

KENTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council held in Kenton Victory Hall on Wednesday 13 March 2024 at 7.30pm

Present

Councillors D Blount, H Bright, J Hare, K Savill and D Smith

Also present

Suzanna Hughes (Clerk), County Cllr Connett, District Cllr Taylor, PCSO Bunce and 25 members of the public

The meeting was opened by Cllr Blount at 7.30pm.

240313.01 Apologies for Absence

None

240313.02 Open Forum

A resident advised that he had recently purchased Brook Path Cottage and will be renovating and letting it. The property was badly impacted by the floods last September. As he will be investing a lot of money in it, he wished to say a few words pertinent to the floods. The brook between the school and culvert by the Dolphin is very silted up which, in his view, is a significant reason for the problems that occurred last September. Looking at the top of the culvert from the car park, the water, even when fairly low, is close to the top and therefore the water has nowhere to go thus backing-up and flooding the cottages. The brick wall which was built across the culvert prevented any water escaping until the force of the flood water knocked the wall down. Within a few minutes of the wall collapsing, the depth of the water immediately dropped. Unless and until the culvert and stream can drain quickly and can cope with large quantities of water, it will be unwise to rebuild the wall and instead it should be replaced by railings or something that will allow water to pass through. Recently on a walk around the Powderham Estate, he stood on the bridge that spans the River Kenn and noticed that the brook is very silted up where the brook exits the River Kenn.

The Chairman thanked the resident for his observations and advised that these have been covered previously in meetings with DCC and the Environment Agency and have been well documented. The reason for the brick wall was to stop people from falling into the brook, but the fire service concur that the wall probably did more harm than good in this instance and advised that it should be replaced by railings or a fence.

A resident asked whether the Parish Council will be re-registering the Dolphin Inn as an asset of community value. They were informed that this registration is due to expire in June and there would be no reason not to re-register it. He also advised that he had observed some straw bales in the brook. He was informed that they were being used to prevent a pollution incident whilst they are building the new bridge.

The Chairman made a statement about the Parish Council's precept request for 2024/25. He informed the meeting that the precept is the only way the Council can raise money. As of 31 January (the deadline for submitting the precept request), liability for the repairs to Brook Path and the cost of those repairs was, and still is, unknown. The Chairman stated that it would not be prudent for the Parish Council to find itself in a position where it does not have sufficient funds to honour its potential liabilities. The impact of this increase is £6 per month on an average Band D property. With regard to affordability, County Cllr Connett advised that TDC is

one of the few Councils in the country which provide 100% council tax reduction for those in greatest need.

A resident asked whether the need to take out the loan was for the repairs to Brook Path. She could not understand why it is the responsibility of Kenton when DCC have not been clearing the culverts. The Chairman advised that the land (known as Brook Path) was transferred in 1983 from Powderham Estate to the Parish Council. Riparian owners are responsible for their section of the culvert.

Cllr Connett advised that for many TDC has cleaned the brook annually. In terms of desilting Slittercombe culvert, DCC's view has been that doing this in isolation, without other riparian owners also clearing their section, would not be helpful. It is the responsibility of all owners. In terms of a general update as to the position today, Slittercombe culvert is being rebuilt. The flood investigation report has been published. He has met with the Chief Executive of DCC on 22 February to discuss the school and also showed her the brook. On 23 February, a wider on-site meeting was held to discuss what can be done to retain water further up the catchment and slow it coming into the village where there is a natural pinch-point. The Estate was very receptive to doing what they need to do. In relation to Brook Path, a meeting has been arranged for 27 March at County Hall. He asked residents to be patient and hopefully there will be some news at the end of the March. He is pushing for a solution. Whilst technically, Brook Path might be the responsibility of the Parish Council, it is an enormous project for a parish this size and he hopes that DCC will respond favourably.

A resident commented that the brook bordering the car park also needs addressing. If there is a restriction further up, the problem along Brook Path will still exist.

A question was asked about the precept if the funds are not required for Brook Path. They were advised that the Parish Council is responsible for a number of assets which require ongoing maintenance and improvement and funds could be reallocated to improve these assets.

A resident commented that the Parish Council could have forewarned residents about the increase in the precept. The Chairman advised that there was an explanation in the minutes of 31 January and updates in the newsletter. A resident thanked the Parish Council for the efforts of members (who are all volunteers) who have been working to try and resolve a huge issue for the benefit of the community. It is beholden on residents to follow what's happening and to support the Parish Council in its progress. The Chairman added that one way of keeping abreast of events is to attend Council meetings and, especially since September, it has been inevitable that Brook Path was going to be on the agenda.

240313.03 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensation.

240313.04 Ratification of Minutes

Members received the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 31 January 2024. It was agreed unanimously that those minutes are signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record of the meeting.

240313.05 Reports

5.1 Police Report and Community Speedwatch

PCSO Bunce apologised for not attending the most recent PACT meeting. He advised that there have been no crimes in Kenton over the last 6 weeks.

