

**WESTBERE PARISH COUNCIL
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD TUESDAY 16 MAY 2017**

Present:

Parish Councillors: Jeanette Dawson (Chairman), Sylvia Harlow (Vice-Chairman), Georgina Glover, Maria Morcom, Kathy Wilson and Stephen Laws.

City Cllr Heather Taylor

8 x residents (some for part of the meeting).

Clerk to the Council, Amanda Sparkes.

1. Election of Chairman for 2017-2018

This being the annual meeting of the parish council, the first order of business was to elect a Chairman for the period May 2017 to April 2018. Cllr Harlow proposed and Cllr Wilson seconded that Cllr Jeanette Dawson continue as Chairman. All councillors were happy with this proposal, there were no other nominations, and Cllr Dawson confirmed she was happy to accept the position and continue in the role for one more year. The Chairman subsequently duly signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

2. Election of Vice-Chairman for 2017-2018

Cllr Dawson proposed, Cllr Glover seconded that Cllr Stephen Laws be elected as Vice-Chairman for the forthcoming year. There were no other nominations. Cllr Laws advised he was happy to be elected to the position.

3. The Chairman's opening remarks and apologies for absence.

Cllr Dawson welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from KCC Cllr Alan Marsh (re-elected at the May 2015 KCC elections for another 4-year term) and deemed to be accepted from Parish Cllr Mike Prince (with continued ill health).

4. Declarations of Interests – None.

5. Minutes of the last meeting held 18 April 2017 – These were approved as a true record of the meeting and the Chairman duly signed them.

6. Minutes of the Annual Electors' meeting held on 20 April 2017

RECEIVED the Minutes of the Annual Electors' Meeting held on 20 April 2017 with guest speakers KCC warden Jack Gilbey and PCSO Nathan Mullins (these Minutes get approved at the annual electors' meeting to be held on 2018)

Actions arising thereon

- The Clerk will add the PCSO and KCC Warden's contact details to the next newsletter / the separate Useful Contact Numbers sheet to run alongside the next newsletter
- At the meeting a resident offered to find out more about taking on village correspondent role – Cllr Dawson confirmed that resident Mrs Laws had been in touch with her. The Clerk will provide help if any is needed in the future.

The Chairman was pleased members of the public were present and explained that she would like to discuss if there should be a possible change of format for the Annual Electors meeting for 2018. She explained that the parish council has to do an Annual Meeting for the Electors, but the last couple of years have had a disappointing turnout. She commented that it is getting harder to find speakers. She suggested that the parish council don't have a speaker and have coffee rather than wine on offer, and make the meeting less drawn out to encourage greater attendance.

The parish councillors felt that the speakers can be interesting and information but are not necessarily an opportunity for residents to come and speak to the parish council – the business items are for the parish council to determine too.

Cllr Dawson then invited residents' views. Residents were happy with coffee being offered but most liked the idea of a speaker and commented that they had learned a lot from previous speakers.

Residents gave suggestions for future speakers as:

- the Kent Surrey Sussex Air Ambulance;
- A local published author of both fiction and non-fiction, James Essinger, who may do a talk around do traditional publishers survive?;
- A crime-scene lecturer
- Simpsons Wines – local vineyards and wine production

7. Chairman's Report and Councillors' Reports

Cllr Dawson – Cllr Dawson advised that planning has been a priority this month but had nothing specific to report at this stage in the meeting .

Cllr Laws report – Cllr Laws advised he had nothing to report.

Cllr Harlow report - Cllr Harlow advised that she had nothing to report.

Cllr Glover report - Cllr Glover commented that the village green looks lovely and the Church looks fine, and that the pre-school parking has been no problem at all. The Church noticeboard has been renovated.

As city councillor she said that she had little report. The Mayor Making and Committee Making at the city council is taking place on 17 May 2017.

Cllr Morcom report – Cllr Morcom explained that she is now working on the next newsletter.

Cllr Wilson report – Cllr Wilson advised that the next CCC Street Monitors meeting will be on 7 June 2017. Serco has moved to Wincheap. She also advised that the village hall is going to be painted this summer. The Chairman and Clerk are able to suggest possible contractors for the hall committee to consider approaching for quotes.

8. KCC Cllr Alan Marsh

KCC Cllr Alan Marsh was not in attendance but he has been elected for another four-year term in the KCC May elections held on 4 May 2017.

9. City Councillor Heather Taylor

Cllr Taylor apologies for not attending Westbere parish council meetings recently; she explained she has had some family issues and also been unwell.

