

Teston Parish Council

These Minutes were approved by the Council
at its meeting on 25th July 2023

Minutes of Meeting on 27th June 2023
7.30pm in Teston Village Hall

Cllr Peter Coulling (Chairman)
Cllr Christopher Douglass (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Ms Tina Burgon
Cllr Robin Owens
Cllr Mrs Nina Wheat

Mrs Michelle Tatton (Clerk)
Members of the public - 3

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.

23/038	Declarations of Interest: In the interests of transparency, all Parish Councillors declare 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 Miss Page and Cllr Mrs Wheat have an interest as members of Teston Village Hall Management Committee; and Cllr Ms Burgon and Cllr Dawn Page have an interest as members of Barming with Teston PCC. No other declarations of interest were made.
23/039	Apologies for Absence: were received from Cllr Ms Burgon, Cllr Levett and Cllr Miss Page and these were <u>agreed</u> .
Meeting adjourned to receive comments and questions from members of the public	
Public session: Information was requested about the Parish Council's position regarding the Quarry. The matter would be discussed under item 23/045 Kent Minerals Plan – Possible Extension of Hermitage Quarry.	
	<u>Administration and Finance</u>
23/040	Annual Return for the Year ending 31st March 2023: a) To receive Internal Auditor's Report: The Internal Auditor's Report had been circulated to all Cllrs. The contents were noted. The fee for the internal auditor, agreed at £332.60, was <u>authorised</u> to be paid by internet banking. Advice would be taken from KALC regarding reclaim of vat relating to Village Hall works/grants. The Chairman had reservations about cloud storage. This would be discussed at a future meeting. The increasing level of reserves was noted along with the need to consider earmarking if they increased further. The Chairman would consider options for Tapestry invoicing and would resolve the issue of more formal payslips for the Clerk. b) To agree the Governance Statement at section 1 of the Annual Return: Cllr Ms Burgon arrived during consideration of this item. As reported at the May Meeting, Cllr Owens and Cllr Mrs Wheat had met with the Clerk to discuss finance and governance. The Annual Governance Statement was considered and <u>approved</u> . Section 1 was signed by the Chairman and Clerk. c) To approve the Accounting Statements at section 2 of the Annual Return: The Clerk had certified the Accounting Statements prior to the meeting. The Statements were <u>approved</u> and signed by the Chairman. d) To note the Public Inspection Period for the Exercise of Electors Rights: The Clerk advised that the necessary Notice would be placed on the website and noticeboard tomorrow with the period of public inspection running from 29 th June to 10 th August.
23/041	Friends of Teston Church: With help from Helen Grant MP, the Charity Commission had been challenged and had now agreed to accept the draft Trust Deed and this could now be executed. The draft provided for no more than 7 Trustees and no less than 5. Three would be Teston Parish

	Cllrs, while the combined Parochial Church Council could nominate 1 of the Churchwardens or the incumbent. The Trustees could appoint others living outside Teston but at any one time there must be no more than 1 Trustee living outside (excluding the PCC nomination). If a Trustee (excluding the PCC nomination) ceases to live in Teston they would cease to be a Trustee. It was agreed that the matter should proceed and that the Chairman, Cllr Douglass and Cllr Mrs Wheat would be the first Parish Council appointed Trustees. A copy of the draft Trust Deed would be circulated for final comment with a copy to the Churchwarden. The Clerk sought clarification and it was confirmed that the Parish Council was acting as a facilitator in the set up of the Trust and would have no ongoing responsibility, save that it would be able to appoint 3 Trustees, and the Clerk would not play any part except to set up the first meeting. There would be a break out session towards the end of full Parish Council meetings to receive information.
23/042	Rural England Prosperity Fund - Village Hall Solar Panels and Associated Works: A Committee to adjudicate entries would be convened shortly. The Chairman would be submitting further quotations as MBC had requested.
	Planning
23/043	New Applications i) KCC/MA/0090/2023 Teston Bridge Country Park: Retrospective planning application for an 'accessible to all' path around Teston Bridge Country Park, including resurfacing and widening of an existing path linking the river path to the carpark and play area, and installation of new path parallel to the carpark edge linking it to the bridge – due 4th July, with relate application to Maidstone Borough Council 23/502687/COUNTY It was agreed that the Chairman should attend the Planning Committee to raise the Parish Council's concerns about the path and ensure the Planning Committee recognises the number of times the Country Park Team has sought retrospective permission which had caused extra work for Committee Members. It was noted that the surface floods. Cllr Ms Burgon would take some photographs. ii) Teston Bridge Country Park Car Park: Retrospective planning permission for engineering works related to the resurfacing of the overflow car park – re-consultation following submission of revised details – due 12th July It was agreed that the Chairman should attend the adjourned Committee Meeting to raise. Parish Cllrs felt that the amount of extra parking was excessive and the revised details, including deciduous planting, had not addressed the landscape issues and iii) TM/23/01186/FL 182 184 And 186A B C D And E Tonbridge Road Waterringbury: Conversion and extension of existing 4x residential units to create 7x residential units, with additional storey and alterations to the existing building façade – due 6th July It was noted that the extra storey only goes part way along the block and there were only 4 parking bays proposed. It was agreed that the Chairman should discuss with the Chairman at Waterringbury Parish Council to ascertain their views but no comment would be submitted unless Waterringbury PC sought Teston's support. iv) 23/502037/FULL 8 Readers Court: Erection of a garden room with associated works – due 10th July. The Chairman left the meeting for this item as it was an application by his neighbour and Cllr Douglass took the Chair. Cllrs had concerns regarding the height of the building, and possible privacy issues for neighbours. It was felt these issues might be addressed through landscaping on the southern and western boundaries which would aid privacy and soften the built form. The Clerk would submit a response. Upon conclusion of this item the Chairman rejoined the meeting.
23/044	Maidstone Local Plan Review: Stage 2 of the Examination had concluded. Main modifications would now come forward from the Borough and Inspector which would then go out to consultation. It was anticipated that the Parish Council would wish to respond. The Local Plan was likely to be adopted by the end of 2023. All smaller villages, of which Teston is one, would need to try to find 30 homes over the next 5 years and if they were not forthcoming MBC had the right to do so at the next Review. A Gypsy and Traveller Planning Document was being developed currently and this was noted.

