



**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL ON
MONDAY 6th MARCH 2023 IN THE HALL, ELHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL STARTING AT 7.30pm**

35.23 Those Present:

Councillors: K Lamb (Chair), C Chapman (Vice Chair), B Swan, G Clements, S Peall, the Clerk and 20 members of the public.

Apologies: Received and accepted from Councillor K Allen and Cllr Jones.

36.23 To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI), Other significant Interests (OSI's) or a Voluntary interest relating to items on the agenda.

None were declared.

37.23 Public Contribution

Member of the public raised their concerns about Goldway Caravan Park in Wingmore being a blot in the AONB.

The nominated persons spoke on behalf of the member of the public present about their frustration and anger at the cuts to the number 17 bus route service following the KCC Bus Reduction Consultation carried out in 2022. *Please see appendix 1 for the public reports given.*

38.23 Minutes of meeting.

1. **Resolved:** The minutes of the Ordinary meeting of the Parish Council meeting of 6th February 2023 were **approved** and were **signed as a true record** by the Chairman of meeting.

39.23 Chairman's Report

Nothing to report.

It was agreed that agenda item 47.23 would be brought forward to before agenda item 40.23.

47.23 Bus Service

1. It was **agreed** that a working party, including members of the public, would be formed to consider and discuss options following the reduction of service for the 17-bus route. The working group meeting will take place on Monday 13th March at 7.30pm.
2. To **consider** setting up a working group for the above agenda item and **agree** actions. - This agenda item was discussed and agreed in 47.23 (1).

40.23 Staffing Committee

Further to the Clerks appraisal at the Staffing Committee meeting on 6th March 2023 it was **agreed** by full Council that: The Clerk to remain on increased hours until the next Staffing Committee meeting in March 2024.

41.23 C&A Committee

1. **Church wall** – It was **agreed** to accept the quotation received from EPS Design for the cost of £2450 + VAT.
2. **Burial Ground** – Memorial application received for RPG 354 was considered and **agreed**.

42.23 Finance

1. It was **agreed** that the Accounts from January 2023 were a **true record** and were signed by the Chairman of the meeting.
2. It was **agreed** the Bank Reconciliation from January 2023 was a **true record** and was signed by the Chairman of the meeting.
3. It was **noted** that all Councillors received the Accounts for February 2023.
4. It was **noted** that all Councillors received the Bank Reconciliation for February 2023.
5. The end of year virements suggested were **considered** and **agreed**.

Amount	From Budget Provision	To Budget Provision
£200.00	Training	Clerks Salary
£410.00	Training	Clerks Office Expenses
£50.00	Insurance	Room Hire
£690.00	Tree Maintenance	Professional Fees
£500.00	Street Furniture	Ringfenced General Reserves
£860.00	Burial Ground	Ringfenced Burial Ground
£500.00	War Memorial	Ringfenced War Memorial
£1000.00	Highways	Ringfenced Churchyard / wall
£2940.00	Professional Fees	Ringfenced Churchyard / wall
£3680.00	C&A	Ringfenced C&A
£2000.00	C&A The Gore	Ringfenced C&A The Gore
£1885.00	Queens Green Canopy	Ringfenced Community Orchard
£900.00	Wellbeing	Ringfenced Wellbeing
£500.00	Increased Ringfenced	Ringfenced War Memorial
£2000.00	Increased Ringfenced	General Reserves
£1000.00	Church wall	Ringfenced Church wall

6. The February invoices were **agreed**, and payments were **approved**. *Please see appendix 2.*
7. It was **agreed** to appoint L Robbins as the Internal Auditor for the 2022/23 audit.
8. The Grant Award Policy was **reviewed**, and re-adoption **agreed**.
9. The Asset Register and Risk Assessment were **reviewed**, and re-adoption **agreed**.

43.23 Policies

1. The Risk Management Register was **reviewed** and re-adoption **agreed**.
2. The Social Media and Electronic Communication Policy was **reviewed** and re-adoption **agreed**.
3. The Communications Procedure was **reviewed** and adoption **agreed**.
4. The Complaints Procedure was **reviewed** and re-adoption **agreed**.

