

Teston Parish Council

These Minutes were approved by the Council at its meeting on 25th January 2022

Minutes of Meeting on 30th November 2021
7.30pm Teston Village Hall

Cllr Coulling (Chairman)
Cllr Douglass (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Ms Burgon
Cllr Levett
Cllr Owens
Cllr Miss Page
Cllr Mrs Wheat

Mrs Michelle Tatton (Clerk)

Members of the public - 1

The Chairman drew attention to the pandemic arrangements in terms of seating. Attention was also drawn to the Parish Council's Standing Orders on the Photographing, Recording, Filming or Broadcasting of Teston Parish Council Meetings. No intention to record the meeting was declared.

21/106	Declarations of Interest and Dispensations: 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; d) Cllr Douglass, Cllr Owens, Cllr Miss Page and Cllr Mrs Wheat declared an interest as members of Teston Village Hall Management Committee; and e) Cllr Ms Burgon, Cllr Owens, Cllr Miss Page, and Cllr Mrs Wheat declared an interest as members of the Parochial Church Council. The existing dispensations were noted, which are as shown below: <table><tr><th colspan="2"></th><th colspan="7">Dispensation Available to Councillor: 'No' permits the Cllr to speak but not vote</th></tr><tr><th></th><th>Dispensation</th><th>Burgon</th><th>Coulling</th><th>Douglass</th><th>Levett</th><th>Owens</th><th>Page</th><th>Wheat</th></tr><tr><td>1.</td><td>Relating to CIC – monies (as all Parish Cllrs are Directors)</td><td>Yes</td><td>No</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td></tr><tr><td>2.</td><td>Relating to CIC – other*</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td></tr><tr><td>3.</td><td>Relating to TLCT – monies (as all Parish Cllrs are Trustees)</td><td>Yes</td><td>No</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td></tr><tr><td>4.</td><td>Relating to TLCT – other*</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td></tr><tr><td>5.</td><td>Relating to Teston Church - monies</td><td>Yes</td><td>N/a</td><td>N/a</td><td>N/a</td><td>Yes</td><td>No</td><td>No</td></tr><tr><td>6.</td><td>Relating to Teston Church – other*</td><td>Yes</td><td>N/a</td><td>N/a</td><td>N/a</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td></tr><tr><td>7.</td><td>Relating to Village Green (as all Parish Cllrs are Trustees)</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td></tr><tr><td>8.</td><td>Relating to Village Hall - monies</td><td>N/a</td><td>N/a</td><td>No</td><td>N/a</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td></tr><tr><td>9.</td><td>Relating to Village Hall – other*</td><td>N/a</td><td>N/a</td><td>Yes</td><td>N/a</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td><td>Yes</td></tr><tr><td>10.</td><td colspan="8">For transparency it is noted that the Parish Council owns land at the Allotments, the Courtlands Verge and Ash Tree Corner. Dispensations will be considered on an ad hoc basis as relevant issues arise. It is not considered that a DPI or OSI arises as a result of consideration of routine maintenance issues.</td></tr></table>			Dispensation Available to Councillor: 'No' permits the Cllr to speak but not vote								Dispensation	Burgon	Coulling	Douglass	Levett	Owens	Page	Wheat	1.	Relating to CIC – monies (as all Parish Cllrs are Directors)	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2.	Relating to CIC – other*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	3.	Relating to TLCT – monies (as all Parish Cllrs are Trustees)	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4.	Relating to TLCT – other*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5.	Relating to Teston Church - monies	Yes	N/a	N/a	N/a	Yes	No	No	6.	Relating to Teston Church – other*	Yes	N/a	N/a	N/a	Yes	Yes	Yes	7.	Relating to Village Green (as all Parish Cllrs are Trustees)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	8.	Relating to Village Hall - monies	N/a	N/a	No	N/a	Yes	Yes	Yes	9.	Relating to Village Hall – other*	N/a	N/a	Yes	N/a	Yes	Yes	Yes	10.	For transparency it is noted that the Parish Council owns land at the Allotments, the Courtlands Verge and Ash Tree Corner. Dispensations will be considered on an ad hoc basis as relevant issues arise. It is not considered that a DPI or OSI arises as a result of consideration of routine maintenance issues.							
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21/107	Apologies for Absence: Cllr Mrs Gooch had sent her apologies.																																																																																																												
21/108	Minutes of meeting on 28th September and 12th October 2021: These were <u>approved</u> as a correct record of those meetings and signed by the Chairman.																																																																																																												
21/109	Re-ordering of Items on the Agenda: It was proposed by the Chairman and <u>agreed</u> that item 21/122 Church Commissioners’ Pastoral Scheme be moved up the Agenda to be dealt with immediately after item 21/113 MBC and TMBC Local Plan Updates, and that item 21/122 be split in two so that part be dealt with in private. The Planning items would be taken immediate after 21/122. All items would be minuted in the order in which they appeared on the Agenda.																																																																																																												
21/110	Ratification of Decisions: Decisions taken by the Clerk since the last meeting, as set out at the end of these Minutes, and in line with delegation of authority, were <u>ratified</u> .																																																																																																												

