

TESTON PARISH COUNCIL

25th March 2020

Teston Parish Councillors are summoned to participate in an Email-based Meeting, as enabled, retrospectively, by Agenda Item 19/204 in the agenda below and such meeting shall be deemed to have taken place on Tuesday 31st March 2020 starting at 7.30 p.m..

This agenda has been posted on the village noticeboard, but there will be no physical meeting. Interim arrangements (see below at Agenda Item 19/204) are being applied so that the responsibilities of your Parish Council may continue to be discharged. Minutes will be placed on the village noticeboard and subsequent decisions and actions similarly displayed. It is intended that Tapestry should also carry articles about Parish Council decisions and actions and we will endeavour to ensure continuing distribution of Tapestry.

As a result of this change in your Parish Council's arrangements, please make any comments on the Agenda Items below or on subsequent minutes, decisions, actions or any Parish Council matter to the Chairman, Peter Coulling, on petercoulling@hotmail.com or to me, Teston's Clerk, on Testonparish@aol.com.

Please bear with us during these exceptional times.



Michelle Tatton, Clerk

In the interests of transparency, all Parish Councillors declare that that they have an interest in (a) Ash Tree Corner, Courtlands Verge and the Allotments, as the Parish Council owns the land; (b) the Village Green and Village Hall as Custodian Trustees; (c) Teston Land Conservation Trust Matters as they are Trustees; (d) Teston Village Stores CIC as they are Directors of the CIC; and d) Cllr Douglass, Cllr Owens, Cllr Miss Page and Cllr Mrs Wheat have an interest as members of Teston Village Hall Management Committee.

*** Denotes item for reporting only or that, if discussion and any decision depends on availability of written or verbal reports or further information and neither is to-hand, the item will be deferred to the next meeting.**

19/200	Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and/or Other Significant Interests
19/201	To Receive and Agree Apologies for Absence – not applicable
19/202	To agree Minutes of previous meetings: 28 th January 2020
19/203	Ordering of Agenda: any requests for items to be taken earlier in the meeting – not applicable
	Administration and Finance
19/204	Policies and Procedures - Standing Orders Review: Prompted by the Coronavirus outbreak, the following permanent amendments to Parish Council Standing Orders are proposed and, if agreed, shall be inserted into those Standing Orders in appropriate positions. Exceptional Delegated Authority (EDA) 1. The Clerk has normal delegated authority (NDA) in accordance with paragraph 3.3 of Attachment 2 (Financial Regulations) to these Standing Orders. 2. This EDA scheme of delegation is only for temporary use in exceptional circumstances as inferred by Government or NALC public statement and is intended to obviate the need for physical meetings until it is safe and advisable for these to recommence. It shall run in parallel with NDA. 3. If circumstances require, EDA may be invoked from a stated date at any physical meeting of the Parish Council or, if circumstances dictate and at the request of the Clerk or the Chairman, by emailed confirmation from the majority of Councillors to the Clerk. 4. In addition to NDA, after EDA has been invoked and after consultation by the Clerk with all Councillors in accordance with the Interim Procedure, the Clerk shall have additional delegated authority to: a. take such action as is necessary to enable and maintain the effective administration of Parish Council business and oversight of matters that affect Teston Parish; b. carry forward all previously agreed actions or actions determined in accordance with Interim Procedure; c. take action on any urgent matter that arises relating to any land or asset owned by the Parish Council including where there is a financial cost of up to £500 (five hundred pounds), excluding VAT, for any individual matter; d. take action on any other urgent Parish Council matter that arises, including where there is a financial cost of up to £2500 (two thousand five hundred pounds), excluding VAT, for any individual matter;

