

# TESTON PARISH COUNCIL

These Minutes were approved by the Council at its meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2017

Minutes of the Meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2017  
at 7.30pm in Teston Village Hall

Cllr Peter Coulling – Chairman  
Cllr Ms Tina Burgon  
Cllr Chris Douglass  
Cllr Robin Owens  
Cllr Miss Dawn Page  
Cllr Mrs Nina Wheat

Kent County Councillor Mrs Paulina Stockell  
Mrs Michelle Tatton (Clerk)  
3 members of the public

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.

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| 17/101   | <p><b>Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and/or Other Significant Interests:</b> In the interests of transparency, all Parish Councillors declared that that they have 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; and d) Cllr Douglass, Cllr Owens, Cllr Miss Page and Cllr Mrs Wheat have an interest as members of Teston Village Hall Management Committee.</p> <p>Cllr Coulling declared an interest in Agenda item 17/110v) The Gables planning application and proposed to leave the room should this need to be discussed.</p> |
| 17/102   | <p><b>Apologies for absence:</b> were received from Cllr Levett and these were <u>approved</u>. Cllr Mrs Gooch had also offered her apologies.</p>   |
| <b>MEETING ADJOURNED TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC</b>  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern was raised about a wall that had been removed, and a tree that had been removed and not replaced. These matters would be discussed later in the meeting;</li> <li>• It was noted that there were thistles in Boathouse Meadow. The Chairman confirmed that TLCT would be dealing with these. The grazier had said they needed topping and spraying and this should be done sometime before next April;</li> <li>• Had there been any progress regarding refurbishment of the benches on the Village Green? It was confirmed that estimates were awaited;</li> <li>• Regarding the ongoing closure of Teston Bridge, the Chairman confirmed that the scaffolding had been moved to the other side and work was progressing. It was anticipated that the Bridge would re-open around 8<sup>th</sup> October. When it re-opened it was likely that there would continue to be issues with unauthorised lorry movements. The Chairman had met with the Chairmen of Barming and West Farleigh to discuss bridge issues and for Teston Bridge an enforcement camera had been mooted;</li> <li>• It was reported that the drains were blocked in Teston Lane and weeds were growing in the kerb. This would be reported. The Parish Council had been told that weed killing had been undertaken twice during the year although there was little evidence of this;</li> <li>• It was reported that the 15 minutes grace notice had been removed. The parking machines had also been moved and were less visible and accessible. The Clerk was requested to ask KCC for finger points to show where the machines are and to ask for the grace period notices to be reinstated;</li> <li>• It was reported that some residents had received a letter regarding the Ward name change while others had not. The Clerk was asked to find out whether Maidstone Borough Council had sent all the letters at the same time and what list they had used, and to request spare forms to place in the Village Shop together with return envelopes.</li> </ul> |  |
| <b>MEETING RECONVENED</b>  |  |
| 17/103   | <p><b>Minutes of previous meetings:</b> The Minutes of the meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2017 were <u>approved</u> as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.</p>  |
| 17/104   | <p><b>Re-ordering of Agenda:</b> None.</p>   |

