



## St Nicholas-at-Wade with Sarre Parish Council



### Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at 7.30pm In The Bell Meadow Pavilion, St Nicholas at Wade

**Present:** Cllrs D. Divers, L. Ageros, D. Tweedale, M. Lawrance, G. Pugh, E. Dore, M. Fentiman

**Also, Present:** KCC Cllr Derek Crow-Brown, KCC Cllr Linda Wright, District Cllr Abi Smith and Sara Archer – Parish Clerk plus 0 members of public.

#### 80/24-25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were noted from Parish Councillors Sonya Smyth and Ann Andrews.

#### 81/24-25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Divers declared an interest in item 92/24-25 (b) – Repayment of expenses incurred.

Cllr Ageros declared a significant interest due to discussing a neighbouring property during his report – item 85/24-25.

#### 82/24-25 PREVIOUS MINUTES

**RESOLVED:** To approve the minutes of the last Parish Council meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2024. These were proposed by Cllr Dore, seconded by Cllr Lawrance, all were in agreement and therefore signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

#### 83/24-25 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Cllr Divers expressed his thanks to everyone who helped to make the fireworks evening a success, including the handyman team. The event had been generally well received with positive feedback.

Cllr Divers had attended the Remembrance Service at the Church and laid a wreath on behalf of the Parish. A wreath was also laid at the flagpole – Sarre.

#### 84/24-25 CLERK'S REPORT/CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk advised she had been contacted by Cllr Colin Brown, Chairman of the recently formed Birchington Health and Wellbeing Group who was interested in a potential collaboration. Kent County Council is the main lead on Health & Wellbeing in the area, however, it was felt there was a need to have a more localised service and, therefore, Cllr Brown has formed a Sub Group under the umbrella of Birchington Parish Council with a goal to give the people of Birchington a more personal presence and involvement, and shared the link to their facebook page.

The Clerk would respond to Cllr Brown for more information about the venture.

#### 85/24-25 COUNCILLORS REPORT

**Cllr Fentiman** advised that the repossession of the show home at Parish Close had gone ahead.

Concerns had been raised with Cllr Fentiman, regarding the lack of progress with the maintenance of the Windmill and Kings Head Public House.

**Cllr Pugh** continued to be involved with the issues and concerns surrounding Parish Close. Cllr Pugh advised he would independently like to donate a bench for the play area. This offer was greatly appreciated.

**Cllr Tweedale** had reported the lampposts at Court Road which were not working properly. Repairs had not been carried out to date, therefore Cllr Tweedale would follow this up.

Cllr Tweedale would be continuing to follow up the traffic safety concerns at the A28 with PC Howe.

KCC Footpaths Officer – Heather Waller, had requested further information concerning the obstruction to the public footpath at Court Road. The issue was in hand and Cllr Tweedale would continue to monitor the progress.

**Cllr Lawrance** confirmed that the recent Church fundraiser had raised £1355 towards the fabric of the Church.

It was noted there was no dog waste bin located at the end of The Length/A28 junction, however, TDC encourage the use of the general litter bin for dog waste bags.

**Cllr Dore** had again received concerns with regard to speeding vehicles in the village.

The footpath lights at Bell Meadow was not working and it was noted the area was extremely dark. Enquiries would be made with regard to replacing the lights.

It was noted that dog walkers were taking advantage of the waste bag dispensers, however, they were seemingly having to be refilled frequently, suggesting they are being misused. The situation would be monitored to ensure costs do not escalate for the provision of the bags.

**Cllr Ageros** had been clearing leaf and litter debris, and thanked the handyman team for attending to the footpaths at Sarre. Cllr Ageros advised that following the concerns raised regarding the work being undertaken at the rear of Sarre House, he would be contacting the KCC Footpaths Officer for advice on the priority of the right of way access to TE10. A 5.2m strip of land at the rear of Sarre House provided vehicular and pedestrian right of access to the field behind the property, however, this should not be obstructed.

Cllr Ageros also offered his thanks to everyone who helped to make the fireworks event a success.