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	e. issue all payments as these fall due on agreed financial items and contracts and, to the extent that such payments require two signatories, take steps to make available for such future use pre-signed cheques, with stated payees, but, unless known, open dates and amounts; f. respond to all planning applications within Teston and those in nearby Authorities that have a potential impact on Teston Parish; and g. cancel future Parish Council meetings as necessary, based on advice from Government or NALC. 5. At the end of the next physical meeting of the Parish Council, a. EDA shall cease, but b. any decisions taken and actions commenced during the period of EDA shall be complied with and completed, as the case may be; and c. at or after that meeting, EDA may be reinstated with, as necessary, effect from the end of that meeting. Interim Procedure 6. If EDA has been invoked: a. Parish Councillors shall make known to the Clerk their views on any item of Parish Council business to be addressed via NDA or EDA by use of email, if available to them, or telephone, rather than at a physical meeting; b. the Clerk shall initiate the matter requesting such views from Parish Councillors and: i. the Clerk shall maintain a computer folder of any such views made by email; and ii. to the extent that such views are expressed to the Clerk by other than email, the Clerk shall make a note of the essence of those views in a computer folder; and the Clerk shall make those folders available to any Parish Councillor who wishes to see their contents; and c. the Clerk shall then take necessary decisions and actions on behalf of the Parish Council, in accordance with the views expressed by Parish Councillors as recorded in such folders. 7. All such decisions and actions shall be recorded in a log for reporting and minuting at the first available physical meeting of the Parish Council. Incapacity 8. If a majority of Councillors become incapacitated concurrently and unable to communicate by Interim Procedure to the Clerk, the remaining Councillors, if any, shall be deemed to form a quorum to be consulted by the Clerk and to support any decisions made, and actions taken, by the Clerk. 9. If all Councillors become incapacitated concurrently and unable to communicate via the Interim Procedure, the Clerk shall have use of NDA and EDA to take time-urgent decisions and actions on behalf of the Council. All such decisions and actions shall be reported to Councillors via email and recorded in a log for reporting and minuting at the first available meeting of the Parish Council. 10. If the Clerk is incapacitated and unable to communicate by email, the role of the Clerk shall be assumed by, in order if available, the Chair, Vice-Chair, any other Councillor willing so to act. Recommendation 1: Retrospectively to approve the above Scheme of Delegation and ratify the decision to invoke it prior to this meeting and for it to remain in effect until normal meetings can safely resume.
19/205	Statement of Accounts: to consider receipts, approve bills for payment, claims for refund of expenses, to note the general financial position including Parish Services Scheme, and consider increase in self-insurance 'sink fund' Recommendation 2: Parish Cllrs to approve the payments in the Statement of Accounts, including post-dated payments for the Clerk's Salary up to and including June 2019 to take account of the likely cancellation of meetings between now and then; while the intention is to increase the self-insurance sink fund from £2,500 to £3,000 in due course, at this time it will remain at £2500
19/206	Financial Review Recommendation 3: Clerk to monitor emerging guidance from NALC and to arrange a Financial Review meeting only if consistent with Government guidelines. As necessary, Clerk to circulate information to Cllr Mrs Wheat and Cllr Owens by email and/or any necessary hardcopy papers so that a remote review can take place, recognising that the time for submitting the Annual Return (AGAR) will be extended until the end of September
19/207	Accessibility Requirements for Public Sector Websites Recommendation 4: Clerk to have Exceptional Delegated Authority to enter into a new contract with Cantium on appropriate terms.

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19/208	Charles Arnold Baker – Local Council Administration 12th Edition Recommendation 5: Clerk to purchase the 12th Edition of Local Council Administration but to wait to see whether discounted rates become available. The Chair to inherit the newly outdated copy and the Vice-Chair to inherit the Chair's current outdated copy.
19/209	Water Plus Contract Renewal Recommendation 6: Clerk to have Exceptional Delegated Authority to enter into a new contract on the Parish Council's behalf
19/210	Teston Village Stores Request for a Grant Recommendation 7: Tapestry consultation be agreed and, if no substantive adverse comments are received and subject to positive advice being received from NALC, £2500 be granted to the CIC. If substantive adverse comments materialise, distil Councillors' views and, if appropriate, make the grant immediately after 28th July 2020, deploying Interim Procedure and EDA, as necessary.
29/211	Tapestry Matters: a) Teston Tapestry Fund Recommendation 8: Subject to a final article in Tapestry seeking views and consideration of responses by Cllrs, Clerk to have Exceptional Delegated Authority to source and purchase a seat up to the value of £500 from the Tapestry fund, to include installation b) Tapestry Advertising Fees: to note new charges have been applied and advertisers advised
	Planning
19/210	i) New/pending decisions and to ratify any responses by the Clerk: a) TM/17/01595/OAEA and 17/503416/ADJ Land East Of Hermitage Lane And South Of London Road Maidstone Kent Adjoining Authority: Outline application for the erection of up to 840 dwellings (including affordable homes) with public open space, landscaping, sustainable drainage systems, land for a Primary School, doctors surgery and for junction improvements at Hermitage Lane/A20 junction, and a link road between Poppy Fields roundabout and Hermitage Lane. Vehicular accesses into the site from Poppy Fields Roundabout and Hermitage Lane. All matters reserved with the exception of means of access – Approved (TMBC) 21.11.19 but called in to the Secretary of State by local MP b) 19/500452/FULL River Barn, Tutsham Farm, West Farleigh Erection of dwelling and associated works with parking and landscaping as shown on drawing references: DHA/10757/11; 15; 16; 18; and 19; and unreferenced existing elevations received 26/02/19 Refused - 29.03.19 Appeal pending c) TM/18/03031/OAEA 18/03031/OAEA 18/03031 - Site North of Amber Lane, Kings Hill (TMBC) Redevelopment to provide up to 85 Class C3 residential units, together with landscaping, open space and other associated works. All matters reserved for future approval except for access (Site 5.4) Application refused – 11.07.19 Refused by the Inspector on Appeal – Decision date 20.02.20 d) 19/02966/FL Coppice Court 70 Teston Road Watlington Maidstone Kent ME18 5BG Erection of building for indoor dog training – Permitted 12.02.20 e) 20/500243/FULL 12 Courtlands Teston Maidstone Kent ME18 5AS Proposed enlargement of existing garage and landscaping to front garden - Permitted 11.03.20 f) 20/500335/TCA Glengarra Mall Road Teston Maidstone Kent Trees in a Conservation Area notification - 2 x Sycamore Trees at front to be felled. Cypress Tree leaning towards Glengarra's garage to be felled. Rear garden 2 x ivy covered Hawthorn Trees to be felled. Before pruning - 1 Sycamore tree 12m tall branches overhanging drive by 5m. After pruning - 12m tall by 2m to take it back to boundary. 1 sycamore 10m tall by overhanging drive by 5m. After pruning - 10m tall by 2m back to boundary Recommendation 9: To ratify the Clerk's response expressing concern that pruning would leave those trees in an un-balanced posture and render them un-safe and, subject to the Tree Officer's views, urging the applicant to agree with the neighbour that the trees should be pruned symmetrically or perhaps even removed – Decision awaited