44.23 Risk Assessments (emailed to all Councillors prior to the meeting)

1. The risk assessment for The Gore was reviewed and re-adoption **agreed**.
2. The risk assessment for the Well was reviewed and re-adoption **agreed**.
3. The risk assessment for the War Memorial was reviewed and re-adoption **agreed**.
4. The risk assessment for the Burial Ground was reviewed and re-adoption **agreed**.
5. The risk assessment for King George V was reviewed and re-adoption **agreed**.
6. The risk assessment for Churchyard was reviewed and re-adoption **agreed**.

45.23 Planning

1. The received planning applications were **noted**, and comments **agreed**:
23/0163/FH/TCA - The Sycamores, High Street, Elham, Canterbury, CT4 6SY - Works to trees in a Conservation area comprising of T1 Fir crown reduction by 4 metres and T2 mixed hedge to be removed. **Resolved: No Objection.**
23/0149/FH & 23/0208/FH - Kings Arms, The Square, Elham, Canterbury, - 3 new timber fascia panels (2 to front elevation and 1 to barn outbuilding), 1 new swing sign mounted on existing bracket. Existing gold lettering to be located above new main entrance to the side elevation (fixed to roof of new lobby). **Resolved: No Objection.**
23/0201/FH - Longland Farm, Exted Hill, Elham, Canterbury, CT4 6UD - Installation of roof-mounted solar photovoltaic panels on agricultural building. **Resolved: Comments of the Council : We ask that the Planning Officer can confirm, that based on the previous planning application, it is our belief that this was based on this building to be used as storage for dry feed and agricultural equipment and machinery (Y19/0001/PA) and that this is not being contravened? – if this is still being adhered then we do not object to this application.**
23/0074/FH – The Gore, Park Lane, Elham - Alterations and extension to the existing sports pavilion. **Resolved: Elham Parish Council would not be commenting on this application as they're the applicant. Elham Parish Council would instruct an Ecologist to carry out a Bat Scope Survey. It was agreed that the Council could expend up to £300.**
23/0270/FH & 23/0283/FH Listed Building Consent- Manor Cottage, The Row, Elham, Canterbury, CT4 6UL - Single storey rear extension. **Resolved: No Objection.**
23/0274/FH- Old Mount Barn, Mount Hill, Rhodes Minnis, Canterbury, CT4 6YD - Single storey extension to existing house, an additional outbuilding and external works to garage. **Resolved: NO OBJECTION. Comments of the Council: Elham Parish Council request a condition that the proposed buildings remain ancillary to the main property (Old Mount Barn).**
2. The planning applications received since the agenda was published were **noted**, and comments **agreed**. **None were received.**
3. The decisions made by Folkestone and Hythe District Council were **noted**: **None were received. None were received.**

46.23 Annual Meetings

1. It was **agreed** that the Annual meeting of the Parish Council would take place following the Annual meeting of the Parish on Monday 15th May 2023.

48.23 Consultations

It was **agreed** that Councillor was response as an individual, if there wished, to the KCC Community Services Consultation. The consultation will also be discussed at the Wellbeing Advisory Committee meeting on 15th March.

Agenda item 47.23 was moved prior to agenda item 40.23.

49.23 County Councillor Susan Carey - Member for Elham - Valley Kent County Council - A verbal report was given.

KCC set its budget for 2023/24 at an all day budget meeting on 09 February. The share of your council tax that funds KCC services will rise by just under 5% which is less than half the rate of inflation that had to be met over the last year. Inflation has been falling recently but is still higher than this rise so there will also be £55m of savings. In that context it's unsurprising that there were no proposals from any of the political parties at KCC to reinstate the bus subsidy reduction which was consulted on last year and came into effect from 12 February 2023. This included an annual subsidy of £46,613 to Stagecoach for four journeys operating Monday to Saturday in the evening on the No 17 bus route. Sometimes the bus company continues a service even when the subsidy is withdrawn and I know Stagecoach was looking at the possibility of running one service later in the evening but it is their commercial decision whether to do so or not. KCC does not run bus service and has no obligation to do so but we are one of the last County Councils to provide subsidies for bus routes and to subsidise the Kent Saver passes for schoolchildren. We are concentrating our remaining subsidy on the bus routes which take children to/from school. (The day services of the No 17 receive no subsidy and have enough passengers to to cover their costs.)

