

TESTON PARISH COUNCIL

These Minutes were approved by the Council at its meeting on 24th September 2019

Minutes of Meeting on 30th July 2019 at 7.30pm in Teston Village Hall

Cllr Peter Coulling – Chairman
Cllr Christopher Douglass
Cllr Roger Levett
Cllr Robin Owens
Cllr Miss Dawn Page
Cllr Mrs Nina Wheat

Mrs Michelle Tatton (Clerk)

3 members of the public

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

19/054	Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and/or Other Significant Interests: In the interests of transparency, all Parish Councillors declared 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.		
19/055	Apologies for Absence: had been received from Cllr Ms Burgon and these were accepted . Cllr Mrs Gooch had also sent apologies.		
MEETING ADJOURNED FOR COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC			
- A question was raised regarding possible fencing on the Village Green. This would be discussed during the meeting. - A resident asked why the benches in the play area at Teston Bridge Country Park had been removed. The Clerk would make enquiries to find out why this has happened. - It was also noted that BBQs are no longer allowed at the Country Park. People have been having BBQs on TLCT land. TLCT would be having a 'No BBQs' sign made up. - There was a report of graffiti on the container in the maintenance yard at the level crossing. The Chairman had pursued this with Network Rail and had been told that the next time a maintenance crew attended they would deal with it but this had not happened. The Chairman would chase. - A question was asked about ragwort in the field on the north western corner of Teston Lane. The Clerk would email the owner to advise. There is also ragwort in the Country Park. The Clerk would contact KCC. A resident would check TLCT's field. - A resident asked what the situation was concerning any profit from Tapestry. The Chairman gave some background regarding the structure for Tapestry. The funds are held in a separate account and the Financial Statement to each meeting would show those funds. No suggestions had come forward so far regarding possible projects.			
MEETING RECONVENED			
19/056	Minutes of Meeting on 28th May 2019: These were approved as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.		
19/057	Ordering of Agenda: No changes were proposed.		
	Administration and Finance		
19/058	Statement of Accounts: A Financial Statement dated 23 rd July had been circulated ahead of the meeting showing a balance of £37880.27 from which the following payments bearing cheque numbers 3136-3144 were authorised. The first two payments shown below, made since the last meeting, were noted.		
	03.06.19	Bank	PWLB Loan Repayment
			979.41

TESTON PARISH COUNCIL

		15.07.19	3135	Three Counties – Allotment Hedge	75.00
		30.07.19	3136	Nurture Landscapes Ltd – Grounds Maintenance March – June 2019	680.40
		30.07.19	3137	Playsafety Ltd Play Inspection	82.20
		30.07.19	3138	Eon Street Lighting Charges Invoice 02.07.19	30.92
		30.07.19	3139	Teston Village Hall – Storage Cabinet Charge 2019/20	25.00
		30.07.19	3140	M Tatton Clerk's Salary July 2019	353.95
		31.08.19	3141	M Tatton Clerk's Salary August 2019	353.95
		30.07.19	3142	M Tatton Clerk's Expenses May – July 2019	54.24
		30.07.19	3143	Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council APM to Tapestry Invoice 29.07.19	104.94
			3144	RBLI – Replacement sign opposite The Street	86.62
				TOTAL	£2826.63
	It was noted that the Parish Services Scheme funds had already been expended for the year. Maidstone Borough Council had not yet requested the year end PSS Certificate for 2018/19 but figures were ready if needed. The Clerk had prepared a separate statement for Tapestry showing all receipts and payments to date reconciled to the bank account. The year end position looked to be in the region of £4415. It was noted that some advertisers had not renewed but others had come forward.				
19/059	Policies and Procedures a) GDPR Policy: A final version of the policy had been circulated and considered. It was agreed that the Policy be adopted. It was confirmed that the ICO fee had been paid. b) Update regarding Standing Orders Review: The Chairman would review Standing Orders shortly. c) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests: At the request of Maidstone Borough Council, Cllrs had checked their DPI Forms, save for Cllr Miss Page with whom the Clerk would liaise. The Chairman had updated his form.				
19/060	*	Annual Return for the Year ending 31st March 2019: An acknowledgement had been received but otherwise there was no further news.			
19/061		Review of Risk Assessment: An updated version had been circulated. It was agreed that this be adopted.			
19/062	*	Managing Future Parish Council Vacancies and Generating Interest: There had been an expression of interest. The Chairman suggested that an article go into Tapestry and some detail would be placed on the website and notice board.			
19/063		Tapestry Matters: a) Possible appointment of a second joint Editor: A meeting would take place shortly with a possible candidate. b) Teston Tapestry Fund: Another article would be placed in Tapestry. A draft would be circulated. c) Other issues: Cllr Miss Page was concerned that some Church items had not made it into a recent edition. It was noted that these had not been time critical. She had also found the template difficult to use. It was also noted that there were items from outside the village. It was generally accepted that Teston articles should take precedence.			
19/064		Accessibility Requirements for Public Sector Websites: It was suggested that the Parish Council contact KCC and this was agreed.			
		Planning			
19/065		i) New/pending decisions 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			

