

VIGO PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting of Council Members
held by zoom on Monday 16th January 2023 at 7.30pm.

Present	Cllr Pat Banks (in the Chair). Cllr Simon Chaplin; Cllr Sharon Cottam; Cllr Mandie Jones; Cllr Alan White; Cllr Andy Woolway. Mrs Joanne Glass (Clerk)
In Attendance	Adam Holloway (MP) (left at 19:45); Cllr Harry Rayner (KCC Member for Malling West) (left at 19:50) PCSO Kirsty Lowe & PCSO Sharon Balman (both left at 19:55).

1] To receive Apologies for Absence

1108. Cllr Mike Germain (VPC); Cllr Jim Haslem (VPC); Cllr Dave Hawkins (VPC).
Cllr Ejaz Aslam (GBC); Cllr Denise Tiran (GBC).

2] To receive Declarations of Interest

1109. None.

3] Questions from the Press and Public

1110. None.

4] Borough and County Council Representative Reports

1111. None received.

5] Police and Community Warden Reports

1112. PCSO Lowe & PCSO Balman attended the Parish Meeting to bring Members attention to a new initiative "My Community Voice". Fliers were provided for information.

My Community Voice is a two-way engagement tool from Kent Police, which provides real-time messages directly from the police officers, staff and volunteers about matters that may affect the community.

The Parish Council were assured that My Community Voice was not replacing crime reporting, which should still be directed to 101 / 999 accordingly.

The Clerk would put the flier on social media and on the website.

[Action: Clerk]

1113. It was noted that the number of PCSOs in Gravesham Rural had reduced from 17 to 6. This was due to a restructure, with many PCSOs eventually being replaced by Police Officers as part of the Governments police up-lift programme.

1114. PCSO Lowe & PCSO Balman left the meeting at 19:55.

6] To approve the minutes of the Full Parish Council Meeting held on 21st November 2022 & ratify the decisions taken at the Meeting of Parish Council Members (by zoom) on 12th December 2022.

1115. The minutes from the Full Parish Council Meeting held on 21st November 2022 were noted and agreed, then signed by Cllr Banks (as Chair) having been accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

1116. The notes from the Meeting of Parish Council Members (by zoom) on 12th December were not available but would be presented to the next meeting.

7] To Discuss Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes (not otherwise on the agenda)

1117. Directional signs for the village shops, to be placed on the chicane in Waterlow Road. The Clerk had measured the sign and responded to RBLI.

[Action: ongoing]

1118. Directional sign for Vigo Shops, to be installed at the Whitepost Lane end of Harvel Road. The Clerk had measured the sign and responded to RBLI.

[Action: ongoing]

1119. Insurance: Key Person Cover and the Legal Expenses Cover, request for quote to increase cover. No response as yet.

[Action: ongoing]

1120. STANDARD POLICY FOR USE OF VILLAGE GREEN: (Charity event scheduled for 22nd July 2023). The Clerk was working on this and would have a policy for approval in time for the February Parish Council Meeting.

[Action: Clerk]

1121. Alan Basford Memorial Bench. The Clerk had written to numbers 101, 103 & 152 Timberbank to let them know about the installation. The Clerk had given the residents a date of Friday 17th February to respond by.

[Action: ongoing]

1122. No parking" sign in The Covert which had the Parish Council logo on it (not a Parish sign). The Clerk had written to the residents to state that the sign would be removed.

[Action: ongoing]

1123. "Raspberry Pi" style cameras to be deployed in Parish Council trees. The Clerk had emailed the resident and was waiting for a response.

[Action: ongoing]

1124. Cllr Cottam: Dynamic Councillor: The tickets for the 23 March online event had not yet been released. The Clerk would book this (in conjunction with Cllr Cottam) in due course.

[Action: ongoing]

1125. Land adjacent to 21 Churchside: The Clerk had emailed the Bona Vacantia Department with a copy of the title register for K95205, and information on Jondy (when they were dissolved, and their last known address). No response had been received as yet.

[Action: ongoing]

1126. Land to the rear of 112 – 200 Highview. One of the companies recommended by Mr Eastland to carry out a survey no longer did this type of work. The Clerk had contacted the second company recommended and was now waiting for a response.

[Action: ongoing]

8] Services

Grounds Maintenance

1127. HORNBEAMS SINK HOLE: Highview Services had acquired a truck load of soil which had been put down in this location. They would now monitor the area to see if more were required. The Clerk would make a diary note to get an update in 3 months' time.]
1128. PLANTERS: Rather than write to all properties in Ash Keys, the Clerk had emailed two residents that she knew, to find out if they had any idea who was maintaining the planters. No response had been received yet.

[Action: ongoing]

1129. QUAD BIKES: Highview Services hoped to install a barrier at the top of the bund leading to Harvel Road in the coming weeks.

[Action: ongoing]

1130. WORK EXPERIENCE: Hadlow College had confirmed they did not insure students on work placements. Highview Services had confirmed that their insurance would cover the work placement, and as such would now send a copy of both his Employers Liability and Public Liability Insurance to the Clerk.

[Action: Highview Services]

1131. "Please do not dump grass cuttings / garden waste here". The Clerk had made and laminated ten signs, which had now been passed to Highview Services.
1132. It was not entirely clear which resident from The Covert was dumping grass cuttings, nor who had planted the tree (thought to be a willow). The Clerk had written to all 9 properties in The Covert regarding this.
1133. Land to the side of 11 The Paddock. Cllr Banks reported that this area had now been cleared.
1134. Damaged Chestnut Fencing adjacent to No.1 Timberbank. The Clerk had asked Highview Services to remove this fencing.
1135. A local resident had contacted the Clerk regarding a delivery driver who had damaged Parish Land (ruts) as a result of getting his vehicle stuck on the grass. This incident had occurred just before Christmas – the resident had details of the driver should the Parish Council wish to pursue this matter with the company. The Clerk had asked Highview Services to attend and establish the level of repair needed, before any further decision was made.

