

TESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Theses Minutes were approved at the meeting on 15th June 2021

Minutes of Meeting on 18th May 2021
7.30pm Teston Village Hall

Cllr Peter Coulling – Chairman
Cllr Ms Burgon (part)
Cllr Christopher Douglass
Cllr Roger Levett

Mrs Michelle Tatton (Clerk)
Members of the public - none

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

21/001	Declarations of Acceptance of Office: All Councillors had re-elected at the elections on 6 th May, The Clerk had met with Cllrs Ms Burgon, Owens, Miss Page, and Mrs Wheat in the days prior to the meeting to witness the signing of their Declarations of Acceptance of Office. Cllrs Coulling, Douglass and Levett signed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office immediately prior to the meeting.
21/002	Declarations of Interest and Dispensations: The Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests form had been circulated to all Cllrs. It was noted that these must be submitted to the Monitoring Officer by 31 st May. It was <u>agreed</u> that the Clerk should continue to have delegated authority to grant dispensations. Cllrs had provided forms to the Clerk relating to dispensations being sought. The Clerk would review these and handle the process, reporting back to the next meeting upon dispensations granted. The Chairman noted that dispensations may be required by some Cllrs in relation to the Church.
21/003	Election of Chairman and Chairman's Declaration of Office: It was proposed by Cllr Douglass, seconded by Cllr Levett and <u>agreed</u> that Cllr Coulling be elected to the office of Chairman. Cllr Coulling duly signed the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office which was witnessed by the Clerk.
21/004	Election of Vice-Chairman: It was proposed by Cllr Levett, seconded by Cllr Coulling and <u>agreed</u> that Cllr Douglass be elected to the office of Vice-Chairman.
21/005	Private items: There were no items to discuss in private.
21/006	Apologies for absence: Apologies had been received from Cllr Ms Burgon, Cllr Owens, Cllr Miss Page and Cllr Mrs Wheat who were attending the PCC meeting and these were <u>accepted</u> .
21/007	Minutes of previous meetings: The Minutes of 23 rd March 2021 were <u>approved</u> as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.
21/008	Ratification of Decisions: A list of decisions taken under the scheme of delegation by the Clerk since the last meeting had been circulated with the Agenda (see the end of these Minutes). These were <u>ratified</u> .
	<u>Administration and Finance</u>
21/009	Review of Standing Orders, Policies and Procedures and Risk Assessment: It was <u>agreed</u> that the Chairman and Clerk would conduct a review with a report back to the July meeting upon progress.
21/010	Appointment of Representatives to Outside Bodies: a) Kent Association of Local Councils: It was <u>agreed</u> that Cllr Coulling and Cllr Douglass

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	be reappointed as the Parish Council's representatives to KALC. b) Teston Village Hall Management Committee: It was <u>agreed</u> that Cllr Douglass, Cllr Owens and Cllr Mrs Wheat be reappointed as the Parish Council's representatives to the Village Hall Committee.																																																																				
21/011	Insurance: The Chairman had reviewed the policy. The notice board would be added although in due course, as the board aged, it might be removed. Adding the notice board now would not affect the premium. It was <u>agreed</u> that insurance be renewed, the premium being £318.26.																																																																				
21/012	Renewal of Subscriptions: These were all agreed as follows: a) Local Councils Update £75 b) CPRE £36 c) KALC £284.12 plus VAT d) Local Council Review £17 e) Action with Communities in Rural Kent £55 f) Kent Men of the Trees (renewal awaited – expected to be £25)																																																																				
21/013	Dates and times of Parish Council meetings to the end of 2021: The following dates were <u>noted</u> – 15 th June, 27 th July, 28 th September, 30 th November. These would all be face to face meetings.																																																																				
21/014	Date of Annual Parish Meeting: In view of ongoing social distancing requirements and lack of available capacity within the Village Hall, and while noting the requirement to hold the meeting by 1 st June, it was not felt possible to arrange a typical Annual Parish Meeting at this time. The matter would be placed on the Agenda for 15 th June.																																																																				
21/015	Statement of accounts: i) A Financial Statement had been circulated by the Clerk showing a balance of £46,845.76 from which the following payments were <u>approved</u> for payment:																																																																				
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	ii) The Clerk noted that, as yet, Maidstone Borough Council had not requested a Certificate for spending under the Parish Services Scheme for 2020-21. It was <u>agreed</u> that if this was requested the Clerk should action, and it was noted that all funds had been expended.																																																																				
21/016	Grants to village organisations, and Tapestry: The proposal for grants, as shown below, were <u>noted</u> . These would be considered at the meeting on 15 th June:																																																																				