If there is interest in running a community minibus it may be possible for KCC to help with the provision of a vehicle and insurance. It could either run the normal route at the same times or connect to another route such as the No 16.

As difficult as these savings will be the alternative is to have Government commissioners take over, remove more discretionary services and put council tax up by 15% as is happening in Croydon.

There will be more savings to come across all services at KCC. Consultations have started about savings in how KCC delivers community services such as children's centres, adult learning, social care and about post 16 school transport. There will be further consultations to come and you can sign up for consultations at letstalkkent.gov.uk There's also a residents' newsletter which you can subscribe to on www.kent.gov.uk which includes news about when policies and proposals are open for comment.

Please remember there is help available for individuals and families struggling to pay bills (including council tax) and a useful place to look is on the KCC website under the 'Kent Together' banner or ring 03000 41 92 92.

My role at KCC includes special responsibility for the disposal of household waste from households in Kent. I'm pleased to report that a national survey by AEG found Kent tops the league for the amount of food waste that's recycled. Kent's food waste is sent to Blaise Farm near Maidstone where it's turned into biogas or fertiliser. It's

not only good for the environment but it also costs around a tenth of the price to send it to the Energy from Waste plant (the stuff you put in your green lidded bins). So thank you to everyone who uses the right bin for each type of waste as it really makes a difference.

Susan Carey, Member for Elham Valley, Kent County Council

District Councillor – Stuart Peall

Folca: Preparation works begin-Works to bring the Folca building in Folkestone back into use are due to start next week (from Monday 6 March). Folca will be separated into two parts: the Edwardian part of the site in Bouverie Place and the Art Deco section in Sandgate Road.

Residents urged to not let recycling go to waste -Folkestone & Hythe District Council has launched a new campaign aimed at preventing loads of recycling being lost when the wrong items are put in bins. The *Don't Let Your Recycling Go to Waste* drive aims to help residents avoid “wish-cycling”, which is when something is put in a recycling bin in the hope it can be recycled. With a focus on myth busting, the campaign will look at reducing contamination and increasing the amount recycled in the district through reminders of good recycling and answering frequently asked questions about waste.

District to welcome new Changing Places toilets - Folkestone & Hythe District Council has secured £205,000 of government funding to bring three new Changing Places toilets to the district. Facilities will be installed in the Lower Leas Coastal Park, the Coastal Destination project at Littlestone and Folca in Folkestone town centre. Changing Places toilets are designed to meet the needs of disabled children and adults with complex needs and rely on carer support. They differ from standard disabled toilets designed for those who can use a toilet independently. Specialist equipment includes ceiling hoists and changing tables.

Council contract drives carbon reduction - A 5% drop in carbon emissions by the district's waste operator has been welcomed by Folkestone & Hythe District Council. As part of its contract with the council, Veolia had committed to support Folkestone & Hythe's objective of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030. Reporting its 2022 figures compared to the previous two years Veolia has attributed the drop in emissions partly to a reduction in the fuel consumption of its vehicles. This is due to equipping new vehicles with electric bin lifts under the new contract and making sure that routes are as efficient as possible and unnecessary journeys reduced. There has been an 11% decrease in electricity use at the Folkestone depot in Military Road where LED lighting has been fitted recently. In addition, the consumption of gas, largely used for heating at the depot, has decreased by 15.7%.

50.23 Correspondence

The receipt of correspondence was **noted**, and any required actions **agreed**. *Please see appendix 3.*

51.23 Date of next meeting and Close

The next ordinary meeting of the Parish Council will be on Monday 3rd April 2023 at 7.30pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.35pm.

Appendix 1 – Report from members of the public regarding 17 bus route service,

WORDS FOR PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MONDAY 6 MARCH 2023

Thank you Mr Chairman for giving me the opportunity to speak today about the ill thought through and devastating cuts to Elham's only bus service, the No 17. Although not specifically within the remit of the Parish Council this is a call for help in the hope you might – perhaps in partnership with other affected Parish Councils – make representations on our behalf . Whatever might be happening elsewhere, this will have such a far reaching effect on Elham village life and our community that we hope there is some possible action.