[Action: ongoing]

Grass Cutting

1136. Nothing to report.

Trees

- 1137.** Cottage: trees to the side (on Parish Land). The resident had responded to state that his recollection of the meeting was not the same as Council Members, and that he was under the impression that the Hornbeam had been coppiced in the past and could be coppiced again. The resident also disputed that the Hornbeam was in excess of 30 years old as they felt, due to its height, it was maybe 12 or 14 years old. Highview Services had confirmed that this was not their opinion.

The resident also noted that the issue was not just the gate posts, but also the patio, which had been damaged and recently replaced.

Lastly, the resident offered a suggestion to the Parish – they would like trees removed which they felt were damaging their gate and patio, and they would then purchase five new trees to be planted as and where the Parish felt appropriate. The resident felt this suggestion would result in their property being protected from further damage, whilst protecting the environment and beauty that is the Vigo woodlands.

The Parish were not agreeable to the supply of five new trees, as they did not intend to authorise any work to remove the trees that were next to Chestnut Cottage.

It was noted that the gate to the side of the garden opened onto Parish Land. This matter was raised with the resident some years ago, which resulted in the resident asking for retrospective approval so that the gate could remain (the gate had been installed by a previous resident). The Parish had not given retrospective approval; therefore it was noted that the gate should not even be there still.

However, regarding the damage to gate posts, it was agreed that the solution was still for the resident to move his gate along.

Regarding the patio, the Parish Council noted there was no evidence of damage, and photographs had not been taken as evidence when the original patio had been lifted. However, if the resident felt that the roots from the Hornbeams were causing issues, they could engage a professional to cut the roots back (only to the boundary line) to prevent any further issues. It would be a requirement that the resident sought permission from Gravesham Borough Council (as the tree had a Preservation Order) and that an assurance was given that pruning the roots back would not damage the trees health or stability.

Clerk to write to the resident.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1138.** Highview: Work to the tree adjacent to this property was scheduled for the beginning of February, the Clerk had updated the resident. *Post meeting note: work has now been carried out.
- 1139.** Oak on Waterlow Road: Work to this tree had not been carried out as yet. The Clerk had asked that this was attended to as a matter of urgency.

[Action: pending]

- 1140.** Ash, rear of 2 The Gallops. The Clerk had asked that Highview Services attend to this as a matter of urgency. Highview Services needed to engage a second tree surgeon for the work and were waiting for a call back regarding this.

[Action: pending]

1141. SCOUT HUT TREES: The Clerk had emailed the scouts to arrange a date.

[Action: ongoing]

1142. HIGHVIEW: Tree to the rear. Clerk to ask the Parish Tree Wardens (Cllr Germain and Mr Talboys) to inspect.

[Action: Clerk]

1143. Timberbank: Resident noted concerns about a tree directly opposite their house – the tree appeared to have some branch damage which they felt could be dangerous. The Clerk would get Highview Services to inspect.

[Action: Clerk]

1144. Hornbeams: Resident had concerns about two chestnut trees, one covered with ivy and the other with dead branches. The Clerk would ask Highview Services to inspect.

[Action: Clerk]

1145. Stonecroft: Resident had emailed as the electricity board had dug a large hole next to the property, which appeared to have compromised the roots of two large trees. Highview Services had inspected and confirmed that the trees had not been compromised, and that the exposed roots were from a rhododendron which was not large in size. The trees presented no safety issue. The Clerk had updated the resident.

1146. Alders outside 2 / 4 / 6 Chestnut Lane. The Clerk had received an email from a resident, noting that one of the Alders had been felled, and asking if the remaining tree would also be removed.

The Clerk noted that an Arboricultural Survey had been carried out on these two Alders due to concerns that a third Alder in the same vicinity had come down during a storm some months previously.

The Arborist had inspected the stump of the failed tree and reported that the root collar contained fruiting bodies of *Ustulina deusta* were noted around the entire stem circumference. *Ustulina* is an aggressive decay fungus that results in sudden, brittle failure of the affected part, the Arborist considered that the reason for the failure of this tree was the presence of the *Ustulina* decay.

No evidence of *Ustulina* was found on either T5 or T6 (the remaining two Alders in the same location).

T6 however, appeared to be of poor form, presenting limited potential to develop into a tree of good structure. It had been suggested that T6 be removed and replaced with a specimen of good form and good long-term potential. This tree had subsequently been removed.

T5 was noted to be of good condition with no work recommended. The Clerk would update the resident.

[Action: Clerk]

1147. Trees to the rear of 1-9 Chestnut Lane. Resident enquired as to whether these could be reduced in height (if complete removal was not an option). The resident felt that the ratio of tree height to proximity of the rear of each house had diminished greatly over the years). Clerk to ask Highview Services to inspect and report back.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1148.** SCHOOL BUNGALOW: The Clerk had received a letter from GHG Claims & Risk Solutions, regarding the subsidence claim at the school bungalow (Alder).

Some trees in the ownership of the resident had been removed / reduced, and superstructure repairs were carried out and completed in August 2021. However further site investigations had been carried out and the presence of roots from the Alder to a depth of 2.0m beneath the bungalow had been confirmed. Removal of the Alder had been recommended by GHG.

The Clerk had passed this letter onto Gallagher (broker) who would forward it Crawfords (Loss Adjusters). For information, Gallagher noted that in August 2021 Crawfords had advised that they had closed the case as they had not heard anything from the claimant.

