

Minutes of the Annual Parish Electors' meeting of Westbere Parish Council held at the Village Hall on Tuesday 26 March 2019 at 7pm

Present

Parish Councillors Jeanette Dawson (Chairman), Stephen Laws (vice-chairman), Sylvia Harlow, Kathryn Wilson, and Karen Williams.

Canterbury City Cllr Georgina Glover

KCC Cllr Alan Marsh

Guest Speakers: Susana Nevesebrooks, the Lead Project Manager, Peter Bullen, Project Engineer, and Erusa Adizie, Project Supervisor, presenting for National Grid

Clerk to the Council, Amanda Sparkes

13 residents

Welcome

Cllr Dawson welcomed everyone to the meeting and especially the guest speakers.

Guest speakers – National Grid: The Richborough Connection Project

Peter Bullen explained that the Richborough Connection Project had been a big project, commencing five years ago, with the actual work starting in August 2017 and completion in November 2018. Their handout presentation explained the following:

We have now built our overhead line

- We have now completed building our new 400kv overhead line between Richborough and Canterbury
- The Richborough Connection went live at the end of November, providing the power for Nemo Link which is also fully operational
- The new 20km overhead line is composed of 60 new pylons and is the first to be built in Kent for 25 years
- It connects Nemo Link® (an electricity link between Herdersbrug near Bruges in Belgium and Richborough, near Sandwich in the UK) to our high voltage electricity network
- This new connection plays a vital role in ensuring that the country has a continued safe, reliable and secure electricity supply
- To support the new connection, we have also completed works at Canterbury North Substation and Richborough Substation. Additionally, we have installed new equipment, upgraded the existing technology and extend the Substation buildings, ready for the new connection
- Throughout our construction, we have worked closely with the local community to minimise the impact of our works

The new 400kV Richborough – Canterbury Line in numbers:

- 23 access points
- 18,000 trackway panels to access pylon site locations
- 43 new temporary water crossings and the reinforcement of 36 existing water crossings
- 60 pylon piling platforms to provide stable working areas for the large piling rigs
- 1,352 pre-cast and in-situ piles
- 60 crane platforms to enable the steelwork for the new pylons to be constructed
- 1,000 tonnes – the size of the mobile crane required to install the temporary bridge across the River Stour adjacent to the Richborough Substation
- 60 new pylon foundations containing over 5,000 tonnes of concrete
- 1,340 tonnes of steelwork to construct 60 new towers

- Over 250km of conductor wire connecting the Richborough Substation to the Canterbury North Substation
- Over 900,000 working hours to construct the first major new overhead power line since 1961

Next steps for the project

- Our next phase of works will support the **removal of the existing UK Power Networks 132kV overhead line, which is planned for 2020**
- Since December 2018, we have been focusing on reinstating land used for temporary access roads, removing crane pads from pylon sites, carrying out drainage works and further ecological works, such as tree planting and wildlife surveys. These works will be completed by July 2019
- Before we dismantle the 132kV pylons, we will undertake essential upgrade works at Canterbury South Substation. These are expected to be complete by mid-2019
- We will then carry out works to build a connection to link Canterbury North Substation and Canterbury South Substation together. This work is anticipated to take place during the second half of 2019 and last until mid-2020
- Our community relations team will continue to keep local people and stakeholders informed about our work through newsletters, letters, the website, social media and the local press. We also have a free phone line in place for people to call with their questions and concerns

Our work in Westbere

- Our site compounds at Westbere has now been decommissioned. Our working area in Westbere has been invaluable to the project and provided a key logistical hub for material storage, waste holding, parking, security, office space and welfare facilities
- We would like to thank the local community in Westbere for your patience and co-operation throughout our work in the area