Meeting adjourned to receive comments and questions from members of the public

A member of the public addressed the Council in detail regarding item 21/122 and asked the Council to reconsider its position and process of appeal of the Commissioners' decision.

The Chairman provided the background to the Parish Council's position and noted that the Parish Council was not objecting to a combined benefice but to unification of parishes. Previously, Barming had not wanted to work with Teston. If the Commissioners were not to seek unification of parishes it was possible that the Parish Council would withdraw its appeal.

The Chairman suggested that the PCC might wish to consider having a wider discussion in the Village Hall which Parish Cllrs could attend.

Administration and Finance

a) Statement of Accounts: A Financial Statement showing a balance of £35,358.54 had been circulated prior to the meeting. The following payments were **authorised**:

30.11.2021	3297	P Coulling - Reimbursement of costs relating to trough	719.16
30.11.2021	3298	M Tatton Clerk's Salary November 2021	362.79
30.11.2021	3299	M Tatton a) Clerk's Salary December 2021	362.79
		b) Office Allowance - Total cheque £499.04	136.25
30.11.2021	3300	Water Plus - Allotments Water	256.07
30.11.2021	3301	SLCC	112.00
30.11.2021	3302	BT - Wifi Charges at Village Hall	73.79
30.11.2021	3303	M Tatton Expenses October/November 2021	37.43
30.11.2021	3304	Traffic Watch UK Ltd	318.00
TOTAL			£2378.28

The Chairman asked that Tapestry charges should be placed on the January Agenda.

b) Budget 2022-23 and Precept: Estimates for income and expenditure for 2022/23 had been circulated with figures for the previous and current years for comparison. Following a full discussion it was **agreed** that the Precept be set at £27300 subject to final discussion in January.

Cllr Levett raised the issue of printing of meeting papers as the pandemic had resulted in these being circulated electronically. This would be subject to a separate Agenda item at a future meeting.

Planning

j) New/pending decisions

a) 20/505234/TPOA Barham Mews Tonbridge Road Teston Kent

TPO application: Various tree works - **Decision awaited**

b) 20/02749/OA Land South Of Barming Station And East Of Hermitage Lane Aylesford

Outline Application: erection of up to 330 dwellings (including 40% affordable homes), together with associated open space, play areas, and landscaping (including details of access) - **Refused by Area 3 Planning Committee 30.09.2021**

c) 21/00881/OA MOD Land South of Discovery Drive Kings Hill West Malling Kent

Outline Application: Development of up to 65 dwellings (all matters reserved other than access) - **Decision awaited**

d) 21/504210/FULL 3 The Bungalows Church Street Teston Maidstone Kent ME18 5AH

Demolition of conservatory and erection of single storey rear/side extension - **Approved by Committee 21.10.2021**