She explained that she is the Chair of the city council's Licensing Committee and attended a meeting on 16 May 2017 regarding the Sturry Shop, which wanted a 7am-11.30pm licence for selling alcohol and even for single cans. The Licensing committee reduced the granting of the application to 8am – 10.30pm and that purchases must be in packs.

10. Adjournment of the Meeting – residents participation

A resident commented that the Hoplands Farm decision (to grant 275 houses) is catastrophic for Westbere. Newcomers will be remote from the village and will have no interest in it. When fully built the new occupants there will be the majority and could 'out vote' the existing residents. He urged the parish council to change the parish boundary so that it would run along the farm track by the RSPCA.

Cllr Dawson commented that she had also heard other villagers referring already to 'old Westbere' and 'New Westbere' but she had concerns about people crossing the A28 to get to the new development and its new surgery for example.

A resident asked Cllr Glover directly why she had spoken in support of the application at the planning meeting. (Cllr Glover as city councillor sits on the planning committee). Cllr Glover said that the local area needs childcare and it needs a new doctors' facility. The one at Sturry is full and there is nothing at Chislet or Upstreet. The resident asked of Cllr Glover, why she had spoken at all? Cllr Glover advised that the people of Hersden wanted her to, but that she did not take part in the vote.

Cllr Laws asked Cllr Glover to explain the Declaration made by Councillor Baker at the beginning of the meeting to the effect that an offer that had been received from the developer very recently to assist with county elections, meant that the Councillor felt he could not participate in the discussion or decision. Councillor Laws confirmed that he had listened to the online recording of this application's discussion and was concerned about this declaration, surprised it had not been taken more seriously and wanted to know if there was going to be an investigation. Councillor Glover said she would ask Councillor Baker about that as he was the leader of the Conservative Group.

Cllr Laws also said he did not understand how Cllr Glover could declare that she could not participate in the discussion - as the chair of the planning committee had said, to avoid "any suggestions of pre-determination" and yet speak in favour of the application before withdrawing. He noted that two councillors had subsequently said they had been persuaded by Cllr Glover's words to support the application. He asked for an explanation.

Cllr Glover advised that planning members are able to speak for 3 minutes and can then either stay or withdraw from the ensuing discussion and determination.

A resident stated that she had been at the meeting and had felt stabbed in the back by Cllr Glover's actions.

Cllr Dawson advised that she had received so many calls and comments from residents and that they feel stabbed in the back. Cllr Dawson addressed Cllr Glover, stating that she was unhappy that Cllr Glover had sat in on all the parish council meetings when the parish council had discussed and spoken against the application.

Cllr Glover commented that she could see her point.

A resident persisted with her enquiry about how procedure let her speak as she did. Cllr Glover advised that members can do so. She spoke as she did, but because of the views of Westbere councillors she did not vote. She spoke about the benefits of the "community add-ons" with the housing.

A resident drew attention to a brand new SureStart centre by the primary school. Cllr Glover advised that it was not big enough to turn into a nursery – they had looked at that.

Cllr Laws commented that the indications were that there had been pre-determination in this case not only by Cllr Glover but also, from things she said in public at a previous meeting about the pressure to support the application, more generally. There were clear grounds for inferring that someone had decided before the planning meeting what was going to happen. That with the other things that happened at the meeting, (including overturning the planning officer's advice) shifted the burden to CCC to demonstrate that things had been decided in an open and above board manner. You can accept decisions that go against you if it is clear that due process has been properly followed with integrity. Sadly, everything about this decision indicated that more needed to be done to show that had been the case here.

Cllr Dawson advised that she was surprised that Cllr Glover in her supporting speech had mentioned "Mark" not "Mr Quinn" or "the applicant" or "developer".

A resident stated that Cllr Glover could support Hersden or Westbere, but could not do both. Cllr Glover stated that she was not resigning.

A resident commented that he thought the honourable thing for Cllr Glover would be to resign and perhaps submit herself for re-election..

A resident asked Cllr Glover to advise who had asked her to support the application. Cllr Glover advised residents at the public exhibition – and that there had been mainly Hersden residents, but some Westbere ones too.

Cllr Dawson commented to Cllr Glover that the residents present were in attendance as they were so unhappy – she commented that they were Cllr Glover’s residents as Ward councillor. Cllr Glover defended this with a statement that there is room for a survey to have been done.

A resident wanted to know who had pressured Cllr Glover to support the application (as she had stated at the April 2017 parish council meeting.) Cllr Glover stated that councillors are pressurising all members of the planning committee because of the need for new housing. She advised that she had spoken about the facilities on offer in the application. She commented that she was sorry she had upset the village – she has lived here for 52 years and her heart is in the village.

