

St Margaret's at Cliffe Parish Council

Minutes of the Ordinary Monthly Meeting of the above Parish Council held on Monday 11th November at 7pm at St Margaret's Village Hall

Present: Cllrs Rebecca Simcox (in the chair), Nikki Fulford (V Chair), Peter Blake, Tony Fielding, Terry Gilham, Mick Luckhurst, Brian Pearce, Lisa Smith, Anne Wheeler

Also Present: District Cllrs Martin Bates & Oliver Richardson,

Apologies: County Cllr Steve Manion

Clerk: Jane Cook, Orla Checksfield (Trainee Clerk)

Public Participation:

- Norway Drove – Impassable even on horses. Previously tried to have it designated as a Bridleway unsuccessfully. It is classed as a private road, so can't be maintained by public funds.
- Footpaths around St Margaret's Road remain overgrown – resident advised to report via the KCC reporting tool
- Ongoing issues with people parking incorrectly as they can't see the parking spaces in the Reach Road Car Park, which blocks the cars on the inside rows nearest to Heath Court. This was included in Cllr Richardson's email regarding the pothole on the exit of Reach Road Car Park, but he will follow up to ensure this was noted.
- Resident mentioned various hedges overgrown around the village such as at Wallets Court, on the narrow section of Station Road as you leave the village – and was advised to report via KCC reporting tool
- Resident also highlighted the manhole by Owl House Stable is sinking, and a few on and on the A258 as you go towards Ringwold, once again residents were reminded the PC does not have any different route to reporting and they must report incidents via the KCC reporting tool.

Actions:

1. Clerk to see if they can find previous correspondence relating to the subject. Explore if there is anything we can do to support the equestrian community with Norway Drove.
 2. Cllr Richardson to ensure repainting of parking bays was noted by parking services team in respect of Reach Road Car Park
-
1. The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting, having been circulated to all Councillors, were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting.
 2. No declarations of interest were made on the agenda items
 3. Report from the County Councillor covered the following topics:
 1. **Highways Interaction – ?**

St Margaret's at Cliffe Parish Council

2. **Surface Water Gulleys** – Cllr Gilham asked for these to be escalated
Dover Road / Station Road Junction & Sea Street need to be cleared
3. **Pothole on Reach Road beyond the Holiday Park** – Cllr Gilham asked
for this to be escalated as well.

Report from the District Councillors covered the following topics:

Local Highlights

1. **Bay Car Park:** Cllr Richardson has contacted DDC and followed up regarding flooding and faded Disabled Bay lines.
2. **Granville Road Dispute:** Discussion around dispute at 70 Granville Rd remains ongoing with no recent updates.
3. **Station Rd Bollards:** Cllr Richardson has followed up on a proposal involving hardwood bollards with Parking Services.
4. **War Memorial Access:** No update at this time
5. **Reach Rd Car Park:** Unresolved pothole and faded bay lines reported to Property Services; follow-up pending.
6. **White Cliffs Hotel:** Concerns raised about neglected upkeep; Planning Enforcement provided an update to say they have “emailed the developer informing them that I have received a complaint and that I advise that if prompt progress is not made in terms of remedying the poor condition of the land and a guarantee given to the council that such works will be undertaken, the council has the option to take enforcement action under S215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990”.
7. **High Street Light:** Issue reported. Engineers will be in the district in the next few days to reassess the issue. If no solution is found, a lane closure with traffic management will need to be scheduled.
8. **Roman Painted House Car Park:** Query about the car park status passed to DDC; awaiting a response.
9. **Bay Hill Road Closures:** New road closures in January; letters sent to KCC officials regarding impact on residents.

District Highlights:

1. **Local Plan:** The new Local Plan was unanimously approved by Full Council on October 16, now fully influencing all planning applications.
2. **Community Wardens:** KCC confirmed the ward will be assigned a Community Warden.
3. **Local Government Association Conference:** Key government priorities outlined include:
 - a. Building 1.5 million homes, accelerating planning, and restoring housing targets.
 - b. Ending current council funding models in favor of long-term funding.
 - c. Easing the formation of unified mayoral authorities and pushing for unitary authorities within five years.
 - d. Enhanced council powers to suspend/remove abusive councillors and protect councillors' privacy.