TESTON PARISH COUNCIL

	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 b) 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) Refused – 11.07.19 c) 18/03032/OAEA Heath Farm Watringbury Road East Malling West Malling Kent (TMBC) Redevelopment to provide up to 40 Class C3 residential units, together with landscaping, open space and other associated works. All matters reserved for future approval except for access (site 5.5) Refused – 11.07.19 d) 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. The Parish Council had submitted comments to the Planning Inspector and these were ratified. e) APPEAL 19/500059/REF Barham Court Tonbridge Road Teston ME18 5BZ Erection of a boundary fence Refused – 25.07.19 f) 9/502350/TCA The Old Post Office Church Street Teston ME18 5AH Conservation Area notification Re felling of trees in rear garden on the rear boundary: T1 Young Lawson Cypress (Conifer) - Fell to ground level. T2 Young Holly: - Fell to ground level No Objection – 31.05.19 g) 19/502403/SUB 1A-2 Livesey Street Teston Maidstone Kent ME18 5AY and 19/502404/SUB 3A-4 Livesey Street Teston Maidstone Kent ME18 5AY Submission of details pursuant to Conditions 4: Method Statement & 5: Tile sample (original application ref: 19/501198/LBC) Approved – 24.06.19 h) APPEAL 18/3204992 Land to the North of Knole Farmhouse, Malling Road, Teston ME18 5BH The Appeal was successful with costs awarded against Maidstone Borough Council. An update from the Borough Council was awaited. ii) To consider any newly submitted applications/ratify submissions made, including: a) 19/503121/FULL 13 Tonbridge Road Teston Maidstone Kent ME18 5BU Erection of first floor extension and alterations Comments had already been submitted, requesting conditions regarding matching materials and obscure glazing on the landing window on the elevation facing 12 Tonbridge Road. These comments were ratified. b) 19/01359/FL Cromar Nursery 39 Livesey Street Watringbury Maidstone Kent ME18 5BQ Redevelopment of existing commercial nursery and garden centre with 3 detached residential units with associated alterations to existing accesses and extension and conversion of existing barn into car parking barn A response had already been submitted addressing the issue of the difficult junction onto Watringbury Road. This was ratified. c) 19/503300/FULL Crown City Chinese Restaurant Tonbridge Road Teston Maidstone Kent ME18 5BU Erection of a three bedroom dwelling with creation of a new access and dropped kerb A draft response had been circulated. It was felt that the dwelling was inappropriate and shoe-horned in between the restaurant and the neighbouring property in The Street. There was also concern regarding the reduction in parking spaces. It was agreed that the response be submitted and that that the matter should be referred to the Planning Committee in the event that the Officer is inclined to permit.
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TESTON PARISH COUNCIL

	d) 19/01621/FL Sports Grounds Beacon Avenue Kings Hill West Malling Kent Provision of an extension to the side of the existing Sports Pavilion to provide two additional changing rooms, enhancement of existing sports pitches with 1 no. additional senior grass pitch, 2 no. tennis courts, 2 no. dual use courts (tennis and netball), 1no. cricket square and outfield, a 2190m trim trail with 6 stations, associated lighting and fencing, and additional parking for 60 cars; being the provision of off-site sport and recreational enhancements required by Outline Application TM/13/01535/OAEA (Phase 3 Kings Hill) It was agreed that the Clerk would ask for sight of East Malling & Larkfield's response and, if appropriate, the Parish Council would support their comments.
19/066 *	Local Plan Review and Call for Sites: The Call for Sites results have not yet been published. The KALC Co-ordinating Team is engaging with Maidstone Borough Council and a response to the Review has been drafted. If sites in Teston came forward the Parish Council would need to consider the matter carefully. The Clerk would ask Maidstone Borough Council to provide a further copy of the Local Plan Review Consultation Document.
19/067	Neighbour Area designation for Teston Parish: It was noted that no other entity could take precedence over the Parish Council in declaring a Neighbourhood Area.
19/068 *	Air Quality Diffusion Tubes: The first readings from the diffusion tubes had been received. Already the Leeds and Broomfield readings were causing some concern. Teston was also quite high although it was noted that a long period of observation would be needed in order to be able to properly evaluate the results.
19/069 *	Tonbridge & Malling Local Plan: TMBC continued to liaise with the Inspectors upon a number of issues. With further consultation likely to be required it was not now anticipated that the Examination in Public would begin before 2020.
19/070	Tunbridge Wells Local Plan Consultation 20th September – 1st November: The consultation was noted. A response would be drafted, focussing on commuting patterns.
19/071	Assets of Community Value Registration: The Clerk had received some information from Cllr Miss Page. It was confirmed that the Clerk should prepare applications for Registration of the Church and Village Hall. Regarding registration of Teston Club, it would appear that, in fact, registration was never completed and MBC could not now find details of the application. Teston Club had also confirmed that it had received nothing from MBC. The Clerk could not find any relevant emails or letters. The Club had been advised that the application would be resubmitted and it was agreed that this should be done.
19/072 *	Abbeyfield Development: No current issues to report. It was noted that the crane was still on site.
	Highways and PROW
19/073	Highways Spreadsheet: A spreadsheet of current matters had been circulated. In particular the following items were noted: • The 'Except for Access' sign at the southern end of The Street had been replaced. • There was concern regarding speeding on both Tonbridge Road and Malling Road. It was agreed that speed surveys should be carried out over a period of a week to gather evidence to support traffic calming. The Clerk would make enquiries as to the cost. Locations would be considered at the September meeting. • It was noted that the annual cleanse of gullies in Malling Road, The Street, Tonbridge Road and Teston Lane takes place in November. Any issues arising at other times must be reported through the portal for reactive maintenance. • It was noted that gullies on Malling Road south of Courtlands were completely blocked. These would be reported for cleansing. • Cllr Douglass reported that the footway on the north side Tonbridge Road just to the Watlingbury side of Crown City was very broken up. This would be reported.
19/074 *	Traffic Island on Tonbridge Road in the Vicinity of Ash Tree Corner: There had been no progress. Cllr Levett wished to impress the importance of pursuing the matter and this was noted.

