

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF ST MARGARETS-AT-CLIFFE

Minutes of the Ordinary Monthly Meeting of the above Parish Council held on Monday 9th November 2020 at 7pm.

Given the current lockdown situation with Covid19 virus, this meeting was undertaken by Councillors and Clerk via Skype.

Present on Skype: Cllrs Rebecca Simcox (in the chair), A Newton, A Fielding, P Blake, J Harris, C Smith, George Simcox, S Creed, T Gilham together with Clerk. District Cllr Oliver Richardson also in attendance together with County Councillor Steve Manion. Cllr Bates also attended during part of meeting.

Community Warden Stephen Noddings in attendance.

Public Questions:-

- Resident reported once again an issue with lights at Reach Road car park toilets – Clerk had reported previously but will report again.
- Mrs Verren advised that the Scout Group have no right of appeal against the recent DDC decision to dismiss the re-application for registration of the Glebe Field as an Asset of Community Value. This had been refused on the basis that the field had seen no community use for five years, following the action of the Bay Trust in fencing off the field. District Councillor Oliver Richardson will check on the position of the field's protection as a green space.

<p>1. <u>Confirmation of Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held 12th October 2020</u> The minutes, having been circulated to all members, were duly confirmed as a correct record.</p>	
<p>2. <u>Declarations of Interest</u> – Cllr Fielding declared an interest in the planning application for Chilterns – family connection.</p>	
<p>3. <u>Co-option</u> – IT WAS RESOLVED to co-opt Mr Terry Gilham as a new Councillor with immediate effect. Mr Gilham signed the Declaration of Office and will complete a Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest Form within the next few days.</p>	Clerk to deal
<p>4. <u>Reports from County / District Councillors</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• District Cllr Oliver Richardson-<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Current guidance available to all on DDC website during current full lockdown.○ DDDC received Government Employer Recognition Scheme Award.○ Re Government white paper on planning changes – proposals would have huge impact on the area with over double the number of current properties proposed. DDC has submitted strong representation to Whitehall.○ The proposals would have severe impact on Local Plan – Section 18 of the Plan (out for consultation stage) is hoped to be completed by middle of January 2021.○ Attended full Cabinet Meeting recently – re budget - £4.7m in arrears this year due to loss of revenue income. DDC has managed to “balance the books” with the postponement of some projects but next year’s budget likely to be severely impacted.	

- Re proposed Customs Clearance Zone at Whitfield – Cllr Martin Bates is leading on this in conjunction with MP Natalie Elphicke – concerns relayed to Department of Transport with their response currently awaited.
- Re Reach Road car parking charges – Cllr Richardson confirmed no increase is planned for current election term. He will send Cllr Nigel Collor email through the Parish Council.
- Sherleys Farm – Enforcement Team in Planning have resolved reported issues.
- Re 36 and 38 The Droveaway – confirmed that following denial of Non Material Amendment, applicant has been given until 19th December to make a full application.
- Re enforcement of new yellow lines in Sea Street – District currently only has 2.5 enforcement officers but he will chase up requested visit to site.
- Community Warden Stephen Noddings:-
 - Has been keeping an eye on the “sink hole” and checking barriers/cones in place.
 - Has been in liaison with Holiday Park residents with recent Covid19 issues and threat of removal of some residents from the site.
 - Following reports of dog faeces at the King George V Field and Alexander Field, has contacted DDC and asked for increased enforcement patrols.
 - Community Wardens do not have social media accounts and asked that any issues are called through to him – he tries to keep local people informed.
 - Confirmed that PCSO Tyler Harris is back in situ but has not yet had the opportunity of meeting with him.
 - Cllr Simcox thanked him for his hard work during the current Covid crisis.
- County Councillor Steve Manion:-
 - KCC trying to help the most vulnerable during pandemic crisis.
 - Advised that KCC had already been supplying vouchers for children’s school meals in previous lockdown ahead of Government decision.
 - KCC currently looking at next year’s budget and confirmed this will be out for public consultation.
 - All Government guidance etc sent through to Clerk.
 - Confirmed that the flooding issue in Reach Road is an ongoing issue and he will keep in liaison with Highways Dept in this regard.
- District Councillor Martin Bates:-
 - Cllr Bates has been involved in recent problems experienced by residents at the Holiday Park. Cllr Rebecca Simcox displayed on screen a letter from park owners to residents advising that they must sign paperwork in order to stay during current lockdown or be in breach of their contract. A gate / barrier has been put up at the park entrance. Residents are very unhappy and uncomfortable with the situation as moving to other accommodation may not be safe for them.
 - Mike Davis Director of Finance Community and Housing is to speak to the park owners tomorrow with outcome awaited.
 - Residents have been advised not to sign new paperwork.
 - Cllr Bates confirmed similar issues are being experienced by residents at Martin Mill holiday park.