[Action: Ongoing]

- 1149.** Mr. Colin Talboys had contacted the Clerk to ask if the Parish Council wished him to remain as a tree warden, as he had not been contacted for some time. The Parish Council felt that it would be good to retain Mr Talboys, as he had a wealth of knowledge which would prove to be useful. All agreed. The Clerk would update Mr. Talboys and start contacting him should any trees need to be inspected. The Clerk would also update Cllr Germain (as the other Parish Tree Warden).

[Action: Clerk]

Future Tree Projects

- 1150.** The working party had not met as yet. It was noted that it would be useful to add Mr Talboys onto the working party membership. Cllr Chaplin (working party Chair) was happy with this. Clerk to update the working party list and give Mr Talboys contact details to Cllr Chaplin.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1151.** Cllr Haslem had emailed the Clerk to say that he felt that the Parish needed to action some tree planning (if there is scope) before the Spring. Cllr Haslem reported that Highview Services were aware of areas which were looking bare. The Clerk would speak to Highview Services.

[Action: Clerk]

9]

Planning

Local Authority Tree Preservation Applications

- 1152.** 136 Timberbank: Fell 1 x Ash, reduce 1 x Hornbeam, fell 1 x Silver Birch. Application number 20221324. No objections.
- 1153.** SWA Water Boost Station, Harvel Road, Meopham, TN15 7JT: Crown lift mixed groups of trees along access road to 5m above ground level. Crown lift mixed group of trees around reservoir to 4m above ground level. Section fell Ash tree to 50mm above ground level. Crown lift Oak tree to 5m above ground level. Section fell

Willow to 50mm above ground level. Vegetation clearance of old reservoir site to 50mm above ground level. Application Number 20221299. No objections.

Full Planning Applications

- 1154.** GBC20221243: Village Tandoori (5 The Bay): Retention of single storey rear extension, including change of brickwork to weatherboard. The Clerk had responded to Gravesham Borough Council as agreed.

Covenant Three Applications

- 1155.** Churchside: The Clerk had sent a formal letter to the resident.
- 1156.** Timberbank: Replacement of two windows to the side (replacing clear glass with leaded to match the rest of the house) & replacement front door: No update.

[Action: ongoing]

- 1157.** Highview: Replacement windows and doors. The Clerk had checked, and the replacement windows were white framed with clear glass. The front door was black. There were no objections, the Clerk would write giving approval.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1158.** Highview: Erection of single storey rear and front extensions and conversion of garage into a habitable room. (Ref GBC application 20220366). The Clerk had sent a formal letter to the resident.
- 1159.** Croftside: Erection of car port / patio cover. The Clerk had sent a formal letter to the resident.
- 1160.** Stonecroft: Replacement doors. The Clerk had not yet written giving approval but would do so as soon as possible.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1161.** Churchside: Replacement windows. The Clerk had written giving covenant approval.
- 1162.** Timberbank: Installation of driveway. The Clerk had sent an updated approval letter as agreed.
- 1163.** Woodside: Installation of a log burner. The log burner would be at the rear of the house, with the flue going up the back wall. A drawing to illustrate the proposal had been provided. There were no objections, Clerk to write giving covenant approval.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1164.** Timberbank: Installation of a driveway. The Clerk had been in discussion with this resident prior to the application being made.

The Clerk had noted that google maps showed a tree in the front garden. The resident confirmed this ornamental flowering cherry had been removed as it was diseased.

The Clerk also noted that some of the garden fronted onto Parish Land. The resident confirmed (by way of a plan) that the proposed entry to the driveway would not necessitate driving over Parish Land.

Having looked at the plans and considered the proposal, the Parish Council confirmed they would have no objections to this, and as such approval would be given. Clerk to respond to the resident accordingly.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1165.** Stonecroft: Replacement windows. To replace five existing white UPVC windows with new units (also white UPVC). Drawing had been supplied. All would be white framed units with clear glass (with the exception of the bathroom window which would be obscure glass). There were no objections. Clerk to respond giving approval.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1166.** Churchside: Installation of solar panels. The resident informed that they were having solar panels installed as part of the "Solar Together Kent2 project. As such it was agreed there was no need to seek covenant approval. The draft Solar Panels Policy would cover this in due course. The resident had been updated by the Clerk.

- 1167.** The Coach Drive: Replacement cladding. Resident wished to replace existing cladding in the near future. A number of questions were asked:

- Would the Parish Council allow cladding with white render.
- Would the Parish Council allow cladding of a different colour / material – for example a cement-based cladding such as Hardy Plank.
- Does covenant approval need to be sought in advance.

It was noted that the Parish Council would not permit any form of render. However, Hardiplank would be acceptable as long as it was in white or grey. Covenant approval should be sought in advance. Clerk to respond.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1168.** Highview: Replacement front door. A photograph of the proposed door had been supplied. There were no objections. Clerk to respond giving approval.

[Action: Clerk]

Other Planning Matters

- 1169.** Timberbank: Porch built in front of building line. The resident had responded to acknowledge receipt of the Parish Council's letter.

The resident informed that he had also forwarded copies to GBC Planning Enforcement, and Mr Tim Spencer (who appeared to be a planning agent who had put the original planning application into the Borough Council).

The resident claimed he had never seen the planning approval letter which gave an informative to advise that the Parish Council should be contacted regarding

covenant approval. The Clerk noted that the approval letter from GBC had been sent to the resident, but care of Mr Tim Spencer (the agent).

The resident also asked for details of who was "in control" of the covenant, so that his solicitor could contact them directly. The Clerk would respond accordingly.