She said again that she would not resign.

The Clerk was able to explain that Canterbury City Council are going to undertake a governance review later in 2017 which may include a boundary review. Westbere Parish Council would be able to investigate all possible options and implications. The Clerk did not know full details of what or was not possible though.

A resident commented that the planning committee had glossed over the fact that the application site is in Westbere not Hersden. It will become ‘greater Hersden’. She felt that nothing but the old colliery links it to Hersden it is in Westbere. Farmland and green space is to become a housing estate – it is an avoidable shame, she commented. And should the old Colliery site application also now go ahead the village of Westbere will be swamped. With regards to a boundary review she felt that to shrink the village will shrink the potential new precepts but it will retain the village of Westbere as it is now with half the parish area.

Residents and Councillors alike were concerned that (this being an outline application only) there is no promise of the delivery of the surgery etc. Just lots of traffic numbers increased.

The developer just happens to be promising an unprecedented upfront payment of £1.2m towards the relief road. An amount that the KCC highways officer said was still needed.

A resident asked, should we go on as we are or should Cllr Glover resign? Six of the eight residents present indicated with a show of hands that they agreed Cllr Glover should resign.

Cllr Glover undertook to resign at the end of the meeting.

Cllr Dawson commented that she felt Cllr Glover had a dilemma, she lived in Westbere and was part of the fabric of Westbere but with two hats was conflicted and had the best interests of Hersden not Westbere in her mind. Cllr Dawson said she would leave Cllr Glover to think about her position.

Cllr Glover commented that she knew the Chairman would like her to resign.

Cllr Glover stated that her family had lived in Westbere since 1912, she had started the preschool in Westbere, and still does so much in Westbere. She had done what she felt was right.

There was also some discussion around the city council approaching the Clerk to ‘gift’ the open space land to the parish council. This is detailed below under planning – the Clerk explained that since the agenda item was posted, the officer had given an update and this was no longer on the table for consideration.

Cllr Taylor gave a reminder that she is the other ward councillor covering Westbere, and that she could take some of the heat too and would be happy to speak in future at planning meetings on behalf of Westbere. She also commented that she also used to wear two hats being a parish and city councillors, but resigned from the parish council (of Sturry) due to the big planning applications in Sturry.

She also reminded everyone that the Hoplands planning application went through against the Officer recommendation for refusal.

She commented that £13k has recently been received from a developer to refurbish the BMX track at Hersden.

Cllr Laws said that the accumulation of questionable factors now included that as well as Councillor Baker's declaration, the suggestions of predetermination and the rejection of official advice.

Cllr Glover further clarified that the preschool are in a very old building at Hersden and its lifespan would not go past 2017. The surgery too at Hersden needs an expansion.

The Clerk commented that Mr Quinn in his speech at the planning meeting on 25 April 2017, had confirmed that he would deliver the doctors' surgery at the 50th house, the parkland at the 75th and the apprenticeship centre at the 100th house.

In answer to a resident's question, Cllr Glover confirmed that she had written her own speech in support of the application.

Cllr Dawson again commented that after all Cllr Glover had done in the village it was an absolute shame that she had done so.

Cllr Glover commented that after 23 years as a parish councillor and living in the village for 52 years it was a great shame for her too. She stated that she was very upset. She was the longest serving parish councillor – the longest Westbere Parish Council has ever had.

11. Planning Matters

NOTED that for the major application CA/16/00673/OUT - Former Chislet Colliery land A28 - Outline application 370 dwellings etc. - there is no firm update yet. City Councillor Heather Taylor advised that she thought it might be going for determination to the June 2017 planning committee.

NOTED the recent KCC application (KCC/CA/0030/2017) for Plots D and E, Lakesview Business Park, recently granted to increase the upper limit of waste allowed to enter the site, from 82,000 tonnes to 120,000 tonnes per annum, and remove the restriction limiting the quantities of domestic waste and municipal waste (arising from commercial, industrial and institutional sources). KCC granted this variation of conditions application in May 2017.

The variation of this condition has the potential to significantly increase the quantities of more malodourous waste types.

The Clerk explained that she has chased for her and Cllr Harlow to be able to do a site visit of the facility. The KCC planning case officer has acknowledged this and informed the applicant of the parish council request to visit the Waste Transfer Building, and when he has heard back from them will be in touch again.

Public Exhibition Sturry/Broad Oak development

NOTED the Clerk and Cllr Harlow attended a public exhibition by BDB Design on 20 April 2017 at the Sturry Social Centre for the Broad Oak / Sturry proposed strategic developments. A copy of the exhibition boards was subsequently received by the Clerk and emailed to all Cllrs.

