

Minutes of General Meeting at 7pm on Wednesday 22nd October 2023 at Sturry Library.

Present:

Cllr Ashley Bubb (Chair), Cllr John Hogben (Vice Chairman), Cllr Peter Campbell, Cllr Ann Davies, Cllr Heather Taylor.

Ken Dekker Interim Clerk, Ken Bullock Cemetery Superintendent and Alan Webster Caretaker.

Ten residents in attendance

7799: Apologies for absence

Cllr Karen Issac, Cllr Peter Wenham, CCC Cllr's Keji Moses and Harry McKenzie and Linda Hayes Community Warden

Public questions

A member of the public asked the question to the Council, when would the finances be awarded to Sturry Social Centre

7800: 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

Cllr's Davies indicated that she had an interest on item 7818.

7801: To approve the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 10th October 2023

These minutes were approved at the meeting held on 7th November 2023

7802: Matters arising from the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 14th September 2023

These were discussed at the meeting held on 7th November 2023.

7803: Chairman and Councillors' reports.

Cllr Taylor stated that she attended the remembrance service at Sturry Church, and she was upset that no other Cllr's were in attendance.

Cllr Davies stated that we need to find out when we are required to allocate the CIL funds from CCC.

She also stated that she had read the statement from the Commons regarding local authorities giving money to local churches.

Cllr Bubb reported that over the past three nights the cemetery gates had been left open and the bin was right down by the road.

7804: County and District Councillors' reports.

Cllr Marsh reported on the situation of the streetlights, stating that there are lights in Sturry that belong to CCC who no longer have a lighting division. There is a procedure to have these lights serviced or repaired by KCC. There are eight lights that have been reported by the Community Warden of which 5 are CCC,s Cllr's and the other 3 are KCC , which have been repaired and are working.

He went on to say that the question has been asked about the bus shelter that is no longer there by the new developments, he stated that it would be better for CCC Cllr's to take this forward.

SPC Report: Cllr. Harry McKenzie

The budget consultation is now open - I have sent a link to the clerk so it can be shared with everyone. This new administration is keen to hear resident's thoughts on the budget, so that we can deliver the best possible service for residents. The consultation closes on the 8th January.

There are eight separate consultations in the budget consultation: - General budget - Parking proposals and charges - Return of the Canterbury market - Housing revenue account - Street trading licence fees - Boat licence fees - Scrap metal dealer licence fees - Taxi and private hire licence fees.

The council has now launched a new initiative to boost recycling rates - a new printed guide will be delivered to each household, stickers will be delivered to each household to be stuck on bins that will detail what can go in each bin, and loaders will now be checking for the wrong items in the wrong bins and leaving bins with the wrong items in them as this can lead to recycling being turned away by recycling facilities due to contaminated items. This is to boost recycling and make the district more environmentally friendly.

Keji obtained 20 personal safety alarms from Kent Police that she has been handing out to residents.

Keji and I took a motion to the last full council meeting calling on the council leader to write to the leader of KCC demanding the suspension of the decision to stop housing care leavers between the ages of 19-21 as we see that decision as immoral, dangerous, and it will pass the buck to us in the CCC and give us an additional financial burden of £2.4 million per year.

At that same full council meeting, we voted in favour of declaring a biodiversity emergency, introducing a cost-of-living action plan, and introducing a right to grow and support for community gardens.

Both Harry and Keji attended services for Remembrance Day - Harry joined the Lord Mayor of Canterbury and others at the service in the Canterbury Cathedral and Keji joined

members of the community at the Sturry remembrance service. It was important to show our respect and remember those who fought and died in service of our country and those who still serve our country today.

With Christmas coming soon, we are eager to come to the Christmas events and celebrate with the community in Sturry and Broad Oak - please let us know of any upcoming Christmas events in Sturry and Broad Oak.

We are able to hand out a number of hardship vouchers for those in need this Christmas on behalf of the Lord Mayor of Canterbury. We are currently surveying local community groups and organisations to request recommendations for those in need who we should consider giving a voucher to. If the Sturry Parish Council has any people in mind, please do let us know as soon as possible!

We met with the head teacher of Sturry Church of England Primary School to discuss road safety for children and parents outside the school, and local parking issues for residents during school opening and closing times.

We put out an advertisement for our plans to recruit new voluntary road safety guards outside the Sturry Church of England Primary School with training provided and a DBS check funded by the school. Volunteers are still welcome.

Harry met with members of SABORA on Popes Lane to inspect drainage and proximity to the Sarre Penn where the proposed development is proposed to go. This was fact finding to help make a decision on the application when the time comes - Harry still retains an open mind on the application.

