

Teston Parish Council

These Minutes were approved by the Council
at its meeting on 30th May 2023

Minutes of Meeting on 28th March 2023
7.30pm in Teston Village Hall

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

Cllr Mrs Fay Gooch - MBC

Mrs Michelle Tatton (Clerk)

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.

22/199	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 Cllr Miss Page declared an interest as members of Barming with Teston Parochial Church Council. There were no other declarations of interest declared.
22/200	Apologies for Absence: Cllr Ms Burgon, Cllr Miss Page and KCC Cllr Webb were expected to join the meeting later.
Meeting adjourned to receive comments and questions from members of the public	
There were no members of the public present.	
22/201	Minutes of Meetings on 31st January 2023: These were <u>approved</u> as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.
22/202	Ratification of Decisions taken by Clerk since the last meeting (see Clerk's Report): Decisions taken by the Clerk since the last meeting as set out at the end of these Minutes were <u>ratified</u> .
22/203	Ordering of Agenda: No changes were proposed.
	Administration and Finance
22/204	Statement of Accounts: A Financial Statement had been circulated showing a cashbook balance of £28,298.14 from which the following payments were <u>approved</u> :

	Date	Cheque	Payee	Including VAT
	28.03.2023	3376	Gary's Landscapes Village Green Hedge	240.00
	28.03.2023	3377	Eyelid Productions Annual Website Support	100.00
	28.03.2023	3378	Teston Village Hall - hire charges for 22/23 plus storage charge	135.00
	28.03.2023	3379	M Tatton a) Clerk's Salary March 2023 - Total cheque £663.44	400.70
			b) Clerk's Office Allowance January - March 2023	136.25
			c) Clerk's Expenses between January and March Meetings	126.49
	28.03.2023	3380	A Tatton Web/Admin Support since September Meeting	36.72
	28.03.2023		P Coulling Replacement padlock for allotments	14.98
			TOTAL	1190.14
	Taking account of all outstanding cheques and payments received but not yet banked, it was noted that the projected year end figure for the Tapestry account stood at £4,126.74 – approximately £400 less than the year end figure for March 2022, but renewal of adverts was reported to be reasonable.			
22/205	Arrangements for Audit: It was noted that the Clerk would be meeting with the internal auditor in June. So that the Council could meet the deadline of 30 th June for submission of the AGAR it was agreed that a meeting be arranged for 27 th June. Cllr Mrs Wheat, Cllr Owens and the Clerk would agree a date for the financial review, hopefully during April.			
22/206	Risk Review: A revised Risk Assessment was had been circulated. This was formally approved .			
22/207	Church Matters: The Chairman had circulated some detail prior to the meeting setting out the position with the Charity Commission and this was noted.			
22/208	Rural England Prosperity Fund: Cllr Ms Burgon and Cllr Webb arrived during consideration of this item. The Chairman gave some background regarding the grant and the opportunity to address the cost of the energy consumption for the hall and stores. Two estimates for possible work had been obtained for between 20 and 40 solar panels. Up to half the energy need could be met. MBC were hoping to release a grant scheme imminently with applications likely to be invited for up to £50,000. The work was expected to fall within the scope of the grant. Another possible option would be an air to air source heat pump. This would make the gas boiler redundant. The Chairman would provide the Village Hall with some information for consideration. At the rear of the Hall the double-glazing was noted to be in poor condition. It was proposed to remove the four windows and restore with pebble dash. A redundant door could also be removed although that appeared not to be favoured by all hirers. The estimate for this work was £4,400. Cllr Douglass noted that income for the Hall had dropped and gas prices had risen five fold. The Chairman had visited Boughton Monchelsea Village Hall which has air to air source heat pumps and viewed the situation from outside. Ms Burgon felt that in considering the environment the Parish Council had an opportunity to lead the way in moving towards net zero. The Chairman, Cllr Ms Burgon, Cllr Levett and Cllr Owens agreed that an application for funding should be made to MBC, subject to agreement with Teston Village Hall, with delegated authority to the Clerk to submit the application. Cllr Ms Page abstained from voting. Cllr Douglass and Cllr Mrs Wheat did not take part in the vote. Further research would be done in relation to air to air heat pumps to ensure there will be sufficient heating in the evening.			
	Planning			
22/209	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) 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 c) 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 d) 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 e) 23/500443/FULL Court Lodge Farm 2 The Street Teston Kent ME18 5RB Insertion of replacement conservation roof lights – Decision awaited f) 23/500446/FULL Court Lodge Farm 4 The Street Teston Kent ME18 5RB Insertion of replacement conservation roof lights – Decision awaited g) 23/500930/SUB Woodlands Cottage Livesey Street Teston Kent ME18 5AY Submission of details to discharge condition 6 (biodiversity enhancement) of planning application – Approved 23.03.2023
22/210	MBC and TMBC Local Plan Updates: Stage 2 hearings would be starting in May. Cllr Coulling would be attending on behalf of the Parish Council in respect of matters relating to small villages and would be involved on behalf of the Coordinating Team. The TMBC Local Plan was still at an early stage.
22/211	Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Development Planning Document – Scoping, Issues and Options Consultation Document (Regulation 18a): The Chairman provided a verbal report and this was noted. The consultation document and draft response from KALC would be circulated.
	Environment
22/212	Teston Bridge Country Park: The Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Clerk would be attending a liaison meeting in April. A number of agenda items had been put forward. The Agenda would be circulated to all Cllrs.
22/213	Tree, Hedge Work and routine maintenance: a) TPO on Village Green Silver Birch: The Clerk had written to the Tree Officer with 2 options but nothing had been heard. The Clerk would chase. b) Lime Tree at Courtlands and Catalpa on the Village Green: Work had been completed. c) Work authorised under delegated authority: The list would be updated to include a status column.
22/214	Allotments Report: Cllr Douglass reported upon a required replacement tap/washer which should be repaired imminently. The water would be switched on on 1st April. It was noted that the lock on the gate had broken and had been changed.
22/215	Play Area: Inspection Rota: March – Cllr Douglass; April – Cllr Miss Page; May – Cllr Owens; June – Cllr Mrs Wheat
	Highways
22/216	Highway Improvement Plan and Highway Spreadsheet of Routine Items: i) Keep Clear box on The Street at Court Lodge Farm entrance: At present Kent Highways remained unwilling to consider a Keep Clear box. This would be pursued. The Clerk was asked to recirculate the HIP. ii) Review of regular items and agree further action It was noted that Livesey Street, approximately 200 yards towards pub from North Lodge, was now

