

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF ST MARGARETS-AT-CLIFFE

Minutes of the Ordinary Monthly Meeting of the above Parish Council held on Monday 13th November 2023 at 7pm at St Margaret's Hall.

Present: Cllrs R Simcox (in the chair), P Blake, A Fielding, O Checksfield, B Pearce, N Fulford together with Clerk. District Cllrs Martin Bates and Oliver Richardson in attendance.

Apologies for absence received from County Councillor Steve Manion.

Public participation:-

Peter Wells - asked if the Parish Council were aware of groups looking for hornet nests in the Valley - Chair confirmed these were acting on behalf of DEFRA to rid the area of these pests.

George Simcox raised a complaint re the poor wi-fi provision at village hall.

1. The minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 9th October 2023, having been circulated to all Councillors, were confirmed as a correct record of the meeting.	
2. No declarations of interest were made on agenda items.	
3. <u>Reports from County and District Councillors</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Written report provided by Cllr Bates (attached to minutes).● Cllr Fulford raised the issue of stone-strewn promenade in the Bay following recent storm. Cllr Richardson will follow this up.	
4. <u>Mr Ian Miller, Civic Cemetery Registrar</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Ian advised that following recent unprecedented heavy rain, around 35 of the graves in the Cemetery are sinking where the earth has become saturated.● Cllrs Fulford and Pearce had met Ian at the Cemetery today and all agreed that in the interests of public safety, the Cemetery needs to be closed to visitors. Clerk will prepare suitable notice for the gate stating closure, asking that anyone wishing to visit a grave contacts him in order to arrange an accompanied visit.● Ian will arrange to purchase additional padlocks.● He has spoken to the gravedigger who could provide labour and soil, but this would not be before early December. He asked if maintenance man Ross Purchase could help if he arranges for delivery of soil. He has been in contact with Crushingtons and soil is likely to be around £100 per load.● Cllr Checksfield agreed to place the current situation on social media so residents are aware.● Ian provided a brief history of the Cemetery since its inception. Since then, there have been 107 interments and 107 exclusive rights have been sold. 30 ashes cremation plots have also been sold.	Clerk to deal

- The original plan of the site provided 122 burial plots; now 15 grave plots remaining.
- Ian had approached a friend (Peter Holdstock) who had prepared a new plan for additional grave spaces - Ian exhibited the new plan which would provide 90 new grave spaces.
- The new plan sets out grave spaces at 2' 6" apart rather than the original 3'.
- Currently the Claringbould family have an option on 14 graves for a family area, with the option expiring in 2030.
- IT WAS RESOLVED that a gift voucher for art materials be purchased by the Council for Mr Holdstock.
- The question of increasing the fees needs to be looked at - Cllr Blake stated that the PC needs to know the cost of soil and labour before setting any new fees.
- During next spring Cllr Checksfield will take some photographs for the PC website.
- No hedgecutting undertaken this year due to problems with access for tractor.
- Previously Walleys Court has been used for parking during funerals and new owners may need to be approached in this respect.

Clerk to deal

5. **Esquire Developments**

- Mr A Wilford was unable to make tonight's meeting - it was agreed that he be provided with a slot on next month's agenda.

Clerk to deal

6. **Clerk Report**

- Cllrs Fielding and Fulford will be attending Local Plan Hearings in November, with Tony to attend Hearing re "Local Centre" definition.
- Still no reply or invoices from Idverde. Also, no booked inspection visit re Play Area. Have therefore contacted Playsafety to ask if they can undertake an inspection visit.
- Costs breakdown now received from Kent Highways re 20mph limit - later on agenda.
- Nothing heard yet re when Leaf Services will undertake tree work in SFV - committed.
- Do we need another meeting re recruitment of new Clerk? Clerk to liaise with Chair on her return.

Cllrs Fielding and Fulford to attend

Clerk to follow up

Clerk to deal

- Relevant forms provided to Richard Haynes at WCCP re DEFRA - nothing heard yet.
- Will add proposal re village business signs to December agenda.
- In December we will need to consider budget / setting of Precept for 2024/25. This will need initial discussion re budget,
- Cllr Fielding and Clerk attended DDC offices re grasscutting - to be discussed under relevant item. (Emma Allen and Darryl Solly).
- Responded to Coastguard rep re use of Valley, advising completion of form re use would be required; nothing since heard.
- Idea of “all encompassing” sign on tennis courts discussed - do we have wording? This to be on agenda for December.
- Licence re “lottery” (raffle) runs from January - agreed that this be taken forward for renewal through DDC.
- Breakdown of Ross Purchase’ invoices provided.
- Request from metal detectorist - it was agreed that this request be refused given sensitive and protected nature of land.
- Report done to Highways re overhanging tree at Nelson Park Road.
- Have asked Cricket Club for costs re commercial contract re waste bins for pavilion (awaited).
- David Parish at DDC confirmed that all should be working OK at Bay ladies toilets. Despite this, Cllr Fulford had advised that the sink was not providing water at the weekend, and the sanitation tower had been removed. Cllr Bates will follow this up.