Harry and Keji attended a briefing by the KCC cabinet member for highways on the Sturry viaduct scheme. The outcome of that meeting has been presented as a separate document to the Parish Council and members of the community.

Harry has got a number of road markings on Park View and in Broad Oak put on the list for the council to re-paint. This won't happen yet, but we are assured it is on the list.

7805: Community Warden report

This month I have received many concerns over streetlights that are not working, I surveyed the area and found 8 that are not working and have been reported to KCC.

I have met with a resident who is concerned over the constant crying and barking of a nearby dog that appears to be left outside after a call from Ken in the Parish Office.

I was contacted by a resident who had walked through the dog walking area with his grandchildren a dog was barking at them aggressively and the owner shouted and swore telling them that they shouldn't be in there!

Many residents asking when will Centenary Woods be opening.

Grant application for a Menshed at Hersden Community Centre for £4139 awarded from Hersden Parish Council and £250.00 from Harry McKenzie Canterbury City Council. This will be used for the purchase of a shed and the startup costs.

7806: Village Caretaker's report.

Quick report tonight, things have been quite this month carried out general duties in the parish. Met with Cllr's Davies and Campbell in Centenary Woodland to check over the repair works also met with the tree surgeon regarding the trees that are giving concern to one of the residents next to the woodland.

Started putting up the Xmas lights along the High Street, most have been done and the rest will be done on Sunday with the cherry picker.

7807: Cemetery Superintendent's Report

Christmas Fayre:

A lot of my time this month has been spent on completing the various documents for CCC & KCC for the Christmas fare. I have also produced the application form for stall holders including t's & c's. I have sent these out and managed the applications. I have also produced letters for local businesses and residents and helped Alan put up some of the Christmas lights.

I will provide an update under agenda item 7820 on the status of the Christmas Fare.

Admin Work:

We had hoped to have now moved fully to the new email system, but I believe 2 Councillors are still not compliant. Any councillors still with issues should contact me.

I am still waiting on Highway Business Services, to deliver the last two elements of our IT service: New Firewall, Cloud server.

Our electricity supply has now moved to British Gas. This change was managed by "Bionic", who we do not pay, they get their money from the supplier. This will now not come up for review again until 2026. British gas installed a smart meter at the office.

General enquiries to the office on all manner of topics (Rats, parking, howling dogs, trees, land registry, speeding motorists, housing, drugs, highway improvements, hedges, new housing, litter, fly tipping, posters, knotweed, footpaths, anti-social behaviour, buses) along with all the standard enquiries regarding the minibus, the cemetery, council suppliers, etc. has increased this last month.

Cemetery Database:

I have started work on a memorial safety policy, including 5 year rolling plan for inspection of all the monuments at the cemetery. This is not a trivial task, requiring a not inconsiderable amount of paperwork. To progress this to completion, may require training. Even if we use a 3rd party to carry out the inspections, I will have to manage the process as set out in the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977 (LACO).

I will present this to the councillors for approval at the December full Council meeting, as this will have financial implications on the Council.

Cemetery Other:

Since my last report, we have had 2 burials of cremated remains. I have 3 enquiries about possible burials ongoing, but no burials scheduled.

7808: Clerks Report

I have been working on in-putting the outstanding accounts to the cashbook, so far, I have managed to input April, May, June, July and August.

I have also managed to claim the first Quarters VAT back.

I aim to get the remainder of the accounts done before the next meeting, which will in turn provide the council with completed accounts for the period from April up to the present date and then we should be able to claim the second quarters VAT back.

I had an enquiry from a resident regarding a vehicle left outside her property that had been involved in an accident, I contacted the police and was informed that the vehicle was to be removed by the owner.

The resident was informed of this, and the vehicle was removed the following day.

We have received requests from two residents on road safety.

First one was on Babs Oak Hill regarding an RTA where the video shows a vehicle travelling at speed and crashing into the properties fence when trying to avoid oncoming traffic. This was reported to the police who are investigating the accident, KCC have been approached by the resident and they in turn have passed it on to us.

The usual response has been that as there have not been more than three personal injury accidents over the past 3 years, nothing will be done.

The second inquiry was to try and reduce the speed at Sweech Farm, again the police had been contacted by the resident, they were told by the police that as the section of road is on a corner, they would not do a speed watch as this could distract the drivers. The same answer came back from KCC, no accidents over the last 3 years. This has also been passed on to us.

We need to update our Highway Improvement Plan and then set a meeting with the KCC Highway Improvements Team.