Evening services which depended on a subsidy from the KCC have been slashed as the subsidy has been withdrawn. The last service from Folkestone is now at 17.40 and from Canterbury at 18.50. This means those who for various reasons might be unable to drive or are without a car cannot leave our village after 16.00 – unless they can afford £20+ for a taxi from Folkestone or £27 from Canterbury.

KCC's decision I would suggest calls into question one of the fundamental principles of local government – that of Transparency through openness and accountability. Where were the Nolan principles? Where was there any scrutiny or impact assessment? The “consultation” was a carefully designed questionnaire allowing no flexibility in response – and was sent only to those on an email list. Our Parish Council mentioned it in the Village Newsletter – but this showed a web link. This all assumed access to the internet, which many affected by this decision did not have. It would appear that passenger numbers for those services provided to KCC as part of their decision might not necessarily have been representative as they were very soon post pandemic. How could they be relevant?

I tried for weeks to find out what had been decided. Stagecoach's helpline had no knowledge of any changes. KCC's website still today is saying that the decision about the No 17 was “Subject to the Outcome of the KCC Decision process”. Councillor Carey could not provide clear information. I held on for half an hour when I phoned KCC as no-one knew who to put me through to. There was no publicity at all on buses or bus stops – until one week before the change when all the bus stop information miraculously changed. This is not transparency.

KCC negotiated the original contract with Stagecoach based on the subsidy – why blame Stagecoach for the cuts? Was any attempt whatsoever made to try to renegotiate the contract – in a way that it could work for everyone? This cut is a miniscule percentage of KCC's budget and has a devastating effect on so many people – in particular the young, elderly, disabled and less well off in the community.

There is no joined up thinking – buses are emblazoned with “Now its time to switch from the car to the bus” to publicise the extension of the government's £2 fare scheme. How does it fit with Councillor Carey's Cabinet responsibility for the Environment and with the Government's net zero target. Parking charges are sky high in both Canterbury and Folkestone. Canterbury is planned to become a Smart City with no driving allowed across the city. Folkestone's ambitious “Place Plan” assumes no-one will drive into Folkestone – and its “levelling up” funds from the Government mean the bus station will be turned into a park!

Mr Chairman you will hear some more detailed examples on those affected when my colleagues speak shortly. But we are asking you as our Parish Council please to help our community.

Thank you.

Notes for Elham Parish Council Meeting – Monday 6th March 2023

Who will be affected and subsequent impact on other services:

Young people unable to socialise and attend after-school clubs and events

Impact: Mental health/increased car usage

Result: More money needed to deal with mental health issues

Parents Driving children to various activities, including vital medical appointments, many outside normal hours and not covered by daytime bus schedule

Impact: Financial, School Attendance & Environment

Result: More money required to help those in need, longer delays in treatment, children being taken to appointments during school hours, and more emissions with increased car usage directly against KCC and Government targets.

Elderly people – unable to go out socially independently using public transport

Impact: Mental Health and independence

Result: More money needed to deal with mental and other health issues resulting from social isolation.

People using bus for work - especially those on low incomes, such as healthcare workers, who rely totally on the buses.

Impact: Reduced number of workers in sectors already critically understaffed

Result: More money needed to fund public social care.

Hospitality Sector – Post-covid recovery just beginning to help this sector.

Impact: Less people going out to eat/drink without driving, and staffing issues in a fairly low-income sector.

Result: More pubs and restaurants in towns and villages along the route closing with a subsequent loss of income to the Council in Tax.

Ukrainian Visitors – A group which didn't exist when initial 'assessment' was done.

Impact: Difficulty for them getting to and from work as they have no cars, resulting in no independence.

Result: The council needing to rehouse them elsewhere at huge cost to the housing department.

Everyone – we are living in a civilised society and ability to travel during normal waking hours is **surely a fundamental right**. How is it that virtually every other European country provide public transport at all times of day and these countries do clearly consider this to be a fundamental right. We need our Councils to help and find proper solutions.

What next?