# TESTON PARISH COUNCIL

|        |   | <u>Administration and Finance</u>   |              |   |        |
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|        |   | <p><b>Statement of accounts:</b> A Financial Statement dated 12<sup>th</sup> September 2017 had been circulated showing a balance of £32800.22 from which the following payments were authorised, including a post-dated cheque for the Clerk's salary for October 2017:</p>  |              |   |        |
| 17/105 |   | 26.09.17  | 2992         | War Memorials Trust Lifetime Membership                 | 150.00 |
|        |   | 26.09.18  | 2993         | NALC Local Councils Review Subscription                 | 17.00  |
|        |   | 26.09.19  | 2994         | Teston Village Magazine - APM Report                    | 111.89 |
|        |   | 26.09.20  | 2995         | RBL Poppy Appeal  | 50.00  |
|        |   | 26.09.21  | 2996         | Gary's Landscape Allotments/TLCT hedge                  | 290.00 |
|        |   | 26.09.22  | 2997         | The Boston Bulb Company Ltd                             | 200.00 |
|        |   | 26.09.23  | 2998         | Mr B Simons - Return of Allotment Deposit               | 25.00  |
|        |   | 26.09.24  | 2999         | PKF Littjohn LLP External Audit Fees                    | 240.00 |
|        |   | 26.09.25  | 3000         | Eon Street lighting charges                             | 22.40  |
|        |   | 26.09.26  | 3001         | M Tatton 1) Clerk's Salary September 2017 - £335.27     | 462.77 |
|        |   |   |              | 2) Office Allowance July - September - £127.50          |        |
|        |   | 27.10.17  | 3002         | M Tatton Clerk's Salary October 2017                    | 335.27 |
|        |   | 26.09.17  | 3003         | Teston Village Hall - Hall Hire March to September (x6) | 78.00  |
|        |   | 26.09.17  | 3004         | P Coulling - Lock for Allotments Gate                   | 13.49  |
|        |   | 26.09.17  | 3005         | Mrs M Tatton - Clerk's Expenses July-September          | 110.48 |
|        |   |   | <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>£2106.30</b>   |        |
|        |   | <p>For the next meeting the Clerk was asked to provide a rough estimate of time spent on allotment matters. It was noted that the subscription cheque for Kent Men of the Trees had not been cashed and the Clerk would chase this.</p>   |              |   |        |
| 17/106 | * | <p><b>Lifetime Membership of the War Memorials Trust, and Discolouration of the Stonework due to Wreaths:</b> It had been confirmed that Lifetime Membership for a Parish Council would be £150. It was <b>agreed</b> that Membership should be accepted.</p> <p>An article had been placed in Tapestry regarding the removal of wreaths and responses were awaited. The matter would be discussed again at the November meeting.</p>   |              |   |        |
| 17/107 | * | <p><b>Annual Return for the Year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017:</b> The audit had been concluded routinely. Notices had been placed on the notice board as required.</p>  |              |   |        |
| 17/108 | * | <p><b>Review of Standing Orders, Policies and Procedures:</b> There was nothing to report.</p>  |              |   |        |
| 17/109 | * | <p><b>Parish Charter:</b> Nothing further to report at this time.</p>   |              |   |        |
|        |   | <u>Planning</u>   |              |   |        |
| 17/110 |   | <p><b>a) New/pending decisions</b></p> <p><b>i) 16/508000/FULL The Granary Court Lodge Farm The Street</b><br/>Erection of single storey front extension with insertion of 2 rooflights – <b>Decision awaited</b></p> <p><b>ii) 17/500888/FULL Gunwalloe 59 Tonbridge Road Teston Kent ME18 5BT</b><br/>Retrospective application for construction of decking at rear and walkway leading to decking at side of property – <b>Refused 02.08.2017</b> Cllr Douglass had attended the Planning Committee and gave a report on the outcome.</p> <p><b>iii) 16/503202/FULL The Tickled Trout PH Lower Road, West Farleigh ME15 0PE</b><br/>Retrospective application for insertion of double head LED floodlights to rear of car park and insertion of single LED flood light attached to chimney – <b>Approved 25.07.2017</b> – No conditions had been imposed regarding angling of lights, spillage or hours of use.</p> <p><b>iv) TM/17/01595/OAEA and 17/503416/ADJ Land East Of Hermitage Lane And South Of London Road Maidstone Kent</b></p> |              |   |        |