	e) Barnjet Layby, Tonbridge Road Barming - Street Trading Application – Comments submitted and decision awaited f) 21/504688/FULL Keepers Cottage Teston Corner Teston Maidstone Kent ME18 5BA Demolition of existing conservatory and erection of single storey rear extension, orangery and conversion of existing garage to an annexe for use by disabled relative, incorporating new pitched roof – Approved 21.10.2021 g) 21/504878/LBC Becketts Croft Malling Road Teston Maidstone Kent ME18 5AR Listed Building Consent for demolition of a two storey and a single storey rear extension. Erection of a two storey and a single storey rear extension with alterations to ground floor rear rooms – Permitted 29.10.2021 h) 21/504080/FULL 12 Courtlands Teston Maidstone Kent ME18 5AS Installation of solar panels to garage roof and convert two hipped roof ends to gable ends – Approved 28.10.2021 i) 21/504912 The Cottage East Church Street Teston ME18 5AJ Erection of summerhouse, potting shed, fence and retention of small greenhouse (part retrospective) Refused 09.11.2021 ii) Newly submitted applications/ratify submissions made a) 21/505650/FULL Orchard Close The Street Teston Maidstone Kent ME18 5AQ Demolition of the existing conservatory. Erection of a single storey rear extension. Conversion of the garage to a habitable space Comments submitted by the Clerk – these were ratified (see 21/110 above) b) 21/505765/FULL Crown City Chinese Restaurant Tonbridge Road Teston Maidstone Kent ME18 5BU Creation of an additional 6 no. car parking spaces and resurfacing existing drive and existing car parking spaces (Retrospective) – Comments submitted by Clerk – these were ratified (see 21/110 above)
21/113	MBC and TMBC Local Plan Updates: Maidstone KALC would be responding at an overarching level. It was also noted that as part of the settlement hierarchy Teston is now a smaller village, planned to contribute 35 homes. No specific site had been identified. Cllrs <u>agreed</u> that the Chairman should continue as part of KALC's Coordinating Team. A response would be drafted from Teston and circulated for comment prior to submission.
	Environment
21/114	Flower Trough Beneath Notice Board: Materials had been purchased and work would progress very shortly.
21/115	Allotments Update from Cllr Douglass and Clerk upon inspections, turnover of vacant plots and collection of rent: Deferred to the next meeting
21/116	Work at Teston Country Park: The Chairman, Clerk, Cllr Mrs Gooch and Cllr Webb would be attending a meeting with the Cabinet Member very shortly. It was understood the work would comprise removal of the gantry, and the concrete weir will most likely to extended to the lock gate which would dramatically reduce the need for maintenance. The Chairman and Clerk had attended a meeting with the Environment Agency and a report had been circulated to Cllrs. It was noted that aggregate put down in the secondary car park had not been placed by the Environment Agency. This would also be raised at the meeting with the Cabinet Member. Cllr Ms Burgon raised the position of benches and this was noted.

21/117	Tree Work at Teston Village Green: a) Possible removal of the Silver Birch in the south-eastern corner and replacement with tree that will reach a shorter height at maturity – deferred to the next meeting b) Minimal crown lifting of the Catalpa and removal of a damaged limb and trimming of the Hawthorns along the edge of the Village Green to keep back from the road – it was agreed that this work should proceed subject to Conservation Area approval and within a budget of £250.
	Highways
21/118	Highways Spreadsheet: Discussion deferred to the next meeting.
21/119	Highway Improvement Plan: The Chairman reported upon data from the recent speed survey at Church Street east. The total number of vehicles speeding over 30mph was about 2%. However, the number of vehicles was a surprise and could not be explained by Woodlands Close alone. The matter would be considered further and discussed again at the January meeting. The Chairman had not made any further progress as yet regarding the speed indicator device but this would be taken forward in due course with Cllr Webb's support.
21/120	Parking of Network Rail Vehicles at Livesey Street Near Junction with Malling Road: It was agreed that the Clerk should raise the matter with the PCSO.
	Other
21/121	Notice Board Policy: This was approved .
21/122	Church Commissioners' Pastoral Scheme: The matter was discussed at length. Cllr Ms Burgon noted that Barming PCC wish to be unified and considered there to be a threat that the Church could become a Festival Church. The Chairman noted that there were no examples of Festival Churches. The likely make-up of representation on a combined PCC was discussed with some concern expressed over how this could change in future. The Chairman suggested that our objection to the current scheme would be withdrawn if the Commissioners gave a legal undertaking to combine the benefices but to abandon the unification of parishes. It was agreed a letter suggesting these terms should be sent.
21/123	HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee: The Chairman proposed a plaque and it was agreed that a quote should be obtained from The Stone Shop. As to where it could be positioned, this could be somewhere on the Village Green. Events would be happening but as yet nothing had been booked.
21/124	Arrangements for New Years Day Event: It was unclear whether the event would be able to take place given potential further changes in Covid restrictions. It was felt that cancellation could be acted upon fairly quickly.
21/125	Clerk's Report for Noting Only a) Play Area Rota: December – Cllr Levett; January – Cllr Douglass; February – Cllr Miss Page b) Speedwatch Equipment: This had been collected by Nettlestead Parish Council on 15th November. c) Verge at western end of Tonbridge Road: Following a query raised by a resident, Highways had confirmed that the verge at the western end of Tonbridge Road between the Allotments and Valley Court forms part of the publicly maintainable highway. Regardless of who planted the trees KCC has legal responsibility for them. The trees are inspected every five years and all trees have a CAVAT valuation placed upon them. There is no legal requirement for an owner of a tree to abate the nuisance of leaf/seed/fruit drop, shading, overhang etc and there are no plans to fell any trees at this location. Discussions would continue regarding ownership of this verge and the matter could be brought to a future meeting for further consideration. d) Standing Orders: This item would return to a future Agenda. e) Train Horns: Network Rail had confirmed that their procedure for using train horns as a warning at level crossings applies to footpath crossings where there is insufficient sighting of approaching trains. The whistle board at Teston is for the footpath crossing at Boathouse Meadow, not for the road level