[Action: Clerk]

Fowlers Stone Wood Update

1170. No update.

Enforcement Issues

1171. Churchside. The Clerk had sent an email to Planning Enforcement to ask for an update.

[Action: ongoing]

1172. Timberbank: Unauthorised outbuilding to the rear of the property, partially on Parish Land.

The Clerk had received correspondence from a planning agent who was acting on behalf of the residents in this matter.

The planning agent informed that a survey had been carried out which confirmed that the outbuilding was partially on Parish land. A copy of the relevant part of the survey plan had been supplied. The outbuilding was noted on the plan as exceeding the boundary by between 630mm and 905mm.

The agent informed that the outbuilding had been erected based on the line of the fence which had been erected by the previous owner, which was now clearly incorrect.

The Planning agent asked if the Parish Council would consider allowing the outbuilding to remain with an encroachment onto the land that was in the ownership of the Parish Council.

The Parish noted that it was unfortunate that this incorrect boundary line had not been picked up as part of the conveyancing process.

The Parish Council were not agreeable to allowing the building to remain, as Parish Land could not be sold, gifted, leased or disposed of in anyway, unless for the benefit of the whole village. The Clerk was to respond to the agent.

[Action: Clerk]

Solar Panels

1173. Cllr Banks had drafted a Solar Panel policy which would be put to the February Parish Council Meeting.

[Action: Cllr Banks]

10] Covenant Breaches & Enforcement of Restrictive Covenants & Properties in Disrepair.

1174. TIMBERBANK: Hedge on Parish Land. This hedge had not been reduced as yet, but the Clerk noted it was due to be removed in 2023 anyway, so it seemed unnecessary to pursue the reduction at this time.

[Action: ongoing]

1175. ASH KEYS: The Clerk had emailed GBC for an update.

[Action: ongoing]

11] To Discuss Requests from and Matters Regarding Residents.

1176. Paving Area outside Vigo School. No update.

[Action: ongoing]

1177. Croftside: Items of furniture etc stored on front garden. The Clerk would establish if this was still an issue before writing.

[Action: Clerk]

1178. Garage Area near 108 Highview (leading to Commority Road and used as a cut through for the Rugby Club). No update.

[Action: ongoing]

12] The Bay

1179. Post Box in need of refurbishment. The Clerk had sent another webmail to chase this up.

[Action: ongoing]

1180. Financial assistance (via grants) for shop owners. No applications had been received. The Clerk would visit and find out if any applications would be made.

[Action: Clerk]

1181. Shop Rents: Cllr Chaplin had not spoken to the Managing Agent as yet.

[Action: Cllr Chaplin]

1182. A local resident had emailed to ask about the rubbish along Harvel Road and Waterlow Road. The Parish Council felt that there was usually very little, if any, rubbish on Waterlow Road. Harvel Road was more difficult to clear because of the traffic. The Parish Council did not intend to take any further action.

The resident had also complained about speeding vehicles on Waterlow Road – it was noted that this issue was being looked at on the Highways Improvement Plan.

Clerk to update the resident.

[Action: Clerk]

13] To Discuss any Highways and Gravesham issues

1183. WATERLOW ROAD SURFACE BREAKING UP: Clerk to meet with Cllr Banks to pinpoint the areas on the online reporting map.

[Action: Clerk / Cllr Banks]

1184. DOG DIRT BINS: The Clerk had sent an email to Gravesham Borough Council for an update on this.

[Action: ongoing]

1185. SIGN FOR ADMERS WOOD ENTRANCE (Small turning circle, delivery drivers beware). The Clerk had ordered the sign as agreed.

[Action: ongoing]

1186. ADMERS WOOD: It was noted that the No Through Road graphic had disappeared from the Admers Wood road sign(s). The Clerk had reported this to Gravesham Borough Council.

[Action: ongoing]

1187. LOWER END OF TIMBERBANK (no through sign): this sign disappeared some time ago, the Clerk had got it reinstated, but it was in the wrong place. The Clerk had reported this to Kent Highways (reference 696039).

[Action: ongoing]

1188. LOWER END OF TIMBERBANK (directional sign for property numbers). Cllr White noted that there was often a vehicle which parked on Timberbank obscuring this sign. It was also noted that this sign had originally had a "no through road" marked on it, but this had faded. The Clerk had reported this to Kent Highways (reference 696042).

[Action: ongoing]

1189. CHILDREN (warning sign): Cllr White had noted that a new sign had been put up on Waterlow Road, near the Timberbank entrance. The Clerk had made enquiries with Highways, to find out why this sign had been erected, and to ask if it was in the correct place.

[Action: ongoing]

Highways Improvement Plan

1190. SPEEDING (Waterlow Road): The Clerk had emailed Ms Norris to ask if a request for a flashing speed sign on Waterlow Road could be added to the HIP.

[Action: ongoing]

1191. Marking parking bays in Admers Wood. No response had been received from Ms Norris or Mr May at GBC. The Clerk had sent an email to chase this up.

[Action: ongoing]

1192. The Clerk had emailed Ms Norris to update the Vigo Highways Improvement Plan as agreed.

Gravesham Issues

1193. It was noted that a fridge had been dumped on Parish Land near the entrance to the Admers Wood garages. The Clerk had reported this to Gravesham Borough Council who had come and removed this at no charge to the Parish.

14] Grounds Maintenance – to agree advert for tender and associated timetable

1194. The Clerk had prepared a draft timetable for advertising the tender, issuing the documents, interviewing if necessary, and awarding the contract. It should be possible to get everything finalised in time to award the contract for 1st April. The draft timetable was agreed by all.

