

**THE PARISH COUNCIL OF ST MARGARETS-AT-CLIFFE**

Minutes of the Ordinary Monthly Meeting of the above Parish Council held on Monday 10th June 2024 at 7pm at St Margaret's Hall.

**Present:** Cllrs R Simcox (in the chair); N Fulford; B Pearce; P Blake; A Fielding; A Wheeler; M Luckhurst; T Gilham, together with Clerk.

Apologies received from County Cllr Steve Manion and District Cllrs Martin Bates and Oliver Richardson.

**Public Participation:-**

Peter Wells noted a problem with electric car charging cables being left across the pavement in Reach Close. Clerk will inform the Community Warden.

Viv Verren - asked if there was any update on 20mph introduction through village - Chair advised payment made to Kent Highways but nothing further to report re dates at this point. Mrs Verren noted that landowner of plot off Sea Street had been strimming land today - she believes this will disturb any badgers in the area. Cllr Gilham stated he had studied the land but found no evidence of badger setts.

Noted that no notices re road closures in High Street / Upper Road. One Network shows that there is a slight overlap on two planned works, effectively cutting the village off. Clerk to contact Cllr Manion.

**Chair Rebecca Simcox received and approved the resignation of Cllr Orla Checksfield, effective from 14th May 2024.**

1. The minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 13th May 2024, having been circulated to all Councillors, were confirmed as a correct record of the meeting.	
2. Declarations of interest - none declared on agenda items.	
3. <b><u>Reports from County / District Councillors</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>County Cllr Manion had sent apologies for absence - he advises that he is in liaison with Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport Neil Baker, to set up an "action group" re the A258 with interested parish councils. Clerk to write to Cllr Baker asking for this to be expedited, offering help with setting up the meeting(s) if necessary.</li><li>Written report received from Cllr Bates - attached to minutes. Whilst no further costings had been provided re High Street layby bollards, it was understood from the on-site meeting that DDC may be prepared to pay or contribute to any costs, in next financial year. Cllr Fielding will liaise with Cllr Bates in this respect.</li><li>Despite several attempts, Cllr Bates had received no response from Thomas Williams at Kent Highways re the reported loose/broken manhole cover in Reach Close. It was agreed to await response from KCC.</li></ul>	Clerk to deal  Cllr Fielding to deal
4. <b><u>Clerk Report</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Simon Creed - request re defib at Bowls Club. Cllr Blake will speak to the Club in this respect - Council would prefer to see any installation on the outside of the pavilion, clearly visible to the public.</li></ul>	Cllr Blake to deal

Request from Mark Sawyer for pickleball site - Cllr Blake will liaise with Village Hall and approach Portal House School to see if this can be accommodated.

Cllr Blake to deal

- Re Planning Committee meeting for 24/00006 Land at New Townsend Farm - committee decided in favour - 8 in favour, 1 abstention. No questioning on the increase in number of units.
- Richard Haynes will cast an eye on Glebe Field in terms of ecological value.
- Lady resident called re appearance of graves at Cemetery. Poor weather conditions have played a part, particularly with the graves having to be re-seeded.
- Re Norway Drove - not maintained by KCC, so could not install a “no access” sign.
- Cllr Manion has stated he will press Matthew Arnold re historic bus use numbers - nothing heard. Clerk to continue to chase, and to place “Stagecoach” on next agenda.
- Re Modifications to Local Plan - confirmed on-line approval for the removal of STM10 from the Plan.
- Insurance premium paid for 2024-2025 - next year sees the end of the “fixed” deal so further quotes could be sought ahead of the renewal in June 2025.
- Payment made to Kent Highways re 20mph works.
- First payment made re cleaning of KGV toilets - season started on 4th May (per Club Secretary).
- £5k payment made to WCCP for 2024-2025. Re risk assessments for volunteers “Regarding risk assessments, each activity we undertake is covered by a generic risk assessment and method statement. For each volunteer day the Ranger will carry out a dynamic risk assessment, which takes into account the weather and site conditions on the day etc., as well as if there are any specific risks associated with individual attendees. This is then communicated to the group at the beginning of the task.”

Clerk to deal

5. **Planning**

(a) The following comments were made on the applications considered:-

24/00507      Erection of a single storey extension with a flat roof (to an open balcony of a flat), side elevation window changed to Juliet balcony doors - Flat 1B, The Granville, Hotel Road      *No objections*

24/00538 Conversion of garage to ancillary use and insertion of window and door -  
Gironde, 43 Salisbury Road *No objections*

24/00558 Erection of a single storey rear extension (existing conservatory to be  
demolished) -  
Merrymead, 21 Royston Gardens *No objections*

(b) No further updates re Glebe Field.

(Late application received - 24/00583 for Chart House, 5A St Margaret's Road. This to  
remain in abeyance at present to allow further consideration by Councillors.