## 86/24-25 THANET DISTRICT COUNCIL COUNCILLORS' REPORT

Cllr Abi Smith reported as follows:

### October TDC full council

There were zero public questions; many questions from members, but four motions from members:

- Cllr Pugh, re revoking the Local Plan: Councillors voted not to debate the motion; therefore the motion fell.
- Cllr Pressland, re solar and rainwater collection: Councillors voted not to debate the motion, but a written answer was promised.
- Cllr Fellows, re changes in Winter Fuel Payments: TDC is promoting Pension Credit uptake through partnerships with local charities & community organisations.
- Cllr Boyd re Millmead Family Hub's funding crisis: "TDC Cabinet Member wrote to KCC
- Question from Cllr Wing: thanks to TDC support, members are now notified of tree work applications — though they still cannot be called in...
- **Network Rail digital notifications:** <https://www.networkrail.co.uk/sign-up/>
- **National Saturday Club offers free Art & Design in Margate**

The National Saturday Club is an established UK-wide network that gives 13—16-year-olds the opportunity to study subjects they love for FREE, on a Saturday at their local university, college or cultural institution. The Club provides a welcoming space for young people to build their skills, develop their confidence, and discover pathways to further study and future creative careers. Applications are now open to join the 2024-25 programme. Young people have the opportunity to take part in an [Art&Design](#) Club at The Margate School, starting Saturday 18th January 2025 to 19th July 2025, 10:00 – 13:00.

- **SW Business Partnership Fund**

Our favourite privatised utility Southern Water is inviting applications for the third round of their Business Partnership Fund. Please share this opportunity with local businesses.

The Fund is open to retailers, businesses and third-party conservation providers across Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Sussex and Kent. Eligible organisations are invited to submit **innovative ideas to help reduce the amount of water used** in those areas. Find more info about the process [here](#) -- please notify local businesses.

Applications close on 31 December 2024. Check out the opportunity at <https://www.southernwater.co.uk/save-a-little-water/business-partnership-fund/>.

- **Free Volunteer Flood Warden training**

Working in partnership with the Kent and Medway Resilience Forum and the Environment Agency, free Volunteer Flood Warden training is available. Initial training is offered as a two-hour online session which shows wardens how to help local people prepare for flooding. The wardens are a crucial link between the community and emergency response teams, and they meet several times a year to test the resilience of their flood plans. **To register your interest, email the Emergency Planning team.** Learn more about the role of Flood Wardens by visiting the Resilience Forum's [website](#). [emergency.planning@thanet.gov.uk](mailto:emergency.planning@thanet.gov.uk) or [floodresilienceKSLES@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:floodresilienceKSLES@environment-agency.gov.uk)

- **Leaf collection**

Dedicated leaf picking patrols collected nine tonnes of leaf fall in 2023 that were sent to anaerobic digestion, instead of being disposed of as street litter. We're doing the same again this year. To try and up the amount collected we're also trialling a community collection programme, with volunteer residents in Broadstairs receiving a wheeled bin just for leaves, plus dedicated leaf picks. Full bins will be emptied by Waste & Recycling teams, then returned to TDC at the end of leaf fall season.

If successful, I hope it will be rolled out across the District next year.

## 87/24-25 KENT COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Crow-Brown reported as follows:

KCC forecasts a shortfall of just under £50m (3.5%) between spending increases, funding from central Government, and local taxation before any announcements in the Chancellor's budget last month. This shortfall would need to be resolved in the

coming financial year through savings and income if the authority is to balance the budget, which is something it legally has to do.

The budget plans will be discussed at KCC's individual cabinet committees over the next few of weeks, and a final decision on the budget for next year will be voted on at County Council on 13 February 2025.

The foremost area of concern remains the delivery of vital services to the county's most vulnerable residents, including adult social care, children's services, and home to school transport, where the demands are great, costs are rising rapidly, and the current spending trends are unsustainable. These services already account for the majority of KCC's spending.

Savings, cost avoidance and income of £42m have already been identified, with a sweeping review across all areas of the business. A total revision of the authority's assets and the KCC estate is also underway. The stringent spending controls across the council have been acknowledged by its external auditors.

However, inadequate funding to keep pace with rising costs and demands means the choices and decisions around services are becoming much tougher.

Because of the financial challenges, KCC has to prioritise its statutory services – the ones it has a legal obligation to provide – over the discretionary services that are not compulsory. Subsidies will be hit, and fees and charges would need to rise to cover the costs of discretionary services.

Kent, like many councils, has had to rely on reserves both as a short-term measure to tide over timing differences between spending growth and planned savings, and to cover unplanned overspends in 2022-23 and 2023-24. It now needs to look to restore its financial safety net to a level that will allow it to deal with further economic shocks.

The local Government settlement – funding from central Government to support local council service delivery – is expected to be confirmed in early December when a more detailed picture can be provided.

Cllr Linda Wright advised there are a number of water collection vessels available on the Southern Water website.

A number of grant funding schemes had opened, including the Southern Water Business Partnership Fund, South Eastern Rail Community Fund and Police Crime Commissioner proceeds from Crime Fund. Applications that meet the various criteria for each fund, were being accepted.