The council simply say they had to achieve budget cuts, and it appears a saving of £46,000 was easy to achieve by simply removing the subsidy on the two last buses.

There was a consultation done in 2022, as we have already heard.

The link given by Susan Carey to see the results of this was last updated in Autumn 2022, and we only discover a week or two prior to 12th February that the last two buses will definitely disappear.

Ok, so cuts are needed....

1. Firstly, bus passenger numbers were run just post-Covid, therefore not an accurate representation when public confidence had not returned.
2. How many people were consulted who do not have access to the internet or social media?
3. Although Stagecoach is a commercial company, presumably they submitted a tender to the Council to run this route? If so, were there not specific clauses within that permission regarding buses being provided at times they are needed and offering a FULL service? Either way the Council should revisit this matter with Stagecoach, and ensure the issue of social isolation in the villages, without a complete service, is addressed and find a viable solution.
4. If we want to retain our bus service (and apparently the day time buses are profitable), there need to be late buses to make the outward journey viable, otherwise people will HAVE to use cars (if they have them) resulting in lower passenger numbers on the outward journey too. Next thing these earlier buses will also be non-profitable and service reduced to nothing, thus removing our fundamental right to travel.
5. It might also be noted that many parents have paid for an annual pass for their children at around £450/£500 per child. This was supposed to give them freedom as they get a little older and need to be more independent. Many of these families have been severely short-changed and this needs addressing. **This is also a huge income source for Stagecoach.**

Appendix 2 – February 2023 approved invoices.

February 2023 invoices for approval at March 2023 meeting

Payee	Cheque No.	Amount	VAT	Net	Comments
Clerk salary **	ONLINE	1,251.76	0.00	1,251.76	February 23 Salary
Clerks expenses	ONLINE	78.40	0.00	78.40	February 23 expenses
HMRC **	ONLINE	200.60	0.00	200.60	HMRC
Nest	Direct Debit	61.55	0.00	61.55	Clerks Pension
123.reg	Direct Debit	71.99	14.40	57.59	SSL Certificate
R Guilding (Palmer Trust)	ONLINE	225.00	0.00	225.00	The Gore Rent
B Passmore	ONLINE	240.00	0.00	240.00	Payroll Services
Land Registry	Chq 001474	130.00	0.00	130.00	FR1
Invicta Arboriculture	ONLINE	475.00	0.00	475.00	Tree Survey
Elham Primary School	ONLINE	40.00	0.00	40.00	Room Hire
The Cosy Tearoom	Debit Card	30.50	0.00	30.50	Warm Hub
KALC	Debit Card	60.00	10.00	50.00	Climate Change
Reliable Networks	ONLINE	50.16	8.36	41.80	Microsoft license February
TOTAL		£2,914.96	£32.76	£2,882.20	

* Bacs / Card payment authorised by 2 Councillors

** Bacs / card payments authorised by 2 Councillors prior to meeting

*** Nest Direct Debit set up agreed in February 2019

© transaction authorised by Chairman prior to meeting

APPROVED

Appendix 3 – Correspondence February 2023

Date	Email/ Phone Call	From	Re	Action
03.02.23	Email	Resident	17 bus route.	Clerk responded
08.02.23	Email	Resident	Litter picking equipment.	Clerk emailed FHDC and replied.
09.02.23	Email	Resident	17 bus route.	Clerk responded.
09.02.23	Email	EHDC Planning	The Gore – update to location plan.	Clerk issued revised plan.
09.02.23	Email	FHDC Planning	Weekly Planning List.	No Action.
09.02.23	Email	FHDC Planning	Delegated List.	No Action.
09.02.23	Email	KCC Cllr Carey	c.c email - general response sent to residents re 17 bus route.	Sent to Cllrs.
10.02.23	Email	FHDC Planning	23/0149/FH – Kings Arms.	Sent to Cllrs.
10.02.23	Email	Resident	c.c email - KCC Cllr Carey 17 bus service.	Sent to Cllrs.
10.02.23	Email	Zurich	Response to Clerks email enquiring about renewal.	No action until 12/04/23.
14.02.23	Email	Area Officer FHDC	Response to email sent 08.02.23 re litter picking equipment.	Clerk actioned.
14.02.23	Email	ENHW	Scam.	On facebook.
15.02.23	Email	FHDC Planning	23/0074/FH – The Gore.	Sent to Cllrs.
15.02.23	Email	KCC Cllr Carey	c.c email - Lamppost works to The Square.	Informative.
15.02.23	Email	Resident	c.c email - Lamppost works to The Square.	No action.
15.02.23	Email	Resident	c.c email - Lamppost works to The Square.	No action
16.02.23	Email	Resident	c.c email - Lamppost works to The Square.	No action.
16.02.23	Email	KCC Cllr Carey	Lamppost works to The Square.	No action.
16.02.23	Email	Resident	c.c email - Lamppost works to The Square.	No action
16.02.23	Email	Resident	Lamppost works to The Square.	Clerk telephoned resident as requested.
16.02.23	Email	EHVA	Response to Clerks email regarding the Coronation.	Clerk emailed EHVA Treasurer.
16.02.23	Email	Resident	Lamppost works to The Square following telephone call with Clerk.	No action.
16.02.23	Email	KCC Cllr Carey	Lamppost to The Square.	Informative.

