

TESTON PARISH COUNCIL

These Minutes were approved by the Council at its meeting on 29th March 2016

Minutes of Meeting of Teston Parish Council
On 26th January 2016 at 7.30 pm in Teston Village Hall

Cllr Peter Coulling – Chairman
Cllr Alan Perkins – Vice-Chairman
Cllr Christopher Douglass
Cllr Roger Levett
Cllr Robin Owens
Cllr Miss Dawn Page
Cllr Mrs Nina Wheat

Maidstone Borough Councillor Mrs Fay Gooch
Yasmin Gordine Maidstone Borough Council Parish
Liaison Officer
Members of the public: 1

Mrs Michelle Tatton (Clerk)

All Parish Councillors have an interest: (a) in Ash Tree Corner, Courtlands Verge and the Allotments, as the Parish Council owns the land; and (b) as Custodian Trustees of the Village Green and Village Hall. Cllr Douglass, Cllr Miss Page, Cllr Mrs Wheat and Cllr Perkins have an interest as members of Teston Village Hall Management Committee. In the context of changes to the regime relating to Code of Conduct, the Parish Council has resolved to apply dispensations to all Parish Councillors that fully reflect the Dispensation from Maidstone Borough Council during the previous regime with regard to decisions relating to (a) Teston Land Conservation Trust (except that Cllr Coulling is not included for decisions relating to any grants from the Parish Council); and (b) the Village Green.

Before the meeting commenced the Chairman drew attention to the Council's policy on photographing, filming and broadcasting of Parish Council meetings. No intention to film, photograph or broadcast was declared.

15/179	Declarations of other interests pertinent to this meeting: Cllr Mrs Wheat declared an interest in item 15/187 Quotations for Grounds Maintenance 2016-17, and Cllr Owens declared an interest in item 15/191 b)iii) Planning Application for Sunnyview, Livesey Street
15/180	Private items: It was <u>agreed</u> that items 15/223 Enforcement Issues be taken in private owing to the requirements laid down by Maidstone Borough Council, and 15/187 Quotations for Grounds Maintenance 2016-17 and 15/224 Land Registration be taken in private owing to the personal and confidential nature of the business to be transacted.
15/181	Apologies for absence: None
MEETING ADJOURNED	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yasmine Gordine explained her role to help improve communication between the Borough Council and Parish Councils. She would be working under the Head of Housing and Community Service, John Littlemore. • A resident reported damage to his wheelie bin which had taken 10 days to resolve. This was noted. • Potholes were reported near North Pole. These had already been notified to Kent Highways. • There was concern regarding the camera in the car park at Teston Bridge Country Park. It was noted that a number of people stop only very briefly to use the toilet facilities. Would there be a period of grace in relation to purchasing tickets? This would be raised with Stephanie Holt. • It was noted with great sadness that PCSO Frank Woollett had passed away. He had provided an excellent service to the community which had been very much appreciated. The Parish Council had offered some words for the book of condolence. It was felt that a donation should be made in his memory and the Clerk would make enquiries regarding the family's wishes.
MEETING RECONVENED	
15/182	To agree the Minutes of previous meetings: The Minutes of 24 th November 2015 were <u>approved</u> by the Council as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.
15/183	Ordering of Agenda: No changes were required.
	<u>Administration and Finance</u>