TESTON PARISH COUNCIL

19/075	*	Purchase of Solar Powered, Moveable Speed Monitoring Equipment (deferred): No progress to report.
19/076		Faulty Street Light: Two quotations had been received. It was agreed that a quote from Kent Highways for £840.79 be accepted. This covered permanent disconnection and all reinstatement works to the footway. The target time for completion was given as 3 months.
19/077		Fingerpost to Village Centre, Shop and Church: A quotation for £72.18 plus vat had been obtained for a fingerpost to replace the previous sign that was damaged when the lighting column was demolished. A new A quote from MBC has been requested for the cost of installation and was awaited. It was agreed that work should go ahead within a budget of £200 excluding VAT for the sign and installation. Regarding the fingerpost at Livesey Street, the Clerk would chase for a price.
19/078	*	Speed Watch: An article had gone into Tapestry but there had not been any responses.
19/079		B2163 Verge: The Chairman and Cllr Levett had met with MVCP to discuss the wildflower verge work due to take place on the south side of Tonbridge Road. Work would take place in October. The weeds would be sprayed, the ground levelled using 3 tonnes of top soil prior to the introduction of a wildflower mix. It was agreed that the work should go ahead with the Clerk having a budget of £500. Cllr Levett would liaise with Mr Pritchard of MVCP regarding the work. The Clerk would report back with quotations for ongoing cutting and raking of the verge. MVCP has been asked to look at the north side of Tonbridge Road, without any commitment, to see whether this would also be appropriate for treatment.
		Environment
19/080		Allotments a) Inspection Report from Cllr Douglass: There were no particular issues to report. b) Water Bills: The Chairman had spoken with the new water company regarding reimbursement of overpayment by Castle Water. It was expected that this would be resolved shortly. c) Rent Review: A few plots were expected to become available shortly though currently all were taken. Cllrs discussed increasing the rent, noting in particular that only 4 tenants are from Teston, holding 5 plots between them. There was concern that Teston residents are subsidising the allotments for use by non-residents. Following discussion it was proposed by the Chairman and agreed unanimously (albeit Cllr Douglass reluctantly) that from 1 st November the charge for Teston residents would be £18 and £25 for non-Teston residents. Cllr Douglass would prepare an email to be sent by the Clerk. It was also agreed that when allocating vacant plots in future Teston residents would take precedence.
19/081	*	Ambulance Sirens: There had been a lot of sirens over the last few days. The Chairman would consider further action shortly.
19/082	*	Defibrillator: The date of expiry of the consumables had yet to be checked.
19/083		Teston's Trees and Hedges a) Removal of access gate on the A26 east of The Street: The south gate had not yet been removed. The Clerk would chase the resident. b) Tree Inspection Report: Following the last meeting and a request from a resident, discussion had continued regarding removal of the Ash and further advice had been sought. The advice was that while the Ash is not a danger it will die and therefore it may be preferable to remove now and proceed with replanting. The cost of supplying 2 Amelanchier Arborea (25 litre 8-10 S – i.e. c 9-10 feet tall) would be £240 plus vat, plus any planting costs, and possibly shipping costs. These are deciduous trees with pink flowers. The cost of removing the Ash would be £92 plus vat. The contractor had also quoted for work to the Crab Apple at Courtlands which has Bleeding Canker, with dysfunctional canker ridden branches in the crown.