Investing in the community

- National Grid is committed to addressing the skills deficit in the industry. We have carried out several educational initiatives in Kent to promote the importance of STEM subjects and engineering as a career. In total, we engaged with over 2,500 pupils and invested over £100,000 to help nurture budding engineers in Kent
- We delivered electricity workshops to 13 schools across the Kent region, reaching a total of 820 pupils, including the following schools located in the Westbere area:
 - Monkton CEP School
 - St Gregory's, Christ Church of England Junior School
 - Chislet CEP School
 - Hoath Primary School
 - Hersden Village Primary School
- We donated £20,000 worth of grants to 17 schools across the Richborough and Canterbury areas for new science, engineering and technology equipment, benefitting over 400 pupils, including the following schools located near to Westbere:
 - Hersden Village Primary School
 - St. Nicholas at Wade CEP School
 - Herne CE Junior School
 - Herne Bay Junior School
 - Hoath Primary School
 - Briary Primary School
 - Chislet Church of England Primary School

Community Grant Fund

- We donated a total of £55,000 to three Kent charities as part of our UK-wide Community Grant Programme
- Three charities which seek to improve the lives of local people in Kent – The Martha Trust, Louie's Helping Hands and The Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Trust – received financial donations
- The donations have been made as part of our commitment to leave a positive legacy in the areas where we need to carry out work

A resident asked the speakers why the old 132kv overhead line was not removed at the same time as installing the new line. Peter and Susana explained that UKPN had work to complete at the end in order to enable connection and feed-in. There has to be a staged delay to avoid any loss of electricity – it is not a simple coupling-up project, it is more like a puzzle. Two residents felt the double-handling was costly and unnecessary, but Peter explained the lack of space in the Richborough Station and Susana mentioned that UKPN are also governed by limitations on the time of year, for example, in the winter when demand is higher, as people have their heating on, very little work is achieved.

A resident commented that for such a large project it was very well run and commended the officers. He asked if all the footpaths had now been reinstated, and Peter explained that three were left along the River Stour at Minster but these were due to be opened this week.

Susana commented that they are part of a very big team and all had worked well to minimise disruption.

A resident asked about artefacts discovered. Susana explained that they were still more boreholes to complete and that they were awaiting information from the council on how to present the findings. They will then produce display and information boards for footpaths and will share the locations and information in due course. Peter explained that the boreholes on the Wantsum channel were very exciting. The boreholes were about 10-15 metres deep. Nethergong boring had also revealed round houses and World War One trenches.

Cllr Dawson thanked the National Grid speakers for attending the meeting and their useful presentation, and they left the meeting.

Annual Electors' Meeting 2019 – Business items then followed:

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from: Parish Cllr Tom Hopkins, Parish Cllr Maria Morcom, Canterbury City Cllr Heather Taylor and residents John Morcom, Valerie Smith and Norman Smith.

Minutes of the Annual Parish Electors' meeting held on 13 March 2018

These were proposed by resident Diana Poulter and seconded by resident Dr Geoff Jones.

Chairman's report

Cllr Jeanette Dawson read her report to the meeting, as follows:

As Chairman of Westbere Parish Council it is my duty and honour in that office to give you this report of the past year. This will be my last report as I am standing down from the parish council after more years than I can remember! Next month's meeting will be my last meeting and then the new council will take over from the 2nd May elections.

This time last year our guest speakers were officers from Canterbury City Council (CCC) to discuss the CCC Governance Review exercise and in particular the options for the boundaries of Hersden, Westbere and Chislet. The Governance Review has dominated our last 12 months and most of you will now know the outcome of the CCC review. The parish of Westbere is with effect from 2nd May to be very much reduced in size with a lot of land being given over to the new Hersden parish council to be created from that same date.

We are preparing an information leaflet with maps of the new Westbere and new Hersden boundaries and this leaflet will be distributed to all Westbere households very soon.

This reduction is not what your parish council wanted but we wish the new parish council well and will endeavour to assist the nine new councillors there where we are able to.

Planning as usual is a priority issue for us. Your Parish Council devotes a lot of time and thought to our representations for new applications. Again, this time last year, we spoke about the beginnings of the Richborough Connection project - and we are delighted to have guest speakers to this meeting from National Grid to speak about this.

