

**Minutes of the “virtual” meeting of the Westbere Parish Council held on TUESDAY 01 December 2020 at 6pm.**

**Background to this “virtual” meeting:**

**Regulations enabling town and parish councils to lawfully conduct virtual meetings by video and telephone conferencing until May 2021 have been published. The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 came into force on 4 April. The legislation allows for virtual meetings if required up to May 2021.**

This meeting was held using Zoom as a virtual hosting platform. Agendas were posted on the village noticeboards as usual and also to the parish council's website. This clearly explained that members of the public are still able “attend” a parish council meeting either online or by telephone and anyone wishing to do so should contact the Clerk for the details of the meeting link or phone number and the PIN code for access to enter.

**Present:** Parish Councillors: Stephen Laws (Vice Chairman and acting Chairman for the meeting), Sylvia Harlow, Maria Morcom, Kathy Wilson and Ian McLean.  
Kent County Councillor Alan Marsh (for part of the meeting)  
Canterbury City Councillor Georgina Glover (for part of the meeting)  
Clerk to the Council, Amanda Sparkes.  
No residents.

**1. Election of Chairman / Chairman for the meeting**

Cllr Laws agreed to chair this meeting, although he does not want the permanent role of Chairman. He welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2. Publishing of the Zoom meeting link on agendas in future**

At their virtual parish council meeting on 03 November 2020, Bishopsbourne Parish Council had been ‘bombed’ by someone who entered the meeting and took his clothes off and exposed himself before he could be ‘evicted’ from the meeting. Although the sector guidance is that the Zoom link and passcode should be published, in future anyone wishing to join the meeting should contact the Clerk for these details.

**3. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Parish Councillor Karen Williams (unwell) and Canterbury City Councillor Louise Harvey-Quirke.

**4. Vacancy on the council**

No-one has expressed an interest in the village yet for the final vacancy. Cllr Morcom will draft a letter to a prospective candidate to see if they might be interested.

**5. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

None. Cllr Morcom advised that she has sent a revised Declaration of Pecuniary Interests form to the Monitoring Officer at CCC.

**6. Minutes of the last meeting**

All councillors agreed that the Minutes of the last meeting held 20 October 2020 were a true record of the meeting. (NOTED that these will be signed by the Chairman of that meeting by post after the meeting.)

**7. Chairman's Report and Councillors' Reports**

**Cllr Laws** - Cllr Laws advised that he had nothing to report not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

**Cllr Morcom** - Cllr Morcom advised that the bin that had previously existed by the bus stop near the entrance to Pennington Close on the A28 Island Road has been taken away about eight weeks ago. The Clerk will contact CCC for a replacement.

Cllr Morcom also commented that the grit bin by Pennington Close has lost its metal plaque. KCC Cllr Marsh confirmed that Kent Highways would not be worried about this.

Cllr Marsh also confirmed that he has arranged for the salt bins in Westbere, Fordwich, Hersden and Chislet to be topped up by KCC. The parish council thanked him for organising this.

**Cllr Wilson** - Cllr Wilson said she had nothing to report. No Yoga has been held in the village hall through the second national lockdown. Neighbourhood Watch reports have also been very quiet.

**Cllr Harlow** - Cllr Harlow advised she had nothing to report not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

**Cllr McLean** – Cllr McLean advised that a new lamppost had been installed by KCC on 30 November 2020 outside No. 26 Westbere Lane, which is welcomed as the area had been very dark.

Cllr McLean and Cllr Harlow agreed to sort out the overflowing books in the Community Library and donate some to a charity shop if possible or to the Hospice outlet at Margate.

Cllr McLean queried who had responsibility for benches by the river – one is within the Westbere boundary. The Clerk confirmed that it is not on the parish council's fixed asset register. The Clerk will look at old minutes to see if there is any history for this.

Cllr McLean explained that the new website has the capability of giving parish councillors generic Cllr email addresses in addition to their personal email addresses. He wondered if the parish cllrs would like one? Cllr Morcom commented that most queries go directly to the Clerk. Cllr Laws said his personal preference was not to have a further email address, but he asked the Clerk to add this suggestion to the next meeting's Agenda to give councillors time to consider whether they would like one set up.

Cllr McLean explained he was mindful that he had not been assigned any Cllr responsibilities yet. He offered to take on those previously undertaken by Tom Hopkins, namely street lighting, roads and traffic.

## **8. Reports from County and City Councillors**

### **KCC Cllr Alan Marsh report**

KCC Cllr Marsh commented that there is lots going on.

He confirmed that the SELEP funding of £5.9m for the shortfall to build the Sturry link road and viaduct bridge has now been extended to March 2021 dependent on a planning approval. As explained under planning below the CCC Planning Committee refused the Sturry housing development application. Cllr Marsh said there is no movement yet on whether the developer will go to Appeal.

Cllr Marsh re-confirmed that the implementation of the 20mph zone in Sturry is still scheduled to go ahead in January 2021.

Cllr Marsh explained that KCC has worked on a Brexit Strategic Plan. He commented that the regulations look good. ANPR technology will be used, and no lorry will be allowed into Kent without a green pass. The lorry drivers will be fined and the lorries stored at specific sites until they have a permit.

Cllr Marsh commented on the latest weekly total coronavirus statistics for the Canterbury area. For people aged over 60 there were 157.5 cases per 100,000 people but for people aged 17-21 years the rate is 308.4 cases per 100,000.

Cllr Marsh left the meeting at this point.

Cllr Laws advised he was very sad to announce that one of his neighbours had died in the previous week with coronavirus. He also explained that he had just looked at the government figures for the area covering Westbere (viz Hoath, Hersden and Littlebourne) and there were 26 current cases and a rolling rate of 399.4 cases per 100,000 people which is above the national average.

## **9. Leader of CCC, Cllr Ben Fitter-Harding**

NOTED confirmation from the new CCC Leader, Cllr Ben Fitter-Harding that he would like to attend the 20 April 2021 Westbere Parish Council meeting

## **Clerk zoom meeting with Cllr Ben Fitter-Harding on 16 November 2020**

The Clerk and Cllr Fitter-Harding, Leader of CCC and one of Chestfield's ward councillors met virtually on 16 November 2020. Key points to report, in no particular order:

### **i) For the change to call-in arrangements on planning applications:**

Cllr Fitter-Harding conceded that he underestimated the strength of feeling from parish councils. He will ask the Head of Planning for a review on the changes and whether it has had its desired result of less applications going to planning committee, regardless of whether a committee pick this up and ask for a review or not.

He does agree that the process will now mean more work for ward councillors, but he's hopeful there will be better outcomes – the old way of an application going to committee meant 'an all or nothing decision' rather than seeking improvements.

### **ii) The EU protection for water quality at Stodmarsh Nature Reserve:**

As reported to the last parish council meeting, mitigation measures such as treatment works to filter out nutrients to protect the Stodmarsh SSSI are now required. There will soon be a consultation on the mitigation required.

Apparently 50,000 new homes are on hold in Local Plans in Ashford, Canterbury and Thanet. Cllr Fitter-Harding has written to a Government Minister saying Help! CCC needs central government help and intervention with this.

### **iii) The 5 year housing supply**

In light of the above (No 3) the 5-year housing land supply requirement is going to be adversely affected. This may result in speculative applications from all sorts of developer for all sorts of schemes – that even if subsequently refused, are more likely to be won on Appeal if CCC is unable to demonstrate it has its 5 year housing numbers.

### **iv) The Call for Sites**

The Call for Sites ended on 30 June 2020. Parish Councils were told that they should see the lists of sites in early 2021. Cllr Fitter-Harding thought that work is on target, with high level mapping currently being done although there are no draft lists yet.

### **v) CDLP review**

CCC is on track with the review of the Canterbury District Local Plan review.

Government are putting housing numbers requirements up for most local authorities, including Canterbury district.

Work is currently being done on the Transport Strategy.

The Clerk mentioned Westbere Parish Council's consistent pushes for lengthening of the Sturry platforms to reduce the level crossing 'down time' – he asked that the Clerk send him previous correspondence and also send it to Cllr Jeanette Stockley who is the CCC Lead for Transport. This was emailed on 20 November 2020.

### **vi) Coronavirus**

Cllr Fitter-Harding explained the loss of parking income in another lockdown is problematic as it is CCC's main source of income – far more than the council tax income.

CCC is discussing preparation for a different tier level and how/where this might apply.

There will be a Kent-wide Leaders meeting by the 02 December lockdown end date.

## **10. Adjournment of the meeting**

As there were no residents 'present' there was no adjournment of the meeting.

## **11. Next newsletter**

The Clerk had drafted a December newsletter and this was discussed. The Clerk will now finalise this and print it for Cllrs to onwardly deliver. Cllr McLean asked if the front page information could be run on the back page in future so that news is highlighted on the front page.

The Clerk will add a new standing Agenda item in future for discussion on the need for any Newsletter/Anything urgent to publish to residents.

Canterbury City Councillor Georgina Glover joined the meeting at this point.

## 12. Planning

### **A28 Link Road - KCC/CA/0091/2019 - Construction of part of a new road (A28 Link Road) including viaduct between A28 Sturry Road and A291 Sturry Hill and associated on-line improvements. A28 Sturry Link Road, Sturry, Canterbury.**

The Case Officer is Helen Edwards at KCC. View documents at:

<https://www.kentplanningapplications.co.uk/Planning/Display/KCC/CA/0091/2019>

This application will be determined by Kent County Council's Planning Committee. CCC has been a statutory consultee. The relief road is to mitigate the effects of the two large strategic housing applications CA17/01383/OUT (Sturry) and CA/18/00868/FOS (Broad Oak).

These two housing applications and the KCC link road application are intrinsically linked together.

### **APPLICATION NO. CA//17/01383/OUT - LAND AT STURRY/BROAD OAK, STURRY**

Outline application (with all matters reserved) for the development of up to 650 houses and associated community infrastructure comprising primary school, community building, public car park and associated amenity space, access, parking and landscaping; and detailed/full application for the construction of part of the Sturry Link Road and a local road from the Sturry Link Road to Shalloak Road.

### **APPLICATION NO. CA//18/00868/FOS - BROAD OAK FARM, SWEECHGATE, BROAD OAK, CT2 3QR**

Hybrid planning application comprising: detailed/full application for development of 456 residential dwellings comprising 402 houses and 54 flats, with associated open space, landscaping, car parking, access and other infrastructure (following demolition of 52 Shalloak Road, existing agricultural buildings and structures); and outline application (with all matters reserved) for development of a commercial area with up to 212sqm of Class A1 and up to 593sqm of Class B1 use.

**The Officers' Recommendation for both housing applications was to:** Defer to the Head of Planning to grant planning permission subject to appropriate safeguarding conditions and the completion of a Section 106 agreement

The above two planning applications for the new Sturry and Broad Oak developments went to CCC Planning Committee on 17 November 2020. View the meeting at <https://youtu.be/ik4OhR4Syy0> . The meeting lasts 2 hours 26 minutes.

The Clerk's detailed write-up of the meeting has been circulated separately.

CA//17/01383/OUT - LAND AT STURRY/BROAD OAK, STURRY was considered first.

Members of the Planning Committee had the following reasons for refusal:

|                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Over dense, over-development – above national average and when compared with others in the local area                      |
| 2. Inadequate protection of - and significant harm to - ancient woodland - which is therefore in breach of a para in the NPPF |
| 3. Lack of useable public open space                                                                                          |
| 4. Inadequate and inappropriate health provision locally                                                                      |
| 5. Site has contamination of lead, as used as a shooting ground for 60 years, so para 178 of the NPPF is breached             |
| 6. The lack of affordable housing                                                                                             |
| 7. Poor layout, resulting in division of the layout by the road                                                               |

The Head of Planning said he found all the reasons proposed for refusal by Members difficult to defend and urged Members to rethink through the reasons/grounds for refusal.

However Members voted 10 : 3 (with no abstentions) to REFUSE the application.

The planning committee was therefore unable to hear the next Broad Oak application – this application relied heavily on the Link Road through the Sturry application and as Members had just resolved to refuse that application the position of the highways impact on that needs to be reviewed.

The Broad Oak application was therefore withdrawn from the Agenda.

The future is uncertain but it is possible that there will be an Appeal lodged by the developer.

KCC Cllr Marsh confirmed that the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) funding of £5.9m to cover the shortfall in funding to build the road and the viaduct bridge has been extended to March 2021 but this is reliant on these applications getting approval.

Cllr Glover advised that she has been told that the Sturry application will come back to the Planning committee by early 2021. The Head of Planning at CCC is talking to the developer about making amendments to the application.

### **Future of the Forums**

The Clerk watched the CCC Governance meeting on YouTube on 07 October 2020 when this item was discussed. There were 3 options: Option A – Continue as now ; Option B – Replace forums with consultation workshops ; Option C – Abolish the forums

A writeup of the meeting is included in the 20 October 2020 parish council meeting Minutes. The proposal to abolish the Forums was put to the vote and was carried 6/4. This decision was to be ratified at the CCC Committee of Council at their meeting on Thursday 15 October 2020 at 4pm. However, this meeting had to be abandoned after 30 minutes due to technical difficulties where it did not livestream, and was rescheduled to 22 October 2020. The Committee of Council voted 10/7 to abolish the Forums.

### **Change to the call-in arrangements for planning applications**

An email was received on 30 September about a report going to the CCC Governance Committee on 7 October. A link to the agenda and report is at

<https://democracy.canterbury.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=666&MId=12549>

This meeting can be viewed on YouTube at the following link: <https://youtu.be/y8m2UkKmETQ>

In summary:

- The call-in rights of Parish Councils and the amenity groups of the Whitstable Society, Herne Bay Residents Association and the Canterbury Heritage and Design Forum would be removed. Parish Councils and the amenity groups would instead liaise with their local ward councillor(s) about concerns.
- The Ward councillor may still request that an application is brought before the planning committee, provided material planning grounds are given for doing so – and only for applications for which wider public interest necessitates consideration by the committee.
- Currently if four or more objections are received from four or more people the application must be reported to committee – this provision is to be removed in future.

A writeup of the meeting, and the parish council's written representations sent to CCC is included in the 20 October 2020 parish council meeting Minutes.

The proposal to remove the right of call-in and remove the trigger of 4 objections was put to the vote and was carried 6/4. The above decision was to be ratified at the CCC Committee of Council at their meeting on 15 October 2020. However, this meeting had to be abandoned after 30 minutes due to technical difficulties where it did not livestream, and was rescheduled to 22 October 2020. This meeting can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/ru4H5sqhSJA>

The Committee of Council voted 10/7 and the motion was carried, with the right of parish councils/amenity groups removed and the trigger of 4 also removed.

### **Canterbury City Council's Local Plan Transport Conference: Our future district to 2040**

Work is now underway on the preparation of a new Canterbury District Local Plan, which will include a Transport and Movement Strategy, looking forward to 2040. New housing and employment will place demand on transport networks and CCC needs to identify the right strategy and specific measures to address these impacts.

RECEIVED the Clerk writeup from the CCC "Our future district to 2040: Local Plan Transport virtual Conference" held on 21 October 2020. This is attached to these Minutes as an appendix.

### **PROWs application and Village Green status application to KCC for the Two Fields site**

Cllr Laws gave a brief update on the Village Green application. The Action Group has received a letter from KCC who have a legal opinion. Most of the issues in dispute, it is advised, need to be determined by a Public Inquiry, such as whether Bellway's notices related only to footpaths. None provides a knock-out blow to the application. The advice, however, does prefer the view that the designation of

Green Gap status is a trigger event and so disqualifies a village green application. However, on that basis, the local plan which designates all land for any development or use would mean that merely having a Local Plan would prevent any land at all from being registered as a village green. Cllr Laws explained that the action group will send a response to KCC by the 04 January 2021 deadline contesting the green gap part of the legal opinion. He thought that KCC will then decide between two options – to either hold a Public Inquiry or reject the application on the legal grounds.

The parish council recorded thanks to Cllr Laws and the Action Group.

#### **New applications:**

*CA/20/02172 - 8 Walnut Tree Lane, Westbere, CT2 0HG*

*Conversion of existing garage to form ancillary annexe, together with pitched roof and rendering of the dwelling.*

Cllr Harlow kindly undertook a site visit, and felt that unless the new pitched roof reduces light for the next-door neighbor, and she really can't tell if it might, this planned change should not affect anyone.

#### **Notifications:**

NOTED CCC's decision on the following application is "NO OBJECTION":

*CA/20/02050 – Former Chislet Colliery, Hersden*

*Land to the south of Island Road (A28)*

*EIA scoping opinion request in relation to a mixed-use development for up to 370 dwellings, open space, community ecological park, hard and soft landscaping and associated infrastructure: on the former Chislet Colliery land, south of Island Road, Hersden, with access from a new junction from Island Road, Hersden*

#### **13. Christmas lights on the village green**

Cllr Laws advised that the Christmas tree lights on the village green have been installed.

#### **14. Use of Section 101 since the last meeting**

None.

#### **15. Financial matters**

The payments totalling £4,858.87 were authorised.

NOTED that the Appendix 3 Finance Schedule will be signed by the Chairman of the meeting and returned to the Clerk by post.

When meetings are able to be resumed in person - TO RECEIVE the bank statements and bank reconciliation for September, October and November 2020, and TO RESOLVE the signature of a councillor other than the Chairman thereon;

TO NOTE that on 07 November 2020 the Clerk completed an online VAT Refund Claim for the period 01 January 2020 to 31 October 2020 totalling £218.01.

#### **Climbing inspection for feature tree in the Churchyard**

Cllrs resolved at their March 2020 parish council meeting to commission a climbing inspection for this feature tree at this time to inform the parish council of its condition. The Clerk commissioned a climbing inspection on 10 October 2020. The Clerk spoke to the contractor on 18 November 2020 who explained this should be done in January 2021.

#### **Capital grant application for 2020-2021**

A CCC capital grant of £241.58 is for the planting of a mature replacement tree on the green to become the feature tree when the Cherry tree finally needs total removal. It is believed to have 2-3 years of life left. The new tree is planned to go to the side of the existing feature tree - between it and the upright village sign on the corner. The Clerk placed an order on 10 October 2020 for the supply of a 10-12 foot mature Snow Goose Cherry tree and protective cage. The Clerk spoke to the contractor on 18 November 2020 who explained this should be done in January 2021.

#### **Capital grants 2021-2022**

CCC advised on 27 November 2020 that CCC has allocated £29k for parish councils' capital grant programme for 2021-2022. The application process will be the same as in previous years and will be open shortly.

## **Future Concurrent Function funding**

Canterbury City Council is considering the future options for the concurrent functions funding budget. Revised proposals were presented at special meeting of parish representatives and rural ward councillors on 19 October 2020. The revised proposals are to:

- i) Not make any changes for 2021-22 and fund the parish councils at the same level as 2020-21.
- ii) Undertake an Audit of the current levels of provision compared to the urban areas, and then consider funding Options for 2022-2023 in line with the average costs incurred across all parish councils for the maintenance of this provision.
- iii) Remove the £20k contingency fund.

### *UPDATE received from CCC on 16 November 2020:*

“At the meeting that the Council held with Parish Councils on 19 October, we proposed to carry out an audit of the current levels of provision in parishes and to continue funding parish councils at current levels whilst the audit was taking place. The outcome of the audit would enable the Council to consider parity of provision across the District and subsequently consider future funding options.

This is a considerable piece of work and in order to do it properly will require a significant call on council officer resources during a period when there are a number of other pressures on peoples' time. As such, we are proposing to extend the duration of the audit to ensure that officers and Parish Councils have adequate time to carry out the audit, given the breadth and importance of the information that will be collated and analysed. The COVID pandemic has also impacted on the use of local facilities and this longer period will enable these changes to be taken into account.

The Council's Community Committee on 25 November will now be asked to support the carrying out of the audit during 2021, for completion during 2022. This means that all Parish Councils would receive the same CFF funding allocation for both 2021/22 and 2022/23 as per 2020/21. Whilst the extension to allow the work to happen may be frustrating to you I hope the guarantee of full funding for the next 2-years is welcome news.

We will work with KALC during 2021 to develop an audit framework so that data is captured in a consistent way that will enable accurate comparisons to be made across the District.”

The report presented to the Community Committee can be accessed via this [link](#) (Pages 114-153 apply). The meeting can be viewed at [Community Committee - Wednesday 25 November 5.30 pm - YouTube](#)

The Clerk watched the meeting. It lasted for 93 minutes.

The following was resolved:

#### **1. For CFF Budget**

That parish councils receive the same funding allocations for 2021/22 and 2022/23 as per 2020/21. For Westbere Parish Council this is £4,094 in each year.

#### **2. The Contingency fund**

The £20,000 annual contingency fund (that has never been applied to) will be removed from 2021/22. The £20k underspend from the 2020/21 contingency fund will roll over and remain available until 31 March 2023.

#### **3. Audit of provision**

To undertake an audit of the current levels of provision in parishes compared to urban areas and subsequently consider the funding options for 2023/24.

The audit is proposed in response to concerns raised by parish councils about parity of provision. The audit framework will need to be in a format to enable like-for like comparisons to be made to draw accurate conclusions.

The officer report states that “there is a significant risk that following the audit findings, the available budget will not fully fund the maintenance of all provision across the District and alternative ways to support parish councils will need to be considered.”

## **The Redmond Review**

The Independent Review of Local Authority Financial Reporting and External Audit has now been published at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-financial-reporting-and-external-audit-independent-review>

This review relates to the auditing practices of all authorities, including parish councils. It is important to note that all the recommendations in the report are only proposals at this stage. *The main points relevant to parish councils are as follows:*

A new body, the Office of Local Audit and Regulation (OLAR), be created to manage, oversee and regulate local audit - this is more aimed at larger authorities than parishes but is recommended to ensure consistency across all authorities, assist with appointments, review the efficiency of the audit process, etc.

Deadline for publishing audited local authority accounts to be revisited with a view to extending it to 30th September from 31st July each year.

Small Authorities Audit Regulation (SAAA): to consider the following:

- Whether the current level of external audit work commissioned for parish councils is proportionate to the nature and size of such organisations
- Review audit fee (likely to increase to ensure a good quality audit is undertaken) - It was interesting to note that some parishes have expressed concern at the fee scale in relation to capital grant funding. The current rising scale calculates the audit fee based on turnover, including one-off grants. Concerns were raised that the increased audit fee could be a deterrent for local authorities investing in future capital grant schemes in the local community
- Review the current arrangements, with auditors, for managing the resource implications for persistent and vexatious complaints against parish councils (the fee for the auditor's time is currently passed onto the relevant parish council so it is important to ensure that complaints of this nature are identified quickly)

A review to be undertaken of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) prepared by smaller authorities to see if it can be made more transparent to readers. This could include:

- Whether Section Two should be moved to the first page so it is more prominent to readers
- Whether the explanation of variances should be disclosed as part of the accounting statements (currently does not have to be published but the Clerk does put this on the website for completeness and transparency)
- Whether budgetary information should be included in the accounting statements - recommendation is to have a standardised format for all authorities to use. The idea behind this is to be more accountable to our parishioners and make it easy to see how their precept is spent.

### **Coronavirus grant from KCC Cllr Marsh**

A Member grant from KCC Cllr Alan Marsh of £1,250 was given to the parish council to administer to mitigate the effects of coronavirus on residents of Westbere. Spend so far is £965.11 excluding VAT. For the balance left of 284.89 KCC Cllr Marsh has agreed that the £250 fee for the BT survey for the BT Community Partnership project may be allocated to this grant. Cllr Morcom proposed, Cllr Harlow seconded and all councillors were happy to RESOLVE to use most of the balance remaining to pay for the BT Community Fibre Partnership survey fee of £250.

### **Brick wall at Shrubbery Corner**

Cllr Harlow confirmed that she has requested a quotation for repairs to the brick wall at Shrubbery Corner which has been damaged by an unknown vehicle. The quote had not yet been received so this item is carried forward to the next meeting.

### **Precept/budget for 2021-2022**

Further to an informal virtual meeting held on 17 November 2020, Cllr Laws proposed and Cllr Harlow seconded and all Cllrs RESOLVED to set the precept requirement for 2021-2022 as £14,855.70 and RESOLVED to adopt a budget as set out in a supporting document, as a forecast of where the parish council plan to spend the money. This is £432.70 more than the 2020-2021 precept and is a 3% increase. The Clerk will do a summary in the December newsletter to inform residents and upload the precept budget document to the website.

## **16. Website**

The new website is now live at <https://westbereparishcouncil.gov.uk/>

KCC has now said they will host the old website until 31 March 2021. The Clerk has added an announcement on the front page that anybody visiting the old site should now go to the new one.

17. **Clerk Report**

RECEIVED the Clerk writeup of the KALC free of charge Net Zero/Environment event on climate change and what we can all do to encourage increased participation and action to deliver Net Zero for Kent, held on 3 November in partnership with Kent County Council and the Kent & Medway Environment Board. This writeup is attached to these Minutes as an appendix.

RECEIVED the Clerk writeup of the virtual annual Kent Highways Seminar held on 19 November 2020. This writeup is attached to these Minutes as an appendix.

NOTED that there will be a virtual CCC Parish Council Engagement Forum on 14 December 2020. The Clerk will attend and report back.

NOTED that the Clerk attended the Canterbury Area meeting of the Kent Association of Local Councils on 23 November 2020. She explained these meetings are open to all councillors. The next meeting is to be held on 14 January 2021. A current item of work for this committee is a review of the Parish Charter – an agreement between CCC and all the parish councils in the district, and what each can expect from each other. The Clerk explained that volunteers were asked to form a working group and she had volunteered for this.

**Census 2021**

NOTED that the next 10-year Census by the ONS is due to take place on 21 March 2021.

**WVPS Remembrance Sunday event cancelled**

NOTED that due to the second lockdown and increased government restrictions from 05 November 2020 that the planned Remembrance event was cancelled.

Cllr Laws explained that the WVPS is considering a Zoom Carols concert in December.

18. **Coronavirus risk assessments**

The Clerk has completed further Risk Assessments around Coronavirus risks for November 2020.

NOTED that since the last meeting KCC Cllr Alan Marsh kindly supplied more sanitisers and face masks to The Yew Tree for residents and customers use.

Cllr Wilson sent the Clerk a written apology and left the meeting at this point for another commitment.

19. **Highways**

**Press Release 30 November 2020 - Kent Resilience Forum outlines end of transition contingency plans**

Plans on how Kent will deal with potential traffic disruption at the end of the Brexit transition period on January 1 have been published.

When the transition period ends, the UK will no longer be a member of the Single Market or the Customs Union. Therefore, new border controls and checks will be implemented which will impact the short Channel crossings.

The UK will be treated by the EU as a third country and will be subject to full third country controls and a variety of border checks.

This has the potential for an increased likelihood of delays to the crossing of the short straits and the need for a multi-agency plan for management of the congestion consequences.

Known as Operation Fennel, the plan was developed by the multi-agency Kent Resilience Forum (KRF) in partnership with national government.

The Forum includes organisations such as Kent Police, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, South East Coast Ambulance Service, Kent County Council, Medway Council and the district and borough councils, working alongside government departments including Border and Protocol Delivery Group, Department for Transport and Highways England and HMRC.

Now available to view on the Kent Prepared website at [www.kentprepared.org.uk/end-of-transition-plans](http://www.kentprepared.org.uk/end-of-transition-plans)

The document outlines the arrangements to ensure the M20 can be kept open to traffic and that disruption for local residents, businesses and other road users is kept to a minimum, whilst providing temporary traffic holding areas.

Operation Fennel, which also covers driver welfare and non-freight traffic, is designed to operate at different stages, with different options being used depending on the prevailing traffic conditions.

The plans can cope with up to 7,000 HGVs, the maximum queue length of HGVs expected in Kent under the national reasonable worst-case scenario planning assumptions.

The plans also outline the Government's web service which will be known as 'Check an HGV is Ready to Cross the Border'. The service will be able to issue a digital Kent Access Permit to freight ready to cross the Straits before it enters Kent.

The Port of Dover and the Channel Tunnel are facilities of national importance. As the shortest crossing point between the UK and mainland Europe, the short straits ports (Port of Dover and Channel Tunnel) account for 69% of all goods vehicles and 89% of all powered goods vehicles that travel between the UK and the EU.

#### **Dip/possible subsidence in Westbere Lane**

There is a stretch of Westbere Lane towards the convent that is dipping badly and is possibly subsiding – this was logged with Kent Highways and the Clerk asked that an inspection/road survey be considered. (Reported 29 July 2020 reference number **516690**) – status of this report on 22 November 2020 was that it was still under enquiry.

#### **20. BT Community Fibre Partnerships**

At the September 2020 parish council meeting Cllrs considered that low broadband speeds already diminish property values and that that is an effect that is only likely to be magnified by the growth of home working and likely technological developments, which will be bound to require higher speeds for new services. The council RESOLVED to advertise with a special leaflet drop to all households in the same way that the parish council delivers the newsletter, with the resident to lead and collate the responses (and with a closing date for expressions of interest of 31 October 2020). The parish council will also pay £250 for the BT survey.

This email was received from the resident on 06 November 2020:

"Thank you for your email. We received 35 notifications of interest from residents of Westbere wishing to participate in the Open Reach survey. I have submitted the relevant information to Open Reach via a confidential portal and we are now waiting to hear back from them with a ballpark figure on costs. Once we have this, we will share it with everyone so that decisions can be made regarding the full £250 survey which, hopefully won't stray too far from the initial quote. Obviously, some people may decide at this point that it's not something they wish to pursue. As soon as I hear back from Open Reach I will be in touch.

At the next meeting, please express my sincerest thanks to everyone involved in posting the leaflets throughout the village. I am immensely grateful."

The Clerk will seek a further update from the resident and report back.

#### **21. Possible lengthening of the Sturry train station platforms**

Westbere Parish Council has had a long desire to try and get Network Rail to lengthen the platforms at Sturry station to avoid train overhang across the level crossing, thereby enabling the barrier down time to be reduced and keep the traffic flowing.

A letter from Chris Heaton-Harris MP, the Minister of State for Transport, was sent to Sir Roger Gale MP dated 27 October 2020 about the lengthening of the platforms at Sturry train station, as follows: "I appreciate your concerns around road congestion owing to the level crossing near Sturry station, and I recognise your related concern around the impact of future housing developments. I also understand that the lengthening of train services as a COVID-19 measure may have contributed to the extended level crossing times closure currently being experienced.

Having consulted with Network Rail, and as outlined in your letter, I understand that the works required to extend the platforms to allow trains stopped at Sturry station to avoid the level crossing would also require the relocation of signalling. Network Rail are exploring the possibility of carrying out these works as part of the London Victoria re-signalling programme, however this programme is still under development. Please be assured that you and other key stakeholders will be kept apprised as proposals develop.

In the shorter term, I understand Network Rail are exploring smaller improvements that could be made at the level crossing which have the potential to improve waiting times. I am assured that Network Rail will contact you directly should any of this work progress significantly.

As you may be aware, we are progressing works to improve rail services in Kent, including a journey time improvement scheme on the Ashford to Ramsgate line. This scheme will reduce journey times between Sturry and Minster stations, which will either flow through directly to

passengers or be used to facilitate the introduction of a new station onto the network. Further, these works will improve safety for level crossing users in Kent.”

### **Date and time for the next full Parish Council meeting/virtual meeting**

The next virtual meeting was set for Tuesday 19 January 2021 at 6pm.

The meeting closed at 7.15pm.

.....  
Signed: Cllr Stephen Laws, Chairman of the meeting

Date:

*Meeting dates for 2021: Third Tuesday of each month: 19 January, 16 February, 16 March, 20 April, 18 May, 15 June, 20 July, No meeting in August, 21 September, 19 October, 16 November, No meeting in December.*

### **Appendix 1:**

#### **Canterbury City Council's Local Plan Transport Conference: Our future district to 2040**

Work is now underway on the preparation of a new Canterbury District Local Plan, which will include a Transport and Movement Strategy, looking forward to 2040.

New housing and employment will place demand on transport networks and CCC needs to identify the right strategy and specific measures to address these impacts.

CCC held a virtual conference to discuss the transport and movement challenges and opportunities facing the district over the next 20 years on 21 October 2020.

The Clerk attended and gives the following written report:

There were 53 attendees.

*Welcome by Councillor Rachel Carnac, Deputy Leader of Canterbury City Council*

*Introduction by Simon Thomas, Head of Planning, Canterbury City Council*

Key features are the ring road around Canterbury and climate change objectives.

*Presentation by Colin Finch, Principal Transport & Development Planner, Kent County Council*

Key points:

- Peak congestion times are 8am-9am and 3pm to 6pm.
- New homes to be delivered in greater numbers over the next few years.
- There has been a big surge in van use since 2012.
- Air quality is a concern especially for Canterbury and the village of Herne.
- Transport causes 1/3 of all emissions.
- Targets to increase sustainable travel, eg the possible introduction of a congestion charge.

*Breakout Workshops: to discuss: De-congest / De-pollute / De-carbonise*

KCC commissioned a report on the Canterbury ring road which found most traffic is traffic going from one side of the City to the other.

There could be signal-controls on roundabouts?

The Eastern bypass to take traffic from the A28 to the A2.

Highways England's focus is not to build lots of new roads. They just fill up! They do have a HE Roads Improvement Plan to 2025 – this includes improvements to Brenley Corner and access to Dover, although there is no guarantee these will be delivered.

The COVID impact – will there be genuine long-term changes? For example, more working from home.

There has been a 75% drop in applications for children's school bus passes, so presumably there are more car movements.

The older person's bus pass giving free travel encourages bus use – should there be free bus travel for all?

Make the use of buses more focussed and more attractive.

Buses on the Triangle route often get delayed due to congestion, especially at Whitstable High Street / Tankerton and the coast. There could be signage on how to use the back routes as alternatives for drivers?

Park and Ride:

- There could be a new Park and Ride site created
- Have longer operating hours for Park and Ride
- Need for more electric Park and Ride buses
- Eliminate free parking on roads around town centres to force people to use Park and Ride
- Create more spaces at the Park and Ride sites

Car share schemes tend to be business based.

Park and share schemes/areas have been successful in other areas – cars park up for a small fee then only one driver drives right into the city centre.

Divert people on to the train:

- Train travel from Canterbury to Faversham to Whitstable and vice-versa – could CCC negotiate a fair fare based on direct mileage from Canterbury to Whitstable rather than the diverted mileage.
- Create more parking at Chartham and Sturry to enable train usage into Canterbury?

Where are the new schools going – these need to be planned in the Canterbury District Local Plan – we don't want people to cross the whole district to get to school – and new schools need cycle path provision linked to them. (There is a new school being built at the old Chaucer school site in Spring Lane.)

More cycle lanes? Create cycle lanes rather than new roads?

Only 5% of people cycle to work.

There is a need for secure cycle storage, which needs to be vandal-proof.

Bad weather is a barrier for cycling.

Crab and Winkle Line improvements are ongoing.

More pedestrianisation areas, eg Harbour Street at Whitstable.

More car-free areas.

Difficulty with dialogue between CCC and KCC could be overcome by creating a Unitary authority.

Motivate local people.

Parish Councils and Community groups have a role to play to lobby local ward councillors and MPs.

There could be a pod-path shuttle (such as that at Heathrow) into the city centre – if a new settlement of 6,000 to 8,000 homes was allocated in the CDLP this could give a critical mass for an idea like this?

There could be smaller delivery vehicles – perhaps from out of town unloading to them from larger vehicles.

More electric cars is the way forward.

Ditto hybrid cars.

Technology is improving – for example the automatic start/stop function.

Engine idling leads to pollution.

Could bring in fines if a driver leaves their engine running while stationary for longer than a minute (Sweden do this. CCC is looking at anti-idling powers and the ability to apply for this power.)

At Sturry station there is train overhang across the level crossing at Sturry with the barriers in the down position for 17 minutes in every hour, leading to engine idling and traffic congestion.

This is only going to get worse with the 2,000 or so new homes planned for Sturry, Broad Oak and Hersden.

Westbere Parish Council has had a long desire for Network Rail to lengthen the platforms at Sturry station as a solution to avoid train overhang across the level crossing, thereby enabling the barrier down time to be reduced and keep the traffic flowing. It's not quite as simple as just lengthening the platforms; it would require signal moving and that does involve significant costs – in the region of £1m for each platform. Network Rail has the East Kent Resignalling Scheme – phase 3, which includes the route between Canterbury West and Ramsgate via Sturry and Minster. At present this scheme is not

scheduled for short-term delivery, but if this scheme were to be brought forward, there might be an opportunity to include the required re-positioning of signals in the vicinity of Sturry station. Westbere Parish Council has spoken to both Network Rail and Southeastern, and the KCC Cabinet Member for Highways. The KCC Cabinet Member suggested that we ask our MP to get the project included in a wider signalling project. Westbere Parish Council's MP, Sir Roger Gale has this month raised this with Chris Heaton-Harris MP, Minister of State Department for Transport.

Climate change aspirations:

- HGVs, freight, taxis and buses affect air pollution greater than private cars.
- Need to cut down emissions
- There are EV charging constraints and nationwide network capacity issues to having more EV vehicles
- Freight – companies are investigating EV vehicles – for longer journeys the preference is for compressed natural gas. Highways England is seeing applications for service stations to have natural compressed gas.
- More air quality monitors.

Where is all the money going to come from?

*Next steps:* Development of a draft Vision for the district. Wider consultation early next year on the options.

## Appendix 2:

### **KALC Net Zero and Environment Workshop held 03 November 2020**

The Clerk attended this virtual workshop. There were 58 participants.

There was a welcome by the Chair of KALC, Cllr Sarah Barker, who introduced the four key-note speakers:

#### **1. NALC's CEO, Jonathan Owen, and colleague Claire Goldfinch**

The National Association of Local Councils CEO explained that there are over 10,000 parish councils, 100,000 parish cllrs and 6,000 Clerks, together with 43 county Area Local Associations.

NALC declared a climate emergency at its annual conference in 2019 and has set up a Task and Finish Group (more details in the link below).

NALC has a national perspective on what parish councils are doing re climate change in their communities.

There is opportunity for action and small things make a difference. The CEO felt that harnessing the community is key.

81% of the public are concerned about climate.

72% think there's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for change –

61% don't know where to start.

NALC has a case studies file and a climate change webpage (links below).

#### **2. Kent Down's AONB Director, Nick Johannsen**

There have been extreme events globally; changes to ecosystems, and Economy and Infrastructure implications, such as water supply/stress.

There is a need to act – to protect future generations.

The current trajectory for global warming is that the planet will be 3 degrees warmer without action by 2050. There is a need to bring carbon emissions and other emissions down.

To meet the 1.5 degree warmer target by 2020 there needs to be a lot done by 2030.

The Kent Environment Strategy was endorsed by KCC in July 2020.

#### ***Levers for change:***

|                                                                     |                               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ○ INCREASE:                                                         | ○ DECREASE:                   |
| ○ Electric vehicles                                                 | ○ Mileage                     |
| ○ Renewable investment                                              | ○ Consumption                 |
| ○ Natural capital (the environment)                                 | ○ Habitat destruction         |
| ○ Sustainable development                                           | ○ Domestic and Industrial use |
| ○ Solar development, offshore windfarm and hydrogen fuel production | ○ Coal use                    |
| ○ Peat restoration                                                  | ○ Food waste                  |

#### **3. Matt Morris, KALC's independent Environment and Green Energy Consultant**

Matt explained that the UK Government was the first to sign up to the Net Zero Policy by 2050 as the UK's contribution to stopping global warming.

He stated that use of land must change to meet a net zero target and there must be increased tree planting, more peat restoration and changes to agriculture.

#### **4. Christine Wissink, Interim Head of KCC's Sustainable Business and Communities**

There are a number of different schemes operated or documents owned by KCC:

- i) Route to Net Zero by 2050 – work is being done by Anthesis to set a base line and determine future work required – this document should be ready by 2021.
- ii) Kent and Medway Warm Homes – financial support for cavity wall and roof insulation for certain people on benefits.
- iii) Solar Together – a collective buying scheme for solar panels and battery storage (get better offers buying together) - the first round has just closed.  
[www.solartogether.co.uk/kent/home](http://www.solartogether.co.uk/kent/home)
- iv) Community EV Charging Points – a push for more electric vehicle charging points. Email [electricvehicles@kent.gov.uk](mailto:electricvehicles@kent.gov.uk)
- v) Business Support – ERDF grants up to £10k (as 40% of project costs) for energy efficiency measures or for Transport efficiency.
- vi) Kent REVS up for Cleaner Air – to try electric vans for free.
- vii) Local Climate Data  
Data available on climate – future climate changes predict hotter drier summers, warmer wetter winters and sea level rises.
- viii) Kent and Medway Climate Risk documents
- ix) Adaptation Planning Tools – although quite technical tools can map out differences implemented.

#### **Reference documents and links:**

NALC climate change case study document: <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/library/our-work/climate-change/3297-climate-change-case-studies/file>

NALC climate change webpage: <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/climate-change>

NALC's Task and Finish group: <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/library/our-work/climate-change/3341-climate-change-lc-powers-sept-20/file>

NALC Case study examples: <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/library/our-work/climate-change/3341-climate-change-lc-powers-sept-20/file>

Frome Town Council has lots of initiatives – look at their website at:

<https://www.frometowncouncil.gov.uk/your-community/resilience/climate-emergency/>

NALC Climate Change Survey at: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/HVNZMR6>

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy launched the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme to be delivered by Salix. The scheme will be available for capital energy efficiency and heat decarbonisation projects within public sector non-domestic buildings, including central government departments and non-departmental public bodies in England only. <https://www.salixfinance.co.uk/>

#### **Giki Zero – online tool: Your Carbon Output: The Future Starts Now –**

Giki Zero is an online tool that can be used by community groups and individuals to track and help improve their carbon output. There is a free version that can be used as well as a “pro” platform. It is definitely worth a look, especially as we are all trying to achieve a “NetZero” score in carbon footprint in the months and years ahead. Access the tool at:

[https://zero.giki.earth/?utm\\_source=MEMBERS&utm\\_campaign=6f22e51202-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2018\\_06\\_08\\_03\\_15\\_COPY\\_01&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_206970988f-6f22e51202-350307201&mc\\_cid=6f22e51202&mc\\_eid=71d1adc94](https://zero.giki.earth/?utm_source=MEMBERS&utm_campaign=6f22e51202-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_06_08_03_15_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_206970988f-6f22e51202-350307201&mc_cid=6f22e51202&mc_eid=71d1adc94)

## **Appendix 3:**

### **Write-up of the virtual annual Kent Highways Seminar held on 19 November 2020**

This was held on Microsoft Teams as the virtual platform and over 60 people attended.

The main focus of the Seminar was to concentrate on the “Live Labs” project and communication with the parish councils.

#### **1. Michael Payne, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

Michael Payne commented that this had been a different year and this was a different style Annual Autumn Parish Seminar this year. He said Kent Highways Services (KHS) are hoping for an in-person Seminar in the Spring of 2021.

He explained that a lot of KHS workers are classified as key workers and a lot of work has continued this year despite the pandemic.

#### **2. Andrew Loosemore, Head of Highway Asset Management**

Mr Loosemore gave a Directorate update:

- HGVs, and Brexit are to be covered at the next Seminar amongst other topics, and suggestions from parishes for topics to be covered are welcomed.
- Government advice in March at Lockdown changed on an almost daily basis, and it was important for KHS officers to meet daily on a virtual basis to discuss services and the impact on staff.
- Within 2-3 weeks there was a normalised service and KHS continued to deliver.
- They lost about a month with the supply chain contractors so surface treatments were delayed, but they have caught up now.
- While the roads were quiet in Lockdown they managed to do £4m worth of drainage improvements and £5m of local repairs.
- They are looking to deliver a £30m full resurfacing programme and £10m pot hole blitz campaign before the end of the financial year
- The Street Works Team deal with utility companies' permits demands – and requests are at a record high this year
- AMEY plc are the service provider, and their current contract was coming to an end, however KHS has extended the contract with AMEY until April 2023 at current rates (this is a many million £ contract). This brings stability for KHS teams, funding, and for AMEY. KHS will recommence the tender process in about 9 months' time for the contract post April 2023.
- There has been a renewal of the road surface contract procured from January 2021.
- Pothole Blitz 7 will commence in February 2021.
- Capital investment in drainage maintenance works continues.
- Innovation for improvement and efficiency also continues.

#### **3. KALC, John Wilson, KALC Vice-President and Chairman of Transport Advisory Committee**

The Kent Association of Local Councils' vice president explained:

- For COVID-19, KALC has put together excellent examples of parish councils helping their communities.
- For the Brexit/EU transition, KALC has been working with the Kent Resilience Forum re the transition. A report is to be circulated to parish councils. “Operation Fennel” has had KCC, Highways England, the Department for Transport, and the Ministry of Defence etc working in partnership.
- For HGVs – KALC did a lot of work last year. A trial of a pilot areas to stop lorries using unsuitable roads has been postponed due to coronavirus. Lorrywatch is working with Country Eye to enable members of the public to report HGVs on unsuitable weight restricted roads on the Country Eye app. There has been a delay due to COVID-19 but hopefully it be available shortly.
- 20mph is now a national issue.

#### **4. The Kent Live Labs**

Carol Valentine, Highways Asset Data Management System (HADMS) Project Manager gave a presentation.

This is all about innovation in Highways to improve business, efficiency and customer service. Technology is to be embedded into the work being done.

There was £23m grant funding from the Department for Transport “Smarter Places” fund. This received 28 bids in 2018 with 8 successful. KCC in partnership with AMEY plc were awarded £1.975m from the Department for Transport to invest in Highways innovation over 2 years. 50 innovations have been identified, categorised by type, then divided into 10 workstreams representing assets or key delivery elements of the Highways business:

- Drainage
- Winter
- Labour Optimisation
- Lighting
- Network Risk
- Works Processing
- General Oversight
- Road Surface
- Traffic Management
- Trees and Vegetation

The Core Principles of the project are as follows:

- Customer-centric – Customers are to be the centre of operations
- Value for Money – Utilise council money effectively and efficiently
- Intelligent Decisions – Empowering decision-making with comprehensive data, information and analytics
- Accountability and Transparency – Internal accountability through data and a culture that welcomes feedback
- Right First Time – Delivering quality solutions that stand the test of time

There is an Operational Platform – where a variety of data sources, such as traffic counts, are all pulled together and analysed. Trends can help delivery.

There is also a Strategic Platform – to improve communications and reduce the number of enquiries to KHS. KHS is developing a platform for members of the public/parish councils to find out local information and thus to self-serve and see where jobs are already raised, etc. They are also looking at a Mobile phone version to access the information too.

It has been a 3-phase delivery – now in phase 2 – Trials and Innovation implementation.

| <b>Phase 1 – Innovation Discovery and Platform Development</b> | <b>Phase 2 – Trails and Innovation Implementation</b> | <b>Phase 3 – Business Transformation and Evaluation</b> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| Data exploration and establishing benefits cases               | Further platform development                          | Implement business change                               |
| Platform architecture and prototyping                          | Major innovation workstreams                          | Agile platform refinement                               |
| Market research and supplier engagement                        | Benefits realisation of quick wins                    | Establish performance measures                          |
| Implementation of quick wins                                   | Facilitate business process changes                   | Embed enduring support model                            |

Phase 1 output examples are:

- i) Gritting compliance (last winter season) – data mapped to show where roads were gritted/salted and therefore where any problem/missed areas are (eg through data mapping the temperature of roads).
- ii) KPI tracking
- iii) Gang compliance and performance
- iv) Network risk

Trials and projects include:

- i) Improved surfacing materials – Lab Tests stimulate 1000's of traffic movements to see if using graphene enhanced asphalt is better and more long-lasting than traditional asphalt.
- ii) Bus displacement trial – sensor cameras on the front of buses show and pick up potholes on roads. Technology will improve road inspections particularly on busy roads.
- iii) Traffic and Pedestrian Counts – the devices are GDPR compliant and do not store personal details, they monitor modal shift.
- iv) Bacteria to work on oil spills after accidents/incidents – bacteria can ingest organic material and it is inert when done. This is to be trialled in the coming months.

- v) Gully sensors in drains – many sensors have gone in some drains in the last two months. There are 200k gullies in all, and not all will get a sensor. Areas with repeat problems will be considered for sensors if trial is successful.

**5. Kent Digital Transformation**

Officer Li-Vern Teo explained KHS want to make fault reporting easier, improve access to important information and improve communication.

There then followed a straw poll voting session with questions answered at the session using interactive “Mentimeter”.

Questions centred about the KCC reporting tool.

Instant results in this East Kent Seminar and the earlier West Kent Seminar show that improvements can be considered and more publicity is necessary to make more people aware of the fault reporting tool.

**6. Simon Maloney, KCC Officer in charge of the Parish Councils’ Portal**

Simon explained that full information on how to register for this and what parishes can use it for, will follow to parish councils after the meeting.