them with the developers. At present, this is not something that CCC is prepared to do as they state the scheme was properly consulted on as part of the planning process.

The recent cold weather has created a lot of new potholes across Kent. Cllr Sole encouraged residents to report these directly to KCC Highways and contact him in due course if they have not been repaired once reported.

During December, Cllr Sole gave advice to residents about planning applications and breaches of planning permission, chased up drainage issues, road closure problems, buses not stopping, housing waiting list issues, road gritting, flytipping and parking enforcement. Cllr Sole distributed gifts around Nailbourne as part of the Lord Mayor's Christmas Fund and continues to chase KCC regarding disabled access at bus stops.

Cllr Sole reported that as part of KCC's draft budget for 2023-2024, the annual Combined Members Grant is proposed to be reduced from £10,000 to £3,600. This is a grant that all KCC councillors have access to that can be used to help fund community and highway projects. Cllr Sole proposed at the KCC Growth, Economic and Communities Cabinet Committee that the grant remain at £10,000, but this was not passed. The budget will be approved at the KCC meeting on 09 February 2023. The Parish Council has benefited from this grant in the past and expressed disappointment at the proposed reduction.

6. HIGHWAYS

The Clerk reported on behalf of Cllr Twyman that all previously reported pot holes should have been repaired before this evening (17 January 2023). Cllr Collinson advised there were some large pot holes in The List and agreed to report these to KCC Highways.

7. PLANNING

CA/22/01530 – Land to the North of The Quaives Retreat, Seaton Road

Cllr Wright reported that the Case Officer is awaiting further information to be submitted by the applicant prior to determining the application.

CA/22/02472 – 6 The Mill, The Green

As the deadline for comments was during the interim period between meetings, Cllr Wright reported that she carried out a site visit at The Mill and circulated a draft comment to councillors for consideration with concerns prior to submission. The Heritage Officer has advised that amendments are due to be made to the proposals.

CA/22/02508 – Ivy House, Stodmarsh Road

The Parish Council has no objections to the proposed replacement outbuilding to form a workshop and studio.

CA/22/02575 – Ivy House, Stodmarsh Road

The Parish Council has no objections to the proposed external and internal alterations including replacement fireplaces to ground floor, removal of arched brick over fireplace, replacement front door and rear door from timber to timber, removal of balustrade and handrail, extension to partition to attic floor, and replacement gable end windows from timber to timber on side elevations.

CCC draft Local Plan

Cllr Wright reported that she attended a public meeting in Littlebourne regarding the draft Local Plan in December 2022, which was very well attended. The majority of attendees were objecting to the proposed schemes in Littlebourne due to concerns regarding infrastructure, community facilities and traffic.

Cllr Wright also attended a meeting with Mr Andrew Thompson (CCC Corporate Policy and Strategy Manager), Louise Randall (CCC Principal Planning Officer), and Cllr Howe on 16 December 2022 to discuss a number of concerns regarding the draft Local Plan. The main topics of discussion were Stodmarsh Nature Reserve and the proposed changes to the Rural Settlement Hierarchy Study.

CCC confirmed that they continue to have concerns for the impact of phosphates and nitrates on Stodmarsh Nature Reserve. The solution continues to be offsetting impacts of new developments with the creation of wetlands through a credits system and on-site Waste Water Treatment plants for developments over 300 dwellings in the short term, and await the upgrading of the Waste Water Treatment Works (WwTW), which the government have made a statutory obligation to update to the 'highest technically available limits' by 2030, in the long term. The WINEP study findings have also not been published yet, which may offer alternative solutions.

Cllr Wright advised that Dover District Council has undertaken some tests which indicate that Dambridge WwTWs is not having a substantial impact on Stodmarsh Nature Reserve. Further tests are also being undertaken on Newnham Valley WwTWs. This may 'free' areas covered under these WwTWs for development.

With regards to the Rural Settlement Hierarchy Study, CCC confirmed the methodology has been changed in line with the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework). CCC has listened to the concerns of smaller villages and has defined village boundaries such as Wickhambreaux specifically around existing development. The majority of undeveloped areas in the parish of Wickhambreaux is proposed to be defined as countryside in the latest draft Local Plan and therefore limited in development potential.

Following the meeting, Cllr Wright raised via email the suggestion to include the definition for 'infilling' in the new draft Local Plan. It is currently a term defined in the current 2017 plan but does not appear in the latest draft plan. Cllr Wright was advised to submit this as an official comment as part of the consultation, which she has done so.

8. PROTOCOL FOR PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Cllr Collinson presented a final draft protocol for responding to planning applications. The protocol also includes a guide for residents on how to respond to planning applications and what constitutes 'material considerations'. It was unanimously agreed to adopt the Protocol, which will be published on the Parish Council's website. Thanks were recorded to Cllr Collinson, Cllr Wright and Cllr Treacher for their input.

9. DM PAYROLL INCREASE IN FEES

The Clerk reported that payroll provider DM Payroll has given notice of an increase in the administration of the Parish Council's payroll from £108.00 to £132.00 annually, amounting to £11.00 a month. The Clerk sought another quotation for comparison which amounted to £201.60 annually (£16.80 a month). The Clerk recommended remaining with DM Payroll, which was unanimously agreed.

10. KALC COMMUNITY AWARD SCHEME

The KALC Community Award Scheme is an award to acknowledge and give recognition for those in the parish who have made a significant contribution to their local community. There is no set criteria for what a "significant contribution" might be but this might include long or sustained service to the community, achievements or actions of an inspiring nature, or other activities which have brought benefits to the parish. The Parish Council unanimously agreed to adopt the KALC Community Award Scheme for 2023 and after some discussion, a recipient of the award was agreed.