There will be three separate planning applications – one from each of the developers for the north and the south of the site – and a third application from KCC as the highways authority for the Sturry Relief road proposal. The relief road proposal is expected by late June 2017.

Cllr Taylor advised that Sturry parish council has a new planning committee – the Westbere Clerk agreed to speak to the Sturry Clerk and keep in touch.

Cllr Dawson commented that KCC Cllr, Alan Marsh, has just been made the KCC Chairman of the Planning Committee for KCC (covering the whole of Kent).

KCC will consult with Canterbury City Council about the relief road application.

Trees felled along the A28 next to Russett Orchard

NOTED that the report by a resident to CCC of several trees felled on the land next to Russett Orchard on the Westbere side of the A28 was assigned to a CCC Enforcement Officer. The Clerk learned on 4 April 2017 that the officer had undertaken a site visit. His reply was circulated on 5 April 2017:

Door to door inquiries have yet to identify any culprits, and are unlikely to do so. Subsequently, I've spoken to the tree officer at the Council who has confirmed that no prior notification (of intention to do tree works in a conservation area) has been given, and that he had previously noticed the trees had been felled (what he calls a 'cut & run', where the culprits are likely to return at some point and claim the wood for fire wood). He also confirmed that the trees appear to be both Ash and Elm and are likely to have had 'Dutch Elm disease, and Ash die back. Having identified the owners from Land Registry search, I shall be writing to them in due course and notify them of the felling of trees, and establish what plans, if any, they have for the land. However, the Council are not in a position to serve a replanting order in this instant.

The Clerk asked to be kept updated as future plans for the area are of concern to parish councillors and residents alike.

There was further activity on site with the felled trees being cut up and cleared. The enforcement officer did a further visit on 10 May 2017, and was advised that the area was to be left to grow out, that some replanting will be undertaken and an assurance that no further trees will be felled was given. The site may also be used to have some bees in future.

CA/16/00404/OUT - Hoplands Farm, Island Road - Outline planning application for a neighbourhood extension for the creation of up to 250 houses etc

The application was granted by CCC at the planning meeting on 25 April 2017, when Members voted 10:0 to GRANT (with conditions tbc).

Westbere Parish Council will keep a watching brief for the Section 106 Agreement coming forward and the progress with the village green status for the open space. And the Planning Application Grant Notice conditions to be aware of.

Further to the granting of permission for this development on 25 April 2017, on 3 May 2017, the CCC planning case officer approached the Clerk seeking the parish council's view on whether the parish council would like to take over the ownership and/or future maintenance of the open space area within the application.

The Clerk explained she told the officer that this was such an important issue that it must come before a full parish council meeting and be discussed and formally ratified. And she asked for more information from the case officer on 4 May 2017, around such items as :

- a map of the open space areas in question;
- request for a visit to walk and familiarise the councillors of the area;
- other options for managing the land such as a management company;
- concerns about the current small precept/tax base and implications of raising expenditure;
- what, if any, the current maintenance regime is – and at what kind of annual costs,
- information on what the future maintenance schedule may include ;
- whether legal fees would be paid for a land transfer;
- whether a transfer of land and responsibility would come with a commuted sum for maintenance for say 5 years or so ;
- who would lead on securing a village green status and how ;
- a request to see the draft S106 agreement and
- what kind of timescale for the transfer would be proposed.

The full email contents are attached as an appendix to these Minutes.

NOTED the planning case officer's reply on 4 May 2017:

"We have met today with the parties to the legal agreement and, due to the issues of long term management, particularly with regard to cost of maintenance, agreed that the most practical way forward would likely be for the parkland to be owned and managed by the management for the

development, rather than being offered to the Parish. A key advantage of this is that it ensures a long-term funding stream for the parkland, and links the responsibility for maintaining the parkland with the people most likely to use it, while a commuted sum would also have implications for the viability of the scheme.

As such it is probably not necessary for the possibility of the parkland being transferred to the Parish to be raised at the parish meeting.

We will still be looking for the parkland to be submitted as a village green to ensure it's kept open and accessible to the public in perpetuity."

NEW APPLICATION: CA/17/00850/FUL - Rear of Bere Lodge, 30 Westbere Lane, Westbere Proposed 1 no. single-storey and 2 no. two-storey detached dwellings.

Westbere Parish Council had set a site meeting with representatives from the developer and architects, to which several members of the public also attended prior to the meeting. This site meeting afforded an opportunity for questions and to give an idea of the proposal in its setting. Westbere Parish Council discussed the application during the meeting. Several members of the public from the site meeting were also in attendance having shared their views on this proposal to councillors.