# TESTON PARISH COUNCIL

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|        | <p>Adjoining Authority: Outline application for the erection of up to 840 dwellings (including affordable homes) with public open space, landscaping, sustainable drainage systems, land for a Primary School, doctors surgery and for junction improvements at Hermitage Lane/A20 junction, and a link road between Poppy Fields roundabout and Hermitage Lane. Vehicular accesses into the site from Poppy Fields Roundabout and Hermitage Lane. All matters reserved with the exception of means of access – <b>Decision awaited</b></p> <p><b>v) 17/502779/FULL The Gables Church Street Teston ME18 5AG</b><br/>Removal of timber fence fronting boundary and construction of new brick wall. Parish Council – no objection - <b>Decision awaited</b></p> <p><b>vi) 17/504116/TPO Grass Verge At Entrance To Courtlands Malling Road Teston Kent ME18 5AS</b><br/>TPO Application for 1 x Lime tree - lift canopy to give clearance of up to 3 metres from the pavement/carriageway – <b>Decision awaited</b></p> <p><b>b) Newly submitted applications/ratify submissions made, including the following:</b></p> <p><b>i) 17/504478/FULL 7 Tonbridge Road Teston Maidstone Kent ME18 5BU</b><br/>Erection of a first floor side extension with pitched roof, a part single, part two storey rear extension and a detached garage<br/>It was noted that a number of properties along Tonbridge Road had already been extended in a similar way. It was <b>agreed</b> that there was no objection.</p> |
| 17/111 | <p><b>Maidstone Local Plan Issues:</b> The Chairman provided an update. Maidstone Borough Council had been due to consider the Local Plan for adoption at full Council but it had been called in by the Secretary of State and the Council meeting had been postponed. KALC's Co-ordinating Team would continue to press Maidstone Borough Council on a number of matters.</p>   |
| 17/112 | <p><b>Tonbridge &amp; Malling Local Plan:</b> The Chairman had met with a number of local parishes. The Clerk had circulated a report of the meeting and this was noted.</p>   |
| 17/113 | <p><b>Assets of Community Value:</b> An application has been submitted to Maidstone Borough Council to register Teston Club as an Asset of Community Value. The Clerk was asked to notify the Teston Club Committee with apologies that this had not been done previously.<br/>Teston Village Hall would be considered at the next Meeting.</p>  |
|        | <p><b><u>Highways and PROW</u></b></p>   |
| 17/114 | <p><b>Highways Spreadsheet:</b> The following items were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weeds around the traffic islands on Tonbridge Road – the Highway Steward was arranging for these to be dug out;</li> <li>• The Clerk would report the blocked drains in Teston Lane;</li> <li>• The Clerk had met with the Highway Steward to discuss a number of vegetation issues. Highways would be asked to write to the owner of a property on Tonbridge Road. The Chairman would speak to two other residents regarding other vegetation issues, and the Clerk would place a further item in Tapestry regarding overgrown vegetation.</li> </ul>  |
| 17/115 | <p><b>Signs, seats and litter bins:</b> The Clerk had contacted Maidstone Borough Council to arrange for the agreed work to be done subject to Maidstone Borough Council confirming that the Parish Council would own the furniture. Nothing more had been heard. The Clerk would chase.<br/>A quotation had been requested for refurbishing the seats in the village. The Clerk was given authority to proceed subject to a budget of £500.</p>   |
| 17/116 | <p><b>Request for a sign in Church Street West to deter parking across the dropped kerb at Ash Tree Corner:</b> A complaint had been received about the kerb being blocked by parked cars. It was <b>agreed</b> that a sign should be obtained. The Clerk would seek clarification from Kent Highways as to whether any permissions were required. Subject to that the Clerk could proceed within a budget of £100.</p>  |
| 17/117 | <p><b>Traffic Island on Tonbridge Road in the Vicinity of Ash Tree Corner:</b> The Highways Engineer had outlined the process the Parish Council could follow in terms of commissioning a feasibility study. A letter had been prepared and the Engineer would be asked to look at this. Once finalised it was <b>agreed</b> the letter should be sent out to consultants with a request for a quotation to do the analysis.</p>   |
| 17/118 | <p><b>Request for 30mph roundels on the A26 between Teston Lane and The Street:</b> The Speedwatch Co-ordinator had asked whether a roundel on the road surface might be possible as signs are often hidden by</p>   |

