

Minutes of Meeting on 29th November 2022
7.30pm in Teston Village Hall

These Minutes were approved by the Council
at its meeting on 31st January 2023

Cllr Peter Coulling (Chairman)
Cllr Christopher Douglass (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Ms Tina Burgon
Cllr Miss Dawn Page
Cllr Mrs Nina Wheat

KCC Cllr Simon Webb
MBC Cllr Mrs Fay Gooch

Mrs Michelle Tatton (Clerk)

Members of the public - 0

The Chairman drew attention 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.

22/139	Declarations of Interest: 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; (e) Cllr Douglass, Cllr Miss Page and Cllr Mrs Wheat declared an interest as members of Teston Village Hall Management Committee and (f) Cllr Ms Burgon and Miss Page declared an interest as members of the Parochial Church Council.			
22/140	Apologies for Absence: received from Cllr Levett and Cllr Owens. These were <u>accepted</u> .			
Meeting adjourned to receive comments and questions from members of the public				
An email had been received from a member of the public regarding criminal damage to a vehicle in Malling Road. This was read out. The Parish Council was disgusted that such a thing should happen in the village. However, Cllrs were relieved that the Police had been informed. Another resident had reported an issue with parking at the bottom of The Street on the eastern side very close to the junction with the A26. The Chairman had taken some photographs and observed the situation and was concerned about situation represented a significant hazard. See Minute 22/156 below.				
22/141	Minutes of Meeting on 27th September 2022: These were <u>agreed</u> as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.			
22/142	Ratification of Decisions taken by Clerk since the last meeting: Decisions taken by the Clerk since the last meeting as set out at the end of these Minutes were <u>approved</u> .			
22/143	Ordering of Agenda: No changes were proposed.			
	Administration and Finance			
22/144	Statement of Accounts: A Financial Statement had been circulated by the Clerk showing a balance of £31,289.06 from which the following payments were <u>approved</u> for payment:			
			P Coulling - Reimbursement Palmstead Nurseries	
	29.11.2022	3356	Pandora Cherries	336.00
	29.11.2022	3357	Commercial Services Trading Ltd - Landscape Services	707.39
	29.11.2022	3358	Water Plus Ltd Water Bill 22.11.2022	157.11
	29.11.2022	3359	SLCC Subscription 2023	112.00
	29.11.2022	3360	M Tatton Clerk's Salary November 2022	400.70
	29.22.2022	3361	a) Clerk's Backpay April-October 2022	212.31
			b) Expenses between September/November Meetings	178.03
	31.12.2022	3362	M Tatton Clerk's Salary December 2022	400.70

	M Tatton Clerk's Office Allowance October-December 2022 136.25 31.12.2022 3363 M Tatton Reimbursement of Cloud Next Web Domain 132.00 31.12.2022 3364 TOTAL £2772.49 The Chairman would provide the Clerk with details of Jubilee mug sales as soon as possible. In relation to Tapestry, the Chairman proposed that advertising rates increase by 10% due to rising costs. This would be discussed at the January meeting.
22/145	Budget 2023-24/Precept: A draft budget had been circulated and this was discussed. The suggested precept of £30,000 represented a 7.8% increase on the current year's precept - lower than the current rate of inflation. Cllr Doulgass advised that hire charges for the Village Hall were likely to increase and so it was felt this line item should be increased to £250. The Clerk was asked to add funds towards a screen and projector for the Village Hall. It was also noted that the Parish Council might wish to make a contribution towards the Village Stores CIC in the next financial year. Cllr Douglass did not support an increase above 5%, citing impact on single occupier households. Cllrs were asked to give the matter further thought prior to a final decision in January. In the meantime, the Clerk would seek rates from contractors for the new financial year and would circulate a revised budget showing a precept based on a 5% increase. Cllr Webb noted that KCC were likely to put the general rate up by 5% which would still not meet the needs of the County Council.
22/146	Review of Standing Orders, Policies, Procedures & Risk Assessment: It was <u>agreed</u> that in the absence of new model Standing Orders or Financial Regulations, and with no recognised reason for changing the existing Standing Orders, no changes to existing Standing Orders were required It was further agreed that the need for review of Standing Orders would be added to the Risk Assessment at its next review.
22/147	Appointment of Internal Auditor for 2022/23: The Clerk had circulated some further detail. Two potential candidates were considered. It was <u>agreed</u> that April Skies should be appointed for the next audit. It was noted that Mazars LLP had been appointed to conduct the external audit for the next 5 years.
22/148	Church Matters including Possible Grant to St Peter and St Paul Church for Assistance with Churchyard Maintenance: It was confirmed that funds provided by the Parish Council would be treated as going specifically to Teston's Church. On this basis it was <u>agreed</u> that a grant of £250 be made, subject to provision of invoices. It was <u>resolved</u> that a further matter relating to the Church be considered in private in view of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.
22/149	Review of Clerk's Salary (in line with the National Pay Award) and Office Allowance: i) The outcome of national pay negotiations was <u>noted</u> and the Clerk's revised salary was <u>agreed</u> at £4808.40 per annum applicable from 1st April 2022. ii) Backpay of £212.31 was <u>approved</u> for the period 1st April – 31st October 2022 iii) Salary payments thereafter were <u>agreed</u> at £400.70 per month iv) It was <u>agreed</u> that the Clerk's Office Allowance from the beginning of the next financial year commencing 1st April 2023 would increase from £545 to £600, payable on a quarterly basis.
	Planning
22/150	Planning Decisions a) 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**