- 1195.** The Grounds Maintenance Working Party had met on 12th January, notes of the meeting had been forwarded to all Council Members.
- 1196.** An advert for the local press had been drafted and circulated to all Members. This was noted and agreed by all present.

The Clerk had sourced advertising costs, and these were noted. It was agreed to advertise in the Kent messenger (Dartford & Gravesham edition) for one week at a cost of £409.72.

The copy deadline for the local paper was Tuesdays at 2pm. The Clerk would get the advert in the Thursday 19th January edition.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1197.** The Clerk understood that the advert did not have to go on the Contract Finders website as the value was not in excess of £189,330.

*Post meeting note: this information is incorrect, and the tender did have to be advertised via the Contract Finders website.

- 1198.** Cllr Woolway (Chair of the Grounds Working Party), Cllr Banks and the Clerk were due to meet on 24th January to look at putting the tender documents together (by combining the original grounds, grass and tree documents). This would then be sent to the working party for approval, prior to it being sent to contractors on 7th February.

[Action: Cllr Banks / Clerk]

- 1199.** It was agreed that "expressions of interest" could be made by email, but the tender itself had to be returned in a hard copy form, in an unmarked envelope (as per the Standing Orders).

- 1200.** The Clerk was to purchase an p to date JCLI contract for Grounds Maintenance, as the one the Parish had was outdated. This would be at a cost of approximately £45. All agreed.

[Action: Clerk]

15] Drainage & Flooding

- 1201.** Sunken ground around drainage / sewage cover in Waterlow Road. The Clerk confirmed that no work had been undertaken to resolve this as yet. Clerk to speak to Kent Highways to get an update.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1202.** HARVEL ROAD FLOODING: Highways had responded to state that they had received a couple of reports of flooding / ponding along Harvel Road, albeit it in different locations. An engineer had inspected these areas last year. Most of Harvel Road had no formal drainage, and all of the areas where flooding / ponding is reported are in areas where there is no drainage and water simply sheds into the verges. If the rainfall had been significantly above average, then it was suspected that everything was saturated. The only area with formal drainage in the stretch between Waterlow Road and Whitepost Lane was near Joan Cottage, which was refurbished a year ago.

Highways had agreed to undertake a Risk Assessment following the inspections and to review the signage in the area. As a short-term measure, some new / replacement "road liable to flooding" signs may be appropriate if any are missing.

The Clerk had updated the resident accordingly.

- 1203.** BLOCKED DRAIN IN HIGHVIEW. The Clerk had emailed the Drainage Team regarding this issue. It was confirmed that due to funding pressures, KCC were unable to attend drains reactively unless the matter is safety critical (risk to life or imminent danger to property). For this particular location, a single blocked drain was unlikely to cause significant issue, hence the response that was given by the maintenance team: "Highview, Vigo will be attended as part of the countrywide programme and does not meet the service level agreement for additional cleansing at this time".

The Drainage Team informed the Clerk that they didn't have a target date showing on this issue, but that it may be dealt with along with other parts of Vigo which were due for routine cleansing by the end of the current financial year.

The Clerk had updated the resident.

- 1204.** HIGHVIEW: Flooding in the area of 90 – 100 Highview. The Clerk had emailed the drainage team regarding this.

[Action: ongoing]

- 1205.** Admers Wood blocked drain. KCC reference 660237. This was now noted on the Highways online reporting system as "works completed". The Clerk had emailed the resident to confirm.

16] Winter maintenance / salt bins / road gritting

- 1206.** Following a heavy snow fall in December, the Clerk had been contacted by a number of residents regarding winter maintenance, salt bins & road gritting.

A resident had contacted KCC to ask for a salt bin to be installed on Erskine Road near the junction of Beech Mast, but Highways would not consider this as they felt there were enough bins near to this area already.

The Clerk had looked at the Highways Map to establish the amount of salt bins in the village and reported that there were 8 in total. The Clerk suggested that it would be a good idea to have an additional two bins as there seemed to be a lack of provision on Waterlow Road (near the Churchside cul-de-sacs) and also on Erskine Road (near Beech Mast).

Although Kent Highways were unlikely to assist with this, the Clerk suggested that the Parish purchase salt bins themselves and position them on Parish land. The cost of a 200l salt bin was in the region of £140.

The Clerk reported that a large bag of grit / salt was usually offered to Parish Councils by KCC each year, and this could be used to fill the bins.

It was agreed that it would be good to have additional salt bins, but that filling them would be problematic and an extra job for the grounds maintenance team who were already very busy.

Parish Council Members felt that perhaps 3 or 4 bins could be useful and suggested the following locations:

1. Erskine Road near Beech Mast
2. Erskine Road near Fern Down
3. Waterlow Road near Croftside
4. Harvel Road near the Timberbank junction.

It was suggested that the Parish Council contact Highways to inform that they were considering purchasing up to four more bins, and to ask if they would agree to adding them to their refilling schedule along with the other bins in Vigo.

Clerk to make enquiries with Kent Highways.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1207.** A local resident had written regarding the lack of gritting of the roads in Vigo. The Clerk had informed that this would be a Kent Highways issue, and as such the resident should contact them directly.

The resident felt that Kent Highways should recognise the geographical position of Vigo and send gritters to Highview and Timberbank, as the longest through roads in Vigo. The temperatures in Vigo were usually lower than those elsewhere.

Alternatively, the resident felt that the Parish Council join forces with Harvel, Snodland, Trottiscliffe, Fairseat and Culverstone to arrange for gritting to be carried out with the cost shared amongst the villages.

The Parish Council felt this was not something they would consider at the present time, being that the responsibility for gritting was with KCC. Clerk to update the resident.