# TESTON PARISH COUNCIL

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|        | vegetation and therefore drivers are not always aware of their speed. This would be located in the vicinity of the traffic island to the east of The Street.<br>It was <b>agreed</b> that the Clerk should investigate and have authority to spend up to £80.   |
| 17/119 | <b>Request to consider further dropped kerbs:</b> A resident had raised the issue of lack of dropped pavements, to aid use by prams and mobility scooters, including at Teston House and by the War Memorial. Of the locations suggested it was felt that the priority should be Teston House. The Clerk would investigate further.   |
| 17/120 | <b>Existing Street Lights:</b> No further news. To be considered again at the next meeting.   |
| 17/121 | * <b>Teston Road:</b> It was <b>agreed</b> that the Clerk should press for the road to be legally stopped up to the concrete barriers.  |
| 17/122 | * <b>Speed Watch:</b> Nothing to report.  |
| 17/123 | * <b>Medway Bridges:</b> Nothing to report.   |
|        | <b><u>Environment</u></b>   |
| 17/124 | <b>Allotments:</b><br>a) <b>Inspection Report:</b> Cllr Douglass reported upon his recent inspections;<br>b) <b>Allotment Stand Pipes and Water:</b> Tenants had been advised that the water readings were unusually high and there was an indication that some abuse had taken place. Unfortunately the latest bill had not yet arrived. Regarding the stand-pipes, these were in need of some refurbishment and this would be looked at in due course;<br>c) <b>Fencing and Hedges:</b> The Clerk had been in touch with the Administrator at the Tregothnan Office at Buston Manor regarding work on the southern boundary and it appeared that permission was likely to be forthcoming for the Parish Council to work from Lord Falmouth's side of the fence, subject to confirming whether machinery was to be used and how access was to be obtained. The Chairman had asked Mr Whillock to confirm how he would intend to do the work;<br>d) <b>Ferretting:</b> It was not thought any had taken place;<br>e) <b>Allotment Holders' Meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2017 at 7.30pm at Teston Village Hall:</b> The Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Clerk would be attend. All Councillors were invited. |
| 17/125 | * <b>Ambulance Sirens:</b> A letter had been sent to the Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust who had indicated that they did not hold the information and that the enquiry should be directed to SECAMB. The Chairman would review and prepare another letter.  |
| 17/126 | <b>Teston's Trees and hedges, including:</b><br>a) <b>Trees in the Village Competition 2017:</b> The outcome was not yet known.<br>b) <b>Village Green Trees:</b> Tree guards had been put in place<br>c) <b>Dead tree at The Street:</b> The Clerk had discussed with the Highway Steward. Further information was awaited. The matter would be deferred until a later date.<br>d) <b>Lime Tree at Courtlands:</b> It appeared that this was no longer a problem.<br>e) <b>Hedge at Courtlands:</b> The Chairman felt that the hedge provided a pleasing entrance to Courtlands and it was <b>agreed</b> that the Parish Council should maintain it from hereon in. Clerk to obtain a quote from Gary's Landscapes and Turfsoil for a hard cut roadside and top.<br>f) <b>'New' Tree at Courtlands:</b> Cllr Mrs Wheat would inspect and report back.  |
| 17/127 | <b>Malling Road Trees:</b> It was agreed that the trees at the northern end of Teston were important to the setting of Teston. The Clerk and Chairman would liaise upon how to approach the matter further with Maidstone Borough Council and/or the Forestry Commission.   |
| 17/128 | <b>Teston Bridge Country Park:</b> The Clerk would contact KCC to request finger points to show where the parking machines are located and to ask for the grace period notices to be reinstated;  |
| 17/129 | <b>Bulb Planting for Autumn 2017:</b> The bulbs had arrived. These would be planted in The Street and the wide verge along Tonbridge Road and on the wide verge at Teston Lane but watching the visibility splay. They should be planted in dense clumps to aid grass maintenance in the spring. Chairman to liaise with  |

# TESTON PARISH COUNCIL

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|        |   | Cllr Levett.   |
| 17/130 | * | <b>Quality of Water – Tonbridge Road:</b> Nothing to report.   |
| 17/131 |   | <p><b>Commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the End of WW1 – Beacon Lighting on 11.11.2018:</b><br/>Cllr Miss Page reported upon a meeting with the History Society. Several suggestions had been discussed including a service and a talk on parishioners who died, followed by an event on the Village Green with a BBQ.</p> <p>In view of the insurance situation, and to be fully inclusive, it was <b>agreed</b> that the Parish Council should be the umbrella organisation for the event. An article would be submitted to Tapestry, once a few more details are known.</p> <p>It was <b>agreed</b> that a site meeting for Parish Councillors be arranged on the Village Green to consider the location for the beacon.</p> <p>The Chairman had circulated details regarding the possible design for a beacon. It was <b>agreed</b> that two quotations should be obtained.</p> <p>The Clerk would email the Clerk at Coxheath regarding their beacon.</p> <p>Planning permission would be required and it was <b>agreed</b> that the Clerk should apply now.</p> <p>The Clerk would also explore the cost of a waterproof big screen.</p>  |
| 17/132 | * | <b>Village Green/Village Hall Boundary:</b> No further news.   |
| 17/133 | * | <p><b>Play Area Equipment Check and Rota:</b> The rota <b>agreed</b> was as follows: October - Cllr Mrs Wheat; November – Cllr Levett; December – Cllr Douglass.</p> <p>Cllr Burgon reported that the left baby swing seat was in need of attention. This would be added to the list of items for which the Clerk was to obtain a quote.</p>   |
|        |   | <b><u>Other</u></b>  |
| 17/134 | * | <b>Social Media, Data Back-Up and Document Retention:</b> No issues to report. The Clerk had purchased two new memory sticks as one of the existing sticks was not functioning and the other had insufficient capacity.  |
| 17/135 | * | <b>Telephone Kiosk:</b> Some suggestions had been received from residents and these were noted. It was <b>agreed</b> that anything that required power should be ruled out as BT would have the absolute right to withdraw power on giving notice.   |
| 17/136 | * | <b>Tonbridge Road and Teston House - postcode change:</b> Royal Mail had allocated a new post code to Teston House.  |
| 17/137 | * | <b>Boundary Review:</b> A consultation was underway regarding the change of ward name to Barming & Teston. Cllr Mrs Gooch's support was acknowledged.  |
| 17/138 | * | <b>Dates for Parish Council Meetings January – December 2018:</b> 30th January; 27th March; 29th May; 24th July; 25th September; 27th November (subject to confirming with the Booking Secretary)  |
|        |   | <b><u>Consultations – to consider responses</u></b>  |
| 17/139 |   | <p><b>i) Council Tax Reduction Scheme - closing 1st October</b><br/><a href="http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/council/have-your-say/current-consultations/council-tax-reduction-scheme">http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/council/have-your-say/current-consultations/council-tax-reduction-scheme</a><br/>The Chairman had responded personally and encouraged others to do so if they wished.</p> <p><b>ii) Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2017-2023 - closing 8th October</b><br/><a href="https://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/LocalFloodRiskManagementStrategy/consultationHome">https://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/LocalFloodRiskManagementStrategy/consultationHome</a><br/>No comment.</p> <p><b>iii) DCLG Consultation - Planning for the right homes in the right places – closing 9<sup>th</sup> November</b><br/><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-right-homes-in-the-right-places-consultation-proposals">https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-right-homes-in-the-right-places-consultation-proposals</a><br/>The KALC Co-ordinating Team would be responding. This would be sent the Parish Council in due course. The Clerk would circulate.</p> |