Clerk to add to agenda

Clerk to liaise with Chair

Clerk to deal

Clerk to deal

Clerk to deal

6. Planning

The following comments were made on the applications considered:-

23/01116 Removal of chimney stack; insertion of window to front elevation and door to rear, insertion of 3no rooflights -
Coastguard Cottages, Bay Hill Response to be provided

23/01302 Variation of Condition 2 (approved plans) of DOV/23/00250 to allow amendments to the dormer, orangery fascia and joinery detailing.
Removal of condition 5 following submission of joinery details -
Ivy Bank, 33 Granville Road *No objections*

23/01303 Replacement balcony -
Ivy Bank, 33 Granville Road *No objections*

8. Finance and Accounts

(a) The following payments made since the October meeting were approved:-

NEST - Oct Pension	£256.32
Greenlands Insurance Services re tractor	£238.32
Mr P Blake - expenses	£179.04
Mazaars LLP - audit fee	£504.00
Mr I Miller - Registrar fees	£80.00
Dover District Council - election costs	£226.17
C M Clayson re Bowls Club	£6,000.00
Dover District Council re public toilets	£2,015.43
Castle Water	£154.14
Credit card - ink/envelopes for Registrar	£24.34
Castle Water	£70.27
Google Cloud - monthly fee	£36.80
NEST - Nov pension	£256.32
Mr I Miller - Registrar fees	£165.00
R Purchase - Oct invoice	£1,210.00
Jane Cook - salary	£1,477.94
Jane Cook	£20.00
HMRC	£373.79

Clerk provided copies of bank statements together with bank reconciliations - these were accepted as a true record.	£13,287.88
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(b) The following payments approved re Christmas expenses:-

- £136.90 lights for Post Office Corner
- £82.00 for raffle tickets
- £345.58 for printed re-usable cups

Additional costs will be needed for lanyards/laminating pouches etc.

(c) IT WAS RESOLVED to have a new Housing Needs Survey commissioned at £1,800 through the Rural and Community Housing Enabling service, with Cllr Fielding to make contact with Tessa O'Sullivan in this respect.

Cllr Fielding to deal

9. **Grasscutting**

- Cllr Fielding and Clerk had met with Darryl Solly and Emma Allen at DDC offices re “tagging on” to DDC services. DDC use the same sub-contractors of Idverde so this would not be an improvement on our current service.
 - Cllr Blake advised that Ross Purchase is investigating the purchase of equipment which could be used in this respect. The Kubota tractor which is used for the Valley could possibly be used in this respect.
- Cricket Club is investigating whether its machine could be used - would need to be insured, taxed and MOT'd for road use.
- Clerk to place on next agenda.

Clerk to deal

10. **South Foreland Valley - cattle grid no. 10**

IT WAS RESOLVED to accept the quote from Harmer and Sons for replacement of cattle grid no. 10 at £2,887.50; however Clerk to check with company re extra cost of galvanising at £835 to check on whether this is necessary and what extra life for the grid would be provided in this respect. Cllr Blake will speak to Mr Purchase re clearing under the grid.

Clerk to respond and Cllr Blake to liaise with Mr Purchase

11. **Councillor areas of responsibility**

- This was generally resolved last month, but some “gaps” remain. It was agreed that the information could be put on PC website, with any remaining areas to await appointment of new Councillors.

12. **New Councillor Recruitment**

- Clerk to place co-option of Anne Wheeler on next agenda, with possibility that Terry Gilham will also return to the Council.
- Cllr Blake will speak to Mr Pyfrom to see if he still wishes to join the Council.

Clerk to deal

Cllr Blake to deal

13. **Correspondence**

- Melanie Wrigley re resignation from WCCP.
- Highways re request for central white lines through High Street/Sea Street.
- Brendan Wells re St Margarets Bay Environmental Project + further email. Cllr Fulford raised the question as to whether the “lesser” improvements were being pursued and Clerk to raise with STMBCA.
- Agenda for 25 October + previous minutes, KALC Dover Area Committee.
- Alice Fey, DDC re Notice of Planning Service downtime.
- Ian Loftus re exit from Reach Road car park - mirror request. Clerk to raise request with Kent Highways.
- Viv Verren re piece of land on Sea Street, recently sold.
- Lezanne Cezar, Kent Highways - updated Highway Information pack.