[Action: Clerk]

17] Street Lighting

- 1208.** ELECTRICAL TESTING RESULTS / STRUCTURAL SURVEY RESULTS: Nick May had sent a spreadsheet which showed the structural testing results for the Vigo Lights. The Clerk had forwarded this to Streetlights Limited for their information.

The Clerk had asked Mr May for an update on the Electrical Testing Certificates, he informed he kept chasing KCC (and their contractor) and would continue to do so.

[Action: ongoing]

- 1209.** OUTSTANDING REPAIRS (PRIOR TO 01.04.2022): Nick May (GBC) had emailed to say that their records now showed that remedial work had taken place and been completed on all the faults reported prior to 01.04.2022 and that the repairs to assets following the electrical testing had also been completed.

Cllr Haslem had reconciled various spreadsheets and had checked the outstanding issues and noted that there were still a number of repairs outstanding. Cllr Haslem had drafted a letter to be sent to GBC to inform them of this, which the Clerk would send.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1210.** The Clerk had spoken to Streetlights Limited to ask if they would inspect the lights in Vigo to establish if the repairs had been done to a good standard, and if anything else

was outstanding. A cost to carry this inspection out had been quoted at £220 plus VAT. This was agreed, Clerk to arrange the inspection.

[Action: Clerk]

1211. Cllr Banks felt it was unlikely that Gravesham Borough Council would do anything to repair the columns that were leaning or were rusty. If a satisfactory response was not received in regard to this, perhaps the Parish should ask for an indemnity in case the issues do become acute, and the posts needed remedial work. Cllr Banks suggested an indemnity against remedial work being required within five years of the official handover. This is something that could be considered as and when necessary.
1212. Spread of light on streetlights. The Clerk emailed Mr Bonner to ask for advice regarding this.

[Action: ongoing]

1213. MUGA: Replacement photocell. This repair work had been carried out.
1214. The Clerk noted that the other MUGA light (far end) was not on any list that the Parish had as not working. The Clerk had emailed Streetlights regarding this and been told that the time switch had been reset and reprogrammed, which had resolved the problem.
1215. BTDH001: Streetlight near Vigo Underpass. This replacement LED lantern had been fitted.
1216. BTBY009 (column 18). It was reported that the streetlight outside 44 / 46 Timberbank was not working at all. GBC had confirmed this was not on their list for repair. The Parish Council agreed to ask Streetlights Limited to carry out a repair. Clerk to organise.

[Action: Clerk]

1217. BHAC009 (column 48) rear of 174 Highview (poor repair carried out by KCC). The Clerk was not aware if this issue had been resolved at yet, so had emailed Streetlights Limited for an update.

[Action: ongoing]

1218. BEAS002 (column 38) in Erskine Road had been vandalised beyond repair. This repair (new LED lantern) had now been carried out.
1219. BAAK002 (Column 68) Opposite 9 Admers Wood. This lamp had been vandalised and required a new LED at a cost of £435 plus VAT. Council approved this cost, Clerk to arrange the repair.

It was agreed to put a post on social media, alerting people to the costs of replacing vandalised lanterns.

[Action: Clerk]

1220. BBAS001 (Column 66) outside 9 Beech Mast: Noted that KCC had carried out a repair to this lantern, which had involved having tarmac re-laid around the base. The resident had reported that the tarmac had sunk by around four inches. This was a trip hazard; photographs had been taken. The Clerk had reported this to Mr May at GBC, who assured he would get KCC to revisit the repair.

[Action: ongoing]

18] 306 / 308 Bus Service

1221. The Clerk had written a response to Mr Jones (Public Transport Co-ordinator) making a number of points regarding the reduction in service:

- Many incidents where the passengers had been “waved on” without payment taken or passes being registered.
- Passengers being ignored and not picked up.
- Buses unreliable often not turning up at all.
- Reducing the service to every 90 minutes would be impractical as it would be difficult to know when a bus is coming unless there was access to the internet.
- The timing of the buses is not in line with the train timetable, with a gap of 90 minutes at times.
- The proposed times mean that there would be no service suitable for commuters.
- It is considered unreasonable for school pupils to have to wait for an additional half an hour for a bus. This could result in more traffic on the roads as parents have no choice but to drive and collect their children.

This letter had been copied to Borough Green Parish Council, Wrotham Parish Council and Meopham Parish Council, along with Adam Holloway (MP), Cllr Bryan Sweetland (KCC), Cllr Ejaz Aslam (GBC) & Cllr Denise Tiran (GBC).

1222. A response had been received from Mr Jones, which was forwarded to all Members and noted. Mr Jones understood the issues raised, but stated KCC would not be making the proposals if there were not significant problems affecting the bus industry in terms of driver shortages, as well as the need for KCC to make economies for budget reasons. KC was no longer in a position to provide increased funding for a growing number of services that are loss-making, as the Council faced its own financial challenges due to a much-reduced budget. It was therefore not possible for KCC to continue to fund the existing timetable for the 306/308 buses.

1223. The Clerk had put a post on Facebook asking for people to respond with their experiences of the Red Route service.

A large number of responses were received very quickly, with most of them negative. There was clearly an issue with bus passes not being recorded, or fares being taken.

It seemed unreasonable to reduce the service based on passenger numbers, when it was clear that the recorded passenger numbers were vastly under-recorded.

The Clerk had written to Mr Jones again, forwarding the examples of poor service received by Vigo residents.

1224. Cllr Sweetland had contacted David Brazier at KCC regarding the matter. Specifically, Cllr Sweetland wanted to know if an Equality Impact Assessment should be carried out. Mr Brazier felt this was not the case as the service was being reduced, and not withdrawn.