For housing, the Canterbury District Local Plan has strategic sites for large housing developments of several hundred homes at Hersden, Sturry and Broad Oak. And of course since last year CCC has granted permission for two non-strategic sites at Hoplands Farm and the Old Colliery. These will all give developer contributions to improve the road infrastructure around the Sturry level crossing. During the last 12 months we tried hard to have dialogue with both South Eastern railways and Network Rail to make enquiries about the barrier down time at the Sturry level crossing. Unfortunately, this has not proved fruitful.

Also at this meeting this time last year we asked residents views on whether to sell the old BT box by the convent. The decision to sell it was made and at the September 2018 parish council meeting a bid of £825 was accepted. The buyer cannot arrange for its removal until BT has capped off the power. Despite our Clerk asking BT to cap off the electricity supply on 28 March 2018 – now nearly a year ago – we have not had confirmation of this and continue to chase for this.

Once the box is removed we plan to purchase and place a backless bench in its place – and we are pleased to report that we have been successful with a capital grant to CCC for 58% of the costs for this.

We held our usual Village Green Party again last year. This annual event marks the gift of the village green to the village, and another will be arranged for later this year – everyone is welcome to attend.

Our budget for the year is always carefully considered and we are mindful of the impact any increase has on your council tax. The number of Band D properties in the village in 2018-2019 rose by 3 properties and the tax base has changed and the Band D payment for 2018-2019 actually decreased by 1% to £79.86.

And now my thank you's....

Firstly, my thanks again to our Kent County Cllr, Cllr Alan Marsh who is always incredibly supportive of the village, your Parish Council and the pre-school in many ways, not just financial. Alan endeavours to attend every one of our meetings, and we are very lucky to have contact at such a high tier of Local Government.

I must also thank my fellow Parish Councillors who are dedicated volunteers who give their time and work very hard on behalf of Westbere. An awful lot goes on that you don't see in terms of planning, environment, neighbourhood watch, village hall, and informally monitoring of our footpaths, fire hydrants, streetlights and salt bins.

And finally, my thanks to Cllr Georgina Glover, and Cllr Heather Taylor - who are the elected City Councillors representing the Marshside Ward which includes Westbere.

Our year always starts with the preparation and approval of our usual annual financial pack. I would like to thank resident David Elliott who again offered to act as our internal auditor free of charge and has kindly agreed to do this job again this year.

My thanks again too, to Karl Grubb who at no charge puts Christmas Lights up on the Village Green for us every year, which makes it look lovely at such a special time of year.

As a Community we are very fortunate to have The Westbere Charities, Westbere Preservation Society and The Village Hall Management Committee whose members all do a sterling job in contributing to

make Westbere a very special place to live and on behalf of The Parish Council, I would like them all to accept my thanks.

I would also draw attention to the hard work that goes into the events offered by The Westbere Village Preservation Society and The Village Hall Committee. For such a small village we are very lucky to have such active groups but find that it is the same people, some of which are on several Committees and it would be good to have more residents involved.

We are community minded people with the best interests of the parish and our residents as our priority. May I again thank my fellow Councillors for all they do on our behalf and giving up their time and of course Amanda, our Clerk, who I certainly could not have done without during my time as Chairman. Her knowledge and experience is such a benefit and help which we couldn't do without in these times.

As I said at the beginning of this speech, I am standing down from the Parish Council. Nominations are now being taken by CCC for new councillors to stand at the 2nd May elections. All of my other fellow councillors have offered to stand again, and they have completed their paperwork. We have also assisted a new resident to complete their nomination so if anyone else comes forward we will have a contested election – the first for very many years. We will not know until after the 3rd April closing date whether this is the case. Either way, I wish the seven new councillors, whoever they may be, every success going forward during their next four-year term of office.

May I now thank you all for coming but remind you that we can only be truly effective as a Parish Council if you tell us of any concerns you may have, be it streetlights not working, empty grit bins, potholes etc so that we can contact the relevant organisations.

And finally, something that some of you may be able to help with. Also at this equivalent meeting last year we had concerns about the Two Fields site at Staines Hill, and the land being cleared of several trees by Bellway Homes the land owners. We are keeping a watching brief on this site – all of the land is in Westbere Parish but backs alongside Fairview Gardens in Sturry. There is only one registered footpath on the site boundary - CB91 – which runs from Westbere Lane to the Railway Line and then behind Fairview Gardens and Island Road as far as Sturry village. We would like to try and get one or more paths registered across the site. If there are witnesses that can complete witness statements claiming 20 plus years of unrestricted access across the Two Fields site, then Westbere Parish Council may be able to try and get established rights of way here. The process can take up to 3 years to complete though.

Several Westbere and Sturry residents have already come forward and the Clerk will be in touch with them soon to complete witness statements.

If you have used this land for 20 or more years and would be prepared to complete a witness statement please give your details to our Clerk.

Cllr Dawson asked for a show of hands of anyone able to help and the Clerk noted the names of five residents. Cllr Dawson asked if the idea of a drop-in session for residents to complete witness statements perhaps for a Saturday in April might be useful, and this was agreed, so will now be organised.

Cllr Jeanette Dawson, Chairman, Westbere Parish Council, 26 March 2019

There was a round of applause after Cllr Dawson's speech.

Report from Kent County Cllr Alan Marsh

KCC Cllr Alan Marsh commented that it had been a difficult year but he makes the effort to attend all of the Westbere Parish Council meetings in order to give detail on county and other agencies as much as possible. He commented that there is 'a disconnect' in the relationship between Government and County Councils and that Parish Councils are an important link between CCC and KCC. Additionally, he explained that any resident with questions, from waste to traffic, may contact him and he will endeavour to find the answers.

In Cllr Marsh's constituency alone over 12,000 new homes are planned to be built.

The recent Shalloak Road emergency road closure has caused problems. A 12 inch water conduit broke and the pressure was so high that it washed a section of the road and subsoils away – so much so that the road is unsafe and the embankment is in danger of sliding. Destruction of the subsoil means that KCC highways must ascertain, using piles, the strength of the road and what is required to repair it. The closure of the road has been extended to 28 April 2019. Cllr Marsh also explained that he sits on CCC's Quality Bus Partnership and has asked the bus company if they can run a bus half way up Shalloak Road as an emergency measure to assist those residents affected.

Cllr Marsh commented that he would like better cooperation with City Councillors and introduced Louise Harvey Quirke and Ann Decker, both conservative party candidates standing in the May elections for Sturry and Herne and Broomfield areas respectively.

A resident commented that the closure of Shalloak Road has caused tremendous gridlock with traffic queues from every angle into Canterbury and Sturry. It has also shown that the critical mass can be affected by a problem with a back road, and he urged Cllr Marsh to bear that in mind with planning permissions for the area. Cllr Marsh commented that the Sturry Relief Road, at a cost of £32m, is not fit for purpose and does not solve the problem. CCC has given permission for the road to be built, funded by developers, and KCC is setting the required standards.

Cllr Laws commented that with all the houses being built there must be the infrastructure required to support them, and pressure must come on the elected councillors to solve this. A resident suggested other initiatives such as paying people not to use their cars. Cllr Dawson again suggested a new Park and Ride at Hersden or similar. Cllr Marsh added that he felt the Park and Rides should be free. The main problem for traffic is the Sturry Level crossing and the barrier being down for up to 17 minutes in every hour. Cllr Williams suggested other options could be considered, for example spending the relief road money on a different solution such as lengthening the platforms at the railway stations or re-routing traffic. Another resident suggested re-opening the Chislet train halt. [both of these suggestions were identified in Westbere's Parish Plan].

A resident commented that the recent spate of pothole repairs in Church Lane were of very poor quality and inadequate. Cllr Marsh explained these were a temporary repair ahead of a resurface in the summer.

A resident commented that Westbere's street lights are often faulty. They are owned by CCC and KCC repair them – an arrangement that causes delays. Cllr Marsh commented that, hopefully, CCC are going to transfer them all to KCC.

Report from City Councillor Georgina Glover

Cllr Glover presented her report to the meeting as follows:

As your City Councillor:-

Firstly, this is another opportunity to thank the residents of Westbere for electing and supporting me as their representative on Canterbury City Council (CCC). I sincerely hope that support will be there for me in the May elections.

Together with Heather Taylor we are responsible for the wider parishes of Broad Oak, Fordwich, Hersden, Sturry and Westbere. This provides two opportunities for raising issues with the City Council.

We have found working a committee decision process allows all of the members to become involved in the decisions of the Council.

Pointing out my responsibilities within the City Council:-

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| (a) Canterbury City Council Planning Committee | (b) Audit Committee (Chair) |
| (c) Council | |
| (d) Decision Review Committee | (e) Joint Transportation Board |
| (f) Standards Committee (Chairman) | (g) Rural Area Advisory Committee |
| (h) Policy & Resource (i) Community Committee (reserve) & Regeneration and Property (reserve) | |

Since April 2018 I attended 51 meetings, often as the reserve, this involves a high level of reading in order to inform me of the current priorities of that committee, challenging but allows me an excellent level of knowledge of CCC. I have responsibilities for outside committees – Action for Communities in Rural Kent, District Advisory Board and Whitstable Castle Trust.

Working with our KCC Councillor Alan Marsh ensures a co-ordinated approach to Village and County problems and this has worked excellently for the past few years. I must offer my sincere thanks for his support and his commitment to Westbere's residents.

Constituency Queries:-

Heather and I work with officers within the City Council to ensure that any queries which arise from residents can be quickly and satisfactorily dealt with. A number of these this year have involved planning issues and these are often very complicated. The approval of planning applications is not always straightforward, the National Planning Framework makes objecting to planning applications very difficult. There have been a number of queries raised about the Waste Collection and I have liaised with CCC at all times to resolve issues.

As your Parish Councillor:- Up until June 2018 I had served as Parish Councillor for Westbere having completed 22 and a half years, part as Chairman.

As the City Council representative I have supported your Parish Council Chairman, Jeanette Dawson, scrutinise planning applications, monitor the village and put forward where possible concerns that arose at the monthly Parish Council Meeting.

I also work as a School Governor within our local schools and a Trustee of Necessary Furniture and the Hersden Neighbourhood Centre.

Georgina Glover – 26th March 2019.

Georgina Glover – 26 March 2019.

In closing Cllr Glover recorded a thank you to Cllr Dawson, as Chair of Westbere Parish Council, commenting that she is also contacted by residents calling and emailing her.

Report from Westbere Charities from the charities' Chairman, Geoff Jones

The Charities' Chairman, Geoff Jones, explained that copies of the Charities' current report had been provided on all the chairs so he would not read it. (The report is appended to these Minutes).

He reminded those present that the Charities don't just give grants to students and Christmas Hampers but they can help those in need with grants of money for example for unexpected house repairs or transport to hospital, etc.

Report from Westbere Neighbourhood Watch, Cllr Kathy Wilson

Parish Cllr Kathryn Wilson is also the village Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator and Chairman of the Village Hall Committee. She explained that the village is a close community and a safe place to live. She mentioned two incidents in the village in the last two weeks – a report was circulated about a missing cat, which was subsequently found, and another report explained that a young man had knocked on a resident's door asking to borrow a wheelbarrow, but despite promises to return it, he did not. The message of the 'theft' led to another resident explaining that had seen a 'lost' wheelbarrow and it was duly reunited with its owner.

Cllr Wilson spoke about 'cuckoo-ing'. Drug dealers from London come to the local area and target vulnerable people, then after befriending them, asking them to store drugs at their homes – a practice called 'cuckoo-ing'. She urged residents to be vigilant and watch for an unusual influx of people in and out of any homes.

Cllr Wilson reminded residents of Victim Support – who give advice and counselling on a range of matters. Cllr Wilson attends the Herne Bay Police Station every Thursday to view reports. She explained that the software has changed since last year resulting in different reports – now reports show all the crimes in the whole of the Canterbury district so everyone is aware of what is happening.

Cllr Wilson also advised that ladies with handbags are currently being targeted and she suggested they wear their bags with a strap over the shoulder to make them harder to snatch.
Any resident not currently signed up for email alerts and wanting to do so should contact Cllr Wilson.

Cllr Dawson thanked Cllr Wilson as her work is very much appreciated.

Electors' Participation

The following points were raised by residents:

Village Hall Committee report – a resident asked if Cllr Wilson could prepare a Village Hall Committee annual report. It was agreed that this would be done and uploaded to the Parish Council's website.

Kent Police Crime Commissioner talk – Louise Harvey Quirke is arranging for Matthew Scott, Kent's Police Crime Commissioner, to talk locally – this should be on Wednesday 17 April 2019, venue tbc.

New KCC Community Warden – Cllr Glover advised that there is a new warden covering the area and offered to confirm the details.

Meeting with Kent Highways Officer

Cllr Laws explained that earlier that afternoon he, Cllr Harlow and the Clerk had met with a Kent Highways officer to discuss the issue of speeding vehicles through the village. They walked all around the village and early indications are that the officer has agreed that there are insufficient reminders of the 20mph zone all through the village. The worn roundels will be repainted by Kent Highways and, in addition, the Parish Council will try to progress others.

There was then a vote of thanks to Cllr Dawson for all her years of hard work and service, followed by a round of applause.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm.

Appendix

THE Westbere CHARITIES (incorporating the Westbere Friend Williamson and the Bread and Cheese Field Charities) Registered Charity Number 239866

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE ELECTORS MEETING OF THE PARISH OF WESTBERE - MARCH 2019

The independently examined financial Statement of Account, annexed to this report, shows the financial outcome of the year.

The policy of the Trustees continues to be to give away as much of the trust income earned in each current year as is prudently sensible and possible. Our capital fund is invested, as hitherto, in the COIF Charity Funds approved by the Charity Commission. The share dividends have increased by 2.1% but the overall value of the shares has decreased by 2.8%.

Once again the Trustees were pleased to be able to benefit a number of local students, twelve of whom received book grants to assist with their studies. The Christmas voucher scheme, operated in conjunction with Marks and Spencer, benefited some eight residents in the locality.

In view of the forthcoming parish boundary changes, the Trustees are awaiting advice from the Charity Commission as to whether the boundary of the Charity should be changed too.

We appeal to everyone who becomes aware of anyone living in or near to our village, whom they think could possibly be in need or otherwise suitable to be helped, to contact the Clerk, Malindi Tucker, or any of the other Trustees. All cases are dealt with in confidence and are known only to the Trustees below.

Geoff Jones (Chairman)
Malindi Tucker (Clerk)

Holly Lodge, Westbere Lane 712570
Ashby Meadow, 6a Westbere Lane 710209

Diana Poulter
Nigel Denne
Alison Grubb

17 Church Lane
Barnfield, Walnut Tree Lane
The Warren, 9 Westbere Lane

719115
711507
711857

Finally I would like to thank each of my co-trustees for their work and support over the past year and especially Malindi Tucker (who is both Trustee and Clerk) and whose work on the administration makes life so much easier for the rest of us. I would also like to thank Andrew Miles, who acts as independent examiner and audited the financial statement.

Geoff Jones
Chairman
February 2019

Charity Commissioners for England and Wales

Charity Commissioner, Charity Database Division, PO Box 245, Liverpool L69 7HD

ANNUAL RETURN FOR CHARITIES

Charity Name	The Westbere Charities
Familiar Name	The Westbere Friend Williamson and Bread and Cheese Field Charity
Charity Registration Number	239866

Accounts prepared for:

Start Date	01/01/18	End Date	31/12/18
Gross Income	£4230	Total Expenditure	£3400
Grants to Individuals	£3400	Grants to Institutions	£0

Declaration on behalf of all the Trustees:

I certify that the information given in this form is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Chairman of the Trustees	Geoff Jones
Date	31/01/19