Westbere Parish Council has concerns predominantly around access, back garden development, the setting of a precedent for 'garden grabbing', increased traffic, the damaging effect of increased vehicles on important listed buildings nearby, privacy and overlooking, and drainage concerns.

Detailed concerns as follows:

- Access is via a narrow access road between two existing houses. This access is considered too narrow to support the development especially during construction, and raises concerns for increased use after occupation, and issues with refuse collections should the application be granted.
- The use of the current access track used for reaching garages would cause unwanted privacy and overlooking issues on the two properties either side of the track.
- The proposal for new houses is considered 'garden grabbing' or inappropriate development of residential gardens and should be resisted (NPPF paragraph 53). The proposal if granted would create an unwanted precedent, with potential to open the flood gates to back garden development along Westbere Lane.
- The village and site is a conservation area and the proposal adversely affects the setting and character of the village.
- The homes proposed are surplus to requirements following Canterbury City Council's Local Plan and the granting of the Hoplands Farm development (CA/16/00404) - a decision contrary both to the Planning Officer's recommendation and the views of current residents.
- Further development within the village also conflicts with the Westbere Parish Plan. This recommends suitable locations for new housing, if required, within the parish but *not* within the village itself.
- The development is considered unsustainable in planning terms (NPPF paragraph 17). The scheme is totally car reliant. The village is not on a bus route and use of a vehicle is essential. There are no shops and the lanes are narrow with no pavements.
- Bere Lodge is situated in the centre of Westbere village on Westbere Lane, a conservation area with a cluster of listed buildings dating from the 15th century. These listed buildings in the heart of

the village, are important to protect, and this proposal will be detrimental to these listed buildings, primarily through heavy vehicles necessitated by the construction phase but additionally through increased traffic as a result of the completed development. Traffic, with its associated vibration, pollution and noise, has negative effects on buildings constructed before the arrival of motor vehicles. To give an example, 15th century buildings do not have concrete foundations and, therefore, are prone to damage from vibration.

- Over the last thirty years Westbere village has seen a substantial increase in vehicular movements and, with the advent of on-line shopping, this has increased further. This new development will further increase traffic. At the same time, although 20mph signs are suitably positioned throughout the village, these are generally ignored by drivers, to the detriment of walkers, cyclists and horses. The lanes in Westbere village are, therefore, for a rural environment busy enough.

Cllr Glover advised that if more than four people object, the application must go to planning committee for determination. She advised residents that their objections must stick to planning law.

Cllr Dawson encouraged all residents present to do their own representation to Canterbury City Council as the planning authority. She asked for an indication of opinion and all residents in attendance were against the application or had got an objection to it.

Westbere Parish Council, sharing the majority of the local residents' concerns, resolved to formally object to this planning application. Cllr Laws kindly agreed to be a speaker to speak at the planning meeting when it is considered by Members if necessary.

FURTHER NEW APPLICATION: CA/17/01111/FUL - Hoplands Farm, Island Road, Westbere, CT3 4HQ

Proposed 2 no. single-storey detached dwellings together with associated works following demolition of existing agricultural buildings.

The Clerk explained that this is an application made by George Wilson Holdings and had been received since the agenda and meeting paperwork was published and circulated.

(Following the widening of permitted development rights for agricultural buildings in 2013, CA/14/01444 was submitted to convert the agricultural buildings to three dwellings. Westbere Parish Council was supportive of this application supporting the re-use of buildings. This application was refused for failure to meet the specific permitted development requirements. A further application CA/15/0136/FUL to demolish and rebuild was granted, and CA/16/01170 was submitted and withdrawn. The parish council did not comment on the last two applications.)

The Clerk explained that she and Cllr Harlow had studied the new application as it needed comments prior to the next meeting. The design takes its cues from the agricultural buildings there now, with steep pitches to the roofs; the footprints are as now and not extended. They felt that the parish council should not offer any comments and leave CCC to determine the latest application.

12. FINANCIAL MATTERS

RECEIVED the bank statements and bank reconciliation for April 2017, and RESOLVED the signature of a councillor other than the Chairman thereon;

NOTED confirmation from CCC on 25 April 2017 of a payment to be made by BACS of £13,000 for the precept £12,855.61 and cushioning grant £144.39 for 2017-2018

Pension Policy

Westbere Parish Council joined the Local Government Pension Scheme in September 2016 with effect from 1st April 2016. KCC advised that an employer requirement is to make a policy covering several pension scheme matters. Under the 2013 regulations, employers are required to make policy decisions under parts of the regulations. At the 18 April 2017 meeting the parish council agreed a policy statement which clarifies Westbere Parish Council's position on the discretions it can exercise in accordance with the LGPS 2014 regulations and guidance on how they apply to different retirement options. The parish council

resolved to use the pro-forma on the KCC LGPS website, which the Clerk had circulated to all councillors in full by email and in full on the Clerk report for the meeting.

