

VIGO PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting of Council Members
held on Monday 20th February 2023 at 7.30pm.

Present	Cllr Pat Banks (in the Chair). Cllr Mike Germain; Cllr Jim Haslem; Cllr Dave Hawkins; Cllr Mandie Jones; Cllr Alan White; Cllr Andy Woolway. Mrs Joanne Glass (Clerk)
In Attendance	2 members of the public.

1] To receive Apologies for Absence

- 1262.** Cllr Simon Chaplin (VPC); Cllr Sharon Cottam (VPC).
Cllr Denise Tiran (GBC); Ms Mandy Cason (KCC Community Warden).

2] To receive Declarations of Interest

- 1263.** None.

3] Questions from the Press and Public

- 1264.** Two members of the public had come to discuss the 306/308 bus service. Please refer to agenda item 18.

4] Borough and County Council Representative Reports

- 1265.** Cllr Tiran had emailed the Clerk with a short report. Council Members were in the process of preparing for / campaigning for the May local elections.
Kent conservatives were opposing the ULEZ expansion across outer London boroughs along with Bromley, Bexley and Surrey Councils.

5] Police and Community Warden Reports

- 1266.** "My Community Voice". The Clerk had put this flier on Facebook, on the noticeboard and on the Parish Website.
- 1267.** Ms Cason had provided a report in her absence which had been forwarded to all Council Members. The following is a list of what the Community Wardens had been involved with recently:
- Liaising with Trading Standards and Kent Police.
 - Providing support and reassurance along with security advice to victims of crime.
 - Reporting abandoned vehicles and road obstructions.
 - Speaking to individuals and parents about Anti-Social Behaviour.
 - Successful in a bid to have a road crossing sign erected at the bottom of Erskine Road junction of Harvel Road.
 - Promoting the sustainable warmth programme (many residents had contacted Eon and been successful).
 - Successful in obtaining grant funding for hats, gloves, hot water bottles and flasks (from Gravesham Borough Council).

Ms Cason welcomed information on anyone who would benefit from the hats, gloves, hot water bottles and flasks.

6] To ratify the decisions taken at the Meeting of Parish Council Members (by zoom) on 12th December 2022.

1268. The notes from the meeting of Parish Council Members on 12th December were noted, and the decisions made were formally ratified (Proposed Cllr Banks, agreed by all).

7] To approve the minutes of the Full Parish Council Meeting held on 16th January 2023.

1269. The minutes from the Full Parish Council Meeting held on 16th January 2023 were noted and agreed, then signed by Cllr Banks (as Chair) having been accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

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

1270. Directional signs for the village shops, to be placed on the chicane in Waterlow Road. RBLI had quoted £44.63 plus VAT and delivery. This was agreed by all Members. It was noted that this sign would also need posts – RBLI could supply these but needed to know the size. Clerk to liaise with Highview Services regarding this.

[Action: Clerk]

1271. Directional sign for Vigo Shops, to be installed at the Whitepost Lane end of Harvel Road. RBLI had quoted £44.63 plus VAT and delivery. This was agreed by all Members. Clerk to place the order.

[Action: Clerk]

1272. 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]

1273. "Raspberry Pi" style cameras to be deployed in Parish Council trees. The Clerk had emailed the resident, no response had been received as yet. This would be filed as pending.

9] Services

Grounds Maintenance

1274. HORNBEAMS SINK HOLE: Highview Services asked if the Parish Council would be agreeable to wood chippings being left in the location of the sink hole. It was agreed this would not be a good idea, as the chippings would rot down and it would not be possible to accurately monitor the soil level to see if the problem with sunken ground persisted. Clerk to update Highview Services.

[Action: Clerk]

1275. PLANTERS: The Clerk had been informed that the resident at number 7 Ash Keys was likely to be the person maintaining the three Ash Keys planters. The Clerk would write to establish if this was the case.