	crossing, although drivers will sound their horns if they observe rail workers on the line. It was agreed that the Clerk should respond to Network Rail noting that there is long visibility from the footpath crossing over the railway and asking whether it is really necessary for drivers to use their horn at this point.
21/126	Exceptional Delegated Authority: It was agreed that EDA should continue until the next meeting.
Meeting Adjourned	
Teston Land Conservation Trust matters - The fence at Lower Boathouse Meadow has been renewed after damage by the cattle - The new gate was reported to need attention - The fields would be cut in the spring Teston Village Stores CIC matters - There had been an issue with the ice cream freezer - Finances were stable but fragile	
	Confidential Items
21/127	It was resolved that the press and public be excluded from the items 21//128 below, and from further discussion on item 21/122 on the basis that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted
21/128	Enforcement issues: Nothing to report.
21/129	Church Commissioners' Pastoral Scheme: It was agreed that a letter would be drafted to the authors of the letter received by the Parish Council and circulated for consideration before being sent.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.32pm

'Date of next regular meeting of the Council – 7.30p.m. on 25th January 2022 at Teston Village Hall

Decisions Taken by the Clerk Since 28th September 2021 Under Agreed Scheme of Delegation

Detail	Decision and background	Date
Planning Application For ratification	21/505650/FULL Orchard Close The Street Teston Maidstone Kent ME18 5AQ Demolition of the existing conservatory. Erection of a single storey rear extension. Conversion of the garage to a habitable space Details were circulated to all Cllrs, and following receipt of comments a response subsequently submitted as follows: As a detail, the front and rear elevations are the wrong way around. While the Parish Council does not object to the proposal in principle, it does have reservations regarding parking. The property would gain an additional bedroom and on this basis we request that it be required/conditioned that the parking area is expanded modestly to permit separate access / egress of at least two vehicles, to reduce the chances of on-street parking by residents.	01.11.21
Planning Application For ratification	21/505765/FULL Crown City Chinese Restaurant Tonbridge Road Teston Maidstone Kent ME18 5BU Creation of an additional 6 no. car parking spaces and resurfacing existing drive and existing car parking spaces (Retrospective) Details were circulated to all Cllrs and following receipt of comments a response was sent as follows: Teston Parish Council welcomes the additional car parking space. The restaurant's customers create some concerns about parking in The Street. That causes hazard to vehicles using that road as it is not wide enough for parked vehicles and two	08.11.21

	opposing lanes of traffic. These new parking spaces will mitigate that hazard to some degree and, if this application is granted, we request a condition that restaurant customers be requested to use the car park when spaces are available, not street-parking. However, we would point out that the work included the installation of two bright standard lamps either side of the entrance, replacing two low-level bollard-lights. They are tantamount to street-lights. While the restaurant building is itself very brightly lit when open, we request that, if this application is granted, a condition is placed that these standard lamps should be removed or, at minimum, moved within the curtilage of the property and restricted to operation when the restaurant is open. Teston is a dark village, without street-lights.	
Traffic Survey	At the last meeting it was agreed that a traffic survey should be conducted at Church Street East within a budget of around £250 plus vat. A quotation was obtained from Traffic Watch for £265 plus vat and following discussion with all Cllrs this was accepted.	08.11.2021

Clerk: Mrs Michelle Tatton

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testonparish@aol.com