- 1225.** Cllr Harry Rayner (Wrotham Parish Council Member & KCC Member for Malling West) had attended the meeting to discuss the bus service. Cllr Rayner noted the large budgetary cuts that were being made by Kent County Council.

Cllr Rayner noted that Borough Green Parish Council, along with Wrotham, Platt, Ightham, Plaxtol and Addington were looking at some sort of subsidised bus services for their villages.

Nu-Venture has supplied them with the estimated daily cost of one bus operating between school run times, starting at Borough Green / Wrotham, running via West Malling, East Malling and Larkfield, to Maidstone, the no. 58 via Trottisciffe and Addington, the no.70 via Offham. The cost would be £125 per bus per day, for 52 weeks a year, giving a cost of £6,500.

The bus service would serve those who needed to go shopping, or attend hospital appointments etc during the day.

Mike Taylor, Chair of Borough Green Parish Council would be starting an application to the Community Transport Fund for a £10,000 grant.

Borough Green Parish Council had agreed to go forward with this, the cost to Parish Councils was between £197 per year and £3717 per year depending on the size of the electorate.

Cllr Rayner had attended the meeting to ask if Vigo Parish Council were interested in joining the project. Cllr Rayner left the meeting to give the Parish Council time to discuss the matter.

- 1226.** After Cllr Rayner had left the meeting, Parish Council Members discussed the matter fully, but agreed that a single bus service running during the day would not resolve the main issues in Vigo, in that the reduced 306/308 bus service would affect school pupils and commuters at the start and end of the day. Therefore, the Parish Council would not, at this time, join forces in the initiative. Clerk to respond to Cllr Rayner.

[Action: Clerk]

19] Provision of a “warm hub” in the village

- 1227.** The Clerk had been alerted to a post on Facebook, regarding the provision of a “warm hub” in the village. It was noted that no official contact had been made to the Parish Council regarding this.

The idea, given the small community that Vigo was, would be to provide a space, perhaps some refreshments, board games, companionship and a warm place to go, especially for those struggling with energy prices.

Some discussion took place regarding this, it was agreed that it would not be practical to set up such an initiative in the village hall, and perhaps it would be better to utilise another space. Cllr Chaplin suggested that perhaps the local pub would be an ideal

place, and the Parish could fund the provision of tea / coffee / hot soup. The Clerk had emailed The Villager, but no response had been received.

It was agreed that for now the best thing the Parish could do would be to advertise warm spaces that were available – giving opening times of the local libraries, the Pop-Up Café, and perhaps the pub as well.

[Action: Clerk]

20] Parking Issues / Electric Vehicle Charging Points

- 1228.** Highview: Electric Vehicle Charging Point. The Clerk had emailed Cllr Hawkins regarding this.

[Action: ongoing]

- 1229.** The Clerk understood that the EVCPs in the car park near the school were now live.
- 1230.** Timberbank: The Clerk had been contacted by the resident regarding the Parish Land to the front of their property. All the other parcels of Parish Land along this stretch of road had bollards, which had been installed by the Parish Council to stop people parking on and damaging the land. The area outside number 13 did not have a bollard. The Clerk explained that this was because it had not been possible to dig deep enough to install a bollard as there was a slab of concrete underground, and it was not clear what the purpose of this was.

The resident informed that parking was difficult in this area, with people parking on the grass and sometimes causing an obstruction. It was noted that the Parish Council had considered putting a piece of quarry stone on this area – Cllr Banks had emailed a company for a quote but not received a response.

This matter would be investigated again. Clerk to update the resident.

[Action: Cllr Banks / Clerk]

**21] To Receive an Update and Discuss Play Areas Issues (Play Park and Ballpark)
Ball Park**

- 1231.** Nothing to report.

Village Green Play Park

- 1232.** Missing D shackle on basket swing. The Clerk had chased GBC about this.

[Action: ongoing]

- 1233.** Goal Mouth on village green in need of reinstatement. The Clerk confirmed that Highview Services had not yet carried out this work, but they would prioritise this and carry it out as soon as possible.

[Action: Highview Services]

- 1234.** Annual Play Park Inspection Report: Cllr Woolway to call a meeting of the Play Park working party to discuss any action required.

[Action: Cllr Woolway]

- 1235.** No Ball Games for the playpark. Highview Services had not yet installed this as they needed to purchase the necessary brackets.

[Action: Highview Services]

- 1236.** "No glasses in the play park" sign. Highview Services had not yet installed this as they needed to purchase the necessary brackets.

[Action: Highview Services]

- 1237.** Play Park Surface Repair Kit (£375 approx.). The Clerk emailed Abacus to get a formal quote for a repair kit.

[Action: ongoing]

- 1238.** It was noted that the Playpark swings were "clunky". The Clerk had emailed Gravesham Borough Council regarding this.