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15/184	<p>a) Statement of accounts: A Financial Statement dated 20th January 2016 had been circulated showing a balance of £15,823.88 from which the following payments were authorised, including a post-dated cheque for the Clerk's Salary for February:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin: 10px 0;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">11.12.15</td> <td style="width: 10%;">2876</td> <td style="width: 65%;">Fleur de Filles</td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: right;">300.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>26.01.16</td> <td>2877</td> <td>Eon Lighting charges invoice 1st January 2016</td> <td style="text-align: right;">34.14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>26.01.16</td> <td>2878</td> <td>P Coulling - New Years Day Event - s137</td> <td style="text-align: right;">151.79</td> </tr> <tr> <td>26.01.16</td> <td>2879</td> <td>M Tatton Clerk's Salary January 2016</td> <td style="text-align: right;">311.22</td> </tr> <tr> <td>26.01.16</td> <td>2880</td> <td>M Tatton Clerk's Expenses December/January</td> <td style="text-align: right;">90.14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>26.02.16</td> <td>2881</td> <td>M Tatton Clerk's Salary February 2016</td> <td style="text-align: right;">311.22</td> </tr> <tr> <td>26.01.16</td> <td>2882</td> <td>R Levett Replacement Tree Village Green</td> <td style="text-align: right;">30.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: right;">TOTAL</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£1228.11</td> </tr> </table> <p>It was noted that £5,000 had been allowed for completion of work at the Village Hall.</p> <p>Since preparing the Statement the Clerk had been able to do some further work on the VAT reclaim and this was likely to be in the region of £2,400 i.e. around £400 higher than anticipated.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Parish Services Scheme Agreement should be signed by the Chairman and Clerk and returned to Maidstone Borough Council.</p> <p>b) Budget 2016-17 and Precept: The Council had considered the budget in detail at its meeting in November and a provisionalsal figure of £22,000 had been agreed, subject to confirmation of grant funding. It had now been confirmed that the Parish Services Scheme Grant would remain at £1972. The Local Council Tax Support Grant would be less than anticipated at £915. After debate, and in view of the reduction and likely further reductions in the future, it was agreed, with some regret, that the Precept should be set at £22,450. An article would be placed in Tapestry to explain the situation.</p> <p>It was also agreed that the Clerk should write to Maidstone KALC asking them to take up the matter of dual rating.</p>	11.12.15	2876	Fleur de Filles	300.00	26.01.16	2877	Eon Lighting charges invoice 1st January 2016	34.14	26.01.16	2878	P Coulling - New Years Day Event - s137	151.79	26.01.16	2879	M Tatton Clerk's Salary January 2016	311.22	26.01.16	2880	M Tatton Clerk's Expenses December/January	90.14	26.02.16	2881	M Tatton Clerk's Salary February 2016	311.22	26.01.16	2882	R Levett Replacement Tree Village Green	30.00	TOTAL			£1228.11
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15/185	<p>Parish Charter: The next Liaison Meeting would take place on 23rd February. KALC would be proposing an amendment to the Charter to ensure that Parishes receive an early briefing on future local plans.</p>																																
15/186	<p>Village Hall Extension & Support: It was reported that there was some minor snagging to resolve. A canopy would be put up over the door in the next few days.</p>																																
15/187	<p>Quotations for grounds maintenance for 2016-17: It was noted in public session that 2 quotations had been received. The detail of the quotations was discussed in private at the end of the meeting.</p> <p>It was agreed that Gary's Landscape should be asked to cut the Village Green hedge as soon as possible after the end of July. Thereafter the situation would be reviewed to see whether a heavy cut would be needed and by whom the work should be carried out.</p> <p>The quotation from Turfsoil for grounds maintenance of the Village Green and various roadside verges for the period 1st April 2016 – 31st March 2017 was agreed.</p>																																
15/188	<p>FOI Request to Maidstone Borough Council: Cllr Douglass had considered the redacted document and could not find anything that pointed towards Golding Homes having responsibility towards adjacent neighbours. Nevertheless it was felt that Cllr Douglass should prepare a letter should to be sent by Cllr Douglass to Golding Homes regarding their process for dealing with problem tenants. The Chairman asked to see the letter before it was sent.</p> <p>A separate issue was noted regarding rubbish at a property. Cllr Mrs Gooch offered to speak with the Neighbourhood Officer.</p>																																
15/189	<p>Auto-enrolment: The Chairman had attended a presentation arranged by KALC regarding auto-enrolment and reported that he was not comfortable with the level of risk and administration involved with the KCC scheme. The matter would be considered in due course. In case it was of help, the Clerk made it clear that, for personal reasons, she would not join any pension scheme the Parish Council might offer.</p>																																
15/190	<p>Standing Orders: It was noted that, due to changes to contract and financial regulations, the Standing Orders were in need of review. This would be considered by the Clerk and Chairman over the coming months and reported to a later meeting.</p>																																
	<p>Planning</p>																																
15/191	<p>a) New/pending decisions</p> <p>i) 14/503786/OUT Land To The East Of Hermitage Lane Maidstone Kent: Outline application for up to 80 residential dwellings with access to be considered at this stage with all other matters reserved for future consideration – Decision pending</p>																																