NOTED that the Clerk duly recreated as a Policy, and added it on the parish council's letterhead, and this was sent to the KCC LGPS section on 23 April 2017 and a copy filed with the Minutes of the April 2017 meeting.

S106 payment held at CCC

As recently reported at recent meeting, CCC are holding developer contributions of £165.60 restricted to an open space project for open space/semi-natural purposes. The WVPS had suggested Spring bulbs be planted around the village such as by the convent etc – the Clerk checked with the relevant CCC officer that this meets the criteria, and it does.

Cllr Dawson therefore asked the WVPS representative present to consider the type of bulbs and where to plant them and report back.

Sturry Handyman

Sturry Parish Council have a handyman who may be borrowed by other parishes for a charge.

At the April parish council meeting the Clerk was asked to make enquiries about the cost and his availability with the Sturry parish clerk. The cost is £10 per hour and cleaning materials etc should be provided by the parish council.

Cllrs discussed and Cllr Wilson proposed and Cllr Laws seconded, and all parish councillors were in agreement, that Westbere Parish Council 'buy in' the Sturry Parish Council handyman as a one-off for two days or so to cover items such as the cleaning of the village road signs, street name plates, noticeboards, maps, salt bins, etc

13. Internal Audit report

NOTED that the finance and other documents were given to David Elliott to undertake the internal audit for year ended 31 March 2017. His report was presented. There are no areas of concern.

14. Annual Return year ending 31 March 2017

The Year End balances to 32 March 2017 are £21,354.66.

The Clerk had circulated all the papers ahead of the meeting to all councillors. NOTED that the Annual Return is submitted with the following supported documents:

- i)** Bank reconciliation
- ii)** Income, Staff costs, All Other Payments
- iii)** Income and Expenditure sheets and balance sheet
- iv)** Statement of variances
- v)** Covering letter to PKF Littlejohn – including contact numbers for Clerk and Chairman

Also RECEIVED:

- a Finance Risk Assessment
- a Statement of Internal Control
- the Ear Marked Reserves schedule up to 31 March 2017 totalling £12,215. (The Council maintains certain restricted and unrestricted reserves to meet general and specific future expenditure. Ear marked reserves are noted in an excel spreadsheet and held for specific spend in those areas.)
- the Council's Register of Fixed Assets totalling £56,553. (The fixed assets are recorded on a spreadsheet with two columns – one showing the purchase price for the purposes of reporting on the annual return form and one column valued on the basis of, and to match, the parish council's insurance schedule.) Cllr Laws commented that he was pleased to note the inclusion of the village hall lease now on the asset register, albeit with a nil value.

15. Approval For Annual Return for the year 2016-2017: Section 1

Cllr Laws proposed and Cllr Wilson seconded and all Councillors APPROVED the Annual Return and all supporting documents for the financial year ended 31 March - to be returned to the external auditors PKF Littlejohn LLP by 12 June. The Chairman duly signed the Section 1 page : the Annual Governance Statement. (Section 1 is for the parish council around the effectiveness of the system of internal control.)

16. **Section 2 : the Accounting Statements** – this had been prepared by the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer and signed and dated *prior* to being presented to the parish council. Cllr Laws proposed and Cllr Wilson seconded and all councillors RESOLVED to approve Section 2 and the Chairman duly signed this section too.

NOTED that the Clerk must publish (including on the website) the Annual Return by 30 June 2017. NOTED that the parish council must make arrangements for the exercise of public rights to inspect the accounts – and the inspection period of 30 working days must include the first 10 working days of July. PKF Littlejohn issued a template suggesting Monday 5 June to Friday 14 July inclusive. The Chairman and Clerk will publish this on both noticeboard(s) and parish council website by Sunday 4 June 2017. (NOTED also that the subsequent signed report returned by PKF Littlejohn with the Annual Return must be published on the parish council website by 30 September 2017)

17. **AUTHORISATION OF ACCOUNTS**

The expenditure list circulated to Cllrs as Appendix 3 totalling £1,494.68 was authorised for payment.

18. **COMMUNITY RIGHT TO BID**

Registration of Assets of Community Value

The Clerk submitted an application along with a Land Registry title and map to CCC on 6 April 2017 for the Yew Tree public house to be registered as a Community Asset on CCC's Register. This will, if successful, enable the parish council to be consulted should the pub come up for sale. Should this occur, the parish council may be given a limited time to raise finance and prepare to bid for it.

