

Minutes of General Meeting at 7pm on Wednesday 10th January at Sturry Library.

Present:

Cllr Ashley Bubb (Chair), Cllr John Hogben (Vice Chairman), Cllr Ann Davies, Cllr Peter Wenham.

Ken Dekker Interim Clerk, Ken Bullock Cemetery Superintendent and Alan Webster Caretaker and CCC Cllr Keji Moses, CCC Cllr Harry McKenzie and KCC Warden Linda Hayes

Four residents in attendance

1-24: Apologies for absence

Cllr Karen Issac, Cllr Peter Campbell, KCC Cllr Alan Marsh.

Public questions

There were no public questions.

2-24: To receive Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests and Voluntary Announcements of Other Interests on any agenda items and a reminder to think of any changes to the DPI register held at CCC, such as change of job or home.

None.

3-24: To approve the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 13th December 2023

All Agreed

4-24: Matters arising from the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 13th December 2023.

None

5-24: Chairman and Councillors' reports.

Cllr Davies stated that the work on Sturry Social Centre has begun, and this is a 6 to 7 week program of work.

She also stated that she had been very busy working on the accounts for the budget.

No other reports

6-24: County and District Councillors' reports.

No report from KCC Cllr A Marsh

CCC Cllr. McKenzie stated the following,

We attended the Sturry Christmas lights switch-on event on Sturry High Street. Harry allocated £250 of his councillor project funding to this event (there were some difficulties with Sturry Parish Council receiving the payment, could the parish council please confirm whether the payment was received in the end? If not, I'll chase it up). We helped sell raffle tickets at the event to assist with fundraising. We really enjoyed the evening, and we would like to thank Sturry Parish Council for their hard work in organising such a successful event. It was particularly lovely to see lots of residents coming together and having fun, and lots of local traders and organisations selling their unique goods and raising money for their respective causes.

We visited Canterbury Food Bank where we had a tour of the facility and learnt more about what they do and how they do it. Canterbury Food Bank is an incredibly impressive local organisation that does a lot to help local people access food; thank you to them for everything they do! While we were there, we asked about food bank use in Sturry and found that Sturry (alongside Hersden) has a high number of food bank referrals (over 200). We want to help our residents who are in need and so we are considering options for a campaign to help people in need in this parish to access food and we would like to set up a meeting with Sturry Parish Council and representatives from Canterbury Food Bank in the near future to work on this in partnership. Could Sturry Parish Council please let us know whether this is something they would like to do with us?

Harry joined the leader of the council (Alan Baldock) and the cabinet member for climate change and biodiversity (Mel Dawkins) in attending a climate action festival and awards ceremony held by the Canterbury Climate Action Partnership. It was there that he got to learn more about local initiatives to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss and recognise some groups who have gone above and beyond to do so. Congratulations and thanks go to: Adisham Church of England Primary School, Simon Langton Girls Grammar School, University of Kent Sustainable Working Group, The Refillery, Stream Walk Community Garden, Barham Downs Farmer Group - Hearts Delight Farm, and Helen Smith.

We were able to secure twenty-four hardship vouchers from the Lord Mayor of Canterbury's Christmas Gift Fund (worth £30 each). We took our time to survey local organisations and identify need; unfortunately, twenty-four vouchers can only go so far but we tried through communication to identify places of real need. We distributed them through partnership with Linda Hayes (the KCC Community Warden), the Sturry Church of England Primary School, and the Hersden Community Centre. We are glad we could help get this support to those in need, we only wish we could have given out more.

We also have our Councillor surgery which will take place at the Social Centre on 19th January 2024 between 1800-1900 hrs.

Signed: Date: 15th February 2024

7-24: Community Warden report

I have continued to work with vulnerable and elderly residents in my area and help distribute the Lord mayors Christmas fund cards.

Many issues with dog mess on footpaths this has been exacerbated by the streetlights not working, these have been reported by myself and KCC Cllr Marsh, but they are still not repaired.

Potholes have been reported as seen and there are a few untaxed vehicles and several residents have asked when Centenary Woodlands are going to be opened.

8-24: Village Caretaker's report.

Quick report tonight, no major issues I have started to remove the Christmas lights in the High Street, the cherry picker is booked for next Sunday.

The Christmas tree is ready to be disposed of.

9-24: Cemetery Superintendent's Report

Christmas Fayre:

I can confirm that most of the activity in respect to the Christmas fare, has been completed, with the Cherry Picker booked to take down the lights on Sun 21st Jan 2024. Final costs came within the approved budget of £5,000. We do however still have 10 unclaimed raffle prizes.

Admin Work:

We have now moved fully to the new email system. Any councillors still with issues should contact the office, otherwise they may not be getting all their emails.

We have a new email account cemetery@sturry-pc.gov.uk

We will in time be closing office@sturry-pc.gov.uk which has become largely a junk email account. We will be contacting any genuine companies and users before we have the account closed for good.

We are updating the website accordingly.