b) Barnjet Layby, Tonbridge Road Barming - Street Trading Application
Comments submitted and decision awaited but presumed decided

c) 22/501171/TCA Witches Wood Tonbridge Road Barming (incorrect address noted)
Notification of works in a Conservation Area T1 (Red Oak) - Carry out 30% (Approx. 3m Reduction) – **No objection 15.11.2022**

d) 22/501491/TCA The Village Green Church Street Teston Kent
Conservation area notification: Fell one Silver Birch and grind stump – **TPO issued**

e) 22/501778/LBC 2 Hillside Cottage Malling Road Teston ME18 5AN
Listed building consent for the renewal of the rear dormer, replacement windows and doors including internal and external repairs. install mechanical ventilation to bathroom and kitchen, 3no. external lights. Retrospective replacement ceiling works to the top bedroom – **Approved at Planning Committee on 24th November 2022**

f) 22/501777/FULL 2 Hillside Cottage Malling Road Teston ME18 5AN
Renewal of the rear dormer, replacement windows and doors including external repairs and 3no. external lights. Retrospective replacement of ceiling works to the top bedroom – **Approved at Planning Committee on 24th November 2022**. The Chairman reported upon the outcome and discussion that had taken place.

g) TM/22/00907/FL Land North Of 351 Hermitage Lane Maidstone Kent
Erection of 42No. residential dwellings including affordable housing. Enhancement of existing access from Hermitage Lane and provision of associated hardstanding, landscaping, open spaces and infrastructure including drainage and earthworks - **Decision awaited**

h) 22/502027/FULL Land North Of 351 Hermitage Lane Maidstone
Erection of 42 no. residential dwellings including affordable housing. Enhancement of existing access from Hermitage Lane and provision of associated hardstanding, landscaping, open spaces and infrastructure including drainage and earthworks – **Decision awaited**

i) 22/503438/FULL The Stables Little Court Lodge Farm Tonbridge Road
Erection of a detached garage/home office and a front glass canopy extension, including alterations to dwelling and change of use of land to residential garden – **Permitted 26.09.2022**

j) KCC/MA/0141/2022 Teston Bridge Country Park Car Park, Teston Lane Retrospective planning permission for engineering works related to the resurfacing of the overflow car park – **Decision awaited – deferred at Planning Committee.**

k) 22/504044/FULL 23 Courtlands Teston Kent ME18 5AS
Removal of existing rear conservatory and erection of single storey rear extension – **Permitted 17.10.2022**

l) 22/504204/TPOA Barham Mews Tonbridge Road Teston Kent
Tree Preservation Order application: G1 - Group of 2 Lime trees with dieback present in tops of both trees. Both approximately 20 meters in height with an 8 metre spread. work requested is to remove major deadwood and reduce height by approximately 4M – **Permitted 26.09.2022**

m) 22/504261/LBC The Cottage East Church Street Teston ME19 5AJ Application for Listed Building Consent for internal alterations to alter a brick arch in a kitchen alcove to accommodate cooking range – **Permitted 09.11.2022**

n) 22/504379/AGRIC Tutsham Farm Hunt Street West Farleigh Kent ME15 0NE
Prior Notification for the erection of 1no. agricultural building for secure storage of machinery, equipment, and other items. For its prior approval to: - Siting, design and external appearance. **Prior approval not required – 10.10.2022** The Clerk was asked to circulate the Officer's Report.