The application was acknowledged by CCC who have until 6 June 2017 to make a decision on its inclusion. CCC must inform the owner, the lease holder (if any) and the lawful occupants.

19. **VILLAGE GREEN PARTY SUNDAY 2 JULY 2017 ON THE VILLAGE GREEN**

The Village Green Party will be held on the village green on Sunday 2 July from 12pm to 2pm.

NOTED that the Clerk completed the online engagement application to the Civic Office to invite the Lord Mayor or Sheriff to the event. They confirmed on 3 May 2017 that the Sheriff and Escort designate have accepted the invitation and will arrive at 12noon on the 2nd July. The names of the Sheriff and Escort designate will be announced at the council's AGM on the 17th May.

Cllr Dawson confirmed that the village hall committee will do a raffle/tombola.

The Clerk has printed party invitations for all councillors to onwardly deliver to all village households. Other actions were assigned to Cllrs and further arrangements are in hand.

20. **CLERK REPORT**

There was nothing to record that has not been included elsewhere in these Minutes.

21. **PARISH PLAN** – Cllr Harlow confirmed that she is still monitoring bird numbers etc.

22. **HIGHWAYS** – The Clerk had received a complaint about pot holes in Church Lane. These have been previously mentioned but they did not meet the Kent Highways intervention criteria. Potholes need to be 50mm deep to be actioned. Cllr Morcom kindly agreed to look at the section of road and log any deep potholes and let the Clerk know their precise locations in order for them to be logged.

23. **ENVIRONMENT**

For the Richborough Connection Project – NOTED that the National Grid Project Engineer and Project Manager, will attend at 6.30pm prior to the 20 June 2017 parish council meeting to provide councillors with a briefing on their work in Westbere and an update on the overall project.

Blocked drains by village green

The Clerk confirmed that she had already reported the blocked drains at the junction of Westbere Lane with Church Lane – and agreed to check the status of the report.

Nettles at entrance to the village

Nettles at the entrance to the village by the convent are affecting sightlines for drivers. The parish council asked the Clerk to advise the contractor that the parish council resolved to do a one off authorised clearance only.

Footpath overgrown

The Fairview Gardens footpath is overgrown with brambles etc and the Clerk had sought quotes from the parish council's contractor to deal with this - of either £300 with spraying to combat future re-growth or £125 for a cut back only. The parish council resolved to do the £125 cut only.

Noticeboard at Little Hoplands

The noticeboard is no longer secured since the front of Little Hoplands has been refurbished. The house is now up for sale. Cllr Dawson had arranged for it be collected and asked a resident to try and chase this collection.

The item to discuss the Clerk's salary review was deferred to the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.40pm

Dates of next meetings - 20 June, 18 July, no meeting in August, 19 September, 17 October, 21 November, no meeting December 2017.

Signed: Date:

Chairman

Please note these Minutes remain as draft Minutes until they are approved by the parish council at their next parish council meeting

WESTBERE PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING REPORT 16 May 2016 meeting APPENDIX

Hoplands Farm CA/16/00404/OUT

Further to the granting of permission for this development on 25 April 2017, on 3 May 2017, the CCC planning case officer approached the Clerk seeking the parish council's view on whether the parish council would like to take over the ownership and/or future maintenance of the open space area within the application. The Clerk asked for more information from the case officer on 4 May 2017 as follows:

This is such an important issue that it must come before a full parish council meeting and be discussed and formally ratified, on a decision in principle, in the first instance, and then further revisited as necessary. We usually meet monthly. Fortunately, there is time for me to add this item to the 18 May agenda – which I have now actioned. So that is the date we will initially discuss whether to take on this responsibility and how to progress. I'll come back to you within 48 hours of the meeting. But to inform the discussion – and decision – we need more information and answer to the following please:

i. Land in question

May we be provided with a map and any other relevant information of the open space(s) in question please?

A parish councillor and I would like to walk the area and familiarise ourselves with it before we have any further discussion – is that possible – and if so when? Would you need to ask Quinn

Estates for permission for us to enter the land? Ideally we need to have walked and familiarised ourselves with the area on the ground before the 18 May meeting.

ii. Options for the land

Presumably, Westbere Parish Council is an ideal choice for owning and managing the land as it falls within our parish boundary.

What are the alternatives for its future maintenance being considered?

- o A Management Company set up with the new homes and maintenance paid for by the incoming residents as a condition of sale?
- o An offer to a neighbouring parish council to consider taking it over?