17.02.23	Email	FHDC Cllr Peall	Lamppost to The Square.	No action.
17.02.23	Email	FHDC Planning	Weekly Planning List.	No Action.
17.02.23	Email	FHDC Planning	Delegated List.	No Action.
20.02.23	Email	FHDC Planning	23/0208/FH – LB – Kings Arms.	Sent to Cllrs.
20.02.23	Email	FHDC Planning	23/0201/FH Longland Farm.	Sent to Cllrs.
20.02.23	Email	ENHW	Local crimes.	On facebook.
20.02.23	Email	FHDC Transportation Manager	Lamppost to The Square.	Informative.
20.02.23	Email	FHDC Cllr Peall	Lamppost to The Square.	Informative.
20.02.23	Email	Resident	17 bus route.	Clerks responded.
23.02.23	Email	FHDC Planning	Weekly Planning List.	No Action.
23.02.23	Email	FHDC Planning	Delegated List.	No Action.
23.02.23	Email	EVHA	Response to email sent on 16.02.23 re Coronation.	Informative.
24.02.23	Email	KCC Cllr Carey	c.c email - 17 bus.	No action.
25.02.23	Email	Resident	Reply to Clerks email sent on 24.02.23.	No further action.
25.02.23	Email	EVHA	Plans for the Coronation.	Informative.
27.02.23	Email	ENHW	Campaign targeting use of mobile phones.	On facebook.
27.02.23	Email	Resident	Questions re planning application 23/0074/FH The Gore.	Clerk responded.
28.02.23	Email	FHDC Planning	23/0283/FH & 23/0207/FH – Manor Cottage.	Sent to Cllrs.
28.02.23	Email	FHDC Planning	23/0274/FH – Old Mount Barn.	Sent to Cllrs.
28.02.23	Email	ENHW	Local Crimes.	On facebook.
28.02.23	Email	Resident	Reply to email responding to questions re 23/0074/FH The Gore.	No further action.
28.02.23	Email	KALC	Climate Change Conference.	Sent to Chair and EWG.
28.02.23	Email	Resident	Litter picking equipment.	Clerk delivered to resident.
28.02.23	Email	Resident	17 bus route.	Clerk to respond.
01.03.23	Email	EHDC Elections	Register extract.	Informative.
01.03.23	Email	Church Warden	Church wall.	Clerk responded.
02.03.23	Email	FHDC Planning	Weekly Planning List.	No Action.
02.03.23	Email	FHDC Planning	Delegated List.	No Action.
03.03.23	Email	Resident	Complaint re street lighting to Hog Green.	Sent to Chair and Cllr Peall. Clerk responded.

04.03.23	Email	Resident	Complaint about lighting to Hog Green.	Sent to Chair and Cllr Peall. Clerk responded.
04.03.23	Email	Resident	17 bus route.	Clerk responded.
04.03.23	Email	Resident	17 bus route, query re public participation.	Clerk responded.
05.03.23	Email	Resident	Streetlighting to Hog Green.	Sent to Chair and Cllr Peall.