Clerk to deal

Clerk to deal

- Parish and Town Councils Climate Action Day, 4th of December (Cllr Fulford booked at £95 (on-line).
- Dan Bruce KCC re Community Transport Grant Scheme.
- Kevin Clark - request re metal detecting.
- Request from Esquire Developments to attend PC meeting.
- Mr A Snelders re land on Sea Street.
- Tracy Gibbs , Electoral Services DDC re Electoral Act changes.
- Liz McNaughton suggestions re new Councillors.
- Draft minutes from KALC Dover Area Committee meeting.
- Emily Neighbour re tree blocking footpath.
- Sara Little re fallen tree in Kingsdown Road.
- Resident letter re anti-social behaviour in Reach Close.
- KALC - advice re approved increase in Clerk pay scales.

14. **Reports from Councillors**

- Cllr Simcox had obtained further detail re cost of implementing 20mph speed limit through village - this came out at total of £7,732.11. IT WAS RESOLVED that this be taken forward - 5 Councillors in favour; Cllr Simcox abstained). Clerk advised she had received two emails chasing invoice of £2,850 in this regard and will now liaise with Lezanne Cezar.
- Cllr Fulford re 80th anniversary of D-Day : she is meeting with working group set up next Wednesday, and has a meeting with Jon Barker of National Trust on Thursday. Clerk has booked Hall for 7th June. Lighthouse is not able to light the beacon due to ongoing maintenance work on the light.
- Cllrs Blake and Checksfield provided feedback on recent KALC Dover Area Committee meeting.

Clerk to deal

15. **Village Maintenance / Matters affecting the Parish**

- (a) Playing Field inspection undertaken by Cllrs Pearce and Blake.
- (b) Re arrangements for Christmas event on 2nd December;
there will be a children's disco in the hall from 4.45 (parents to remain to look after children);
Cllr Fulford is preparing a timetable for the event;
raffle ticket sales need to be pushed;
the Players will be performing an excerpt from their panto;
Church choir will be singing;
David Hart will look at increasing lights in car park;
a rep from Dover Outreach will be in attendance

Clerk asked to contact Hall to book for next year, either 29th or 30th November.

Clerk to deal

- (c) Sea Street land - Cllr Bates is continuing to pursue with Planning Enforcement.

- (d) Community Transport Grant - Cllr Fulford will investigate.

Cllr Fulford to take forward

- Cllr Simcox had been approached for a memorial bench on Madge Field for ex Councillor Chris Smith - this to be on next agenda with formal request through the Clerk. It was agreed there is probably space for a further 3 or 4 benches on the site.

Clerk to deal

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.35 pm.

Confirmed:

Chair

13th November 2023

DDC ADVISORY SERVICES

Dover District Council's (DDC) Benefit and Money Advice team has helped prevent hundreds of tenants from spiralling into debt. The advisors helped 1,213 tenants increase their income by more than £1 million in total in the past year, preventing some families from falling into debt or being referred to court. Due to their work and close working with the Council's Income Collection Officers, the amount of rent arrears owed to DDC also dropped significantly from £427,812 to £297,765 in 2022/23.

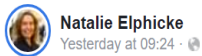
Support from the advisors involves conducting benefit reviews to ensure families and vulnerable individuals are getting financial help where they can so they can pay their rent. They also help pensioners transition onto pension age benefits seamlessly, preventing worrisome delays, and support any with entitlement to Pension Credit or Attendance Allowance. They review Universal Credit (UC) entitlement, prompting and supporting tenants to review or claim the correct rate from the right date. They also offer advice on other services such as schemes to help people on low incomes with their bills or access to Healthy Start vouchers.

If you know of any person in need of advice and support you can direct them to www.dover.gov.uk/Housing/Housing-for-Tenants/Rent/Money-troubles.aspx

CHRISTMAS CAR PARKING

Dover District Council is to offer free parking in its car parks from 3pm on weekdays throughout December.

DEFIBRILLATOR GRANTS



Natalie Elphicke

Yesterday at 09:24 · 🌐

📌 Important heart news 🗣️

The Department of Health and Social Care has launched a £1million Defibrillator Community AED fund, open for applications to place 2,000 public access defibrillators in communities across England - including in Dover, Deal and the Villages.

Companies can apply for match funding under the scheme as well as voluntary organisations

Interested in applying? Click the link below to learn more and get started:

defibrant.co.uk

Let's save lives together.

🇬🇧 #DefibGrant #CommunitySafety #SavingLives 💖



BUSES

The £2 flat rate bus fare has now been extended until December 2024.

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT GRANT

Charities, residents' groups and parish and town councils are encouraged to apply for fresh funding worth £450,000 from the Department for Transport and £50,000 from Kent County Council (KCC) through the Community

Transport Grant. The fund can support local transport schemes and is being offered as a Kent Bus Service Improvement plan initiative supported by National Bus Strategy funding provided by UK Government.

The council has provided grants for community transport schemes for a number of years but this year KCC has been able to make additional funding available from its National Bus Strategy award for groups to bid for to try to help communities impacted by changes to their bus service or with another local transport need. Applications are now open and should be submitted before the deadline by 18th December 2023.