23/045	Kent Minerals Plan – Possible Extension of Hermitage Quarry: The Clerk had attended a meeting at the Quarry. KCC had identified a shortfall of 17.4 million tonnes of crushed rock. The current supply would run out before the end of the Minerals Plan. A Call for Sites had taken place and only Hermitage Quarry had come forward for future working of hard rock. A public consultation was currently taking place, ending on 25th July. Any proposed allocation would then be subject to a technical assessment, which would examine constraints to winning the material such as PROW, ancient woodland soils, overhead power lines, blasting impacts and required buffers e.g. from nearby homes. Blasting would be modelled to predict the level of impact. It was noted that in the last year very few complaints had been received by the Quarry regarding blasting but every complainant had been offered a visit and a temporary monitoring machine. It was noted that there is currently around 10 years worth of ragstone left from the current allocation at Hermitage Quarry. The maximum PPV for blasts at Hermitage Quarry is currently 50. All blasts remain well within the limits. Blast data is available on KCC's website It had been emphasised by the Quarry that any new allocation would represent a continuation of existing quarrying activity. There would be no changes or expansion to operations in terms of increase in HGV movements. KCC had arranged a public meeting from 6.30pm to 7.30pm on Friday 7th July 2023 at Larkfield Village Hall. The Chairman invited comments from members of the public who were concerned about a number of matters including noise, dust, discomfort from blasting and potential property damage, lorry movements and increased traffic, loss of ancient woodland, and potential for sink holes. It was <u>agreed</u> that the Clerk should arrange a meeting with the Quarry which the Chairman and Vice Chairman would attend, and the Clerk if available. The above matters would be raised and further understanding sought as to the extent of the proposed extension and need for ragstone, how they will make good, and the nature of the inert waste used to restore the land. An article would be placed in Tapestry and on the notice board.
	Environment
23/046	Teston Bridge Country Park: The Chairman had circulated a draft letter which Cllrs were asked to consider and comment on as quickly as possible. It was <u>agreed</u> that the Parish Council should continue to pursue removal of the crane pad and road.
	Other
23/047	D Day 80 – 6th June 2024: The date was noted. Cllrs would think about how this could be celebrated.
Meeting Adjourned	
Teston Land Conservation Trust matters: • A Trustee Meeting would take place on 17th July when permissive opening of Ripton Wood would be discussed. Two quotations had been obtained. • Boathouse Meadow – the Young Farmers had expressed an interest in taking over the 2 fields. • It was noted that people were having BBQs in the field. A sign had been put up and this had been ripped down. The logs around the tree could be removed. Teston Village Stores CIC matters: • A grant of £3000 had been secured for replacing the chillers and freezers. • Staff matters – 2 young people had signed up and were helping in the shop at the weekends. • Consideration would be given to a charity alongside the shop.	
	Confidential Items
23/048	It was <u>resolved</u> that the press and public be excluded from item 23/049 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
23/049	Planning and Enforcement issues: An update was given on an enforcement issue and <u>noted</u>.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 21.30pm

Next Parish Council meeting – 7.30pm on 25th July 2023 at Teston Village Hall

End