I am still looking into the Educational Support Centre booklets that had been signed up by the last Clerk, I have been unable to find this being agreed on any minutes. I would like to ask the councillors if they have any recollection of this. We have paid the deposit of £179 and there is an outstanding amount of £413.95. All the booklets have been sent to the school.

I have filled out the online application to become a signatory at Lloyds Bank, I received a paper application form the following day, on contacting the bank I was instructed to fill this in as well. Once I have access to the bank I will endeavour to try and set up the new bank account with Unity Trust. I will of course require at least four Councillors to become signatories when this is done.

Once the accounts are up to date, I will then begin sorting out the hard copy agendas and minutes from previous meetings. These need to be in separate files and not all in one file.

Dealt with several residents who came into the office.

7809: Finance

a) Payments for Approval

The following invoices were submitted for approval:

£2165.18	C.A.T	Fieldwork & post excavation reporting
£1310.89	John Caddick	Grounds Maintenance
£162	Safety Inspections	LOLER inspection on minibus
£114.17	Screwfix/ B&Q	Trade Account Card
£28.51	Mustang Washrooms	Washroom Supplies for two months
£21	Ken Bullock	Events Management licence Application
£418.95	Safeguarding campaign	Educational Support Centre

All of the above bar the Safeguarding Campaign were approved by Cllr Bubb and seconded by Cllr Davies. All agreed with 1 Abstention Cllr Taylor who doesn't likes that only one person authorises the payments.

b) Report from Finance committee on 2024/25 budget.

Cllr Davies explained that looking at the figures from the first quarter it looks like we can hold on increasing the precept this year as we are in credit on expenditure. We will bring the final figures to our next meeting in December.

7810: To discuss and update on Speed watch.

Cllr Hogben has contacted the Speed watch co-ordinator to come along and give a demonstration to all who wants to do a Speed watch. This date needs to be confirmed.

7811. Update on the Popes Lane development.

An extraordinary meeting has been called for next week.

It was decided that there is not enough time, an extension to the deadline is needed so that a response can be drafted properly and submitted.

7812. Update on recruitment of permanent Clerk.

Not be advertised, this needs to be done ASAP.

7813. To Discuss and agree Sturry Kings Grant application.

This was deferred to the next meeting when we hope there will be a representative from the football club in attendance.

7814. To discuss and agree on enhanced DBS checks for all Cllr's

Cllrs had a discussion on this, and it was decided to check the prices for enhanced checks.

7815. To update on Sturry Crossing (Platform extensions).

Deferred till the next meeting so that a report can be given after a meeting that is being held next week.

7816. To discuss and agree engagement of internal Auditor.

Cllrs discussed this item, and it was proposed by Cllr Bubb and seconded by Cllr Davies.

All agreed.

7817. To discuss and agree Tree Cutting Quote for Centenary Woods.

Cllrs discussed this item, and it was proposed by Cllr Taylor and seconded by Cllr Davies.

All agreed.

7818. To discuss and agree how funding is set up for Sturry Social Centre.

Cllr Davies explained what was undertaken for this project at the Social Centre, quotes and breakdown of costs. Cllr Davies explained that the Social Centre has spent a lot of money of their own.

It was also discussed that this project could meet all the requirements for the CIL contributions.

Ownership to be confirmed and checked against the land registry.

Proposed to use the CIL funds by Cllr Taylor and seconded by Cllr Hogben

All agreed.

7819. To discuss Section 106 Contribution – Sports Facilities. How to proceed further.

There is a sum of money to be used on sports facilities in the parish.

Cllrs to bring ideas to next meeting.

7820. Update on Christmas event.

Ken explained that we have 12 store holders, he also explained the plan of the day and asked that we have volunteers on the day.

Cllr Campbell would like it minuted that he is against the reindeer being at the event.

7821. To discuss and agree on to whether to extend or re-tender the Grounds maintenance contract.

Cllrs discussed this item, and it was proposed to extend for 1 year. Proposed by Cllr Bubb and seconded by Cllr Davies.

All agreed.

7822 To discuss and agree on the draft brief for a management plan to be sent to English Nature for approval.

Deferred till next meeting so that a full report can be given.

Date for next meeting.

Weds 13th December 2023

Meeting closed at 21:27

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

7823 To approve pay rates for Cemetery Superintendent and Interim Clerk.

A discussion was held between the Councillors and a decision was made on the pay rates.

7824 To discuss and approve final payment for past Clerk.

A discussion was held between the councillors and a decision was made on the final pay for the previous Clerk.