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	<p>iv) 15/504345/FULL American Oast Tutsham Farm West Farleigh Kent ME15 ONE: Change of use of building from live/work use to a mixed business and residential use – decision pending (deferred by Maidstone Borough Council Planning Committee to the next meeting)</p> <p>v) 15/02495/FL Abbeyfield Greensted Residential Home 16 The Orpines Wateringbury Maidstone Kent ME18 5BP: Demolition of the existing Greensted Residential Care home and the erection of 55 Older Person's Extra Care units (C2 Use Class) with associated communal facilities, landscaping and parking – Decision pending</p> <p>b) To consider any newly submitted applications including:</p> <p>i) 15/510563/LAWPRO 4 Woodlands Close Teston Kent ME18 5AL: Lawful Development Certificate (Proposed) - Loft conversion. The Parish Council was not a consultee. However, it was felt the Clerk should ask Maidstone Borough Council to note that the large rear dormer window would result in overlooking of properties to the west.</p> <p>ii) TM/16/00032/CRD Sports Ground, Beacon Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling: Closure Report pursuant to condition 3c). This related to soil samples. It was agreed that the Clerk should submit a 'no comment' response.</p> <p>iii) 6/500243/FULL Sunny View Livesey Street: Erection of two storey extension and porch to the front of the house. It was agreed that the proposed development was acceptable and should be approved.</p>
15/192	<p>Local Plan Consultations, Call for Sites, Integrated Transport Strategy and Protection for the Medway Valley, including polytunnels: Public consultation on the final draft of the Local Plan would begin on 5th February. All responses would be forwarded directly to the Inspector.</p> <p>KALC would be meeting next week to discuss. It was agreed that the Chairman should continue his involvement in the process.</p> <p>The Clerk would notify Wateringbury PC and East Malling and Larkfield PC.</p> <p>Cllr Mrs Gooch offered to lend the Parish Council a copy of the relevant documentation, and Yasmin Gordine also offered to look into whether a copy of the final Plan would be circulated to parishes.</p>
	<p><u>Highways and PROW</u></p>
15/193	<p>Highways Spreadsheet: Items 4-11 on the spreadsheet had all been resolved. It was agreed that the Clerk should meeting with the Highway Liaison Officer to discuss the blocked channels on Tonbridge Road, east of The Street and on the access road at the Farm Shop; and the lighting column on the island at Crown City which had still not been repaired, despite promises that this would be done during the second week of January.</p> <p>It was noted that the pavement in Teston Lane south of the railway towards Teston Bridge needed sweeping. It was understood this ought to have been done in late December/early January. The Clerk would report to Maidstone Borough Council. She would also discuss the need for early weed killing on the A26 with the Highway Liaison Officer.</p>
15/194	<p>Street lighting review: The Clerk was still trying to get definitive responses from the Lighting Manager regarding the future of the two lights and would chase.</p>
15/195	<p>Parking at Courtlands and seat at the bus stop: Highways had agreed that, at this time, the Parish Council would not need to pay a fee for Street Works Licences.</p> <p>The Village Hall builder would be able to supply an ex British Rail seat and it was agreed that this would be a satisfactory solution for the bus stop and the Clerk should action subject to a budget of £250 to include installation.</p> <p>It was agreed that a sign should be purchased for Courtlands to deter parking close to the junction subject to a budget of £250 including installation. The sign should read 'Please do not park closer to junction than this sign (line 1) to avoid a hazard (line 2)'.</p>
15/196	<p>Traffic island on Tonbridge Road in the vicinity of Ash Tree Corner: No update was available. The Clerk would discuss with the Highway Liaison Officer.</p>
15/197	<p>Maidstone Borough Council Cycling Strategy: As part of Maidstone Borough Council's Cycling Strategy a proposal had come forward to close North Pole Road to through motor traffic to facilitate the creation of cycle route from Barming to Kings Hill. An extension of the Medway Towpath Scheme from Barming Bridge to Yalding was also proposed.</p> <p>The proposal was discussed and it was agreed that the Parish Council could not support the stopping up</p>

