

TESTON PARISH COUNCIL

These Minutes were approved by the Council at its meeting on 27th November 2018

Minutes of the Meeting on 25th September 2018
at 7.30pm in Teston Village Hall

Cllr Peter Coulling – Chairman
Cllr Ms Tina Burgon
Cllr Roger Levett
Cllr Miss Dawn Page

Cllr Robin Owens
Cllr Mrs Nina Wheat
Mrs Michelle Tatton (Clerk)
2 members of the public

Before the meeting commenced the Chairman drew attention to the Council's policy on photographing, filming and broadcasting of Parish Council meetings. No intention to film, photograph or broadcast was declared.

18/107	Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and/or Other Significant Interests: In the interests of transparency, all Parish Councillors declared that they have an interest in (a) Ash Tree Corner, the 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 (not present), Cllr Owens, and Cllr Mrs Wheat have an interest as members of Teston Village Hall Management Committee. As a Church Warden, Cllr Miss Page declared an interest in item 18/149 Teston Church Status																																																																										
18/108	Apologies for absence: Were received from Cllr Douglass who was on holiday and this was agreed .																																																																										
10/109	Minutes of Meeting on 24th July 2018: These were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the meeting.																																																																										
18/110	Ordering of Agenda: No change.																																																																										
	<u>Administration and Finance</u>																																																																										
18/111	Statement of accounts: A Statement of Accounts had been circulated showing a balance of £39,157.73 from which the following payments were agreed , including post-dated cheques for the Clerk's salary for October: <table border="1"> <tr> <td>25.09.18</td><td>3067</td><td>W R Whillock - Allotments grounds maintenance</td><td>20.00</td></tr> <tr> <td>25.09.18</td><td>3068</td><td>PKF Littlejohn LLP - External Audit</td><td>240.00</td></tr> <tr> <td>25.09.18</td><td>3069</td><td>Eon Street Lighting Charges Invoice 01.09.18</td><td>25.46</td></tr> <tr> <td>25.09.18</td><td>3070</td><td>Tapestry - Annual Parish Meeting Report</td><td>116.98</td></tr> <tr> <td>25.09.18</td><td>3071</td><td>Kent Association of Local Councils Clerk's Conference September 2018</td><td>72.00</td></tr> <tr> <td>25.09.18</td><td>3072</td><td>Maidstone Borough Council Seats, Bins and Signs Installation</td><td>1848.00</td></tr> <tr> <td>25.09.18</td><td>3073</td><td>Gavin Jones - TOTAL £1959.60 i) Grounds Maintenance March - June</td><td>680.40</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td>ii) Village Green Hedge</td><td>1279.20</td></tr> <tr> <td>25.09.18</td><td>3074</td><td>Mr D Harker - Seat and bin refurbishment</td><td>885.00</td></tr> <tr> <td>25.09.18</td><td>3075</td><td>M Tatton TOTAL £474.47 i) Salary September 2018</td><td>341.97</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td>ii) Office Allowance - July to September 2018</td><td>132.50</td></tr> <tr> <td>31.10.18</td><td>3076</td><td>M Tatton Clerk's Salary October 2018</td><td>341.97</td></tr> <tr> <td>25.09.18</td><td>3077</td><td>Peter Coulling TOTAL £85.44 i) Beacon expenses</td><td>65.97</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td>ii) Tree guards</td><td>19.47</td></tr> <tr> <td>25.09.18</td><td>3078</td><td>M Tatton Clerk's Expenses August - September 2018</td><td>113.22</td></tr> <tr> <td>25.09.18</td><td>3079</td><td>Kent Men of the Trees Subscription</td><td>25.00</td></tr> <tr> <td>25.09.18</td><td>3080</td><td>RBL Poppy Appeal</td><td>100.00</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td>TOTAL</td><td>£6307.14</td></tr> </table> It was expected that the year-end figure would be better than the current estimate of £15769.78 A letter had been received from Maidstone Borough Council regarding the amount of the Parish Services Scheme Grant for 2019/20 following submission of information by the Clerk regarding the Parish Council's grounds maintenance commitments, land ownership etc. It was agreed the Clerk and			25.09.18	3067	W R Whillock - Allotments grounds maintenance	20.00	25.09.18	3068	PKF Littlejohn LLP - External Audit	240.00	25.09.18	3069	Eon Street Lighting Charges Invoice 01.09.18	25.46	25.09.18	3070	Tapestry - Annual Parish Meeting Report	116.98	25.09.18	3071	Kent Association of