[Action: ongoing]

22] Finance

To note any payments made since the last meeting

- 1239.** 10.01.23 D/P Nest Pension 116.14 Clerk Pension - December

To authorise payments due

- 1240.** The following payments would be authorised by Cllr Banks & Cllr White

16.01.23	D/P	D Mackay	15.00	Bus Shelter Cleaning 29.12.22
16.01.23	D/P	Viking	65.96	Stationer
16.01.23	D/P	Vigo Village Hall	837.63	Hall Rent
16.01.23	D/P	Joanne Glass	14.39	Zoom January 2022
16.01.23	D/P	Joanne Glass	239.94	Electric Blankets (Rotary Club grant)
16.01.23	D/P	Joanne Glass	56.63	Newsletter printing
16.01.23	D/P	Parish Online	156.00	Mapping Service membership
16.01.23	D/P	SLCC	236.00	Annual Membership
16.01.23	D/P	Streetlights Ltd	390.00	New LED column 37
20.01.23	D/P	HMRC	1972.00	PAYE 3 rd Quarter
28.01.22	D/P	Joanne Glass	1734.42	Clerks Salary – January

- 1241.** The following Standing Orders / Direct Debits were authorised:

21.01.23	D/D	Gravesham BC	80.60	Paladin Bin monthly payment
28.01.23	D/D	J&F Accounts	31.80	Payroll Charges - January
28.01.23	D/D	British Telecom	54.17	Telephone / Broadband
28.01.23	D/D	Highview Services	5110.00	Grounds Maintenance Contract

To note any income received

- 1242.** None.

To note the actual vs budget spend and associated bank reconciliation for the period ended 31.12.2022.

- 1243.** The actual vs budget spend and associated bank reconciliation for the period ended 31.12.22 had been prepared and circulated to all Members in advance of the meeting. There were no questions on the documents.

Cllr White proposed that the documents were accepted as a true and accurate record, this was seconded by Cllr Banks and agreed by all.

Other Finance Issues to Note & RFO's Report

- 1244.** Finance Councillor Quarterly Checks: The records were ready for inspection, Clerk to make arrangements to pass them to Cllr Hawkins.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1245.** Internet Banking for Cllr Jones & Cllr Woolway. The Clerk would make a new application to add Cllr Jones and Cllr Woolway as signatories.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1246.** Grant to Heart of Kent Hospice £250. The Clerk had been unable to pay this as the bank details for the Hospice had not been provided. The Clerk would email to ask for the details.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1247.** Zoom VS Microsoft Teams. The Clerk confirmed that Microsoft Teams could not be paid by invoice and would have to be paid by credit card (the same as Zoom).

- 1248.** The Community Wardens had applied for a grant to purchase electric throws to be donated to the vulnerable residents in Vigo. It was noted that some had already been purchased by the Community Wardens via a grant from the British Legion, but these were for Gravesham as a whole, not just Vigo.

Cllr Jones proposed that Vigo Parish Council give a grant of £250, this was seconded by Cllr Chaplin. All agreed. Clerk to make the necessary arrangements.

[Action: Clerk]

23] To receive the Chairs announcements

- 1249.** The agenda items put forward by Vigo Parish Council for the GBC Chairs meeting (due to be held on 18 January) were noted as:

- Streetlights: updates on work completed and testing certificates.
- Bus Service: the GBC Climate Change Strategy Document stated that they would "encourage active travel through the use of public transport, cycle routes and walking facilities across the borough, promoting the health and climate change benefits for all". This seemed at odds with the reduction of the 306/308 bus service.

24] To receive the Clerk's Report and note correspondence received

- 1250.** "There's No Place Like Vigo" poster. The Clerk had emailed the supplier to place an order.

[Action: ongoing]

1251. Community and Sports Development Coordinator for Mencap request to attend a Parish meeting. The Clerk sent an email to ask if the coordinator would like to attend the Annual Parish Meeting on 3rd April 2023.

[Action: ongoing]

1252. Request from postgraduate students for information on Parish Meetings (photographs of venue etc). The Clerk was not sure if this information was still needed, so would email and check.

[Action: ongoing]

1253. NEWSLETTER: The Clerk had produced a Winter 2022/2023 newsletter which had been posted online, and hand delivered to those who had requested a hard copy.

1254. The following items of correspondence had been received and were noted:

- Invitation to apply for a Community Transport Grant (VPC did not intend to apply)
- Updates on the Lower Thames Crossing (forwarded to all Members)
- KALC newsletter January 2023 (forwarded to all Members)

25] Kent Association of Local Councils – Community Awards Scheme

1255. It was noted that the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) had now launched the 2023 KALC Community Awards Scheme, with support from Kent County Council.

If Vigo Parish Council were to adopt the scheme again, nominations would need to be submitted by 28th February 2023.

Cllr Jones proposed that Vigo Parish Council adopted the KALC Community Awards Scheme 2023, this was seconded by Cllr Chaplin and agreed by all.

26] Elections 2023

1256. Cllr Banks and the Clerk had attended an online meeting with GBCs Electoral Services department. The main issue which was noted was the need for photographic ID in order to vote in the May elections. Information advertising this fact would be posted online and on the village noticeboard.

27] Training

1257. Details of available training were noted and sent to all Council Members.

28] Reports from other organisations

1258. VILLAGE HALL: It was noted that Sticky Fingers preschool had shut, due to the owner's personal circumstances.

A new preschool would be opening in the hall. "Little Learners" would open (Ofsted permitting) on 17th April, every Monday – Friday 9am til 3pm (term time only).

29] Councillor Patch Reports

1259. The Clerk noted that some Councillor Patch reports had been received, but not all. Cllr Banks asked Council Members to complete a report every 3 months:

- By end of January to be noted at the February Parish Meeting

- By end of April to be noted at the May Parish Meeting
- By end of July to be noted at the September Parish Meeting
- By end of October to be noted at the November Parish Meeting.

[Action: All Council Members]

30] Working Party Reports

- 1260.** The Clerk had updated the Working Party Commitment List and emailed it out to all Members. The Clerk had also produced a document which gave details of the remit of each working party and what the priorities were. This had also been circulated.

31] Any Other Urgent Business (at Chairman's Discretion)

- 1261.** The Grounds Maintenance Working Party had met on 12th January 2023 – please see minute number 1195

**There being no other business,
the meeting Full Parish Council Meeting was closed at 21.28 hours.**