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	<p>of North Pole Road. On occasion the road had been used as an alternative access when Tonbridge Road had been closed. There were concerns that extending the towpath would create problems for landholders grazing cattle and this issue would also be raised. Cllr Miss Page abstained from the vote.</p> <p>It would be preferable to create a 'quiet lane'.</p> <p>The Clerk pointed out that the proposal had come to light by chance as a result of reading committee papers, not because of any formal notice, and the Parish Liaison Officer was asked to look into whether parishes could be consulted directly on matters that affect their area.</p> <p>Cllr Mrs Gooch commented that there are also plans to reinstate 2 halts on the Medway Valley Line at Tovil and Teston which was noted with interest.</p>
15/198	<p>Barming Bridge: Cllr Levett had been considering the way forward and proposed that the Clerk should contact nearby parishes to seek their view on whether Highways should be asked to consider an another river crossing due to the ever increasing volume of traffic. It was agreed that the Clerk should make contact.</p>
15/199	<p>Traffic cones: The Clerk has provided prices for cones and a sign for Remembrance Sunday. It was agreed that the Clerk should proceed within a budget of £100.</p>
15/200	<p>Speed Watch: A recent update had been circulated. There was nothing further to report.</p>
15/201	<p>Teston Bridge lorry issues and MJTB Meeting on 7th December 2015: There was nothing further to report at this stage.</p>
15/202	<p>East Malling Traffic Scheme Signage: There was no further progress at this stage. The Clerk would chase.</p>
15/203	<p>Parking at The Street: It was noted that the PCSO was monitoring parking in The Street where a vehicle had been seen parked too close to the junction.</p>
	<p><u>Environment</u></p>
15/204	<p>Allotments:</p> <p>a) Outcome of inspections: Cllr Douglass had carried out 2 inspections since the last meeting. There were no plot/tenancy issues to report.</p> <p>It had also been noted that rabbits appeared to be taking up residence on vacant plot 3.</p> <p>b) Fencing: A tenant had pointed out that the boundary fence to the left of the main entrance gate needed fixing.</p> <p>Cllr Douglass planned to carry out a further inspection ahead of the next meeting and would report back upon all necessary fencing repairs.</p> <p>c) Ferreting: It was agreed that John Rye be given permission to carry out ferreting at the allotments to help with the rabbit problem. A letter was issued, signed by the Chairman, which would be given to Mr Rye by Cllr Levett.</p>
15/205	<p>Teston's Trees and hedges, including:</p> <p>a) Trees in the Village Competition 2015: Cllr Levett recommended obtaining a second Scarlet Oak using the voucher from Kent Men of the Trees and this was agreed</p> <p>b) Trees on the north side of Tonbridge Road between The Street and Barham Court: Cllr Levett had met with a resident who wished to carry out some work on the verge on Tonbridge Road to the east of The Street. Cllr Levett felt that it would be acceptable, subject to necessary permission from Kent Highways and Maidstone Borough Council, for the resident to remove the 4-5 Hazels on the verge and plant more sensible specimens that would add character. There was also a lot of scrubby undergrowth which the resident would be prepared to clear and tidy up at his own expense. It was agreed that the Clerk should contact the resident to confirm that the Parish Council would have no objection to work being carried out as above but that he would need to contact Maidstone Borough Council to seek approval due to the location within the Conservation Area and Kent Highways who were owners of the verge.</p> <p>c) Overhanging trees in Church Street and broken branch on Lime Tree at Courtlands: Cllr Levett would check to see whether the trees in Church Street had been lifted. He would also contact the resident regarding the branch on the Lime Tree.</p> <p>d) Cllr Douglass reported that the Beech Tree in the grounds of the Village Hall was causing concern with possible subsidence occurring. The Clerk would make contact with the Tree Officer for advice and a possible site visit.</p>