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	a) Pioneers - £125 – with consideration given to whether the grant should be half this amount to reflect the date when the Pioneers would return to the Hall b) TVHMC - £250 – it was suggested that this should be applied to general maintenance for assistance at Teston Village Hall, not just grounds maintenance c) St Peter and St Paul - £250 for assistance with Churchyard maintenance – to be considered within the context of the current proposed scheme d) Transfer to the Tapestry Account for inclusion of regular items of information for 2021/22 – to be considered within the context of an Annual Parish Meeting this year
21/017	General Power of Competence: It was resolved that, the Parish Council continuing to meet the eligibility criteria as defined in the Localism Act 2011 and SI 965 The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012 of having a CiLCA qualified Clerk and the requisite proportion of Councillors elected, the Parish Council continues to adopt the General Power of Competence.
21/018	Exceptional Delegated Authority: It was noted that the exceptional delegated authority, enabling the Clerk to take decisions between meetings, would cease at the end of the meeting. It was resolved that exceptional authority currently delegated to the Clerk should renew immediately at the conclusion of the meeting and would be reviewed at each subsequent meeting. It was also agreed that the wording of the scheme of delegation would be reconsidered as part of the Standing Order review.
	Highways
21/019	Tonbridge Road Crossing: The Chairman reported on progress. If the Parish Council met the legal and design costs of £10,000 Highways would add it to their list of schemes and would meet construction costs. The newly elected County Cllr, Simon Webb, had made contact and the Chairman had provided a briefing by email, including a copy of the Highway Improvement Plan. The Chairman would maintain contact with Cllr Webb and Highways. Cllr Douglass questioned whether cats eyes or fluorescent lines could be used within designs and this was noted. The Chairman asked that Cllrs consider whether the Parish Council should seek a PWLB loan. In view of current interest rates a £10,000 loan would attract repayments of around £1,000 per annum. Cllr Ms Burgon joined the meeting during this item.
21/020	Road Safety/Highway Improvement Plan: This was updated last autumn and includes the above items together with issues relating to the Crown City junction and South Lodge Bend. Cllr Levett raised the longstanding issue of water flowing across the pavement below Court Lodge Farm. The Clerk would press Highways to take action.
	Other
21/021	Church Commissioners' Pastoral Scheme: The Parish Council's application for leave to appeal had been lodged. The Church Commissioners had objected. It was agreed that the Chairman should draft further detail for submission to the Judicial Committee. Cllr Ms Burgon advised that she had been elected to the PCC along with Cllr Owens, Cllr Miss Page and Cllr Mrs Wheat, and 3 other residents.
21/022	Clerk's Report for Noting Only: A report providing general updates on various matters had been circulated and this was noted. The play inspection rota was clarified as follows: Cllr Levett – May; Cllr Douglass – June; Cllr Miss Page – July; Cllrs Owens – August; Cllr Mrs Wheat – September; Cllr Coulling – October; Cllr Ms Burgon – November.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.40pm

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Date of next regular meeting of the Council – 7.30p.m. on 15th June 2021 at Teston Village Hall

Clerk: Mrs Michelle Tatton

10 Clare Wood Drive, East Malling, Kent ME19 6PA

Telephone: (01732) 521889 E-mail: testonparish@aol.com

List of Decisions Taken by the Clerk Since 23rd March 2021 Under the Agreed Scheme of Delegation During COVID-19

Detail	Decision and background	Date
Grounds maintenance Ash Tree Corner	It was noted that the dogwood at Ash Tree Corner was in need of cutting down to ground level and the area generally was in need of a tidy up, in particular the thin verge along the eastern boundary. A quotation for £90 was received. All cuttings and strimming to be removed from the site. Following discussion with Cllrs the Clerk accepted the quote.	13.04.2021
Relocation of Church Street name plate	Following installation of the new notice board it was apparent that the name plate was within striking distance of one of the doors when opened. To avoid damage to the door of the board it was considered that the name plate should be moved a very short distance to the north. A quotation not exceeding £200 had been obtained. Following discussion with Cllrs the Clerk accepted the quotation under delegated authority. The final cost was £185.00.	15.04.2021
Tree Application	21/501988/TCA The Cottage East Church Street Teston ME18 5AJ - Conservation area notification to reduce height of one Holly, from 10m to 3m, and reduce lateral spread from 5m to 4m Cllrs were invited to provide comments to the Clerk. It was the collective view that Cllrs should support the Conservation/Tree Officer. The Clerk submitted a response on this basis.	21.04.2021
Planning Application	21/501770/FULL Wealden Court Church Street Teston Maidstone Kent ME18 5AG - Change of use from office to a single residential dwelling, including conversion of existing garage/store to personal home working unit with adjacent gym, partial demolition of detached store to create new patio with existing southern and western walls retained, and erection of 1.8m close boarded boundary fencing with 300mm trellis. Erection of new double garage to side with storage space and utility room, removal of western parking area to create garden, and associated landscaping and ecological enhancements Cllrs were invited to provide comments to the Clerk. It was the shared view that the high level windows in the proposed gym were a concern in terms of privacy as the look straight towards neighbouring properties; there was a concern that noise nuisance could occur; and ongoing concerns were raised regarding the potential for multiple occupation of the premises. The Clerk submitted a response setting out the issues and repeating the comments made by the Parish Council to the previous application.	21.04.2021
Tree Application	21/501012/TCA St Peter And St Paul's Church Church Street Teston Conservation area notification to crown lift one Yew to 2.5m; clear overgrown hedge to uncover gravestones (as detailed on hedge plan); remove one Laurel; remove one privet bush; reduce one Yew away from church to leave distance of 3m, raise crown to 2m; remove one self-seeded Cotoneaster Cllrs were invited to submit comments to the Clerk. It was the general view that the Conservation Area/Tree Officer should be supported, but with the general comment that the appearance of the churchyard would benefit from the trees and hedges receiving considerable attention. The Clerk submitted comments along these lines.	22.04.2021
Church Pastoral Measure	Correspondence has continued both with the Registry of the Supreme Court, Church Commissioners and Bishop of Tonbridge. With the support of Parish Cllrs, the application for leave to appeal was lodged with the Registry of the Supreme Court on 27 th April, along with the Court fee of £150.00.	27.04.2021
Planning Application	MOD Land South of Discovery Drive Kings Hill West Malling Kent - Development of up to 65 dwellings (all matters reserved other than access) MOD Land South Of Discovery Drive Kings Hill West Malling Kent	05.05.2021

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	Details of the application were shared with Cllrs. In view of the Clerk's likely attendance at TMBC's Area 1 Planning Committee the response was drafted by the Chairman and shared with Cllrs prior to submission by the Chairman to TMBC	
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