o) 22/504270/TCA The Old Post Office Church Street Teston Kent ME18 5AH Conservation area notification: Fell one Purple Leaf Plum; Copper beech - rear boundary (neighbours - Located in Hillside Cottages) - Reduce lateral growth over client's side by no more than 2m leaving 1m of growth from walls edge. **No Objection – 07.11.2022**

	p) 22/504533/LBC The Old Post Office Church Street Teston Maidstone Kent ME18 5AH Listed Building Consent for creation of an opening fanlight above door to existing shopfront and installation of secondary glazing behind, internal alterations including creation of new door opening, installation of new partitions and widening of existing door opening. Decision awaited q) 22/504916/SUB Becketts Croft Malling Road Teston Maidstone ME18 5AR Demolition of 2 storey & single storey rear extension. Erection of 2 storey & single storey rear extension with alteration to ground floor rooms – Decision awaited r) 22/505176/FULL The Cottage West Church Street Teston ME18 5AJ Erection of an outbuilding to form log store, shed and greenhouse. Decision awaited
22/151	MBC and TMBC Local Plan Updates: The Chairman reported upon the Maidstone Local Plan Review. The Inspector would now consider proposed main modifications. There would be an opportunity to respond to the Inspector's findings. The Parish Council would continue to watch the progress of TMBC's Local Plan. It was noted that the Inspector for Tunbridge Wells Local Plan was extremely unhappy with the proposal for Capel.
	Environment
22/152	Teston Bridge Country Park: The Chairman had attended the Planning Committee to speak against the retrospective application for resurfacing of the overflow car park (KCC/MA/0141/2022). The matter had been deferred for the Country Parks Team to produce a substantial landscaping plan. The Chairman had been in dialogue with KCC regarding options. Further details would be circulated when available. It was reported that the Environment Agency have almost completed their modelling work. KCC had requested that a lot of the stone on the 'road' be relocated to the path.
22/153	Tree and Hedge Work: a) TPO procedure for the Silver Birch on Teston Village Green: Further news was awaited. b) Schedule of maintenance: A Tree, Hedge and Grass Maintenance Schedule (THGMS) had been prepared listing the Parish Council's grounds maintenance requirements. In terms of the timing of cuts it was proposed that where hedges required cutting in the spring these cuts should take place in late February, with any autumn cuts taking place in September. If cuts were required outside of these periods extra care should be taken in respect of nesting birds. Subject to the changes noted above, and to enable timely action on routine matters, it was agreed that the Clerk have delegated authority to arrange work within the scope of the THGM Schedule. Any unusual work, such as a heavy cut to the Village Green hedge, would continue to be referred to the Council for approval. c) Lime Tree at Courtlands and Catalpa on the Village Green: The Clerk would chase the contractor regarding scheduling of the work. d) Pandora Cherries for Village Green: Cllr Levett was due to take delivery imminently.
22/154	Allotments Report: Cllr Douglass had no issues to raise following his recent inspection. The Clerk reported that rent from 3 or 4 tenants remained outstanding. This had been chased by email. This would be followed up with a more formal letter unless payment was received shortly.
22/155	Play Area: There were no matters to report. Play Area Rota: Dec – Cllr Coulling; Jan – Cllr Ms Burgon; Feb – Cllr Levett; March – Cllr Douglass
	Highways
22/156	Highway Improvement Plan and Highway Spreadsheet of Routine Items: i) Results of recent traffic surveys: An article had been placed in Tapestry. The Chairman was particularly concerned about speeding north of the central crossroads. It was agreed that the Clerk should send the data to Highways and ask them to identify a solution, and seek an extension of the 30mph limit on Malling Road northwards beyond Knole Farmhouse. An extension of the 30mph limit on Tonbridge Road would also be sought towards Wateringbury and eastwards towards Barming. ii) Review regular items: In light of the issues caused by parked vehicles at the southern end of The Street, it was agreed that the Clerk should ask Highways to consider a keep clear box. iii) It was noted that on or around 28th October Kent Highways repaired the pavement immediately

