

KENTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting

10th April 2024

Present: 3 Parish Councillors (Cllr D Blount, K Savill & J Hare), County Cllr Connett, District Cllr Taylor and 14 members of the public.

Clerk: Suzanna Hughes

The meeting was chaired by Cllr David Blount (Parish Council Chairman).

APM240410.01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- Cllr Smith
- Cllr Bright

APM240410.02 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman outlined projects which the Council has been involved in over the past year:

The car park wall has been repointed and looks much smarter.

Playpark equipment – much of this had to be removed as it was not deemed to be safe and some replacements have been made with a view to adding to this as funds become available.

The Council completed the Emergency Action Plan which is on the Parish Council's website. The Council is grateful to the Victory Hall Committee and the Church who have agreed to be reception centres in the case of an emergency.

Robert Neill has been appointed the volunteer food warden. He has done some great work and is always out and about looking for any problems. A group has been formed to keep an eye on things.

The biggest problem for the year has been Brook Path. There have been many meetings and items of correspondence to try to seek a resolution. The Chairman thanked Cllr David Smith for all the work he has done. The Parish Council is also thankful to County Cllr Connett and District Cllr Taylor for all the help they give us. Tomorrow (11 April), a postponed meeting of all relevant authorities is being held at County Hall to try and work out a long-term solution.

APM240410.03 OPEN FORUM AND QUESTIONS

A resident asked whether anything can be done about the speed of traffic through the village. The Chairman advised that, according to Devon County Council, there is not a speeding issue and therefore the village does not meet the criteria for traffic calming/speed reduction measures.

A resident stated that it is pleasing to see that the road and bridge has been completed on Slittercombe Lane. The gate, however, is still chained and padlocked. Could this now be unlocked? County Cllr Connett advised that the footpath is officially closed until 24 May. However, now that the contractors look as though they have finished, the Public Rights of Way officer will check this is the case with a view to reopening it and revoking the footpath closure notice. A request has also been made to clean the road which is covered in mud.

A resident asked whether there is any update on Parsons Walk? The Chairman advised that no one is taking responsibility for it. County Cllr Connett advised that Powderham Estate has expressed willing to find a three-way compromise (Church, TDC and Powderham) with a view to sharing the cost of a repair with the Church and TDC on a no-liability basis. However, TDC believe it is not their responsibility and therefore are not willing to engage.

A resident expressed concern about the recent landslips on Exeter Hill. County Cllr Connett advised that there is currently a dispute over whether DCC is responsible for the bank. He will be referring the matter to the Council's legal team. In the meantime, DCC has assessed the stability of the bank and they have advised that they are not unduly concerned about it. County Cllr Connett is aware of the issues and will be following the matter up with DCC.

A resident referred to the discussion at the last meeting about communication. Can the Parish Council consider setting up its own Facebook account? Reference was made to the discussion which took place around two years ago in relation to the Parish Council's stance on climate change and biodiversity. It would be good for the Parish Council to reconsider its stance and what actions can be taken in terms of biodiversity collapse. It is a retrograde step to use weedkiller, as was agreed in March's meeting.

A resident confirmed that the delivery of the EV chargers has been a long and complex process but chargers are now being installed in other locations as part of this phase and, whilst a date has not been given for Kenton, it is hoped that they are edging closer to an installation date. He also supports the proposal that the Parish Council should not use chemicals to treat weeds.

A question was asked about mobile phone communication. Cllr Savill advised that the installation of a mast on the church was prohibited by the potential costs (approx. £50k). A resident suggested that energy companies might be interested in contributing (to enable their Smart meters to work etc).

County Cllr Connett wished to acknowledge the severity of the flood. He and District Cllr Taylor especially wanted to thank the emergency services, all the residents who pulled together to support each other and for the work of the Parish Council since then. He continues to chase DCC about the long-term future of the school. It looks like the school will move back in September but the school is vulnerable in this location. The proposal to include a site for 35 homes on Mamhead Road in the draft Local Plan was dropped. This followed the Leader of the Council, Cllr Martin Wrigley's visit to the parish to discuss the proposal with residents. The Plan has now moved to the next stage of public examination. He ended by thanking and acknowledging, once again, everyone's support throughout the year and particularly during the awful flood event in September and the way residents pulled together during that period. The Chairman also thanked County Cllr Connett for all his support and everything he has done in the last 12 months.

APM240410.04

CLOSE

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.34pm.

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Cllr D Blount
Chairman