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15/206	Purchase of a Defibrillator: Details of cost had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that Teston Club had a defibrillator as did the Nursery Group. Cllr Levett suggested that the Clerk make contact with the Club to see whether they might be prepared to put the defibrillator outside for use by other members of the community if the Parish Council funded the purchase of a secure locked cabinet and this was <u>agreed</u> .
15/207	Fire Hydrant Initiative - and Community Resilience/Reassurance: KFRS would be making contact again in due course regarding their need to access suitable community buildings in emergencies.
15/208	KCC Country Parks: Regarding KCC's procurement process in relation to the future of the county's largest 9 country parks, no organisation had expressed a specific interest in Teston Bridge Country Park and KCC had decided not to pursue further any discussions with seven providers who submitted an Expression of Interest (EOI). Of the remaining four EOIs, one proposal related to the concept of a Trust. The Chairman has asked for further information once available.
15/209	Play Area Equipment Check and Rota : The rota was confirmed as follows: January – Cllr Owens; February - Cllr Coulling; March – Cllr Perkins.
15/210	Village Green/Village Hall Boundary: This item was deferred to the next meeting.
15/211	Ambulance Sirens: No further news. The matter was deferred to the next meeting.
	<u>Other</u>
15/212	Parish Council elections (May 2016): It was <u>agreed</u> that the Clerk should prepare a new poster for display on the notice board.
15/213	Police and Parish Council Liaison Meeting 18th February: There were no items for the Agenda.
15/214	Parish Council Meetings for the period 1st April 2016 – 31st March 2017: The following dates were <u>agreed</u> : (2016) 17 th May, 26 th July, 27 th September, 29 th November; (2017) 24 th January, 28 th March
15/215	APM Date: It was <u>agreed</u> that the Annual Parish Meeting should take place on 19 th April.
15/216	HM 90th Birthday Celebrations: It was noted that the Church had arrangements in hand for the celebrations and as a result it was <u>agreed</u> that this would be sufficient.
15/217	Civic Service 15th March 2016 at All Saints Church, Maidstone: It was <u>agreed</u> that Cllr Miss Page and the Clerk would attend.
15/218	KALC Maidstone Area Committee: Following discussion it was <u>agreed</u> that a contribution of up to around £100 towards a Maidstone KALC commissioned review of Objectively Assessed Housing Need.
15/219	Telephone kiosk: This item was deferred to the next meeting.
15/220	Tonbridge Road and Teston House postcode issues: This item remained under consideration and so would be considered further at the next meeting.
	<u>Consultations – to consider responses</u>
15/221	<p>a) Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013-30 – further revisions: closing 4th March 2016. It was <u>agreed</u> that the Clerk should review and respond as necessary.</p> <p>b) Mobile Library Service – Redesigning for the Future: running from 22nd January until 4th March. It was <u>agreed</u> that an article should be placed in Tapestry to seek views from villagers to inform the Parish Council's response, which Cllr Miss Page would consider.</p> <p>c) DCLG Consultation on proposed changes to National Planning Policy: It was <u>agreed</u> that the Chairman should consider and an appropriate response should be submitted.</p> <p>d) Lower Thames Crossing Consultation: It was <u>agreed</u> that the Parish Council would offer no comment.</p>
15/222	ANY LATEST REPORT UPDATES FOR NOTING ONLY - None
	MEETING ADJOURNED

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	<p>i) Teston Village Stores CIC Matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A canopy would be erected over the door within the next few days; • Directors would be meeting on 28th January. <p>ii) Teston Land Conservation Trust Matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fishing rights had now been granted to Tunbridge Wells Anglers and the fee had been received. A probationary period would apply; • Insurance had been renewed with Allied Westminster. Restrictions upon signage had been removed; • An article had been placed in the latest edition of Tapestry calling for volunteers for odd jobs.
	MEETING RECONVENED
	Public session: There were no further questions or comments from members of the public.
	MEETING ADJOURNED & RECONVENED IN PRIVATE
	<u>Confidential Items</u>
15/223	<p>Enforcement issues: Outstanding issues were noted. These would be chased as necessary.</p> <p>A new item was discussed and it was agreed that this should be reported to Maidstone Borough Council for investigation. Reference should be made to the historic imagery on Google Earth.</p>
15/224	<p>Land registration: Two matters were discussed. It was agreed that both should be investigated further and reports made to the next Parish Council meeting.</p>

END OF MEETING

*Date of next regular meeting of the Council – 7.30p.m. on 29th March 2016 at Teston Village Hall
(Available at meeting: Agenda, Clerk's Report, Correspondence List, Financial Statement, and Highways Sheet)*