Local Councils Clerk's Conference September 2018	72.00	25.09.18	3072	Maidstone Borough Council Seats, Bins and Signs Installation	1848.00	25.09.18	3073	Gavin Jones - TOTAL £1959.60 i) Grounds Maintenance March - June	680.40			ii) Village Green Hedge	1279.20	25.09.18	3074	Mr D Harker - Seat and bin refurbishment	885.00	25.09.18	3075	M Tatton TOTAL £474.47 i) Salary September 2018	341.97			ii) Office Allowance - July to September 2018	132.50	31.10.18	3076	M Tatton Clerk's Salary October 2018	341.97	25.09.18	3077	Peter Coulling TOTAL £85.44 i) Beacon expenses	65.97			ii) Tree guards	19.47	25.09.18	3078	M Tatton Clerk's Expenses August - September 2018	113.22	25.09.18	3079	Kent Men of the Trees Subscription	25.00	25.09.18	3080	RBL Poppy Appeal	100.00			TOTAL	£6307.14
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	Chairman would challenge the figures.
18/112	Review of Standing Orders, Policies and Procedures: <u>Deferred</u> to the next meeting.
18/113	Parish Charter: Nothing to report.
18/114	Date of Annual Parish Council 14th May 2019: Possible speakers were discussed. It was <u>agreed</u> that the Clerk should contact Henry Boorman asking whether he would accept an invitation to be the guest speaker. The Clerk would also email Helen Grant's office indicating that Ms Grant would be welcome to attend and speak or, if not available, would she be willing to come to a special meeting to speak to residents about matters relevant to the Maidstone area.
18/115	Teston Village Hall: It was noted that the Hall had received a large bill for electricity. The question of a further grant of £1000 was <u>deferred</u> to the next meeting.
18/116	Annual Governance and Accountability Return Year ending 31st March 2018: The external audit had been concluded. The Auditor had noted that £432 of cancelled cheques had been included in Section 2 Box 3 and advised that these items should have been netted off from the relevant expenditure rather than shown as income, and therefore Box 3 also needed adjustment. It was in order for this to be done on next year's AGAR.
18/117	Review of Risk Assessment: The Clerk had circulated an updated Risk Assessment which addressed the situation of small contractors carrying out work for the Parish Council and them being covered by the Parish Council's insurance. This was <u>approved</u> .
18/118	General Data Protection Regulations: Some further work had been done on this and a final draft should be available very shortly.
18/119	Charles Arnold Baker 'Local Council Administration' 11th Edition: It was <u>agreed</u> that the Clerk should order the new edition at a cost of £103.99 plus £7.00pp.
18/120	Managing Future Parish Council Vacancies, Including Steps for Generating Interest: Cllr Levett had indicated an intention to stand down at the next election. It was <u>agreed</u> that an article would be placed in Tapestry to generate interest.
	<u>Planning</u>
18/121	New/pending decisions and Applications: a) New/pending decisions i) 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 – Decision awaited ii) 17/506268/SUB Gunwalloe 59 Tonbridge Road Teston Kent ME18 5BT Submission of Details to Discharge Condition 2 of Appeal Decision (Privacy Screen Fence) Subject to 17/500888/FULL (Appeal Ref: APP/U2235/D/17/3183100) Maidstone Borough Council had requested further information from the applicant. iii) 18/502062/FULL The Village Green Church Street Teston Kent Installation of a beacon to mark the centenary of the World War I armistice (Parish Council's own application) – Approved 25.06.18 iv) 17/505995/FULL Court Lodge Farm The Street Teston Maidstone Kent ME18 5AQ Erection of a detached five bedroom dwelling with associated parking – Referred to Maidstone Borough Council's Planning Committee – Refused 14.06.18 v) 18/502285/NMAMD The Gables Church Street Teston ME18 5AG Non Material Amendment Being Amendment of Condition 4 to Substitute Hedera Helix with Native or Near Native Plants Appropriate to the Street Scene Subject to 17/502779/FULL - Decision awaited vi) 18/502380/FULL Wateringbury Level Crossing, Bow Road, Wateringbury Relevant Demolition in a Conservation Area for the proposed upgrade of Network Rail's Wateringbury Level Crossing from a Manned Gated Hand Worked (MGHW) Level Crossing to a Manually Controlled Barrier(s) (MCB) type – Approved 05.07.18 with an informative for Network Rail to meet with local Councillors, Parish Councils and residents to discuss safety / noise / light and related issues b) Newly submitted applications/ratify submissions made