Clerk to note

**6. Finance and Accounts**

The following payments since May meeting were confirmed:-

Castle Water Ltd (Cemetery)	£6.91
Castle Water Ltd (Alexander Pavilion)	£13.43
Castle Water Ltd - Trough Supply Goodwin Road	£50.69
Elysia Allsopp re D-Day commemoration	£395.00
Zurich Municipal - annual insurance	£2,871.03
Kent County Council - 20mph works	£5,589.00
Dover Security Ltd - South Foreland Valley	£324.00
Dover District Council - Reach Road toilets	£2,327.48
Dover District Council - re hire of green in The Bay	£345.00
Ashford Borough Council - Housing Needs Survey	£2,193.60
Mr I Miller - Registrar fees	£130.00
St Margaret's Village Hall	£29.70
J B Wickham re beacon	£680.00
R Purchase - Cemetery maintenance	£200.00
R Purchase - General maintenance	£1,749.14
Dover District Council - WCCP re South Foreland Valley	£6,000.00
R C Claringbould & Sons - works at Kingsdown Road pavilion	£1,920.00
Jane Cook - May salary	£1,561.83
Jane Cook - office	£20.00
HMRC	£372.24
Britannia Coaches Ltd - re D-Day event	£275.00
Lynne Hopwood re cleaning	£228.00
NEST - Clerk/Council	£256.32
Credit card - ink/paper	£26.34
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	£27,834.71

**Receipts:-**

Cemetery fee	£60.00
Credit interest 9 May	£160.08
Square reader re D-Day	£9.82
VAT refund	£3,175.30
UK Power Networks	£6.90

Bank reconciliations for 3 accounts provided and accepted.

**7. Appointment of new Clerk**

Councillors Simcox, Fulford and Luckhurst had undertaken interviews. IT WAS RESOLVED to appoint Mrs Orla Checksfield for the position, effective from 1 October 2024.

**8. Cemetery Charges / Rules**

Cllrs Blake and Pearce proposed the following changes for the Cemetery:-

- When buying a plot - Interment and maintenance fees apply.
- When reserving a plot - Deposit of £250 for 25 year lease (£125 for cremation plots). When interment is arranged, the fees are at the going rate at time of interment minus the deposit. On reserving contact details needed, address, email, telephone numbers plus next of kin details.
- After 25 years have lapsed without interment, clients will be contacted to ask if they need an extension or to release the plot. Extension term and fees to be decided at the time of contact.
- Reserve plots to be limited to 25% of overall plots.

Councillors agreed to take these new proposals forward. Clerk to place on agenda the “contingency” to be put in place in the absence of Mr Miller and forward planning re a replacement Registrar on his retirement.

Clerk to liaise with Registrar and prepare new sheets for website together with new rules

Clerk to deal

**9. Correspondence**

- SMBCA re closure of Bay Hill.
- Jane Driver - request re box trailer Councillors had confirmed approval.
- Anna Newton re ER40 footpath - reported overgrown. (Now cut back).
- Viv Verren re plot of land off Sea Street.
- SMBCA re proposed mural art project.
- Circular re SE motorway works/closures.
- Cllr Bates re proposal of traffic lights at Walmer on Dover/Deal Road.
- Rob Freeland, volunteer re HM Coastguard re use of SF Valley confirmed.
- William Barfoot PROW Definitive Map Officer re claimed restricted Byway from Lucerne Land to Dover Road Langdon and St Margaret's.

- Mrs Williams re knitted postbox covers.
- Notification re overnight resurfacing works on A258 from Jubilee roundabout 6th-19th June.
- Mr and Mrs Stanislawski re streetlights near village shop. Councillors to note whether lights are “too bright” and confirm to Clerk.
- Rebecca Brough DDC re restrictions on publicity in run-up to election.
- Sophie Bramble - May 2024 CSU newsletter
- Notice re Rural Affordable Housing event at Shepherdsweil 10 July.

Clerk to await contact and report as necessary

#### 10. Parish Councillor Reports

- Cllr Fulford provided a round-up of events which had taken place over last few days in commemoration of D-Day. She displayed a video of photographs of the event and expressed her thanks for all the volunteers involved and the organising committee.
- Cllr Fulford advised she has arranged to meet with Richard Haynes of White Cliffs Countryside Project next week. Clerk asked to chase re any information of the removal of the poplar trees as previously approved.
- Nothing available re Conservation Area Character Appraisal - this to be placed on agenda for July.
- Cllr Fielding had provided Council with the final Housing Needs Survey report. This clearly demonstrates a need for more affordable housing in the village. IT WAS RESOLVED that Cllr Fielding liaise with Tessa O’Sullivan to take forward the proposal and identify possible land for this purpose. Letter also to be sent to the Housing Association for Ash Grove re application of allocation rules.