5. Clerk Report

Notes from recent Finance Conference attended by Clerk:

- Stressed that KALC training is invaluable.
- Need for focus on financial management during Covid crisis - Councils are holders of the public purse with great responsibility.
- AGAR this year – 10 Councils had provided no information to external Auditor.
- Common issues with AGAR – prior year reporting; boxes 3/6/9; staff costs; asset revaluations – need to be restated in previous year.
- Completion of audit must be on website in line with legislation (exercise of public rights).
- Stressed need for privacy – do Councillors have separate laptop computer protected by a password with no access by other family members.
- Minutes – good practice to confirm approved budget, approved precept, increase/ decrease for Band D property.
- No current news on referendum principle.
- Assets / buildings need to be inspected regularly. Unoccupied / unused buildings – how are they secure? Are gas / water / electric still on?
- NALC and SLCC strongly advise to continue with remote meetings for time being.
- Asset register – needs to be a “live” document. Suggest also holding an inventory of small items). Clerk preparing register and will add to future agenda. Depreciation not applicable to PC assets, just original purchase / acquisition cost until disposal. Commercial concepts of depreciation are not appropriate.
- Re VAT for Cemeteries (not applied) - would need £70k income limit exceeded.
- Addition of 3 new Councillors to bank account in train.
- EKRHA have confirmed that a work order has been put in place re fence leaning from Ash Grove.
- New brush mower added to insurance policy – no extra cost now but will add £16.62 at renewal.
- Southern Water finally came out to look at sink hole on 2nd November – no further information.
- £500 grant paid to Nursery this month.
- Number of problems reported with lighting at toilets in Reach Road ref 489486)
- Problem on hedge reported to DDC in car park (ref. 489467).
- Ian Miller to undertake Christmas tree recycling on 6th and 7th January.
- Insurance paid on tractor - tax form completed for DVLA (zero rated).
- Advised DDC of PC acceptance re new costs for toilets for 2021-22 – Service Level Agreement awaited for next year.
- Christmas trees ordered to arrive 3rd December (+ one tree for the Hall).
- IT WAS RESOLVED that donation of £100 be made to RBL Poppy Appeal.

Clerk to deal

Clerk will follow up

Clerk to deal

6. Planning

The following comments were applied to the planning applications considered:-

- DOV/20/01155 Change of use and conversion of an agricultural building to a wedding venue with single storey front/side extensions, canopy to front, cycle storage and associated parking (retrospective)
Reach Court Farm, Reach Road *No objections*
- DOV/20/01161 Erection of a 3 bay car port and workshop with solar panels to roof and 1.8m chain link perimeter fencing (retrospective)
Windy Ridge, Victory Road - *Object due to infringement on right of way outside the boundary*
- DOV/20/01145 Certificate of Lawfulness (existing) for the continued use of unit and caravan as a residential dwelling
Westcliffe Farm, Dover Road, Westcliffe
Object – outside village confines and in AONB
- DOV/20/01168 Erection of front and side extensions with addition of second floor and erection of a detached garage
Sunrise, 31 Salisbury Road *No objections*
- DOV/20/01191 Erection of a single storey front extension
3 The Freedown *No objections*
- DOV/20/01196 Erection of a balcony with rail to front elevation
Seamark, 9 Salisbury Road *No objections*
- DOV/20/01167 Conversion of garage to habitable room, erection of a side and front porch extension
Chilterns, 9 Lighthouse Road *No objections*
(Cllr Fielding abstained from vote)
- Clerk was delegated to deal with the following application, received since publication of the agenda:-
- DOV/20/01238 Erection of a first floor rear extension and enlargement of 2 no. windows. Construction of boundary wall, installation of doors to car port and cladding to upper side elevation (existing dormer to be removed)
Foreland Cottage15 St Margarets Road *No objections*