	impassable. There had been a lot of heavy tractors movements from the southern side dragging logs. Cllr Ms Burgon offered to obtain some photographs. Water was noted to still be flowing over the pavement on the A26 below Court Lodge Farm. This would be raised again with Highways with Cllr Webb copied in. There was disappointment that Highways had not yet removed the damaged bus stop post at the western end of the A26. All matters on the spreadsheet would be monitored and chased as necessary.
	Other
22/217	Screen and Projector for Teston Village Hall: The project had been completed successfully. The Parish Council used the facility to display documents for the meeting and this had worked well.
22/218	Possible Film Club at Teston Village Hall: The Chairman had circulated a report prior to the meeting. It was noted that Amazon Prime downloads can be shown in a Village Hall (with some downloads requiring a normal payment to Amazon). Copyright permission would be required which would cost £119 per evening film. It was agreed that the possibility of a Film Club should be explored further with the Chairman to liaise with Cllr Douglass as Chairman of the Village Hall and a draft application for an entertainments licence would be prepared for the Village Hall to submit.
22/219	To consider collaboration with Teston Village Hall Management Committee on repairing the roof leak above the shop and replacing the side gate with a “chicane”, including any funding: It was noted that the gate at the back of the hall was perpetually being left open. The Chairman recommended a chicane to improve safety for young children. The cost was estimated to be £250. Some Cllrs felt that a gate with a self closing mechanism would be preferable. Cllr Webb offered to provide 50% of the funding for high quality self-closing gate and this was welcomed. It was agreed that the Chairman would look at options again. A leak had developed in the Village Hall roof above the shop. The estimated cost of repair was £1,200. It was suggested that the Parish Council consider increasing its grant to the Village Hall for 2023/24 to £1,000. This would be considered at the next meeting.
22/220	Coronation Beacon Event May 2023, and Commemorative Mugs: There was support for the Viillage Hall opening on Coronation Day between 10.30am and 3pm. Cllr Miss Page confirmed that there could be a ringing of the bells, the timing of which was to be agreed. The Beacon would be lit at 8pm. Logs had been donated, for which the Parish Council was very grateful. Drinks would be provided from the shop and paid for by the Parish Council. On the Sunday the Church had organised a ‘Bring Your Own Picnic on the Green’ which was open to all. Thirty six porcelain mugs had been purchased from Clerks and Councils Direct. These would be offered at no charge to children (up to Year 6) with any left over available to purchase.
22/221	Annual Parish Meeting 9th May 2023: A representative from the Environment Agency would be attending to provide an update on plans at Teston Lock. Cllr Miss Page would organise refreshments within a budget of £25. Cllr Ms Burgon suggested photographs from Mr Astridge’s and Cllr Miss Page’s books be shown on the projector during the interval and this was agreed subject to their agreement.
22/222	Southeast Water Strategic Direction Statement: Noted. https://southeastwater.uk.engagementhq.com/sds
22/223	Clerk’s Report: This was noted .
22/224	Exceptional Delegated Authority: It was agreed that EDA should continue until the next meeting.
Meeting Adjourned	
Teston Land Conservation Trust matters - No matters to discuss. Teston Village Stores CIC matters: - The drinks machine had been replaced. - The roof leak had been discussed earlier in the meeting. A notice would be put up in the shop	

seeking donations.	
	Confidential Items
22/225	It was <u>resolved</u> that the press and public be excluded from items 22/226 and 22/227 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
22/226	Enforcement issues: Updates were provided upon current matters and <u>noted</u> .
22/227	Complaint under the Code of Conduct to the Monitoring Officer: It was noted that MBC would be taking no further action.

Decisions Taken by Clerk Since 31st January 2023 Under Scheme of Delegation For ratification under Agenda item 22/202

Detail	Decision and background	Date Taken
Internal audit arrangements	Following a further exchange with the new Internal Auditor regarding possible additional charges and how these would be communicated/agreed, the Clerk signed the Terms of Engagement as permitted under the terms of delegation agreed at the last meeting.	08.03.2023
Village Green hedge	It was confirmed by the Chairman that the Village Green hedge was in need of attention. The contractor has been asked to schedule a cut back to the previous cut on the top and sides.	14.03.2023

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.25pm

Date of next meetings:

Annual Parish Meeting – 7.30pm on 9th May 2023 at Teston Village Hall

Parish Council meeting – 7.30pm on 30th May 2023 at Teston Village Hall

End