St Margaret's at Cliffe Parish Council

- e. Possible elimination of the right-to-buy policy, along with other social initiatives.
- f. Councils may decide on remote meetings and proxy voting..

Actions:

1. No new actions but Cllrs will continue to follow up on outstanding actions.

Clerk's Report

- **Bank Statements:** Transitioned to online-only access.
 - **Training and Events:**
 - Cllr Wheeler booked for "Introduction to Neighbourhood Planning" and "Climate Change Conference 2024" and Flood Warden Training.
 - Trainee Clerk attending the KALC Clerk's Networking Forum on 5th December.
 - **Recycling and Waste:** Christmas Tree recycling will be available in Reach Road car park between the 4th and 7th January 2025. DDC Recycling confirmed Christmas tree collection for garden waste subscribers in early 2025.
 - **Community Notices:**
 - Announced Dexters' return to SFV.
 - Weekly updates on highway works shared on website and Facebook.
 - Notified about upcoming safety sign replacement work on Dover Deal Road near Martin Mill Junction (13th/14th November).
 - **Highways and Roadworks:**
 - Emailed Cllr Gough, Leader of KCC, regarding engagement on Highways.
 - Updated SMBCA and Cllr Bates on Bay Hill closure and awaited KCC response on series of planned road closures.
 - **Local Planning and Projects:** Liaised with DDC Planning for a meeting on Design Guides for Local Plan; noted no guarantee for a dedicated guide for St Margarets.
 - **Finance:** Trainee Clerk granted access to bank account and can now set up payments.
 - **Grounds Maintenance:** Idverde asked to perform an additional cut of Alexander Field following request from Cllr Fielding.
- 4.

S137 Policy Review

- Reviewed and approved Section 137 Policy in preparation for Community Grants Applications

Actions:

1. Clerk to update S137 policy dates on website and include Community Grant Applications in December edition of Parish News, Parish Council News and Website

Planning:

a. New Applications

24/00983 - Change of use of land to Gypsy/Travellers site for the siting of 4 additional pitches to provide space for mobile home, touring caravan, and associated parking for car and light goods vehicle (part retrospective)

Sherleys Farm Upper Road St Margarets At Cliffe CT15 6HY

5. Strongly Objects

b. Glebe Field –

No further updates at this time.

Actions:

1. Cllrs Fielding & Wheeler to finalise Objection presented at the meeting
2. Clerk to deal with responses to new planning applications once finalised

Finance & Accounts:

The council review and approved all payments since the prior meeting. All receipts were noted.

Items to Note:

The Chair & Clerk approved an additional spend of £400 towards the costs of the Christmas Lights On event at the village hall to enable the purchase of Christmas Lights between council meetings.

6. **The DDC SLA for Public Conveniences:** Was not received in time for review at this meeting and will be added to the December agenda.

The UK Budget Impact to the employer's national insurance contributions was noted and will be included in budgetary considerations at the meeting on the 21st November.

KGV Pavilion Cleaning Contractor – The proposal to add 7 additional monthly cleans, between October and April to cover the additional community events hosted at the KGV was accepted, noting the additional annual cost of £210 on current rates.

The setting of the precept for 2025/2026 Financial Year was discussed and a meeting, subject to availability of the Channel Room will take place on the 21st November

Clerk Salary heard in CAMERA – The Parish Council agreed to accept the NALC recommended adjustments to the Clerk Pay scales and apply where the Clerk would benefit

Action:

1. RFO to action NALC Salary Recommendations as applicable

Correspondence

- **Resident Correspondence:**
 - Wellard Family re their memorial bench at the Tennis Club
 - Hope Inn Bus Shelter - concerned about the seasonal timing and public cost for replacement.
 - Parking difficulties at Post Office Corner.
 - Dog-walker behaviour at King George V Field.
 - Parking on double yellow lines at The Drove/Sea Street junction.
 - Overflowing bin at village shop and
 - Parking issues for football events at the Freedown.
 - Enquiry on additional village buses and
 - Broken streetlight in Downside.
 - Community. Grants Application Process
 - Praise given for the Reach Road public toilets
- **Highways Seminar:** Invitation for an in-person seminar on 20th November 2024 in Maidstone.
- **Housing Register:** DDC confirmed all applicants can access the register; low-need applicants receive a lower banding.
- **KALC Updates:** Weekly bulletins and agenda item requests for the DDC/Town and Parish Council meeting.
- **Highways Update:** 20mph speed limit to start on 5th December; no update on A258 Action Group.
- **Community Warden:** New warden for St Margaret's expected by end of December 2024/early January 2025.
- **Citizens Advice Bureau Kiosk:** Village Hall lacks private space for inquiries.
- **KALC AGM:** Scheduled for 30th November 2024.
- **DVLA Reminder:** Tax due for the Council Tractor.
- **St Margaret's Primary PTFA:** Engaging in the Community Grants process.
- **KCC Engagement:** Acknowledgement from Cllr Gough on highways collaboration.
- **Public Rights of Way:** Claimed footpaths in St Margaret's at Cliffe under review.

Action:

1. None

Reports from Councillors

Cllrs Simcox & Smith – Christmas ‘Lights On’

- Raffle prizes have been generously donated by local businesses and tickets are now on sale
- Local businesses are also supporting operating costs or through donations of food on the night as in previous years
- Christmas Lights have started going up in the village, main activity will take place on the 17th November
- Previously the council agreed to a £250 contribution towards the Village Hall tree, request made to change this the PC purchasing the tree and gifting it to the community. This was agreed.
- The PC has also purchase additional lights.

Cllrs Blake, Pearce & Fulford – Cemetery Resilience Planning

- 8.
- Cemetery Books and Paperwork not in a safe controlled environment according to data protection rules. Needs to be put in a fireproof, waterproof, lockable cabinet.
 - Cllr Pearce has agreed to shadow Ian and be his back up if Ian needs time off.
 - Cllr Blake will meet with Ian Miller, Registrar to discuss the above points and feedback to the council

Trainee Clerk Checksfield - KALC Dover Area Committee

- Parish Charter is still being finalised
- Resilience Plans – Workshop being scheduled in Q1 2025 with the 35 Level 1 Councils invited to enable a collaborative approach and avoid duplication of effort
- KALC subscriptions expected to increase in 2025/2026 due to increased costs at KALC
- There was Kent Police meeting where KALC were advised recruitment is on track. The police emphasis is on local crime prevention, rural crime and retail thefts.

Cllr Fulford – Update on Pétanque Piste

- Emma-Jane Allen, DDC has been engaged to request a Licence and we are awaiting a response
- Sarah Platts, DDC has asked a Senior Planning Officer to take a look at the proposal and get back to us to advise if a planning application is required.

St Margaret's at Cliffe Parish Council

- Team of 10 already setting up constitution and looking to apply for grants. The intention is to be constituted before Christmas

Cllr Fulford – Stagecoach Buses

- New timetables commences 17th November with 2 additional services, but unfortunately they are going from Dover to St Margarets and back, and not to Deal as previously advised.
- There is a hopper bus, an 82a which leaves Deal at 15:42 returning to St Margarets on Monday to Friday's only, and during school term, but this does typically have available seats and can be used by all ticket holders.
- Tried to engage with Mike Tapp again last week re the emergency meeting last week but that seemed the directly linked to Route 61 and Fasttrack
- Cllr Fulford is going to follow up

Cllrs Gilham & Blake – Bus Stop

- The Hope Inn bus stop has now been reinforced and moved back
- Seems to be safer now than previously
- Await completion of build and then review the bus stop and potential 'refurb'
- Cllr Blake to thank Mr Clayson for his care in this matter.