6. Finance and Accounts

IT WAS RESOLVED to meet the following payments:-

Mrs R Simcox – hand sanitiser for Play Area	£73.33
Greenlands Insurance Services Ltd – for tractor	£191.88
D A Hart – new fuel can/fuel for machinery	£41.33
Castle Water – water rates	£119.00
St Margarets Nursery and After School Club	£500.00
KALC – Finance Conference for Clerk	£60.00
Idverde Ltd – grasscutting Sep 2020	£255.38
J and I Kirby – re litter and road signs	£876.53
Safe and Secure Locksmiths – padlocks for Valley	£118.80
R Purchase – October invoice	£1,088.77
Jane Cook – October salary	£1,218.99
Office expenses (inc. dog signs)	£82.45
HMRC	£239.39
NEST Pension	£180.83
Idverde Ltd – grasscutting + line marking Oct 2020	£323.08
	£5,370.26
Receipt - £7,713.75 re wicket	

- Discussion held on budget for 2021-22 – Cllr Rebecca Simcox displayed Excel spreadsheet displaying budget based on financial information from Clerk.
- This gave a draft overall requirement of just over £105,000 – this to appear on the agenda for December. However, several Councillors wanted to increase the budget put I place in respect of the South Foreland Valley.
- Councillors generally felt that the Precept for St Margaret’s should not be increased.
- It was agreed that Councillors would consider the information further, with a final decision to be made in December.

Clerk to place on agenda

8. Retention and Disposal of Documents

- Clerk had prepared a document setting out the planned retention and destruction of documents for the Parish Council.
- IT WAS RESOLVED that this Policy be adopted with immediate effect, and together with other information, this to be placed on the Parish Council website.
- Councillor George Simcox will prepare a report for next meeting setting out the case for the acquisition of separate devices (tablets) for Councillors, given the need for privacy of PC information.

Clerk to deal

Cllr George Simcox to deal and item for agenda

9. **South Foreland Valley**

- Cllr Newton provided update – met with Richard Haynes and Melanie Wrigley at of WCCP the end of October. One volunteer day undertaken but Ranger and (Matt) had worked in the Valley on the welfare of the horses and cattle, including ragwort and Japanese knotweed removal.
- WCCP also check fences and undertake risk assessments.
- Ranger (Matt) and Melanie will be looking to clear the second grass corridor from cliff top.
- Melanie would like to take Councillors around the Valley to see the improvements (possibly early next year) and to set up a “Friends of the Valley “ group.
- Richard Hayes stressed that he believes the PC gets far more from WCCP than the £5k provided by the Council annually. He has been on call since the first lockdown.
- Several cattle grids need clearing – WCCP will pay for this work.
- Cattle and horses have moved compartments, with good results from the grazing and Matt remains busy with the cattle.
- Volunteers cleared the side of ER40 following our approach to Kent PROW with National Trust clearing other side.
- Second corridor – golden rod cleared by volunteers (not native to chalk grassland) with new cages placed around young junipers.
- New machine is proving excellent.
- Nudists have been seen at the tunnel. Jon Barker will be fitting new locks soon. Two car meets have been seen in the Valley recently – dispersed by DSS.
- Suggestion made of more warning signage at gun magazine.
- Cllr Newton had received quotation from Harmers for a steel wall at a cost of £3,656 + VAT – this would include an entrance door and a gap for bat movements. IT WAS RESOLVED to go ahead with this and Cllr Newton will make contact.

Cllr Newton to deal

10. **Telephone Kiosk, Reach Road**

- Following PC’s registration of interest in acquiring the old telephone kiosk, the consultancy period had now finished.
- BT had provided a contract for signature by the Council for taking on the kiosk for community use – the onus would be entirely on the Council for liability.
- Clerk had expressed concern re the liability surrounding this acquisition, particularly given the poor and possibly unstable nature of the box. Councillors will consider further and item to be on December agenda.

Clerk to advise community re contract and speak to Langdon

11. **King George V Boundary Wall**

- Cllr Blake reported re the boundary wall at King George V Field. He is currently pursuing owner of land on the other side of the wall.
- He will continue to try and pursue Surveyor / agent of the Bay Trust – it seems likely that the Trust sold the properties at St George’s Terrace as leasehold rather than freehold properties. There appears to be more than one “manager” of these leaseholds.
- Cllr Blake will continue to investigate and to appear on next agenda.
- He believes that the wall behind the King George V Pavilion is leaning dangerously and it possible the whole wall is unsafe.

12. **CCTV**

- Cllr Fielding had provided a briefing paper to Councillors setting out current system.
- Idea mooted of having CCTV in the Play Area at the King George V Field – this could only probably be achieved by having new cabling from the Pavilion which could prove expensive – question is to whether there is strong justification for this given low level of vandalism.
- Re Alexander Field / Pavilion – there is an old non-internet CCTV system previously used by the Cricket Club which could be of use here – survey would need to be undertaken to see if this is workable.
- Any new system for the Alexander Pavilion could prove expensive.
- Cllr Fielding will seek quotes re new installations, meanwhile check to see whether old system could be used at Alexander Pavilion.