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	g) 19/506426/FULL North Pole Orchards North Pole Road Teston Kent ME18 5BB Erection of 2no. agricultural storage barns Recommendation 10: To ratify the Clerk's response No objection – Decision awaited h) 20/500707/FULL Greystones Malling Road Teston Maidstone Kent ME18 5AU Erection of a detached garage Recommendation 11: To ratify the Clerk's response seeking a landscaping condition to soften the impact of development on the streetscene in view of the garage being forward of the building line and prominent in the front garden – Decision awaited i) 20/501098/TPOA Group Of Trees Adjacent West Bank Malling Road Teston Maidstone Kent TPO application to reduce overhanging branches of group of Sweet Chestnut trees back to boundary, making pruning cuts to secondary growing points where possible Recommendation 12: To ratify the Clerk's response supporting the Tree Officer's view – Decision awaited <i>ii) To consider any newly submitted applications and to agree that, until further notice, the Clerk have Exceptional Delegated Authority to respond to all planning applications subject to consulting with all Councillors via email:</i> 20/501232/FULL 10 Fairlawn Close Teston Maidstone Kent ME18 5AX Erection of a single storey rear extension Recommendation 13: No objection
19/211	Local Plan Matters Recommendation 14: The Chairman should continue to engage with KALC and MBC upon the Local Plan Review and the Clerk to have Exceptional Delegated Authority to respond to any consultation or request for information at any relevant stage affecting Teston; and to agree that the Chairman and Clerk continue to engage in the Local Plan process of neighbouring authorities including any preparation for and attendance at any of the TMBC preliminary hearing dates set for May
19/213	Assets of Community Value Registration Recommendation 15: Clerk to action as soon as possible and to liaise with the Chairman as necessary regarding final draft.
19/214	Abbeyfield Development * Recommendation 16: To note the current situation regarding parking issues and continue to monitor and liaise with the Site Manager as required.
	Highways and PROW
19/215	Highways Spreadsheet: a) to receive the latest spreadsheet and agree any specific action via Exceptional Delegated Authority required to progress outstanding issues b) to note any new items for reporting including street cleaning and litter issues c) to note that the Clerk will continue to report all routine issues as they arise Recommendation 17: See spreadsheet
19/216	Speed Surveys/Traffic Calming * Recommendation 18: To note the surveys have been booked for June, but deferral is recommended until, initially, second-half September, as traffic patterns are currently distorted and would challenge the credibility of survey results. Clerk to circulate information when available.
19/217	Traffic Island on Tonbridge Road in the Vicinity of Ash Tree Corner * Recommendation 19: Clerk and Chairman to continue liaison with KCC, engaging with our County Councillor, or her close colleagues. To note that Helen Grant's questionnaire results may be made available and that the Parish Council will need to come to a view on its reaction to any recommendations
19/218	Fingerpost to Village Centre, Shop and Church * Recommendation 20: Clerk will continue to chase MBC but in view of the current crisis MBC may not be able to action this matter as a priority.