Cllr Wright had attended the Remembrance Services at Birchington and the twinned town in France, visiting War Graves.

Concerns had been raised at KCC with regard to the impact of the National Insurance contributions outlined in the Chancellors Budget.

An Air Show had been arranged to be held at Manston in 2025.

#### **88/24-25 KENT POLICE REPORT**

PC Howe was unable to attend, no report available.

#### **89/24-25 BELL MEADOW REPORT**

Cllr Divers advised of concerns that had been raised by the horse owners who lease the paddocks adjacent to the Bell Meadow.

Discussion took place at length regarding the concerns, and it was agreed that other options would be explored for the event next year. A vote was taken and it was agreed to go ahead with the fireworks event in 2025. (6 support 1 abstain)

Enquiries would be made with regard to the provision of quieter fireworks.

It was suggested the Clerk engaged with the horse owners and notified of the date of the event as soon as it had been arranged.

The maintenance of the Pavilion, general housekeeping and events moving forward were discussed. Cllr Divers and his wife had been undertaking the cleaning of the facilities, however, this was unsustainable and the need for a permanent cleaner was necessary. Although some interest in the vacancy had been shown, the position would be advertised further afield.

Grateful thanks were expressed to Cllr Divers and his wife for their commitment to maintaining the building.

Cllr Fentiman expressed an interest in forming another Committee to take on responsibility for the Pavilion, and would explore options for publicising and moving the facility forward.

#### **90/24-25 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

a) No new applications received.

b) No decisions to report.

#### **91/24-25 HIGHWAYS**

a) The yellow lines survey and recommendations made by KCC had been circulated to the Councillors prior to the meeting. The plans were considered and it was agreed to approve the recommendations in principle, subject to the costs involved. The Clerk would advise KCC accordingly.

b) Cllr Divers had contacted PC Andy Howe for advice regarding the A28 safety concerns and improvements that could be made in Sarre. Unfortunately, statistics did not support the issues experienced in the village. It was discussed and agreed to add the following items to the Highways Improvement Plan and resubmit to KCC.

- place a chicane 100m before entering Sarre from each direction with a welcome notice to drive carefully.

- On St Nicholas's A28 stretch, reduce the speed to 30 mph and request a GATSO speed camera.

## 92/24-25 FINANCE

a) The Clerk presented the monthly bank reconciliation between the cash book and bank accounts.

**RESOLVED: To approve the monthly bank reconciliation for October. (Proposed: Cllr Tweedale, seconded Cllr Lawrance).**

b) The Clerk presented the monthly payment schedule which included the following payments:

Kent Playing Fields - Membership	£20.00
HMRC - Employee PAYE	£178.96
Country Mowers - o/s invoice	£638.59
Cartridge People - Printer cartridges	£309.90
J. Perfect - Handyman's salary & expenses	£643.17
Forvis Mazars - Audit fees	£378.00
SNS - Domain Hosting	£50.52
EDF - BMP Electric	£49.27
Business Stream - BMP Water	£95.91
M. Savage - Handyman's salary & expenses	£550.70
S. Archer - Clerk's salary & expenses	£1,195.69
TDC - Event fee	£301.00
S. Archer - Event prizes	£60.00
Lloyds Bank DD - Credit Card	£494.75
S. Archer - Fireworks Stock	£153.24
D. Divers - Key replacement	£20.00
Hugofox - Website domain hosting	£11.99
EDF - BMP Gas	£61.75
Unity Trust - Service Charge	£5.40

### Receipts:

BMP - Pitch Hire - Frames	£60.00
BMP - Pitch Hire - Frames	£60.00
Cemetery fee - headstone	£70.00
Allotment Plot 1b	£26.00
BMP - Pitch Hire - Holmans	£60.00
BMP - Pitch Hire - Holmans	£60.00
BMP - Pitch Hire - Frames	£60.00
Sum-up: Bar card payments - Fireworks	£422.31
Various - see paying in book	£1,252.10

**RESOLVED: To approve payment of invoices included in the monthly payment schedule for November. (Proposed: Cllr Fentiman, Seconded: Cllr Pugh)**

c) The Clerk advised of the National Pay Award for the Clerk which would be backdated to April 2024. This was noted and approved accordingly.

d) The offer made for the surplus pitch roller had been circulated and discussed. It was considered that the Council were not in a position to sell the roller for the amount offered. The Clerk would advise the interested party of this decision.

e) The quarterly budget report had been circulated prior to the meeting. No significant variances were evident, therefore the report was consequently noted.

## 93/24-25 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

- No members of public present.

**The meeting was concluded by the Chairman at 9:35pm.**