11. KING CHARLES III CORONATION

King Charles III's Coronation is due to take place on Saturday 06 May 2023. The Parish Council supported holding a community event to mark the occasion however, councillors were mindful that with the parish council election just beforehand on 04 May 2023, it is not certain which councillors will still be in post to help organise and run the event. Cllr Treacher proposed that the Village Hall Committee Events Sub-Committee be invited to take the lead in organising the event, with support from members of the Parish Council, which was unanimously agreed. Cllr Treacher agreed to raise the suggestion with the Village Hall Committee.

12. CLLRS' REPORTS

Trees

Cllr Treacher confirmed that the Finance Committee will convene on Cllr Twyman's return from holiday, with the main item of discussion a tender package for the annual tree inspection and resultant remedial work.

Cllr McRobbie reported that a number of residents have approached her wishing to replace the recently felled tree on Stodmarsh green. In 2018, the Four Villages' Conservation Society was looking to plant a native tree in each of the four villages (Littlebourne, Ickham, Stodmarsh and Wickhambreaux) as part of their 50th anniversary commemorations, but it was not possible to find a suitable location in Stodmarsh at the time. Now the opportunity has arisen for a tree in Stodmarsh, the Society has offered to fund the replacement, which was gratefully accepted.

KALC

Cllr Treacher reported that he attended the joint meeting on 21 November 2022 with CCC and KALC (Kent Association of Local Councils) Canterbury Area Committee to launch the new Parish Charter. Cllr Ben Fitter-Harding, leader of CCC, signed on behalf of CCC and Cllr Treacher signed on behalf of the KALC Canterbury Area Committee. This was followed by a Question and Answer session with Cllr Fitter-Harding. The next meeting of the KALC Canterbury Area Committee will be the Annual General Meeting in March 2023, date to be confirmed.

Village Hall Committee

Cllr Treacher reported that new art classes and fitness classes have started up in the village hall since the start of the year. The first coffee morning is also scheduled for 04 February 2023. Cllr Howe suggested that the Committee may wish to consider using some of its funds to source specific instructors to hold courses or classes in the village hall. Cllr Treacher agreed to raise this at the next Committee meeting scheduled for 06 February 2023.

Village Greens

Cllr Howe wished to thank all the councillors and volunteers for erecting and decorating the community Christmas trees in both Wickhambreaux and Stodmarsh. Cllr Howe agreed to contact Polo Building Contractors to arrange for the Christmas tree on Wickhambreaux village green to be removed.

Flooding

The Clerk reported on behalf of Cllr Twyman that the aquifer remains low, with no sign of the Nailbourne at Elham running before he went on holiday. The Emergency Committee is due to meet at the end of February 2023 and the Little Stour and Nailbourne River Group is due to meet end of February/early March 2023.

Website

Cllr Collinson reported that the amount of subscribers has remained steady. An enquiry was recently received from a subscriber wishing to update their email address. The Parish Council has the ability to delete subscribers but not to amend email addresses already subscribed. Any residents and members of the public who wish to amend their email address need to subscribe with their new email address, and either inform the Parish Council to remove their previous email or unsubscribe themselves.

13. FINANCE

The expenditure totalling £1536.09 was authorised, made up of:

- Cllr Martin Twyman - Reimbursement for Inside Out Services grass cutting 2022-2023 - £835.00
- Ewart J Clough - Christmas trees - £240.00
- SLCC - Annual subscription - £78.44
- Chenice Howard-Sparkes - Clerk Salary January 2023
- HMRC - Employee and PAYE January 2023

The Clerk advised that the SAAA (Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments) has concluded its procurement process for the next five years. Mazars LLP has been confirmed as the Parish Council's External Auditor for 2022-2023 to 2026-2027.

14. CLERK REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE

- (i) ACRK (Action with Communities in Rural Kent) is in the process of ceasing to operate. KALC is working with key officers and stakeholders to explore options to maintain services.
- (ii) KCC is consulting on its Developer Contribution Guide. Designed for local planning authorities, landowners and developers, this guide provides an overview of the contributions that KCC may seek as part of the planning process. Deadline for comments is 02 February 2023.
- (iii) The Clerk previously circulated a copy of the KALC January newsletter and list of training courses. The Clerk encouraged councillors to check the training available and contact her if they wish to attend.
- (iv) The Lord Mayor of Canterbury, Cllr Anne Dekker, has invited the Parish Council to attend The Lord Mayor's Banquet on Saturday 04 March 2023 at Leros Barracks. The Clerk asked councillors to contact her if they wish to attend.
- (v) Cllr Treacher advised that CCC is holding a virtual elections briefing for parish councils on 25 January 2023.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (i) Cllr McRobbie reported that there was an incident of flytipping in Stodmarsh recently where the culprits were caught on camera. The evidence has been passed onto the Police who have agreed to pursue the matter further. Although the reasons for flytipping are varied, Cllr McRobbie suggested KCC should be approached to reconsider their stance on the booking system to permit one day a week where a booking is not required at their Household Waste Recycling Centres. Cllr McRobbie agreed to contact Cllr Sole to enquire whether KCC would consider any changes. A councillor from Ickham Parish Council suggested the Parish Council may wish to look into sourcing cameras in flytipping hot spots and agreed to share her knowledge. The Clerk agreed to liaise with the councillor outside of the meeting.
- (ii) A councillor from Ickham Parish Council enquired whether the Parish Council would be interested in forming a joint Speedwatch group with Ickham. Cllr Treacher advised he contacted the Chairman of Ickham Parish Council back in November 2021 to make similar enquiries but did not receive a response. Cllr Treacher agreed to forward a copy of the email to facilitate further discussions.

The meeting closed at 8.56pm

Signed..... (Chairman)

Date.....