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19/219	*	Speed Watch: to note that a potential volunteer has come forward, but to note also that for the time being Speed Watch around the County has been suspended. Recommendation 21: Matter to be reviewed once social distancing restrictions have been lifted.
19/220	*	Tonbridge Road Eastern Verges Establishment of the wildflower verge on the north side of Tonbridge Road below Court Lodge Farm Recommendation 22: Clerk to chase Kent Highways Drainage and Landscapes with the Chairman to be involved in email discussions with them to resolve outstanding issues. The Chairman to meet on-site, at a suitable distance, if KCC agree.
19/221		Bollards on the western side of The Street Recommendation 23: The (revised) quotation, subject to a limit of £1500 plus VAT, be agreed and the Clerk have authority to authorise the works to go ahead as soon as possible.
		Environment
19/223		Allotments a) Regular Inspection Report from Cllr Douglass and to agree action Recommendation 24: Clerk to contact allotment holders to recommend that they exercise social distancing while at the allotments but be aware that some allotment holders may not be able to attend for some while and to ask that anyone who is unable to do so to notify the Clerk, and to ask that any allotment holders who would be willing to volunteer to keep an eye on other plots to contact the Clerk also so that, with permission, those in need and those who can help can be put in touch with each other. b) Hire of a digger to shift soil in the car park area: to receive quote Recommendation 25: To defer a decision until other work has been identified. c) Recommendation 26: To give the Clerk Exceptional Delegated Authority for actions relating to the allotments
19/224	*	Teston's Trees, Hedges and Verges a) Teston Village Green Recommendation 27: To ratify Clerk's action to arrange tree work in line with the permission granted, at a cost of £100. b) Other issues: No known issues. The Exceptional Delegated Authority will enable any necessary works to be addressed as they arise
19/225		VE Day 2020 Events Recommendation 28: To agree to postpone the event in its entirety until VJ Day (Saturday, 15th August), respecting any social distancing measures still in place at that time.
19/226		Light Clean of the War Memorial Recommendation 29: The quotation from The Stone Shop of £350 plus vat for a light clean be accepted and the Clerk arrange for the work to be carried out prior to Remembrance Day 2020.
19/227		Memorial Bench on the Village Green Recommendation 30: To agree to permit the installation of an Ashbourne (or similar) bench on the Village Green in memory of Mrs Oxley, to be located with its back close to the metal fence of the Churchyard, facing the Village Green, in a precise location determined by the Chairman and Cllr Levett.
19/228		Replacement of Notice Board Recommendation 31: Clerk to circulate details of replacement/refurbishment options for consideration and agreement prior to making a grant application to MBC.
19/229	*	Village Green/Village Hall Boundary Recommendation 32: Defer until social distancing restrictions have been lifted.
19/230	*	Removal of seating from play area at Teston Bridge Country Park Recommendation 33: Defer until social distancing restrictions have been lifted.
19/231		Seat at Crown City Recommendation 34: To give the Clerk Exceptional Delegated Authority for actions relating to this item
19/232	*	Ambulance Sirens

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		Recommendation 35: Given the current crisis and pressure on the NHS, matter to be deferred until the next full meeting of the Parish Council.
19/233	*	Play Area Matters a) Review of Play Equipment: Recommendation 36: Carry forward to the next Parish Council physical meeting, with the Clerk to circulate relevant information to Cllr Ms Burgon in the meantime b) Inspection Rota: April – Cllr Douglass; May – Cllr Miss Page; June – Cllr Owens; July – Cllr Mrs Wheat; August – Cllr Coulling; September – Cllr Ms Burgon Recommendation 37: Where possible, but taking full account of any continuing social distancing requirements and individual Cllr self-isolation, the play equipment and defibrillator will continue to be inspected subject to any further guidance from Government and NALC/KALC
		Other
19/234		Annual Parish Meeting Recommendation 38: Exceptional Delegated Authority be given to the Clerk to rearrange the meeting in due course subject to confirmation of Cllr availability and in line with any guidance from the Government and NALC/KALC
19/235		Dates of Meetings during 2020/2021 Recommendation 39: Council to respond to forthcoming guidance. Meetings will resume when Government guidance indicates it is appropriate to do so.
		Continuing Accessibility of the Play Equipment and Church: (noting latest guidance from Government issued on 24 th March) Recommendation 40: A notice to be placed in the Play Area advising users to exercise social distancing and hygiene rules. Recommendation 41: The advice from Government regarding places of worship be noted with the hope that St Peter & St Paul would remain open for solitary prayer as allowed by the guidance.
		Consultations – to consider responses
19/235	*	None.
19/236		ANY LATEST REPORT UPDATES FOR NOTING ONLY – to be reported to the Clerk by email
19/237		Confidential Items: To resolve that the item 19/238 below be processed on the basis that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted
19/238		Enforcement issues: to consider any further information received from Maidstone Borough Council and to agree upon any further action to be taken to progress outstanding enforcement issues. The material supplied is considered in confidence as required by Maidstone Borough Council.

Date of next regular meeting of the Council – 7.30pm 19th May 2020 at Teston Village Hall

Please note that this meeting and other following meetings may be subject to cancellation, possibly at short notice, depending on the advice of Government and the National Association of Local Councils

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