# TESTON PARISH COUNCIL

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| 17/140  | <b><u>ANY LATEST REPORT UPDATES FOR NOTING ONLY</u></b>  |
|   | <p>Cllr Miss Page reported that the Church now had a plaque indicating the presence of a Commonwealth War Grave. She also reported that a relative of Francis Gale, whose plaque is located to the left of the War Memorial, had visited the village.</p> <p>It was noted that a ragstone wall in the village had been removed. The Clerk had emailed Maidstone Borough Council with a general enquiry as to what can be done to walls within the Conservation Area.</p>   |
| <b>MEETING ADJOURNED TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING REPORTS</b> |  |
|   | <p><b>i) Teston Village Stores CIC Matters</b></p> <p>Auto Enrolment: The Chairman provided an update;</p> <p>Staffing: Arrangements were in hand for cover during the planned absence of a member of staff;</p> <p>Margin analysis: This was underway and a report would be available shortly.</p> <p><b>ii) Teston Land Conservation Trust Matters</b></p> <p>Renaming of some land holdings: Kings Farm and the woodland have been renamed Ripton Farm and Ripton Wood respectively;</p> <p>Young Farmers: It was noted that the 3 year cropping agreement for part of Ripton Farm would come to an end next September. This might be of interest to the Young Farmers;</p> <p>Boathouse Meadow: the grazier felt that the upper field needed topping and spraying and he might do this but possibly not until next spring.</p> |
| <b>MEETING RECONVENED</b>                                 |  |
| 17/141  | <p><b>Confidential Items</b> It was <b>agreed</b> that the press and public be excluded from the items 17/142 - 17/145 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</p>   |
| <b>MEETING ADJOURNED AND RECONVENED IN PRIVATE</b>        |  |
| 17/142  | <p><b>Enforcement issues:</b> The current position regarding enforcement matters was noted. The Clerk seek an update regarding the Malling Road Appeal</p>   |
| 17/143  | <p><b>Land Registration and Trees in Need of Protection:</b> Nothing further to report.</p>  |
| 17/144  | <p><b>Preserving gap between Teston and Barming:</b> Nothing further to report.</p>  |
| 17/145  | <p><b>To receive update regarding Hop Garden Stables:</b> The position was noted.</p>  |

There being no further business the meeting ended at 10.05pm

*Date of next regular meeting of the Council – 7.30p.m. on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2017 at Teston Village Hall  
(Available at meeting: Agenda, Clerk's Report, Correspondence List, Financial Statement, and Highways Sheet)*

**Clerk: Mrs Michelle Tatton**  
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