Cllr Fielding to deal

13. **Reach Road Pond**

- Cllr Gilham provided brief update – he will have firm costings for presentation next month.
- Part of improvement project is to deal with the soakaway which is currently entirely blocked and of no use.
- Soil samples taken for analysis had come back mostly clear but with some oil contamination (not unexpected in road drain).
- The next move is to remove the vegetation and obtain quotes for a new liner – this could not be done until early next year as dry weather is needed.
- Fence in front of the pond needs attention as it has been the subject of some vandalism.
- IT WAS RESOLVED to allow costs up to £1,000 for initial works, with firm figures to be provided in due course.

Cllr Gilham to deal

14. **Correspondence**

- KALC re Dover Area Committee Meeting 28th October.
- KALC re local food banks.
- Mr M Thompson re green space in St Margaret's Bay, together with copy of email to DDC re FOI request.
- KALC re AGM 28 November.
- Mr M Sawyer re Canoe Wild proposals.
- Miss B Paul re Canoe Wild proposals.
- County Cllr Steve Manion re Reach Road flooding works.
- Kate Mace BBC Events re filming at War Memorial.
- Follow up email from Mr M Thompson.
- Forwarded by Cllr Steve Manion – pre-purchase letter to residents of White Cliffs Business Park.
- Mr M Thompson – follow up email.
- Monthly update from PCSO.
- KCC Highways – re Parish and Town Council seminar 23rd November.
- Joanne Hadfield DDC re refusal of nomination for Glebe Field as an Asset of Community Value.
- Brin Hill DDC re Community Hub.
- KALC re Future of Planning System.
- Kent Highways – advice re postponement of closure of Granville Road.

Councillors to advise on attendance

15. **Reports from Councillors**

- Cllr Rebecca Simcox had spoken with AJ at DDC re Public Space Protection Orders – currently only Play area at King George V Field and Tennis Courts are covered by a “no dogs” order. The legislation is considered every 3 years and it may be that further areas need to be included – PC can promote the idea but decision rests with DDC for inclusion. Both Cricket Club and Football Clubs are to discuss the problems. By-laws no longer enforceable. Agreed that this should be an item for further discussion.
- Cllrs Newton and Harris had attended virtual meeting of KALC Dover Area Committee – only 9 attendees. Guston PC had advised that they had held all of their PC meetings face to face. Ash PC got most of the village on-line and kept in touch with villagers that way. Councillors had reported on what St Margaret's had been doing during Covid19 crisis and this seems ahead of most Councils. Dynamic Councillor courses are being held on a monthly basis. No Parish Council reps currently on local Planning group. Need to be vigilant on nature of planning applications during pandemic. County Association is to discuss problem of litter from McDonalds and KFC at Whitfield.

Councillors to consider and further agenda item - Clerk

<p>16. <u>Village Maintenance / Matters affecting the Parish</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles / responsibilities – Chair together with Clerk and Vice Chair had looked at list of individual responsibilities for Councillors and Chair had prepared in grid form. General discussion and agreement on roles undertaken. • Parish magazine – Chair asked that this appear on next agenda for discussion. She will prepare article for next publication. 	<p>Chair to deal</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">- 9 -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following second lockdown tennis courts have been locked although Play Area remains open. St Margaret's hub is to continue. Sufficient hand spray currently at the Play Area. • Re Christmas – 2 trees ordered by Clerk to arrive 3rd December. It was agreed that maintenance contractor Ross Purchase would be erecting tree at PO Corner with advice from Mr Miller. It was agreed that Mr Purchase could also help with the tree to be erected at the Village Hall. Re lights for PO Corner – these are currently at the Hall and are to be checked by electrician. It was agreed that perhaps some new LED lights could be sourced. • Canoe Wild proposal – a few responses received from residents, mostly wary of increased vehicles in The Bay. Councillors feel they need more information – idea not ruled out but further information required. • Councillors felt the addition of this month's planning applications on the PC website had been helpful. Chair will liaise with Computer Geek re providing an extra page per month. • Playing field inspection undertaken by Cllr Blake which had been provided to Clerk. Cllr Blake continues to liaise re issues. 	<p>Clerk to make contact</p> <p>Chair to deal</p>

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.20 p.m.

Confirmed:

Chairman

9th November 2020