Cllr Blake – Bowls Club – Defib

- Need to review the grant possibilities for installation of the Defib externally
- Cllr Simcox agreed to assist in sourcing grant information

Cllr Fielding – Highway Improvement Plan

- Dates have been requested from Lezanne Cesar to discuss revised HIP
- Put out the question re Chapel Lane being One Way "from Deal to Bay" to include in the Parish News, Facebook, Website and Letter Box Drop
- Action prioritise MM Junction to number 1 in HIP

Action:

1. Cllr Simcox to speak to Village Hall Committee regarding Christmas Tree and associated lights – confirming date of delivery and arrangements to install tree
2. Cllr Blake will meet with Ian Miller, Registrar to discuss Cemetery. Resilience Planning and feedback to the council
3. Cllr Blake to thank Mr Clayson for his care in the matter of moving the Hope Inn bus stop
4. Cllr Simcox to look for potential grants for installation of Defib on exterior of Bowls Club building
5. Cllr Fielding to position Martin Mill junction as item 1 in HIP
6. Clerk to co-ordinate survey of residents in respect of a proposal to make Chapel Lane 'One Way

Village Maintenance and Matters affecting the Parish

Playing Field Inspection

- Guttering down pipes righthand side broken off again at the Alexander pavilion.
- Overall equipment in good order at both fields and free of general rubbish, although dog mess present on Alexander field, which Cllr Pearce removed.
- Hedges all cut back at Alexander field.
- Checked the civil cemetery which looks neat and tidy.

Public Spaces Protection Orders

- Outdated signs on KGV field relating to previous 'Keep Dogs on Leads' byelaws still in place. These need to be removed to avoid causing confusion with the current PSPO. Clerk will action or ask Team Purchase if they won't come down easily.
- The PSPO only restricts dogs from entering the Tennis Courts and Playgrounds and those signs are in place.
- A Public Consultation will come out prior to the expiry of the PSPO on 26th July 2025 which will allow residents to make representations to DDC for any changes.

9. **VE Day**

- 8th May 2025
- Working group already underway
- Cllr Fulford will put together a likely budget requirement and present to the council

South Foreland Valley

- Dexter's are now grazing.
- Sadly a volunteer reported they have seen dogs chasing the cattle.
- Desperately need more SFV volunteer's
- Cllr Wheeler to send the Clerk posts to put on social media regarding the dogs and another request for volunteers.

Resilience Planning

- At this stage we just need to be ready to engage with workshop process in early 2025
- Cllrs Wheeler and Fulford are undertaking some training sessions in preparation.

Highways – Road Closures

- Beyond what was reported elsewhere nothing further has been received from KCC Highways, but the Clerk will be following up again this week in light of the lacklustre response received from the Highways Manager.

Damaged Wall at the KGV Field

- Peter has chased the contractors at Trevor May to get a date on reinstatement and is awaiting a response
- The new sign has been designed, Cllr Blake believes the Cricket Club Secretary has arranged for it to be printed/made.

Parking Bay by the Village Shop

- Cllr Gilham to email Parish Clerk a softcopy of the plans he shared with Cllrs Richardson and Bates in hardcopy at the meeting last evening for Parish Council records.
- This design is the most likely to be accepted by the PC and once a quote for hardwood bollards is received can be reviewed by the Parish Council.

Action:

1. Clerk to remove outdated signs at KGV Field
2. Cllr Fulford to prepare a budget for VE Day celebrations for review by the PC
3. Cllr Wheeler to send the Clerk posts to put on social media regarding the dogs and another request for volunteers.
4. Clerk to contact KCC Leadership again, sharing the response received from Cllr Manion and Thomas Williams, Highways Manager, Dover, KCC Highways
5. Cllr Simcox to confirm with Cricket Club Secretary the sign has been made and is ready for installation
6. Cllr Gilham to email Parish Clerk a softcopy of the plans he shared with Cllrs Richardson and Bates in hardcopy at the meeting last evening for Parish Council records.

10. Information received since last meeting. Anything raised to be added to the next meeting agenda.

None

Minute of Appreciation for Outgoing Parish Clerk

The Chair, on behalf of the Parish Council, expressed sincere gratitude to Jane Cook, who has served as Parish Clerk with dedication and distinction for 23 years. The Chair noted Jane's invaluable contributions to the council and the community, highlighting their commitment, professionalism, and tireless work in supporting the council's operations and initiatives.

Council members acknowledged the significant impact Jane has had on the council's success over the years.

The Council agreed Jane's presence and expertise would be greatly missed and expressed heartfelt thanks for their years of service to the Parish Council and community.

St Margaret's at Cliffe Parish Council

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.30pm

Confirmed by the Chair:

Date: