

Minutes of the meeting of Westbere Parish Council held on Monday 17 October 2022 in Westbere Village Hall at 7.00pm.

Present: Parish Councillors:

Paul Glover (Chairman),
Sylvia Harlow (Vice Chairman),
Kathy Wilson
Ken Dekker
Clerk to the Council, Amanda Sparkes.
Canterbury City Councillor Louise Harvey-Quirke
5 residents

77. Chairman's welcome

Cllr P Glover as Chairman opened the meeting and a minute's silence was held to mark the death of HM Queen Elizabeth II on 08 September 2022.

NOTED that due to the Period of National Mourning that the parish council meeting scheduled for 19 September 2022 was cancelled.

NOTED that the Chairman sent a letter of condolence on behalf of the parish council to the private secretary to His Majesty King Charles III.

78. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were noted from Canterbury City Councillor Georgina Glover, and Kent County Cllr Alan Marsh.

79. Vacancies on the council

There has been no interest in the three parish councillor vacancies on the council.

80. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None.

81. Minutes of the last meeting held 18 July 2022

Cllr Wilson proposed, Cllr Harlow seconded and the Minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting and the Chairman duly signed them.

82. Chairman's Report and Councillors' Reports

Cllr Kathy Wilson

Cllr Wilson advised the quiz held on 01 October 2022 was attended by about 40 people and raised approximately £230.

Cllr Sylvia Harlow

Cllr Harlow advised that her garden has many wood pigeons who seem to be pushing other birds away; she has only seen one blue tit this year.

Cllr Ken Dekker

Cllr Dekker had nothing to report.

Cllr Paul Glover

Cllr P Glover gave an update on the roll out of faster broadband. The village has been split into five or so sections Pennington Close has been completed. The project should complete in January 2023. He advised the parish council is still chasing the promised regular sweeping of the village regime. The officer has said that this area was set up for every four weeks originally but because it is very difficult to do this area, it has changed to every six weeks. They were due last week but due to being on the A2 these jobs are being planned for this week and next week.

Cllr Louise Harvey-Quirke offered to speak to the Canenco manager about this.

Two water leaks have been reported – one in Church Lane is to be repaired late November.

Drains were inspected and marked up for attention in July when the Clerk walked the village with the KCC Highways Steward but have still not been cleansed. With leaf fall now the problem will worsen. The Clerk will speak again to the highways steward.

Cllr P. Glover advised he has now replaced the salt bin in Church Lane and disposed of the old bin. He also dealt with a Wasps' nest inside the electrical cabinet on the village green.

The village cut had a long power cut recently. Over 12 hours duration triggers £75 compensation. The Clerk will chase BT about a BT manhole on the A28 between Bushy Hill Road and the garage on the Westbere side of the road – this manhole was broken in August and has still not been replaced.

83. Adjournment of the meeting

A resident asked about the 16-sided pergola for the village green being applied for under a capital grant and whether there will be resident consultation. The chairman explained the parish council hope it is a well-received idea to enhance the village green in light of the impending removal of the dead feature tree. There wasn't time to widely consult prior to the grant application deadline. The pergola could have trailing plants added, and it could have Christmas lighting too. The Clerk will do an article in the next newsletter with a picture example and invite residents' comments. The chairman commented that if the residents don't want it the project will not go ahead.

The Clerk will report the street light outside the Church that is not working.

The meeting continued.

84. Canterbury City Councillor Louise Harvey-Quirke

CCC Cllr Harvey-Quirke read her report to the meeting:

"As many would have seen in the press, the Draft Local Plan has been released and can be found online. The plan will be featured on the Cabinet agenda for this week, after which, it will go out to consultation. I will be attending the Cabinet meeting as a guest speaker.

The consultation period for this plan will continue until January 2023, and a decision will not be taken until later in the year. I have, however, asked for officers to attend meetings with Parish Councils and local residents to discuss what this means for Canterbury and how every village/parish will be affected.

The Canterbury Festival is currently taking place, and runs until Saturday 5th November. The festival is based at several venues throughout Canterbury, with some walks taking place through the City.

A range of pages have been added to the CCC website, that will help people with the cost-of-living crisis. There is information on energy payments, cost-of-living payments, general help for households, and advice on help with rent/mortgages.

This week, I will be attending Planning, Cabinet, and Overview & Scrutiny. Should there be any item specific to Westbere, I will of course report back.

Southern Water have announced that they are closing part of Lower Bridge Street in Canterbury from Saturday 22nd October to Sunday 30th October. This is to carry out essential repairs to a broken pipe.

If you are travelling through Canterbury via this route, Southern Water have advised that there will be delays, and also that some routes will have one-way traffic in place.

Finally, at a recent meeting, I raised the anti-engine idling signs in Sturry, by the level crossing. I have asked for foliage to be cut back and the signs to be maintained. They should be more visible going forward.

Brief Sheriff of Canterbury Update -

I attended both Water Meadows and Sturry Primary Schools last week to launch my Sheriff's Christmas Card competition.

This will allow one student from each school to design the Sheriff's Christmas cards for Christmas 2022.

The schools will be choosing a design from every year, and then I will choose the overall winning design to go on the cards.

We will host the winners at Tower House in Canterbury, for prize-giving and photos."

Cllr Louise Harvey-Quirke, Ward Councillor

85. **Canterbury City Councillor Georgina Glover**

CCC Cllr G Glover had given apologies for having to attend a separate CCC meeting but had sent the following report:

“Just recovering from small operation - not very well and will not be joining you tonight.

Everyone will be concerned over the draft local plan and that is where the concentration tonight needs to be channelled. It's very radical and the residents and the PC need to consider their response - it might be useful to call an extraordinary meeting to make a response.

Lower Bridge Street is to be closed for 9 days from Saturday 22nd October to Sunday 30th - access to the Sturry side of Canterbury will have to travel clockwise around the city via Westgate Towers.

The Road affected will be Tourtel Road, Rhodas Town, Upper Bridge Street, Pin Hill, A290/Reims Way, St Peter's Place, St Dunstan's Street, B2248 Station Road West and Kingsmead - it will cause major traffic disruption in Canterbury.

The Forrest Funfair will be operating in Westmeads Recreation Whitstable - from 20th October to 24th - for family fun over half-term break.

Newsroom from CCC have all the details on the Local Plan

ALSO

Council Tax Support Scheme for 2023-24.”

Cllr Georgina A Glover, Ward Councillor.

86. **Planning**

Canterbury District Local Plan to 2045

CCC Cabinet meeting is meeting on 19 October 2022 to determine that the draft Canterbury District Local Plan may go out to public consultation. The report link is below – pages 5 to 309 refer....

<https://democracy.canterbury.gov.uk/documents/g13265/Public%20reports%20pack%2019th-Oct-2022%2019.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=10&fbclid=IwAR1dHREXl7XlJwors7FLEGXqC15gT8QO3giB52VBaY2cX-HrXF6Az-zp4Ys>

Assuming consultation on the draft Canterbury District Local Plan goes ahead, this would run from 24 October and run for 12 weeks, closing on Monday 16 January.

As part of the consultation, CCC is holding a briefing session for parish councils on Wednesday 2 November 2022.

Online maps of all proposals at canterbury.gov.uk/localplanmap

Cllr P. Glover commented that the plan is not for today but to the year 2045. It is extremely bold and looking to the future. It is likely to change as every local authority has to review its plan every five years.

Cllr Harvey-Quirke advised it proposes an Eastern bypass through Fordwich to St Martins, Littlebourne Road, but there is no definitive route for this yet, only indicative.

The Bread and Cheese field in Hersden on the Hersden side of Bushy Hill Road is proposed as a CCC selected site for 250 homes – but there is no planning application yet and no known timescale for one. The consultation will be an opportunity for residents to give comments.

New applications:

CA/22/01388 - Walnut Tree Livery, Bushy Hill Road, Westbere, CT2 0HE

Retrospective application for change of use of land to campsite in addition to existing use for livery/horse keeping.

The Clerk emailed the parish council's representation and relevant attachments on 19 July 2022 to the CCC case officer, generic planning department email, and the two CCC Ward councillors, with a request that the ward councillors call the application in.

Kent County Council's Ecological Advice Service (EAS) wrote to the case officer on 17 August 2022. No ecological information has been submitted with this application. As a result of reviewing the data available to EAS (including aerial photos and biological records) and the information submitted with the planning application, EAS advise that further information is sought from the applicant with regards to

the potential for ecological impacts. It is unclear what ecological impact the development will have but as the development is proposed within existing green space, and adjacent to the Stodmarsh SSSI, EAS advise that a professional assessment is made regarding potential impacts to biodiversity and the designated site. Additionally, recommendations should be made how biodiversity can be enhanced, in alignment with paragraph 180 of the NPPF. This information should be submitted prior to determination of the application.

If the development entails no provision of infrastructure, no permanent features, no lighting, no retention of toilet waste on-site, etc, EAS advise that the applicant provides information stating as such to assure EAS and the LPA that an ecological assessment is not warranted.

This application did not go to the 21 September or 18 October 2022 CCC Planning committee. Next planning meetings are 15 November and 13 December 2022.

Presumably the hold up is that additional information is still awaited. The Clerk will seek an update from the planning officer, there is strong resident feeling about this proposal with dozens of representations submitted, and the Clerk will ask what timescale CCC is working to with regard to receiving the extra information requested.

CA/22/01627 – Andover Villa, Island Road

Retrospective application to convert existing dwelling into 2 dwellings.

The parish council had no comments.

CA/22/01864 - Paigles, 6 Bushy Hill Road, Westbere, CT2 0HE

Addition of lean to roof to conservatory roof together with replacement windows and doors from upvc to upvc

The parish council had no comments.

CA/22/01849 - Rose Cottage, 9 Church Lane, Westbere, CT2 0HA

TPO No 4/1969 -T1 Oak Reduce height by 2m and reduce spread by 7m, T2 Oak - reduce height and spread by 5m, T3 Remove Trunk knuckle

The parish council had no comments.

CA/22/01158 - Walnut Tree Farm, Walnut Tree Lane, Westbere CT2 0HG

Agricultural building for use of drying fruit and vegetables.

The applicant's statement says:

"the above is a full application for the erection of a new multilevel agricultural structure for the purpose of drying fruit and vegetables, greenhouse in winter, planting of medical herbs on limited terraces as seen on drawings. the project consists of a larger storey on stilts, providing an eco-corridor and plantation below, further short stories above in line with barn next door, and stepped backed 2 spaces above supporting staircase acting as solar chimney. the drawings and relevant key are explanatory. the large floor will be offered to the parish and the regional "marshland villages" designated in the Westbere parish plan d2 (copyright G mason & W Murray) for artistic activities, children's exhibitions and local handicrafts... etc during xmas, new year and easter festivities when use of structure is reduced. the site was previously occupied by tall and large agricultural building as shown in survey of 1825 and recent aerial photo supplied. many eco-friendly features are included in design eg rain water retention, preserving all trees etc consistent with the English planning and architectural manifesto and sections on bio diversity, infill sites and action plans of the vision for Westbere. I have attempted to make the ziggurat shaped structure aesthetically pleasing as seen on drawings. the structure is mostly concealed by higher trees and only glimpses can be enjoyed when passing on lanes. Further detailing and treatment is done on southern elevation for good view across the lakes. Further details can be provided, and comments for refinement are welcome."

NOTED the following response was uploaded to the CCC portal on 13 September 2022:

Westbere Parish Council has studied this proposal in detail and has many concerns and questions regarding this application.

Whilst the parish council appreciates that there are the partial remnants of a wall from the original structure, the suggested height at five floors is very alarming. Firstly, do both the height and design match the 1825 structure? The planning statement mentions an aerial photo supplied but this has not been uploaded to the CCC Portal – is this easily accessible?

The planning statement also states the large floor (presumably the first floor) will be offered for community use and activities – but there is no parking available – and is there a need - as there is a village hall in Westbere.

Additionally, there is inadequate / no detailing of the proposed materials for the construction/wall in-filling/cladding and roof which makes the application impossible to assess. The parish council is of the opinion that this application should not have been validated without this.

This plan is for obviously a massive structure and could give a huge volume of dried fruit and vegetables – is this for own consumption or to be shared elsewhere?

Where are the fruit and vegetables originating from – presumably offsite?

The proposal could increase traffic on the village's roads which are really country lanes with a blanket 20mph speed limit and most of them without pavements.

Rainwater harvesting is mentioned and indeed applauded but however based on recent (2022) rainfall could be sadly lacking. Is the assumption that this will be re-used, if available, for the washing of the fruit and vegetables – or will there be a mains water connection applied for?

Similarly, there is no mention of whether there will be an electricity connection for power and lighting? Dry WCs are proposed on the ground floor but these are not detailed on the floor plans or elevations. These should be resubmitted with this relevant information.

Further clarification is required for the medical herbs. What herbs? And for whose consumption?

Essentially, the parish council is unhappy with the bulk, height, size and massing of the building and the unclear objectives of it. Therefore, this application cannot be fully considered without full information and the parish council awaits this. Without further details and clarifications this application should not be determined by CCC.

The Clerk advised this application is no longer available on the CCC Portal so may have been withdrawn, although there has been no formal confirmation of that.

NOTED new neighbouring applications in Hersden:

CA/22/01648 – Hoplands Farm, Island Road

Erection of foodstore with 10 residential apartments above.

CA/22/01584 – Hoplands Farm, Island Road

Erection of 59 dwellings with associated access, parking, amenity space and landscaping

The Design and Access Statement has been prepared by On Architecture, on behalf of Redrow Homes, in support of a detailed planning application for a residential development consisting of 59 housing units, including affordable housing, on land at Hoplands Farm. The application site forms part of a wider site subject to an outline planning permission CA/16/00404/OUT for up to 250 houses, a neighbourhood centre and Business Park. The outline scheme was granted on 5 July 2017. The approved Reserved Matters applications that have subsequently been submitted will deliver a total of 248 dwellings on the site. Given that only 2 additional dwellings could be accommodated under the outline planning permission, a new full application is therefore being made for all details of the additional 59 dwellings to be approved for a surplus parcel of land alongside the A28.

CA/22/01845 - Land To The North Of Hersden, Canterbury, Kent, CT3 4HY

Hybrid planning application comprising: Full planning application for development of 261 residential dwellings (including affordable housing); with vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access from A28 Island Road; open space; landscaping; internal roads and car parking; sustainable drainage system together with associated earthworks and infrastructure, Outline application (with all matters reserved) for up to 539 dwellings (including affordable housing); 1 ha of land for employment floor space (accommodating a café, use class E-b; office floorspace, use class E-g; light industrial, use class E-g); 0.8 ha of primary school extension land; new community building (use class F2); new sports pavilion (use class F2); open space, including equipped play, playing pitches and landscaping; mobility hubs; sustainable drainage system; landscape bund together with associated earthworks and infrastructure.

This is the Persimmon development. The site is one of CCC's chosen strategic sites for housing in the Canterbury District Local Plan.

RESOLVED a comment to this Persimmon application CA/22/01845 to include a further push for the lengthening of the platforms at Sturry train station along with the associated required signal alterations, as follows:

CA/22/01845 - Land To The North Of Hersden, Canterbury, Kent, CT3 4HY

Whilst this application is not in the parish of Westbere it inevitably has severe implications on it, as the villages of Hersden and Westbere feed on to the A28 arterial Road in and out of Sturry/Canterbury. This application will increase the traffic impact enormously and thus in doing so increase the difficulties residents already face in leaving the village of Westbere in order to join the traffic on the A28. This will apply to each of the three exit roads, Westbere Lane, Church Lane and Bushy Hill Road, along with the Pennington Close cul-de-sac.

Importantly, more traffic will create even longer queues and severe traffic congestion when the Sturry level crossing barriers are down. At present the queues frequently reach back to Westbere Lane, even before this development and all the new homes in the vicinity are built.

Westbere Parish Council would therefore push yet again for signal repositioning to allow for the lengthening of the Sturry station platforms to negate train over-hang and lengthy barrier down times as a result. This would alleviate traffic congestion on the A28 Island Road and the Herne Bay Road (A291). Both roads carry heavy traffic, including buses and frequent lorries.

Background

The level crossing at Sturry is closed for 17 minutes in every hour. (See Footnote 1 for further information). The regular traffic congestion frequently backs up for over a mile from the crossing. The level crossing 'down time' is made worse as the Sturry station platforms are too short, causing any train of more than four carriages to experience "train overhang", so the barriers cannot be raised. The arrangement of the platforms is such that both up trains and down trains overlap the crossing.

This issue is only going to get worse because of the housing developments for more than 2,500 homes at Sturry, Broad Oak and Hersden. (See Footnote 2.)

Westbere Parish Council's concerns about traffic congestion and air quality are also shared in the neighbouring parishes of Sturry and Fordwich.

Westbere Parish Council wrote to the managing directors of both Southeastern and Network Rail during 2018 to suggest the lengthening of platforms (copies of the correspondence is available on request, although it lacked a resolution and was dismissed by them due to a lack of funding for the necessary signal relocation requirements in the immediate and wider network area.)

We are sceptical that the Sturry Link Road and viaduct bridge **KCC/CA/0091/2019** will mitigate congestion – and certainly there will be no beneficial effect *until* implementation. Work is not scheduled to begin on this £30 million 0.9 mile bypass in autumn 2023 and end in the summer of 2025.

We also feel that the proposed link road provides poor value for money. Lengthening the platforms at Sturry will give immediate and long-lasting benefit to a great deal of residents and road users, not just in the local area but from the wider towns around. It would be better for the environment, climate change and air quality. It would also be a much cheaper alternative to mitigate traffic congestion and ease the flow of traffic.

This has been born out by the recent and current days where no trains run due to strike action – the difference in traffic flow has been amazing.

Recent lengthening of the platforms at Sandwich train station - The 149th Open was due to be played at Royal St George's Golf Club in Sandwich in July 2020 (although due to COVID-19 was postponed to July 2021). In advance of this event Network Rail enhanced passenger capacity at the Sandwich station to improve the experience for the thousands of spectators expected to be travelling by train:

- Network Rail extended both platforms at the 'Dover end' of Sandwich station by 80 metres so they can fully accommodate the 12-carriage trains that will operate during The Open. This also means that the 12-carriage trains calling at Sandwich will not straddle the level crossing causing less disruption to local traffic.
- A new stepped footbridge was added to provide a link between the extended platforms along with a new walkway from the extension on platform one, to provide spectators with a more segregated and direct route towards Royal St George's Golf Club which avoids local roads and streets.

Westbere Parish Council undertook a Freedom of Information Request to Network Rail about this project in March 2020. We learned that the improvement works were paid for by both Kent County

Council and Network Rail. (And KCC received funds from third parties (unknown)).

Westbere Parish Council feel that platform lengthening for a sports event lasting just 8 days and not even an annual event gives an argument that the lengthening of the Sturry platforms should be revisited.

We realise that unlike the Sandwich lengthening project, any lengthening at Sturry *will* require signal moving and that this does mean significant costs – along with software changes and announcement changes and driver training - but we feel still at a very much lower level than the £30 million plus costs (and rising) for the Sturry link road.

One of the previous Westbere parish councillors, who happened to work for Network Rail did some research around rail billing schemes. For lengthening platforms at the Sturry station:

- One platform (for trains heading in the Thanet direction) has no signal, so from research we feel the costs to lengthen would be in the region of £150k.
- The other platform (for trains travelling in the Canterbury direction) does have a signal which would need moving and which would mean that the next one to it would be quite close and so the position of that one would also need adjusting. And, in fact, any lengthening of that platform could mean 3 or even 4 signals might need adjusting. This could potentially then be a project costing a few million.
- As both up trains and down trains overlap the crossing, ideally both platforms need extending, but even lengthening just one would bring huge benefit.

Whilst the above seems to us to be the ideal solution, perhaps if for whatever reason this platform lengthening cannot be pursued at present, may the following may also be considered, explored and commented upon also, please?

- We believe the train driver stops at the 4 car mark. Can the train be stopped at a different mark. All long trains have a guard/train manager? So, the driver could get off by walking back through the train?
- Would a cheaper alternative be to move the station westward (and lengthen the platform) so that both platforms are parallel to each other and reduce the barrier time?
- Can Canterbury City Council make improvements to the Sturry station / platforms / signalling etc a priority on their Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) infrastructure projects list to ensure that this has a programmed outcome for achievement?
- Can we push for inclusion of improvements as part of the Network Rail objective of completing the East Kent Resignalling Scheme to include the proposed re-siting of signals in the vicinity of Sturry? If this could be combined with a change to the Selective Door Opening (SDO) arrangements, whereby passengers were enabled to board and alight from the rear 6 coaches only in both directions (as the newly located signals further along the route on the Up side would permit this), then the platform lengths could remain as they are and the level crossing would be clear of the rear stopping trains at all times.

Westbere Parish Council is taking this opportunity to write to each key Members and stakeholders of CCC, KCC, Network Rail, South Eastern, and our MP to ask them to consider the above, and also to provide an update from each of them, as to the current situation.

We feel that with partnership working and a joined-up approach Network Rail, Southeastern, KCC and Canterbury City Council could move on this project.

Footnote 1: Crossing closed for 17 minutes every hour:

Southeastern railway has confirmed that the crossing is closed for approximately 17 minutes every hour and this varies between

- stopping off-peak trains (one train per hour) and
- stopping peak time trains (two trains per hour)
- and the non-stopping trains running through the crossing.

Given that Sturry is a 6-car length platform and Southeastern operate stopping trains up to 12-car in length unfortunately trains will overhang the crossing.

Footnote 2: New housing developments:

- o 1,100 houses off the A291 given permission for land in Sturry and Broad Oak, and work is now underway.

- CA17/01383/OUT (Sturry) and CA/18/00868/FOS (Broad Oak).
- 539 houses off the A28 in the Canterbury District Local Plan for land North of Hersden – current application CA/22/01845 refers.
- 370 houses off the A28 – CA/21/02797 granted October 2022 for - Land to The South Of Island Road (A28) Former Chislet Colliery Hersden - Reserved matters application for phase 1 comprising access into the site together with associated infrastructure and landscaping pursuant to outline planning permission CA/16/00673/OUT.
- 270 houses off the A28 at Hoplands Farm (construction now underway)
- 80 houses off the A28 at Bredlands Lane – construction now complete.
- Current application CA/22/01648 – Hoplands Farm - Erection of foodstore with 10 residential apartments.
- Current application CA/22/01584 – Hoplands Farm, Erection of 59 dwellings with associated access, parking, amenity space and landscaping
- Housing development at Bullockstone Lane at Herne in the Canterbury District Local Plan will also impact traffic flow on the A291 towards the Sturry level crossing.
- Housing developments further East eg at Preston and if Manston Airport is developed for housing will also impact on the traffic flow on the A28 into Canterbury from the East.

The Clerk will now send a letter/email with similar information to the response above to Network Rail, South Eastern, key CCC and KCC officers and Members, Roger Gale MP, requesting a response/update, and a copy of the letter will also be shared for information with Sturry Parish Council and Fordwich Town Council.

Notification:

Neighbouring application GRANTED by CCC on decision list dated 17 October 2022:

CA/21/02797 - Land to The South Of Island Road (A28) Former Chislet Colliery Hersden

Reserved matters application for phase 1 comprising access into the site together with associated infrastructure and landscaping pursuant to outline planning permission CA/16/00673/OUT.

This comprises a mixed-use development of up to 370 dwellings, local centre, open space, community ecological park, hard and soft landscaping and associated infrastructure with access from a new roundabout on Island Road.

Stodmarsh water quality issues

In July 2020, Natural England issued water quality advice which affects planning applications for new homes in large parts of the district. This is to make sure new development doesn't cause any further deterioration of the water quality at Stodmarsh nature reserve.

Kent online ran an article on 31 July 2022:

[Housing developers stalled by Stodmarsh water quality issue set to buy 'nutrient credits' to resolve problems \(kentonline.co.uk\)](https://www.kentonline.co.uk/news/housing-developers-stalled-by-stodmarsh-water-quality-issue-set-to-buy-nutrient-credits-to-resolve-problems/) :

A long-awaited solution to the environmental issue stalling thousands of new homes across [Kent](#), including Canterbury, Ashford, Thanet, Dover, Deal, Folkestone and Maidstone, has finally been announced.

The government has revealed housebuilders can offset the damage caused by harmful substances seeping into the county's rivers and lakes by buying 'nutrient credits' to fund mitigation measures, such as new wetlands or woodland.

It will allow developers to begin work on projects delayed since 2020, when Natural England discovered high water pollution levels at the Stodmarsh Nature Reserve, near [Canterbury](#).

Since the Stodmarsh pollution issues came to light, Natural England has been instructing local planning authorities not to grant approval for new housing without mitigating measures.

The new nutrient mitigation scheme, launched by Defra (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) and Natural England, is designed to 'unlock' the barrier to building work.

Mitigating measures that have been used to get developments approved, include creating wetlands elsewhere to offset any environmental harm.

Another option is building an on-site wastewater treatment works, which the developers of the 4,000-home Mountfield Park estate south of Canterbury are now proposing.

Canterbury City Council says it is already in a "very advanced" position in tackling the issue and will be taking advantage of the nutrient credits scheme in its planning process.

"The six Kent councils that are affected by the water quality issues at Stodmarsh are dealing with the issue as a priority and will ensure that we are in the best position to take advantage of the scheme," said a spokesman.

"We are in discussion with Natural England and will take the opportunities it provides us with, both working towards achieving the long-term objective of returning the water quality at the Stodmarsh lakes to 'favourable condition', and also delivering desperately needed housing as soon as we possibly can."

What are the issues at Stodmarsh nature reserve?

In October 2020, Government advisers at Natural England called for planned construction across swathes of east Kent to stop.

Experts had discovered high levels of nitrogen and phosphorous in the water at Stodmarsh Nature Reserve. This causes excessive algae growth, which had started to harm the ecology at the site. The pollution had been caused by wastewater entering Stodmarsh's lakes, which are fed by the River Stour.

As a result, Natural England said new developments must not "add the burden of nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrogen".

In basic terms, for every new house built, there is at least one new toilet being flushed on a regular basis. Natural England put the onus on councils and developers to find a way of stopping that extra wastewater ending up at Stodmarsh.

What makes Stodmarsh so special?

Stodmarsh is made up of a series of wetlands and lakes that are internationally recognised for the habitats and the wildlife they support.

This includes water voles, two rare British birds (cetti's warbler and bearded tit), and swathes of reedbeds and grassland used by breeding and wintering bird populations.

It is also home to some scarce wetland plants - like the greater bladderwort and bog bean.

What has been the impact on plans for new homes?

As a result of Natural England's advice, before gaining planning permission developers now need to show their schemes can achieve "nutrient neutrality" and therefore not add to the problem.

The issue has mainly impacted the Canterbury district and Ashford borough. But it has also affected planning decisions for Dover District Council, Maidstone Borough Council and Folkestone & Hythe District Council as they also partly fall within the Stodmarsh "catchment area".

What has been done so far to tackle the issue?

Up till this point, developers have aimed to achieve "nutrient neutrality" by building on-site wastewater treatment works at new estates or creating new wetlands.

Building an on-site treatment works has very roughly estimated costs in the region of around £1,500 per dwelling.

How will the government's new plan work?

Developers will now be able to purchase "nutrient credits" which will remove the need for them to provide mitigation themselves.

Natural England will issue "nutrient certificates" to developers, who can use them for planning applications.

The certificates will give councils the assurance that additional pollution from new developments can be mitigated by the purchase of nutrient credits.

Conditions attached to planning permissions will ensure that any necessary credits are bought before the new homes are occupied.

Income from the sale of credits will be used to provide new mitigation, such as wetlands to "soak up" the impact of unavoidable pollution, and cover the costs of monitoring and maintaining them.

The scheme will be open to all developers, with priority given to smaller builders who are most affected. Developers can also continue to put their own mitigation schemes in place should they choose.

The scheme is due to open in the autumn.

What about Southern Water?

The councils affected are pushing Southern Water to bring forward an upgrade to Canterbury's wastewater treatment works - currently not planned until the next investment period of 2025-2030.

In a document published online, Southern Water says it is "not feasible" for it to increase the nitrogen or phosphorus removal rate "beyond consented levels" at the treatment works.

The firm says "significant investment" would be needed, financed through income collected from customer charges, which would have to be increased - and this would require approval from regulator Ofwat.

RECEIVED also the Clerk's write-up of a virtual briefing session offered by CCC to the parishes on 21 September 2022 with a further update on the Stodmarsh water quality issues. This write-up is appended to these Minutes for information.

Presumption in favour of sustainable development

RECEIVED the Clerk's write-up of the Canterbury City Council's online training session on 20 July 2022 regarding the Presumption in favour of sustainable development. Cllr Harlow and the Clerk attended this session. This write-up is appended to these Minutes for information.

Fordwich, Sturry and Westbere Parish council meetings re the Bretts owned Westbere Lakes/Fordwich site

Cllr P. Glover explained there is no update and no date yet for a next meeting although in light of the draft CDLP and pending consultation he will suggest that one be scheduled shortly. The biggest concern is infrastructure.

87. Finance

The payments listed on Appendix 3 were noted and the Chairman signed the document.

- i) NOTED that on 23 September 2022 an application was submitted to the CCC Capital grants scheme for 2023-2024 for a 16-sided Pergola and new Christmas tree lights/trellis lighting for the village green. Grant sought is £1,256 and the parish council's contribution if successful to be £875.80.
- ii) RECEIVED an End of Quarter Two Income and Expenditure report and NOTED this has been uploaded to the parish council's website to satisfy the Transparency Regulations.
- iii) RECEIVED the bank statements and bank reconciliation for July, August and September 2022 and RESOLVED the signature of a councillor other than the Chairman thereon.
- iv) NOTED that the Clerk completed the online acceptance of a Member grant of £800 from Cllr Alan Marsh for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee event on 06/07/2022. FS-Case-434899073.
Project reference allocated is 22-CA-17. This was paid by BACS on 22 August 2022.
- v) NOTED that a VAT refund claim totalling £173.89 for the period 01 October 2021 to 30 June 2022 was paid into the bank on 02 August 2022.
- vi) Financial Services Compensation Scheme Annual review – NOTED that on 08 August 2022 the Clerk confirmed the parish council's eligibility with Unity Trust Bank for the FSCS – this compensates customers up to a maximum of £85,000 if a bank, building society or credit union has stopped trading or does not have enough assets to pay claims made against it.
- vii) NOTED that on 24 August 2022 the Clerk updated the email address with the Pensions Regulator in readiness for the re-declaration of compliance becoming due soon.
- viii) NOTED £18.00 debited on 30 September 2022 for the Unity Trust Bank quarterly charges for the period 04/06/2022 to 03/09/2022.
- ix) Local Government Pay claim 2022-2023 – NOTED the National Employers offer to the NJC Trade Unions on 25 July 2022. The Trade Unions will be taking the views of their members before responding to this offer. The Association of Local Councils (ALCC) advised on 30 September 2022 that the UNISON ballot and UNISON members have voted to accept the offer. However, this is not the end of the matter because in order to be finalised so it can be paid, GMB and/or Unite members acceptance is necessary. The closing date for their consultations are 14 October for Unite and 21 October for GMB so the results of those are awaited. NALC/ALCC will keep clerks advised.

KCC LGPS Pension

The Kent Pension Fund has recently been made aware of a backdated pay award from April 2021, potentially relevant to employers whose Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) staff are on National Joint Council (NJC) terms and conditions. This is relevant to Westbere Parish Council so the Clerk completed the requested online questionnaire on 21 July 2022. The answers may be material to the 31 March 2022 triennial valuation currently underway and so the employer contributions from 01 April 2023.

External auditor for the period 2022-23 to 2026-27

Under the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015, SAAA is responsible for appointing external auditors to all applicable opted-in smaller authorities, for setting the terms of appointment for limited assurance reviews and for managing the contracts with the appointed audit firms. Smaller authorities are those whose gross annual income or expenditure is *less than £6.5 million*.

The next 5-year appointing period runs from 2022-23 until 2026-27 and SAAA has undertaken a procurement exercise to appoint auditors to each County area from 1 April 2022. Now that the

submission deadline for the 2021-22 Annual Governance and Accountability Returns has passed, there is an option to opt-out of the next round of 5-year audit appointments.

All authorities require an appointed external auditor even if the authority meets the criteria to qualify for exemption, as a Certificate of Exemption is required to be submitted to the external auditor and the auditor must be in place in case of objections from local electors

During the previous 5-year period **all** smaller authorities were 'opted-in' to the central procurement regime managed by SAAA - no authority decided to 'opt-out' and follow the various complex procedures required under statute to appoint their own external auditor. *To continue as part of the SAAA sector led auditor appointment regime, no action is required to remain part of central scheme.* However, all authorities must be given the option to opt-out of the central procurement and appointment scheme and appoint their own external auditor for the next 5-year period, although the process is onerous for smaller authorities.

Cllr Dekker proposed and Cllr Harlow seconded and all Cllrs RESOLVED that the parish council remains in the central procurement and appointment scheme for the period 2022-23 to 2026-27.

88. **Use of Section 101 since the last meeting –**

Replacement of the Perspex in the Shrubbery Corner noticeboard £146

89. **Precept/budget setting for 2023-2024**

The Clerk will do a draft budget and it was agreed that all councillors would meet informally to discuss it – this would then come to the full council meeting in November to be ratified.

90. **Clerk report**

NOTED that KCC PROW team sent a letter on 19 August 2022 to the landowner regarding the removal of the unauthorised stile on CB91. They were given one month to remove the obstruction. It is still there.

Fordwich Sturry Westbere Twinning association representative position

At the last meeting the Clerk explained she was contacted by a representative of the Twinning association about a parish Cllr taking over the Fordwich Sturry Westbere Twinning association representative position. This was discussed at the 18 July 2022 parish council meeting. The Clerk rang the representative on 19 July and explained that with three vacancies the existing councillors are stretched thin across the necessary responsibilities currently.

NOTED that the twinning association may submit a grant application for a visit from the French to Westbere next year.

Bullockstone Road Improvement Scheme

MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS DUE TO START 1 AUGUST 2022 FOR UP TO 1 YEAR

The following restrictions will be implemented on 1 August 2022:-

Bullockstone Road

A temporary mandatory 30mph speed limit will be imposed on Bullockstone Road between the junctions with the A291 Canterbury Road and Owls Hatch Road (south of Thanet Way).

Bullockstone Road will be closed between Lower Herne Road and the A291 Canterbury Road, to the extent indicated by signs and barriers on site. Access will be maintained for residents, businesses and deliveries.

The alternative route is via A291 Canterbury Road, A291 Herne Street, A291 Canterbury Road, A2990 (Old) Thanet Way, Greenhill Road, Bullockstone Road and vice versa.

The existing 7.5 tonne weight restriction on Bullockstone Road will be temporarily suspended between the junctions with Lower Herne Road and Greenhill Road, to allow access for construction vehicles to the site compound.

Greenhill Road, Herne Bay

The existing 7.5 tonne weight restriction on Greenhill Road will be temporarily suspended, between the junctions with Bullockstone Road and the A2990 Thanet Way/Greenhill roundabout, to allow access for construction vehicles to the site compound.

ONS publishes Census 2021 initial results

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/populationandhouseholdestimatesenglandandwales/census2021>

The main points:

- On Census Day, 21 March 2021, the size of the usual resident population in England and Wales was 59,597,300 (56,489,800 in England and 3,107,500 in Wales); this was the largest population ever recorded through a census in England and Wales.
- The population of England and Wales grew by more than 3.5 million (6.3%) since the last census in 2011, when it was 56,075,912.
- The population grew in each of the nine regions of England and also grew in Wales; the region with the highest population growth was the East of England, which increased by 8.3% from 2011 (a gain of approximately 488,000 residents).
- There were 30,420,100 women (51.0% of the overall population) and 29,177,200 men (49.0%) in England and Wales.
- There were more people than ever before in the older age groups; the proportion of the population who were aged 65 years and over was 18.6% (16.4% in 2011).
- There were 24,782,800 households in England and Wales on Census Day; the number of households increased by more than 1.4 million since 2011 (6.1%), when there were 23,366,044 households.

91. Parish Charter

NOTED the Parish Charter (that the Clerk was part of the working group for) will be launched along with a Q&A session with the Leader, Councillor Ben Fitter Harding, on 21 November 2022 at an in-person meeting in the Guildhall, Canterbury. This clashes with the next Westbere Parish Council meeting.

92. Parish Engagement meeting

RECEIVED the Clerk's writeup of the CCC Engagement meeting with parish councils held on 19 July 2022, including updates on waste management, review of public toilets, the Parish Charter and new Model of governance at CCC. This writeup is appended to these Minutes as a separate appendix.

93. CIL Community Infrastructure Levy Strategy

Following on from the last meeting, all Cllr RESOLVED and ADOPTED a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Strategy.

94. Meeting dates for 2023

RESOLVED parish council meeting dates for 2023 as the third Monday of each month except no meeting in August or December, and March delayed by one week.

95. Any new residents that a Westbere Parish plan may be delivered to.

None.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm.

.....
Signed: Cllr Paul Glover, Chairman

Date:

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

Next Meeting dates: Third Monday of each month except no meeting in August and December – 21 November 2022, 16 January, 20 February, 27 March (delayed by a week), 17 April, 15 May, 19 June, 17 July, 18 September, 16 October, and 20 November 2023.

And an additional date between 01 March 2023 and 01 June 2023 tbc for the Annual Electors' meeting.

Separate appendices for information follow/....

Separate appendix 1

Stodmarsh water quality issues

The Clerk's write-up of a virtual briefing session offered by CCC to the parishes on 21 September 2022 with a further update on the Stodmarsh water quality issues:

Stodmarsh water quality – CCC Briefing 21 September 2022

CCC held a virtual briefing for parish councils on 21 September 2022 on the Stodmarsh water quality issues.

Stodmarsh is protect as its latent wetlands are important for the habitats it supports.

It has National and international designations protecting it:

- Special Protection Area (SAC)
- Ramsar Site
- Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- National Nature Reserve (NNR)

What is the issue?

Natural England advise that the water quality in the lakes is deteriorating.

This is due to increased levels of phosphorus and nitrogen.

The result is algae growth and fish kill.

Catchment area and affected WwTWs (waste water treatment works):

<https://www.dover.gov.uk/Planning/Planning-Policy-and-Regeneration/PDF/NN-map-Stodmarsh-SAC-Ramsar-v2.pdf>

<https://canterburycc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=86372bea6bf746ff9ba0ab0da0f2a52c>

Generally, Herne Bay and Whitstable and villages north of the A28 do not affect Stodmarsh as they discharge in to the sea.

6 other councils in Kent are affected – with delivery of 33,000+ homes across the catchment affected and delayed. The greatest impacted is in Canterbury and Ashford.

It is not just a Kent problem - 74 councils across England are also affected by similar advice from Natural England on designated sites.

Where does phosphorus and nitrogen come from?

- Water run-off from agricultural land and residential land
- Discharge from wastewater treatment works (WwTWs) – Natural England believe this is causing the greatest deterioration at Stodmarsh.

What does this mean for housing?

More homes

= increased volume of water to WwTWs

= more phosphorus and nitrogen discharged into River Stour

= more phosphorus and nitrogen potentially entering lakes at Stodmarsh

= 'likely significant effect' and further deterioration on this protected site as a result of further deterioration of water quality.

How does this impact on planning applications?

- Habitats Regulations - no plan or project can be authorised if there is a 'likely significant effect' on the protected site
- Planning permission for new housing cannot be granted unless an Appropriate Assessment has been adopted

This assessment is done in consultation with Natural England (statutory consultee)

- Mitigation must be secured at the time of permission

What is being done?

- Strategic sites – mitigation by providing on-site WwTWs and on-site environmental enhancements, like wetlands creation, to achieve nutrient neutrality. This clears out the nutrients on-site rather than discharging into the River Stour. There is an expectation on larger developers to do mitigation on-site.
- Smaller sites are more tricky.

What is the solution for smaller sites?

- Phosphorus - Upgrades to WwTWs
- Nitrogen - Creation of wetlands – this is the most efficient option and solution and is being looked at in the emerging Canterbury District Local Plan – and operates as a credits system like SAMS with developers of new housing in the catchment area making financial contributions or getting credits.

Why can't the WwTWs be upgraded immediately?

- Establish source of problem and extent (by a WINEP study)
- Design mitigation
- Secure funding

This might not happen until 2030!

What is CCC doing to help?

CCC's objectives:

- Deliver planning growth to support local economy and meet housing needs
- Bring Stodmarsh back into favourable condition ASAP

CCC Requests:

- Funding – CCC has written to the government for upfront costs of on-site WwTWs and land acquisition to provide wetlands and credits system
- Lobbying for funding to accelerate WwTW upgrades

Government update

- New statutory duty on water and sewerage companies to upgrade WwTWs, to tackle the nutrients issue, to the 'highest technically available limits' by 2030 in affected areas
- Nutrient Mitigation Scheme – to be designed by Natural England and due to open in Autumn 2022
- Funding to be made available for mitigation projects, including wetland mitigation
- Recouped through developers purchasing 'nutrient credits'
- Priority to be given to smaller builders most affected.

The next steps...

- Pursue local solutions through the Canterbury District Local Plan – with wetland creation sites being looked at in the Canterbury District Local Plan - and credits system
- Await the WINEP study findings.

With the preferred growth option being another 17,000 new homes, capacity required to treat more water is a concern - capacity (as well as nutrients) is also being looked at in the Canterbury District Local Plan.

CCC will offer another briefing later.

CCC has a webpage on its website for latest information:

<https://www.canterbury.gov.uk/planning-and-building/stodmarsh-and-water-quality/>

Separate appendix 2

Presumption in favour of sustainable development

RECEIVED the Clerk's write-up of the Canterbury City Council's online training session on 20 July 2022 regarding the Presumption in favour of sustainable development:

CCC Briefing session for parish councils held 20 July 2022

Cllr Sylvia Harlow and the Clerk attended this briefing session.

The CCC Planning Manager (Development Management) gave a presentation on **Decision making and the Presumption in favour of sustainable development**.

The government published its Housing Delivery Test results earlier this year – this is an annual test/measurement of housing delivery in each authorities' local plan area.

It gives a % of homes delivered versus the number of homes required.

Each authority is expected to hit 95%.

29% of all local authorities failed the Housing Delivery Test.

19 delivered 85-95%.

23 delivered 75-85%.

51 delivered less than 75%.

To avoid action being taken, CCC needed to hit 75%.

CCC hit 65%.

Not hitting the target means the government brought in sanctions for a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

What does this mean?

It means the policies in the current Local Plan which restrict or control the supply of housing are now deemed out of date, as they are not delivering at the required rate and City councillors and officers must make decisions on planning applications against the National Policy Planning Framework (NPPF – i.e. the government's planning framework) and in line with the "presumption in favour of sustainable development".

NB Policies like landscaping, drainage, open space, Green gap designations, climate change, heritage and any not related to housing, are not considered out of date and CCC and an Inspector can and would have to take these into account.

National Planning Policy Framework - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

The National Planning Policy Framework was revised on 20 July 2021 and sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

This revised Framework replaces the previous National Planning Policy Framework published in March 2012, revised in July 2018 and updated in February 2019.

This training session ran through what the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' means and how CCC apply it when making decisions on planning applications for housing that fall outside of the current Local Plan.

CCC must currently grant planning permission for housing developments unless:

- i. Policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of importance provide a clear reason for refusal *or*
- ii. Any harm is significantly and demonstrably outweighing the benefits

Since sanctions were imposed only two developments have been approved outside of the Canterbury District Local Plan – a development of 42 units adjacent to the urban area on the Thanet Way – and another 10 units for flats on the opposite side of the road.

Factors for approval included being adjacent to the urban area and that there were good transport links – so the sites were considered sustainable.

Each case will be judged on its merits.

CCC will monitor appeals against refusals and take note of inspectors' judgements.

Reasons for under-delivery:

- Stodmarsh mitigation requirements – lots of applications are currently held in abeyance and are unable to be determined at present
- COVID and national restrictions slowing building on approved development sites
- The shortage and supply of materials
- Legal challenges (at the large South Canterbury/Mountfield Park strategic site and Thanington site).

Sanctions will last until the government publishes a delivery rate above 75%.

CCC is hoping this is a short-term position with work progressing on a strategic solution for Stodmarsh.

The target figure for housing is set by the number that CCC states in its Canterbury District Local Plan – not the figure for housing delivery set by the government if this is lower.

It is an annual test and CCC will do what it can to get out of 'presumption' for a second year.

The National Planning Policy Framework NPPF gives a holistic definition of sustainable development, which includes looking at the environment, heritage, employments, community facilities, social implications etc.

The starting point is to ask:

- Where is the proposed development? Is it near to existing settlement and not isolated?
- Are there good transport links?
- Is it close to services?
- What is the harm? What are the public benefits to outweigh the harm?

A question was asked about the definition of 'affordable housing'.

Annex 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework Glossary states:

Affordable housing: housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:

a) Affordable housing for rent: meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).

b) Starter homes: is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute and any such secondary legislation at the time of plan-preparation or decision-making. Where secondary legislation has the effect of limiting a household's eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level of household income, those restrictions should be used.

c) Discounted market sales housing: is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.

d) Other affordable routes to home ownership: is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.

Separate Appendix 3

The Clerk's writeup of the CCC Engagement meeting with parish councils held on 19 July 2022, including updates on waste management, review of public toilets, the Parish Charter and new Model of governance at CCC:

CCC Engagement meeting with parishes

19 July 2022

Key people present:

CCC Cllr Barbara Flack, Chairman

CCC Cllr Andrew Cook – Cabinet Member for waste

David Maidman – in charge of Canenco

CCC officer Sarah Randall – waste management

CCC officer Alexis Jobson – toilet review working group.

CCC officer Matthew Archer – Head of Corporate governance

1. WASTE MANAGEMENT

Officer Sarah Randall (Contracts delivery lead) advised Canenco took over waste management from February 2021.

The Councillor waste review group is chaired by Cllr Cook. A report went to committee recently.

Pilot projects include hessian sacks for purple sack properties, and food collection from communal properties (not currently available).
CCC has KCC funding for two years (now in the second year) to reduce paper/card contamination in bins – through education and reminders, and red bins available at much discounted rates for a period while stocks last.
A government announcement is expected soon re a deposit refund scheme on glass bottles and plastics if people return these to some outlets.

David Maidman, in charge of Canenco, explained there have been some challenges since February 2021, including covid restrictions, staff sickness, working from home, communication handover from Serco, driver shortages and fuel shortages.

180 staff were TUPE'd over.

Services were maintained through covid.

A digital solution has been introduced – all collection crews now have a tablet with collection information and can report specific details about anomalies with properties and when a bin is not out at its collection point.

Missed bin performance statistics are now much improved – 50-70 per day down from a high of 1,200 last summer.

Canenco is resourced differently now.

The grounds maintenance contract was taken over from January 2022 – this is managed from the Bretts site at Fordwich.

Grounds contract staff were inherited, plus there has been a skills shortage recruitment drive. 85% of staff have done 12 years plus service.

For fly tipping it's about where it is (not what it is) – if on a highway or CCC owned land then CCC/KCC will deal – if it's on private land assistance to liaise with the landowner to resolve it is offered. There can be delays in dealing with some cases if Canenco has to engage a third party contractor e.g. if a grab arm is needed.

Mechanical street sweeping is included in the contract. Procuring vehicles proved difficult to start but Canenco now has a full complement of sweepers. (email Sarah Randall if there are specific problems or needs.)

2. TOILET REVIEW WORKING GROUP

Alexis Jobson explained that the lead Councillor for the Public Toilets review is Cllr Ben Fitter-Harding, along with Cllr Andrew Cook.

The aim is to make a £53k saving or generate income through a range of measures rather than closures.

The review working group is informed by contracts officers, property officers, The Bid, and a disability panel.

Stock condition surveys have been undertaken for what is needed maintenance wise in the short, medium and long-term. Also, usage surveys have been done.

Alternative funding could include:

- "User pays" option – linked to investment upgrades
- A community use toilet scheme with businesses (who would be given a contribution)
- Possible transfers to parish councils
- Levelling Up funding opportunities.
- There has been a £100k successful bid for the Herne Bay and Kingsmead leisure centres for hoists and showers to be provided – work to be done over the next two years.

Information will be collated and the working group recommendations will inform budget setting in the autumn.

3. PARISH CHARTER

Parish Cllr Robin Treacher, Chairman of the Canterbury area KALC, explained a working group of CCC Officers and parish representatives has worked on a Charter and this has brought CCC and the parishes together. Canterbury area KALC gave the document unanimous support at its recent meeting.

CCC is to give final sign off at a meeting on 26 September 2022 – there should be a draft to all CCC Cllrs by the end of this week.

The Charter is renewable next year at the beginning of a new 4-year term of councillors.

4. CCC GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Matthew Archer explained there has been a change from committee governance to a Leader and Cabinet Model. There was a previous Leader and Cabinet governance from 2000 to 2015.

The Cabinet will have responsibility for decisions on the budget, Corporate plan, Local plan and policies.

The Model structure:

Council

Cabinet	Appointments committee
Whitstable Harbour Board	Audit committee
Overview and Scrutiny Committee (to offer constructive views and hold Cabinet to account)	General Purposes committee
Scrutiny Sub-committee	Licensing committee
	Planning committee
	Standards committee
	Joint Committees:
	- Joint Transportation Board
	- EK Services Committee
	- South Thames Gateway Committee

The Leader of the Council appoints a Cabinet and allocates specific roles and responsibilities to Cabinet members:

Cllr Ben Fitter-Harding – Strategy and Improvement

Cllr Rachel Carnac – Corporate

Cllr Barbara Flack – Place, regeneration, property and parking

Cllr Joe Howes – People, housing, community

Cllr Andrew Cook – Environmental services

Cllr Ashley Clark – Enforcement and open spaces

Forward Plan

When major decisions are to be made by Cabinet details must be published on a 'Forward Plan' at least 28 days prior to the decision date.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee can request reviews into local issues, and feed in concerns and views before decisions are taken.

It undertakes pre-decision scrutiny of cabinet decisions and oversees the review programme.

Chaired by a member of the majority group – Cllr Mark Dance.

Scrutiny Sub-committee

The Scrutiny Sub-committee monitors Cabinet decisions and scrutinises the overall performance of the council. It also has responsibility for considering any cabinet decisions 'called-in' by councillors.

Chaired by a member of the opposition groups – Cllr Dave Wilson.

Both committees are politically balanced.

Public speaking is allowed at both committees:

Public speaking

If an item receives pre-decision scrutiny at an Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings are 3 weeks before the Cabinet meeting. Members of the public can only speak at Overview and Scrutiny Committee and not at Cabinet.

If an item does not go to Overview and Scrutiny Committee and straight to Cabinet instead then members of the public can speak at the Cabinet meeting.

The Petition threshold for a council debate is 1,000 signatures.