Cemetery Database:

Last month, I reported the task of correcting Interment references in the database as almost complete. Unfortunately, I have discovered circa 100 records in the duplicate Burial Register, which have the incorrect Interment Reference. I now must correct these and the database. So far, I have corrected approx. 50 records and continue to work on the rest.

As reported last year, once I am happy that the current records in the database are correct, I still have the task of adding over 1,000 historical burial records to the database.

Cemetery Other:

Since my last report, we have had no burials.

Thanks to a historian friend of Councillor Campbell's, we have discovered fate of the 4 German airmen in the cemetery I reported upon last month. It transpires, that 1 was a fighter pilot shot down over Chislet and the other 3 part of a bomber crew, shot down over Sturry. All were exhumed after the war and re-interred at the German Cemetery at Cannock Chase.

10-24: Clerks Report

All finances are now inputted into Rialtas.

January's invoices will be inputted once the new bank account has been set up.

Unity Trust Bank. I have completed the application form, and it was sent off with all accompanying documents.

Once the account is opened Unity Trust will do the switch from Lloyds, this will transfer over all Funds, Direct Debits and all Payee details.

Time scale for this is approx. 14 days.

There will be four signatories who will have access to the account, the signatories will have their own logins, passwords and six-digit codes. Once I have set up payments to be authorised, I will send an email to the signatories with the list of these payments, only two signatories are needed to authorise the payments.

I am now working my way through all the agendas and minutes and separating all the non-relevant paperwork from the files. There will be files for each, Agendas and Minutes.

I am also going to start working on the filing cabinets and archiving items that are not needed for the day-to-day operations of the office.

The office has now stopped using private email addresses and all mail will be sent to the parish email accounts of the Councillors.

We have dealt with several members of the public on various items.

11-24: Approval of Final Completion Certificate for Ovenden Allworks in relation to the works undertaken at Centenary Woodland.

Cllrs discussed this and it was proposed that payment was to be made.

Proposed by Cllr Davies and seconded by Cllr Hogben. All in agreement.

12-24: Finance

a) Payments for Approval

The following invoices were submitted for approval:

£30981.00	Ovenden	Centenary Woodlands
£1250.89	John Caddick	Grounds Maintenance
£30	P W Needham	Window Cleaning x 2
£23	CCC	Christmas Lights
£56.05	Trade UK	Screwfix
£60	Richard Marsh	Interment
£28.51	Mustang Washrooms	Washroom

All the above were approved by Cllr Davies and seconded by Cllr Bubb. All agreed.

b) To Discuss and agree the Financial Plan for 2024/25.

Cllr Davies explained Financial Plan to the Council but this is to be brought back to the next meeting after several Cllrs stated that they needed to read the document.

b) To discuss cost codes for salaries.

Cllr Davies explained that the salaries should be split across different cost codes, there was a discussion between the Cllrs, and it was decided that the four employee's wages would be put under four headings.

c) Accounts for approval and signature.

The accounts were signed by Cllrs Bubb and Davies.

13-24: To discuss and agree Sturry Kings Grant application.

Two representatives from Sturry Kings answered questions on the grant application.

It was decided to grant the application.

Proposed by Cllr Davies and seconded by Cllr Hogben. All agreed.

Clerk to arrange this.

14-24. To discuss and agree Cemetery Charges.

Ken Bullock explained that he had done some research and found that we are cheaper on most thing charged for in the Cemetery than Canterbury City Council.

It was decided to increase the charges by 9.5 %.

It was suggested to scrap the difference between residents and non-residents.

The increase to be implemented 1st February 2024.

Proposed by Cllr. Bubb and seconded by Cllr. Hogben. All agreed.

15-24. To discuss and agree Cemetery work.

Cllrs Davies went through the list that she had compiled; costings need to be brought back to Council at next meeting.

16-24. Update on Centenary Woodland.

Cllr Davies explained that the work that had been done but this requires to be seeded with root grass, Cllr Davies to get size of plot so as to be able to order the correct amount of seed.

There is a number of logs and debris to be removed and also the Harres fence before this can be opened to the public.

Bring back to next meeting.

17-24. To discuss and agree if we would like a presentation by the Cyber Protection Officers of Kent Police

Cllrs had a discussion on this, and it was decided to ask if they could do this at our APM in May.

18-24. Update on dog walking area suitability.

Cllr Bubb stated that he had looked at this and he had found that the fencing need strengthening at the bottom and all the gates needed looking at to see how we could make them self-closing.

19-24. To discuss Section 106 Contribution – Sports Facilities. Councillors’ ideas.

It was decided by the Councillors to bring this back to the next meeting.

20-24. To discuss and agree on items to be included in our Highways Improvement Plan.

It was decided to bring this back to the next meeting.

Date for next meeting.

Thursday 15th February 2024

Open meeting closed at 20:37

Exclusion of the Press & Public, pursuant of section 1 of the public bodies (Admission to Meetings) act 1960

21-24. To discuss and agree the Clerks position.

Cllrs had a discussion, and it was proposed to make the Clerks position permanent.

Proposed by Cllr Bubb and seconded by Cllr Hogben. All agreed.