TESTON PARISH COUNCIL

	It was agreed that the Ash should be removed, to be replaced with 2 Amelanchier Arborea. The Clerk was given authority to commit to shipping costs of up to £75. Taking into account all costs, including planting, the Clerk was given a budget of £425 to complete the work. A quote for planting would be obtained from Malling Garden Services. It was also agreed that the Crab Apple work be done at £85 plus vat. c) Replacement Prunus Pandora for Village Green: Unfortunately, one of the trees on the Village Green had died. It was agreed that this should be replaced within a budget of £100 to purchase, ship and plant. An appeal would be placed in Tapestry seeking volunteers to water the tree. d) Kent Men of the Trees – Trees in the Village Competition 2019: Cllr Levett had taken the judge on a tour of the village. He appeared to be impressed with what he saw. e) Tree Charter: This had been noted.
19/084	Beacon Yuletide and VE Day 2020 Events: Arrangements for the Yuletide Event were discussed. It was proposed that there be beer, and local wine, and some light refreshments. It was agreed that the event should be held at the Church but it would not be a religious event. A donation of wood had been offered for the beacon. The Chairman and Cllr Douglass would load it. An article would be placed in Tapestry in September. The invitation would be extended to Teston residents and friends. Guests would be issued with a ticket and invited to make donations. Regarding VE Day 2020, it was felt appropriate for the History Society to be involved. The Chairman would contact Mr Davis and Mr Astridge. Cllr Miss Page suggested that a plaque should be installed on the beacon to identify why it was installed and by whom and this was thought to be a good idea. Enquiries would be made.
19/085	* Village Green/Village Hall Boundary: No further progress.
19/086	* Telephone Kiosk broken light: The kiosk is still on the list for painting (with a planned completion prior to October this year). BT is aware of the broken light and has raised an order.
19/087	Play Area Matters a) Village Green fencing: This would not be progressed without consultation with the village. The Chairman reported upon recent discussions between Maidstone KALC and Maidstone Borough Council. The matter would be held in abeyance for the time being pending further discussion. b) Fencing the Beacon: The Chairman felt that the beacon needed to be fenced while burning but no permanent fencing was felt necessary. This was agreed. c) Inspection Rota: July – Cllr Coulling; August – Cllr Levett; September – Cllr Douglass
	Other
19/088	Clerk's Conference 17th September 2019: It was agreed that if the Clerk should attend if she wished.
	Consultations – to consider responses
19/089	* a) Kent & Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy: closing 23rd September 2019 b) Kent Nature Partnership Biodiversity Strategy 2019 – 2044: closing 1st September 2019 c) Transforming Health and Social Care: closing 16th August These were noted.
19/090	ANY LATEST REPORT UPDATES FOR NOTING ONLY - An Emergency Plan has been formulated and circulated. This would be placed on the website. - The seat by Crown City Restaurant in The Street, installed by MVCP installed it, had a fractured leg. While this could only be repaired it was felt that the seat was not of the best quality and it might be preferable to replace it. The Clerk was asked to get a quotation from Maidstone Borough Council for provision of a seat similar to the ones installed on Tonbridge Road, including installation costs.
MEETING ADJOURNED TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING REPORTS	
	a) Teston Village Stores CIC Matters The Chairman reported that the 2018/19 stock take had taken place. The accounts had been put together and Cllr Mrs Wheat would be reviewing these.

TESTON PARISH COUNCIL

		A CIC meeting would take place in around October.
		b) Teston Land Conservation Trust Matters - Upper Boathouse Meadow was untidy. Cllr Levett wished to see it cut on a regular basis. - A check would be made for ragwort and, if necessary, action taken. - MVCP had been asked to look at the woodland to see what their volunteers could do during a team day.
MEETING RECONVENED		
19/091		Confidential Items: It was resolved that the press and public to be excluded from the items 19/092-19/096 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
MEETING ADJOURNED AND RECONVENED IN PRIVATE		
19/092	*	Enforcement issues: An issue was raised regarding an Article 4 matter. The Clerk would contact the Wateringbury Clerk to check the situation.
19/093		MBC Call for Sites – impact on Teston: The current situation was noted.
19/094	*	Preserving the Gap Between Teston & Barming, Land Registration and Trees in Need of Protection: This would be deleted from future Agenda.
19/095	*	Village Hall Matter: The current position was noted.
19/096		Employee Matters: An issue was discussed and a way forward was agreed .
19/097		Civic Matters: The matter was discussed and a way forward was agreed .

Date of next regular meeting of the Council – 7.30pm 24th September 2019 at Teston Village Hall

(Available at meeting: Agenda, Clerk's Report, Correspondence List, Financial Statement, and Highways Sheet)

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