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	TM/18/01877/FL Land Opposite Ketridge Lane at Teston Road Erection of a building to provide covered sand school for animal training – The response submitted by the Clerk objecting to the application was <u>ratified</u>
18/122	a) Maidstone Local Plan Issues: The Chairman reported on latest developments. Cllrs had seen the letter circulated by Maidstone KALC. The Chairman encouraged Cllrs to be mindful of the pressures. b) Air Quality – diffusion tubes: Information had been circulated to Cllrs. KALC had been compiling candidate sites and it had been suggested that a site on Tonbridge Road should be included. The cost to the Parish Council would be £261.35 per site for a year. Candidate sites were considered. It was <u>agreed</u> that the Parish Council should ask for a tube to be installed somewhere between Ash Tree Corner and Crown City.
18/123	Tonbridge & Malling Local Plan: TMBC had approved its Local Plan for Regulation 19 consultation prior to submission to the Secretary of State. The consultation period was expected to start very shortly. Parishes had been encouraged to revisit all the sites that came forward in the Call for Sites (including those that had not been taken forward). It was <u>agreed</u> that the Clerk circulate further details when available and would submit a response. It was felt that there should be a specific policy preventing eastwards access from Kings Hill.
18/124	Assets of Community Value: Work was still in progress. Meanwhile, the Clerk would contact Maidstone Borough Council regarding Teston Club being added to their list on line.
18/125	Abbeyfield Development: Cllr Douglass had attended an informative site meeting on 28th August. Work at the site was not expected to be completed until around August 2020. Groundwork would take approximately 30 weeks in total. All access to and from the site would be via The Orpines and working hours would be 8a.m. to 6p.m. Monday to Friday and, potentially, 8a.m. to 1p.m. on Saturdays, with no working on Sunday or Bank Holidays. Wheels on the lorries would be hosed off to reduce soil falling onto the Tonbridge Road and a road cleaner would operate once a week. Rapport Housing & Care (formerly Abbeyfield) were fully aware and mindful not to cause inconvenience to residents during construction of the new facility. An article had been placed in Tapestry.
18/126	Community Infrastructure Levy: The Clerk had circulated further information to Cllrs. It seemed that the Borough Council was obliged to pass on CIL payments to Parish Councils that meet the criteria unless the Parish Council said that it did not wish to receive the payments i.e opt out rather than opt in.
18/127	Advertisements on Roundabouts: The Chairman observed that some roundabouts in Maidstone were very untidy with advertisements. Permission for the advertisements should be renewed after 5 years. A response had been received from Maidstone Borough Council suggesting it would not be in the public interest to take the matter further. The situation was noted but Cllrs did not wish to pursue.
	<u>Highways and PROW</u>
18/128	Highways Spreadsheet: A spreadsheet of current issues was circulated. In particular the following were noted: 1) Blocked channel at edge of path between The Street and Barham Court – the Clerk would ask for land drain to be cleared and for the vegetation to be cleared from the footway; 2) Water run-off onto the highway from the farm track – as no response had been received from the owner the Clerk was asked to report to Highways so that they could contact the owner and arrange for the channel to be cleared; 3) Overgrown hedges and trees – It was noted that the hedges at 13 and 18 Tonbridge Road were still in need of attention. The Clerk would obtain photographs before reporting to Highways; In addition a letter would be sent to Granville regarding the tree adjacent to the footway. A tree near the southern bus stop is overhanging the road. The Clerk would check whether the tree was on the verge or in the grounds of Teston House and then report accordingly; 4) Blocked gullies – the Clerk would check when the routine maintenance was planned and report any issues if no maintenance was due to take place soon; 5) Obscured signs at South Lodge Bend – the signs were still obscured on both sides of the road. The Clerk would report again; 6) Pothole at The Street – this was noted and would be monitored as it was not felt that it was yet sufficient deep to meet the criteria for intervention.

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18/129	Signs, seats and litter bins: All work had been completed.
18/130	Meeting with Kent Highways: The Chairman and Clerk had met with Kent Highways to discuss: i) Traffic Island on Tonbridge Road in the Vicinity of Ash Tree Corner: Highways had been encouraged to look at a 'creative solution' in respect of the traffic island, which may include re-engineering the Church Street (West) junction to remove the sweep for east bound traffic. The Officer would now investigate whether Highways could carry out a feasibility study, at what cost, and when this might be done. The Chairman has offered to meet the designer on site. ii) Footway Extension on the eastern side Malling Road: It was suggested that this would cost around £95 per metre (pricing is based on a 100 metre stretch whereas the section of pavement required at Malling Road would be in the region of 25 metres) plus traffic management costs. The Officer had made it clear that, at this time, there is no funding available through Highways for these works iii) Dropped pavement by the Village Hall: It was suggested that this would not need to be tactile as it is not in an area where other tactile paving exists. It was also suggested that a dropped pavement on the Hall side be matched by a drop on the northern side. The Highway Officer was concerned that the existing kerbstones are unusual and might be difficult to match. She would investigate.
18/131	Purchase of Solar Powered, Moveable Speed Monitoring Equipment: No further news at this stage.
18/132	Speed Watch: An article had appeared in Tapestry though it could be a little while before the scheme is up and running again.
18/133	Medway Bridges and Meeting with Network Rail: Cllr Douglass had attended a meeting with Network Rail regarding upgrade of the level crossings at East Farleigh and Watlingbury. The sirens overnight would be at a minimum level. At present Network Rail and Highways say traffic lights are not possible at East Farleigh but this is being pressed and a further meeting between Barming, East Farleigh and Teston Parish Councils with Network Rail was being arranged.
18/134	Watlingbury Crossroads: It was understood plans were to be put before the Tonbridge & Malling Joint Transportation Board on 24 th September but the Committee papers had made no reference to the scheme. The Clerk had contacted the Watlingbury Clerk for information.
	<u>Environment</u>
18/135	Allotments: a) Regular Inspection Report from Cllr Douglass: There were no issues to report b) Fencing and Hedges: Nothing to report. c) Allotment Tenancy Renewals: Renewal letters had been posted to Tenants with a refreshed Tenancy Agreement incorporating information regarding GDPR and advising of the small increase in rent, and advising of the Allotments meeting below; d) Allotments Meeting 23rd October 2018: This would be chaired by Cllr Douglass. This would be an informal meeting at which no decisions would be taken. e) Water: Enquiries were ongoing with South East Water over the water bill and in particular whether there had been overcharging as a result of a second meter being erroneously registered to Teston Allotments. It had been very difficult to speak with SEW although the Clerk had now had email contact. A cheque for the bill had been sent and SEW had been asked to hold it to the Parish Council's account. It was agreed that the Council would continue to dispute the bill although if necessary SEW would be invited to cash the cheque (to avoid additional legal charges) while discussions continue. It was agreed that the water should be turned off at the beginning of October for the winter.
18/136	Ambulance Sirens: The Chairman had emailed Helen Grant MP in his personal capacity and had asked for details of the regulatory authority for setting the tone, tune and decibels of sirens.
18/137	Teston's Trees and Hedges: i) Removal of access gate on the A26 east of The Street: The Clerk was waiting for a response from the resident and would chase. ii) Dead tree at The Street: It was noted that Kent Highways would be replanting with a Cherry. iii) Proposal for replacement of dead tree on the Village Green: Cllr Levett had obtained a quotation from Palmstead Nursery for £82 for a Prunus Pandora. It was agreed that the tree should be ordered. Cllr Levett would collect if required. iv) Proposal to plant a Copper Beech at the corner of the A26/B2163: Cllr Levett felt that it would be better not to replace the tree as the nearby Tulip tree would benefit from having additional space. It was