I feel that my councillors need to know what the alternatives might be, and the implications should they be minded to turn the offer of ownership and/or responsibility for maintenance down.

iii. Current tax base/precept

Westbere currently has in the region of 150 properties and therefore a very small tax base. Their precept is one of the highest levied of all the 26 parish councils in the Canterbury District.

The parish council is therefore very mindful of the impact that any expenditure has on raising the precept/council tax on residents. Even a small percentage increase when shared across such a small number of houses has an impact.

iv. Taking ownership

I cannot speak for the parish council but I would like the parish council to be offered 'first refusal' on an ownership transfer of the land (subject to a site visit and further information above and below being freely given and considered).

v. Legal fees

Would the developer pay for the legal fees of both parties for a land transfer? As mentioned in (iii) above, the parish council does not currently have significant income raising power and would not want current Westbere residents to be penalised for legal fees on land that potentially seems a noose around their neck rather than a gift horse. Our budget has already been carefully considered, and is currently set until April 2018, with very little leeway.

vi. Current maintenance regime

Can we know what, if any, the current maintenance regime is – and at what kind of annual costs?

vii. What would the future maintenance be?

Can we know what the future maintenance schedule may include? We are aware that the planning application mentions new fencing provision and tree planting as screening – such as for the SSSI site. Fencing and trees incur future maintenance costs and considerations... and need to be budgeted for in advance.

viii. A commuted sum

Would the transfer of the land if agreed with ongoing maintenance come with a Commuted Sum from the developer? As mentioned, if land is transferred with maintenance responsibilities then costs start straight away.

However, the tax base and therefore precept raising powers of the parish council would not increase until the houses start to be built and occupied. I would therefore think it reasonable to ask for a Commuted Sum to cover, say, as a minimum, 5 years of maintenance. Can we seek the developers' views and offer on this?

ix. Village Green Status

Having been present at the planning meeting, I am aware that a mention of protecting the open space from future development by getting it a Village Green status was mentioned on at least one occasion. Can we know more please about obtaining such status and the mechanisms and the parties involved in securing that? If securing village green status is a set planning condition then we would want a third party to secure that. We have neither the paid Clerk hours, nor volunteer hours, nor expertise to pursue that. Clarification would be most welcome.

x. Section 106 Agreement and Planning Conditions

If we are able to see both a draft of the S106 and the Planning Application Grant Notice conditions that would be most welcome.

xi. Timescale What timescale for a transfer of ownership / and possibly maintenance would we be working to?

TO NOTE the planning case officer's reply on 4 May 2017:

"We have met today with the parties to the legal agreement and, due to the issues of long term management, particularly with regard to cost of maintenance, agreed that the most practical way forward would likely be for the parkland to be owned and managed by the management for the development, rather than being offered to the Parish. A key advantage of this is that it ensures a long-term funding stream for the parkland, and links the responsibility for maintaining the parkland with the people most likely to use it, while a commuted sum would also have implications for the viability of the scheme.

As such it is probably not necessary for the possibility of the parkland being transferred to the Parish to be raised at the parish meeting.

We will still be looking for the parkland to be submitted as a village green to ensure its kept open and accessible to the public in perpetuity."

New Applications

CA/17/01111/FUL - Hoplands Farm, Island Road, Westbere, CT3 4HQ
Proposed 2 no. single-storey detached dwellings together with associated works following demolition of existing agricultural buildings.

The parish council has no comments. Further details above in these Minutes.

CA/17/00850/FUL - Rear of Bere Lodge, 30 Westbere Lane, Westbere, CT2 0HH
Proposed 1 no. single-storey and 2 no. two-storey detached dwellings.

As ratified in the Minutes above, the parish council resolved to formally object to the application.

Notifications

<p>Application No. KCC/CA/0030/2017 - Plots D and E, Lakesview Business Park Proposal: Section 73 application for the minor material amendment of planning permission CA/15/2375 to increase the permitted tonnage in condition (9)</p>	<p>Granted by KCC on 19 April 2017. As the application has now been approved the applicant will be required to apply to the Environment Agency for a new Environmental Permit prior to being able to operate at the increased capacity.</p>
<p>KCC/CA/0090/2017 – Spires Academy, Bredlands Lane, Sturry Section 73 Application to vary details already approved in relation to condition 2 of CA/16/1009 including a reduction in height of building. Size and location of windows, and details of roof plant and roof lights</p>	<p>Granted by KCC</p>
<p>CA/17/00630/FUL – Canterbury Industrial Park, Island Road, Westbere Proposal for two workshop cabins.</p>	<p>Granted by CCC</p>