Visit www.kent.gov.uk/communitytransportgrant to find out more about the Community Transport Grant scheme and how to apply.

POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES REVIEW

Under current legislation, all local authorities are required to review their polling districts, polling places and polling stations every fifth year. The Dover district review started on 2 October 2023 and all relevant representations received have been published on their website here:

<https://www.dover.gov.uk/Council--Democracy/Elections/Responses-Part-1-of-Polling-District-Review-2023.pdf>

What happens next

DDC are inviting comments on the representations received during the review and your comments on these representations can be submitted until 13 November 2023. They are interested in views from all residents, particularly people who may have a view on disabled access to polling stations.

Further information on the review can be found on the DDC website at

www.dover.gov.uk/polling-district-review-2023

How to take part

Until 13 November 2023 you can use the on-line response form, which can be accessed using the following link: <https://forms.office.com/e/pC7njWaV8f>

Alternatively, please send your comments in writing to the Electoral Services Team marked 'Polling District Review' either by email to elections@dover.gov.uk or by letter to the address below to be received no later than **13 November 2023**. Please ensure you include clear details of the representation you are commenting on and details of any alternatives or solutions you wish us to consider. If you are responding as a councillor or on behalf of a political party or local community group or organisation, please include the relevant details. All representations received will be published on our website on 1 December 2023 at the end of the review.

Electoral Services – Polling District Review

Dover District Council

White Cliffs Business Park

Whitfield

Dover

CT16 3PJ

LOCAL PLAN

Planning Inspectors will this month begin the hearing sessions for the examination of the Dover District Local Plan. Dover District Council (DDC) submitted the Plan to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities for independent examination in March this year. Through the examination, Inspectors, appointed by the Secretary of State, will consider the soundness of the submitted Plan and whether it has been prepared in accordance with the legal and procedural requirements.

All sessions will be streamed online for the public to watch. You can also attend to watch these discussions in person, but you will not be able to speak (unless you have been registered to contribute to hearing sessions).

The first three weeks of the hearings will take place in the Council Chamber at the Council Offices, White Cliffs Business Park, Whitfield, Dover CT16 3PJ. Week four will take place virtually using Microsoft Teams. The sessions will begin from 10am, however this time is subject to change. You can find the times and format of each session as well as relevant links

here: www.doverdistrictlocalplan.co.uk/examination-home/hearing-sessions/hearing-sessions

Sessions concerning St Margaret's are taking place tomorrow (14/11) during both morning and afternoon.

LOCAL ISSUES

1). VILLAGE CAR PARK FLOODING

I was advised on 9th October that just a bit of treatment work remains to cut out some fibrous tree roots on one of the drainage lines, but the car park should still be functioning and draining away ok. I just spoke with Hydro Cleansing last week and will be booking these works in very soon. I have recently forwarded an email asking whether this work has been completed.

2). COMPLAINTS OVER THE STATE OF THE BAY CAR PARK TOILETS

Complaints continued around the lack of water in the Ladies section. I wrote to David Parrish on 2nd November who replied that the problem had now been fixed. He wrote to me again on 10th to say that he had returned to the toilets on 10th and had confirmed that the taps were still working.

3). GRASS CUTTING

Request from Jane to see whether we could undertake grass cutting on the back of the DDC contract. I wrote to Darran Solley seeking advice and copied Emma Allan into it as she is now the Head of Parks, Open Spaces and Countryside. Emma has written to Jane offering a meeting. Has this now taken place?

4). UPDATE ON THE LEDGE APPLICATION

A date is still awaited as to when this application will go to the Planning Committee. I note that there are still ongoing discussions between the applicant and KCC over highway access. It is not listed for this month.

5). SEA ST

On 23rd October we received a copy of a request for an investigation sent to Planning Enforcement by a local resident who was concerned about work being undertaken on a small plot of land alongside Sea St. Vegetation had been removed and a drop curb created for access to the land. The following day Planning Enforcement replied to say that dropping a curve does not require planning permission but that they would refer the matter to highways. Furthermore, removing vegetation does not require planning permission either but that they would seek advice from the council ecology officer. However, the construction of a new means of access would require planning permission and they requested the resident to provide photos of the site. She has now done this and they include the recent installation of a container. I have written to Planning Enforcement and requested an update as to how they intend to proceed.

10). REACH CLOSE

A resident has recently complained about harassment at her home by a group of youths and their parents. She was also concerned about street lighting within the area. I have written to Property Services about the street lighting who agree that it is their responsibility to maintain street lighting but not to provide additional. They will however repair any lights that are currently out of action. The complaints around Anti Social Behaviour are being investigated by the Housing Team and I am awaiting an update concerning the actions which are being taken to resolve this issue.