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	<u>agreed</u> that the tree would not be replaced but the Clerk would check with Highways what their policy is for Parish Councils wishing to plant replacement trees. It was felt that the verge was untidy and in need of landscaping. The Clerk would contact Highways. iv) Strimmer guards for Village Green trees: These were now in place on the Village Green. Cllr Levett had guards for the trees on the B2163. v) Pruning of trees along edge of Village Green: The hawthorns, particularly the second one from the Hall, was quite low. It was <u>agreed</u> that the Clerk apply to Maidstone Borough Council for Conservation Area Consent to crown lift up to 2 metres above ground height and maintain. v) KMOTT Trees in the Village Competition: The outcome was still awaited.
18/138	Malling Road Trees and Conservation Area Considerations: No further news.
18/139	Teston Bridge Country Park: This was <u>deferred</u> to the next meeting.
18/140	Commemorating Centenary of WW1 Armistice: Beacon, Beacon lighting, Memorial Plaque, War Memorial Cleaning and related matters, including funding: The foundation for the beacon had been laid and the post would be installed shortly. The Clerk had received guidance for the event from insurers and clarified that Mr Astridge would be covered by the Parish Council's policy. Attendees would be encouraged to bring torches on the evening. Safety lighting would not be required. Cllr Miss Page confirmed that the exhibition would open on the Friday evening. It was <u>agreed</u> that the Parish Council would contribute £100 towards the cost of refreshments. The Armed Forces Trust Covenant Fund had donated 10 'There But Not There' silhouettes. There was a caveat that the Church must reach out to the Armed Forces. Ideally there would be a small contingent of Gurkhas and a bugler for the 11am service. Cllr Owens undertook to make some enquiries. The Deputy Lord Lieutenant was expected to attend and might say a few words. Cllr Ms Burgon advised that the loan of a projector had been secured, and free exhibition board printing. The Chairman would load the beacon the previous day and cover with tarpaulin. He would co-ordinate with Mr Astridge regarding the events on Sunday evening and the calling to order. The Risk Assessment would be finalised, taking into account how any emergency response would be co-ordinated and monitoring of the beacon during the event. Insurers had said in particular that weather conditions should be considered so that, for example, if it was windy the Council should consider whether the event was safe to go ahead. Cllr Owens would read the Tribute to Millions. For Sunday evening there would be a budget for refreshments but this would be substantially less than the amount initially anticipated. It was <u>agreed</u> that two wreaths would be ordered for a donation of £100. It was <u>agreed</u> that the Clerk would design a poster and flyer.
18/141	Litter and Fly-tipping: Mr and Mrs Berry were thanked again for their efforts with litter picking.
18/142	Village Green/Village Hall Boundary: Nothing to report.
18/143	Early Cutting of Daffodils and future Bulb Planting: The Clerk was waiting to hear from Highways regarding the early cutting. Meanwhile, it was decided that no bulbs would be planted this autumn.
18/144	Marking Teston's Northern Boundary: <u>Deferred</u> to next meeting.
18/145	Caution' Sign at Rear of Village Hall: The laminated sign had worn badly. It was <u>agreed</u> that the Clerk would investigate a metal one that could be bent around the pole.
18/146	Play Area Equipment Matter, including: i) Annual ROSPA Inspection: This was noted. There were no significant issues requiring attention. Cllr Ms Burgon asked whether any work to improve the play equipment was possible and whether there was a grant available. The grant available from Maidstone Borough Council for strategic play areas was noted. The Chairman asked that any suggestions for improvement be brought to a future meeting. Cllr Levett suggested thought be given to another piece of equipment as there had been no new equipment for a long time. The possibility of outdoor gym equipment was suggested. ii) Inspection Rota: September – Cllr Owens; October – Cllr Coulling ; November – Cllr Ms Burgon

