

GODMERSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parishioners Meeting held remotely via Zoom on Thursday 6th May 2021 at 7.00 pm

Present : Cllrs Taylor (in the Chair), Lee, Grayson, Gee & Johnson, KCC Cllr Bell, Julie Knuckley, Rev Sigrist, and one parishioner

In attendance: Mr. Eaton, Clerk to the Council

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from ABC Cllr Dehnel

2 Chairman's Report

Cllr Taylor read his report -

The last year for the Parish Council has been very disjointed with the majority of our meetings being held on Zoom. This was challenging in the beginning, but we learnt very quickly.

We have appreciated the ongoing problems the pandemic has caused organisations in the village and have tried to reach out to them to offer help if needed.

During the last year we have had a number of major issues that would have been a lot easier to handle if we had been able to have face to face meetings. I have to pay tribute to the support and dedication of my fellow Councillors and clerk in this difficult time.

The last 12 months have seen us deal with the usual planning applications none of which have been unconventional other than the development at Penny Pot, which is still under consideration with the planners. We are seeking clarification on the current status. We have had to deal with some very serious incidents of anti-social behaviour, which has been very disturbing and frustrating for the council as we feel for the victims and have very little power to influence any outcome. This situation is still on going and very upsetting for the residents involved.

We have also produced a Highways Development Plan for the A28 and the Village Hall cross roads. This has been a very difficult process with the Highways department. Basically, hiding behind bureaucracy and statistics. The bottom line is that we need evidence to move this forward as all the statistics say the junction and road are not a high incident area. As the road and junction provokes such passion with the community with diverse views, we need the evidence to know which way to pursue this to get the best and correct outcome for the village. This evidence will take the form of CCTV surveillance at the crossroads and traffic measuring systems at points along the A28. This has to be funded by us.

On a very positive end to my statement, we have to pay special thanks to Red, supported by

Simon for their fantastic work setting up and roll out of the fibre broadband. I know how tirelessly they worked to get this done especially Cllr Lee devoting many hours of his own time. I would like to personally thank you both as well as thanking you from the community.

One interesting point on recent examination of past records of Parish Council meetings the issues are almost identical.

3 KCC Cllr Report

KCC Cllr Clair Bell reported that it had been a strange year at KCC with all the effects and implications of COVID. Help had been targeted towards vulnerable families and young people. Clair also reported that all meetings had been held online with many staff working from home. It had been a difficult year financially but KCC had agreed a balance budget

4 Guest speakers and Reports

Rev Cathy Sigrist spoke about the effects of COVID on her work and reported that most Services had been held virtually by ZOOM. Cathy was fairly new to her role and given the restrictions of COVID hadn't managed to meet many people but was looking forward to doing so soon

Julie Knuckley spoke about the Godmersham Relief in Need Charity, comprising of 5 Trustees. Julie spoke in general terms about the work of the Charity and the types of grants that had made mainly to support and help young people in the Village

Matt Gee reported on how the Village Hall had suffered financially over the last year being closed for most of the time due to COVID. Matt was pleased to report that ABC had provided grants which had kept the Hall afloat and that he and the other Committee members were looking forward to reopening the Hall for business as usual

5 Public discussion

There was a general discussion about the problem of dogs being walked off leads in the Village Hall grounds and the problems this had caused. The Parish Council's proposals to have certain areas where dogs could be walked on leads, and off lead, was discussed and were considered a fair and reasonable solution

There being no other business the Meeting closed at 7.50 pm