Clerk to deal

Clerk to deal

Cllr Fielding to deal

Clerk to deal

#### 11. Village Maintenance / Matters affecting the Parish

- (a) Playing field inspection undertaken by Cllr Pearce - all in generally good condition. He advised that drainpipes had again been damaged, alongside front door. Mr Purchase to move these to end of the pavilion.
- (b) Re claim for restricted byway - this only affects Langdon side of the A258 and no objections raised by Councillors. Clerk to advise PROW.
- (c) Nothing further heard re A258 action group. Cllr Simcox advised (as per item on website) of the following advice from Kent Highways: *“There isn’t any benefit of creating an official petition, when we (Highways) receive them they receive the same response as what an email or complaint would. The only way it may make a difference is if over 1600 signatures are received and it would then be referred to full Council after consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.”*
- Cllr Blake confirmed replacement railings at King George V Field are in hand.
  - Cllr Blake advised that one of the Duke of Edinburgh volunteers has now finished, with one other still in place. He has asked to be put in touch with school re feedback.

Clerk to deal

- Cllr Blake advised that the bench for Chris Smith has been put in place on the Madge Field, with the bench still to be erected on the tennis courts. He has been asked about “walking tennis” and is to meet a representative of this tomorrow. Cllr Blake advised that he is now a Trustee on the Dover Patrol Memorial Trust and that Christine Waterman is to join as a Trustee.
- Clerk asked to place individual Councillor responsibilities on next agenda.
- It was agreed that tree surgeon Dave Austen be approached to cut down trees to rear of Reach Road Pond.

Clerk to deal

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.20 p.m.

Confirmed:

Chair

10th June 2024

## **MEETING REPORT FOR ST MARGARET'S AT CLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL ON MONDAY 10.06.24**

### **GENERAL ELECTION**

During the period leading up to Polling Day the District Council along with all other local authorities must observe a state of purdah whereby they cannot be seen to make any statements or undertake any actions which would indicate the support of a political party. Hence the number of statements and initiatives which will be taking place over the next few weeks will reflect that position. This state of purdah also relates to the activities of both District and County Councillors who can only report on activities being undertaken by the council and must avoid anything that could be construed as a political statement. Consequently, we are in a position where our report is somewhat light on information this month.

### **COMMUNITY GRANTS**

Community groups supporting local people with the cost of living are being encouraged to apply to Dover District Council's Cost of Living Community Impact Fund. The grant scheme, which launched on 20<sup>th</sup> May, will provide £104,700 to registered charities, Community Interest Companies and local groups to help with their work in the district's communities. Funds will be allocated over two rounds – winter and summer – during 2024/25, and groups can apply for a grant of between £500 and 2,500. Applicants must highlight the impact the cost of living is having on their beneficiaries, and how their project will help bridge the cost-of-living gap, for the benefit of the local community.

The closing date for the first round is Monday, 1 July, 2024.

To apply go

to [www.dover.gov.uk/Community/Grants-Funding/Community-Grants-Scheme/Cost-of-Living-Community-Impact-Fund.aspx](http://www.dover.gov.uk/Community/Grants-Funding/Community-Grants-Scheme/Cost-of-Living-Community-Impact-Fund.aspx)

In the last round of funding, 59 applicants received a grant from the £86.7K that was available. The groups are using the funds on projects which support some of the most vulnerable in the community with the cost of living.

### **LOCAL ISSUES**

#### **1). UNAUTHORISED DEVELOPMENT AT SEA ST**

We have received complaints from neighbours that the new owners were removing their fencing in order to claim additional land. We referred the matter to Community Services and Planning Enforcement who responded to say that they believed the police will not act and would treat it as a civil dispute. However, the destruction of fencing could be considered as criminal damage and they have recommended that the residents make a complaint along those lines which will then require the police to act. We passed this advice to the residents on 28<sup>th</sup> May and have heard nothing since.

#### **2). BOLLARDS IN STATION RD**

Following on from the site meeting of last month we have been advised that the three options have now been forwarded to Property Services to evaluate and they will advise us once the costings have been returned to them. We have received one back which you were presented with on 13<sup>th</sup> May. This was in response to the proposal provided by Operation Gridlock and was costed at £15,436. We have since requested costings for the two other options which were to either reduce waiting time to 30 minutes or to align the cars alongside the kerb thus reducing the number of parking bays by two. We have since sent two chasers and are still awaiting a response.

#### **3). MANHOLE COVER IN ROMAN WAY**

On 16<sup>th</sup> April we received a reply from Thomas Williams of KCC Highways to say that he had passed this over to his Highway Steward to raise a work request if the cover was identified as a KCC responsibility or, if not, to pass a request to the relevant utility company. Despite having sent a request to KCC on 12<sup>th</sup> May they have still failed to respond. We have therefore sent a

further email to KCC reminding them of their own personal liabilities under the Health and Safety Act in the hope that this will initiate a response.

#### **4). CAMPER VANS ON THE BAY**

This issue has again arisen, and we are in correspondence with Mark Sawyer who has sent us numerous photographs of camping activities taking place. He has also been very conscientious in reporting the incidents on the DDC website. We have been in communication with the Head of Community Services who is arranging to repeat the awareness exercise DDC conducted last year to deter the camping activities before the summer peak is upon us.