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	<u>Other</u>
18/147	Sorting and Storage of Historic Parish Council Papers: This was <u>deferred</u> to the next meeting.
18/148	KALC Finance Conference 18th October 2018: It was <u>agreed</u> that the Clerk attend the Finance Conference if the programme appeared useful. The cost would be £60 plus vat.
18/149	Teston Church Status: Cllr Miss Page reported on a recent consultation on reorganisation of the parishes and on the different method of calculating contributions to the Diocese. It was <u>agreed</u> that the Council should explore registration of the Church as an Asset of Community Value.
	<u>Consultations – to consider responses</u>
18/150	a) MBC Taxi Emission Policy Consultation – closing 7th October 2018: No comment. b) KCC Household Waste Recycling Centre Consultation – closing 1st November 2018: It was suggested that Councillors might wish to respond individually.
18/151	<u>ANY LATEST REPORT UPDATES FOR NOTING ONLY</u>
	Kent Highways were holding a seminar on 2 nd November. Unfortunately no one would be able to attend.
	i) Teston Village Stores CIC Matters • The accounts were being prepared; • Prices were being reviewed; • The cost of electricity was noted. ii) Teston Land Conservation Trust Matters • There were at least 200 trees in good shape at Ripton Wood; • Contact had yet to be made with Mr Pickering; • The Young Farmers had done a lot of good work. They would be prepared to take over the bottom 3 acres. They would also be interested in renting Upper Boathouse Meadow. • It was agreed that the weeds in Upper Boathouse Meadow could be topped for up to £215; • It was noted that the fence at Upper Boathouse Meadow had been installed the wrong way round; • A letter from a neighbour to Ripton Farm had raised an issue relating to boundaries. Cllr Levett suggested that TLCT and CIC meetings should be away from the Parish Council. This suggestion was noted.
B)	Public session: No further questions or comments were made (the public having left prior to this time).
18/152	<u>Confidential Items</u> It was <u>resolved</u> that the press and public to be excluded from the items 18/153 – 18/156 below on the basis that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted
18/153	Enforcement issues: The Chairman was aware that a complaint had been made that work carried out to a property on Tonbridge Road was not compliant with the planning permission granted. The Parish Council <u>agreed</u> that there were legitimate concerns and Maidstone Borough Council would be contacted.
18/154	Land Registration and Trees in Need of Protection: Nothing to report.
18/155	Preserving gap between Teston and Barming: Nothing to report.
18/156	First Review of Local Plan: This had already been discussed under 18/122.

*Date of next regular meeting of the Council – 7.30p.m. on 27th November 2018 at Teston Village Hall
(Available at meeting: Agenda, Clerk's Report, Correspondence List, Financial Statement, and Highways Sheet)*

Clerk: Mrs Michelle Tatton
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