	outside the garage and gate of The White House at Church Street, suggesting KCC now accept that this section is part of the publicly maintainable highway.
	Other
22/157	Screen and Projector for Teston Village Hall: Details of a potential solution had been circulated for a projector and 2.8 metre screen. The cost including installation had been quoted at £5653.08. The Village Hall was sympathetic to the project provided it was fully funded. The Village Hall had itself secured a grant of £4,500. Subject to Cllr Ms Burgon reviewing the specification to see whether any savings could be achieved, it was agreed that the Parish Council would contribute up to £1000 plus vat towards the cost. Ideally work would take place between 12 th and 19 th February 2023.
22/158	Boundary Changes: i) Constituency Boundary Review: The final proposal was noted. Teston had been placed within the Maidstone & Malling Constituency. ii) Maidstone Borough Council Ward Review: Final proposals had been issued. Teston would be placed in the Barming Heath with Teston Ward, represented by 2 Councillors. iii) Maidstone Community Governance Review: This review would look at Parish boundaries. The Chairman noted that Teston's boundaries were well defined.
22/159	Book of Condolence: A spare book had been purchased and was passed to Cllr Douglass for safe keeping at the Village Hall.
22/160	New Year's Day Event 11am-1pm: A budget of £25 was agreed for food and £200 for drinks.
22/161	Coronation Beacon Lighting Monday 8th May 2023: Arrangements for the event would be considered over the next few months including the possibility of purchasing commemorative mugs. The Clerk would research designs.
22/162	Emergency Plan: The Clerk would circulate the current emergency plan with a view to re-adoption in January.
22/163	Kent Minerals and Waste Consultation closing 12th December: No response required.
22/164	MBC Design & Sustainability Consultation closing 12th December: It was agreed that the Chairman would circulate a response for comment.
22/165	Clerk's Report: The following items were noted : i) KCC Country Park Strategy Consultation: response due 12 th December. ii) MBC Air Quality Action Plan: closing 29 th January. ii) Date of Parish Council Meetings for 2023: 31st January, 28th March, 30th May, 25th July, 26th September, 28th November. iii) Date of Annual Parish Meeting: 9 th May 2022. The Environment Agency would be invited to speak.
22/166	Exceptional Delegated Authority: It was agreed that EDA should continue until the next meeting.
Meeting Adjourned	
• Teston Land Conservation Trust matters An update was provided regarding Network Rail Unfortunately, the Environment Agency project would not be going ahead • Teston Village Stores CIC matters Work on the accounts would be progressing The current financial position was noted	
	Confidential Items

22/167	It was resolved that the press and public to be excluded from the item 22/168 and an item related to the Church, minuted below at 22/169) on the basis that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted
22/168	Enforcement issues: The Chairman provided an update on a planning matter and this was noted.
22/169	Teston Church: A matter relating to the Church was discussed and a way forward was agreed.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.25pm

Date of next Parish Council meeting – 7.30pm on 31st January 2023 at Teston Village Hall

End

Decisions Taken by Clerk Since 27th September Under Scheme of Delegation and approved under Minute 22/142

Detail	Decision and background	Date Taken
Remembrance Wreath	Every year the Parish Council makes a donation to RBLI. Following consultation with Cllrs the Clerk ordered a wreath and made a donation of £50 - to be reclaimed at the November meeting.	04.10.2022
Planning Application	22/501777/FULL 2 Hillside Cottage Malling Road Teston Maidstone Kent ME18 5AN Revised details were received and circulated for consideration together with a draft response which was subsequently submitted to MBC.	03.10.2022
Tree Application	22/504270/TCA The Old Post Office Church Street Conservation area notification: Fell one Purple Leaf Plum; Copper beech - rear boundary (neighbours - Located in Hillside Cottages) Reduce lateral growth over clients side by no more than 2m leaving 1m of growth from walls edge. Details were circulated to Cllrs for comment and a response was subsequently submitted pointing out some procedural anomalies, proposing pruning of the Purple Leaf Plum rather than felling, and requesting an informative highlighting that work to the Copper Beech should only take place after the necessary consent has been obtained from the neighbouring owner of that tree.	14.10.2022
Tree Works	Lime Tree at Courtlands A quote was received for crown lifting (£125 plus vat). Following consultation with Cllrs the Clerk accepted the quote. The Clerk has been in touch with MBC's Tree Officer who has confirmed he is happy for work to take place under the existing permission even though the permission refers only to lifting over the road and pavement. He wishes to be advised of the date for the work and the contractor has been asked to confirm.	19.10.2022
Planning Application	22/504533/LBC The Old Post Office Church Street Listed Building Consent for creation of an opening fanlight above door to existing shopfront and installation of secondary glazing behind, internal alterations including creation of new door opening, installation of new partitions and widening of existing door opening. Details were shared with Cllrs following which it was decided to offer no comment.	07.11.2022

Planning Application	22/505176/FULL The Cottage West Church Street Erection of an outbuilding to form log store, shed and greenhouse Details were shared with Cllrs and comments sought, following which the Clerk submitted a response noting that it is unclear how the gutter on the east side of the main roof is collected and, in the absence of assurance, seeking a condition that rainfall on to the whole of the roof structure shall not be allowed to discharge on to neighbouring property.	09.11.2022
Tree Planting	Pandora Cherries for Village Green: Two quotations were obtained and shared with Cllrs, following which a decision was taken and an order placed. Delivery is expected to Cllr Levett on 30 th November.	18.11.2022