5.2 County Councillor's Report

Cllr Connett reported that TDC has issued an Untidy Land Notice on the owner The Dolphin Inn.

5.3 District Councillor's Report

Cllr Taylor reported that TDC has now agreed the budget. The increase for an average band D property will be 2.99%, which equates to 11p per week. Up to 100% council tax support will still be available to those households in need. Voluntary grants will be maintained at current levels, a blue badge parking permit scheme is being introduced and the Councillors' community fund is being maintained at £1,000 each and is open for applications from 1 April.

5.4 Volunteer Flood Warden's Report

There are no blocked drains or gullies in the village. The drains around the school were gully-sucked for the first time since September. A resident advised that the drain at the bottom of the steps is blocked. A resident also advised there was a blocked drain in Slittercombe Lane but DCC have now unblocked this. She also questioned whether there is a blocked drain on East Town Lane near Manor Gardens. The Chairman advised that he does keep an eye on this one.

5.5 Action Report – update on outstanding matters

5.5.1 Mobile phone mast:

Cllr Savill reported that there was a meeting on 13 February about installing a mast on the church tower. An expert present at the meeting advised that it would cost £10k-50k to install before maintenance, insurance, set up costs etc. Whilst the Church was happy to support a mast on the church, DCC has no funds available for this and so it was decided that it was a non-starter. A mobile phone company would not fund it as there isn't the clientele in the village to service. A resident mentioned that Crowd Funding could be explored.

240313.06 Brook Path & Slittercombe Lane

See open forum.

240313.07 Finance and Governance

Members received the invoices for payment and it was agreed unanimously that the payments as listed are approved (attached).

240313.08 Village Maintenance

A job specification has been approved and quotes are being sought. Whilst this is being resolved, Chris Britton has offered to cut the grass on the Triangle as part of his Kenton in Bloom role. He will also spray the weeds when the rain stops.

240313.09 Planning

9.1 New planning applications/appeals

None

9.2 Decisions

9.2.1 23/02126/LBC - 1 Court Hall, Kenton
Repair works following flood damage

Members noted that TDC has granted conditional listed building consent.

9.2.2 23/00914/LBC – 11 Oxtton House, Kenton
Retention of patio doors and windows

Members noted that TDC has granted conditional listed building consent

9.2.3 23/01604/FUL – 7 Castle Gate, Kenton
Retrospective change of use of annex to a mixed annex and holiday use

Members noted that TDC has granted conditional planning permission.

9.3 **Other matters**

As reported by Cllr Connett, an Untidy Land Notice has been served on the owner of The Dolphin Inn.

240313.10 Highways and Footpaths

All highways defects should be reported on:

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem>

Members noted the recent landslide on Kenton Hill which spilled into the highway. The Chairman thanked Cllr Connett and DCC for their quick response in dealing with this. Cllr Connett advised that arising from the last slip, he has asked if DCC has any plans to assess its stability given its proximity to the narrow footpath and highway and it awaiting a response.

240313.11 Car Park and Triangle

Members received a request from The Rodean to use the Triangle for drinks and a light menu for this year's spring and summer season. This was unanimously supported.

240313.12 Playing Field & Hard Court

The Chairman reported that some of the equipment has been replaced. Additional equipment is still required, but this is subject to raising more funds. At some point, the hard court will also need resurfacing

The school has taken no action with regard to the dangerous space between the hard court and the fence adjacent to the highway. It was agreed to write again to the school reminding them of their responsibility.

240313.13 Annual Parish Meeting

It was agreed to hold this at 7.00pm on 10 April ahead of the Parish Council meeting at 7.30pm.

240313.14 Devolution Deal Consultation

There were no comments.

240313.15 'One Teignbridge – Working Together for a Better Future'

Invitation to attend the community leaders workshop: Tuesday 26 March 2024 (Kenn Centre 10am - 12.30pm or Forde House 6-8.30pm)

This invitation was noted.

240313.16 Members' items for information or general discussion, for inclusion on future agendas and/or items requiring urgent attention

[Members were reminded that they have not received the statutory notice of this business to be transacted and should therefore recognise that any decision made may be taken to be unlawful if challenged in the future]

None

240313.17 Correspondence

The Chairman advised that he had received an email about the temporary black sheeting in the cemetery along the boundary between the cemetery and the allotments. This was put up about three years ago to protect the newly-planted hedge saplings. The Chairman offered to speak to the Allotments about whether the sheeting is still required.

240313.18 Date of Next Meetings

- Annual Parish Meeting, 10 April, 7.00pm
- April Parish Council Meeting, 10 April, 7.30pm

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Chairman

13 March 2024

Item 7:

Expenditure

Payment type	Payee	Details	Amount
Standing Order	Salaries	February	£527.62
Online	The Play Inspection Report	Annual inspection	£148.50
Online	Reids Playground Maintenance Ltd	New play equipment	£17874
Online	Powderham Estate	Half yearly rent	£650

Income (28 January – 8 March 2024)

Date received	Received from	Details	Amount
None	-	-	-

Bank Balance at 8 March 2024

Current account	£38,090.31
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