[Action: Clerk]

1276. WORK EXPERIENCE: Copies of Highview Services Employers Liability and Public Liability Insurances had been sent to the Clerk and forwarded onto Hadlow College. The work placement had started on Monday 6th February and would run for three weeks.

- 1277.** Damaged land in Stonecroft. The Clerk had asked Highview Services to attend and establish the level of repair needed, before any further decision was made. No update.

[Action: ongoing]

Grass Cutting

- 1278.** Nothing to report.

Trees

- 1279.** Chestnut Cottage: trees to the side (on Parish Land). The Clerk had written to the resident as agreed, stating that there was no arboreal justification to carry out works to the Hornbeam to the side, and that the resident should consider swapping the position of the gate with one of the other fence panels. The Clerk had also noted that historically permission had never been given for the resident to retain the gate to the side. The Clerk had stated that, as long as approval was sought from GBC, the Parish Council would not object to root pruning any roots which had encroached beyond the boundary, but that the resident would be responsible should the tree become unstable.

The resident had responded to state they would try to find a solution that was agreeable to all parties.

The Clerk had written to the TPO officer at GBC to inform that they may be receiving an application from the resident regarding the root pruning.

[Action: ongoing]

- 1280.** Oak on Waterlow Road: Work to this tree had not been carried out as yet. The work had been programmed in but had been cancelled due to sickness. The Clerk would ask when the work would be re-programmed.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1281.** Ash, rear of 2 The Gallops. The bracing system was due to be installed on Monday 27th February.

[Action: ongoing]

- 1282.** SCOUT HUT TREES: Cllr Banks, Cllr Germain and Highview Services were due to meet the scout leaders on Saturday 25th February, to discuss their concerns.

[Action: ongoing]

- 1283.** HIGHVIEW: Tree to the rear. Both tree wardens had inspected these trees and agreed that there was no need to do anything more than cut back a minimal amount of overhang (as recommended by Highview Services). There was no arboreal justification for a reduction in height. Clerk to write to the resident.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1284.** 1143: 59 Timberbank: Highview Services had inspected and confirmed that a limb needed to be removed from this tree. It was safe at present, and the work would be carried out in due course. The Clerk had updated the resident.

[Action: ongoing]

- 1285.** Hornbeams: Highview Services had confirmed that there was a group of ash trees that were dead and needed removing. The trees were safe at present, but the plan was to remove them before the end of March.

[Action: ongoing]

- 1286.** Alders outside 2 / 4 / 6 Chestnut Lane. The Clerk had responded to the resident, to state that the remaining Alder had been assessed as a good specimen which did not need any remedial work, and as such there were no plans to carry out any tree surgery at the present time.

- 1287.** Trees to the rear of 1-9 Chestnut Lane. The resident would like the Parish Council to consider reducing the height of these trees. The Clerk had asked Highview Services to inspect.

[Action: ongoing]

- 1288.** SCHOOL BUNGALOW: Please see agenda item 24.

- 1289.** THE GALLOPS: Large tree branch hanging down close to the path in the woods behind 2 The Gallops. Highview Services were aware of the issue and felt the Oak limb was well wedged in the tree. It would be removed as soon as possible. The Clerk had updated the resident.

[Action: ongoing]

- 1290.** HIGHVIEW: The resident had contacted the Clerk to complain about overgrown trees to the rear of the property. The Clerk had asked Highview Services to inspect.

[Action: ongoing]

- 1291.** DOWNSWOOD: Resident had chased up tree work that had been agreed, but not carried out yet. Noted that there were some overhanging branches to the side to be cut back (Hornbeam) and also a limb from an oak at the rear. There was also a dead cherry in the woodland that needed to be removed. The work would hopefully be done by the end of March.

[Action: ongoing]

- 1292.** The Clerk had written to all properties in The Covert, noting that, over previous months/years saplings / small trees had been planted by residents on Parish Land. The Clerk informed that the Parish Council were happy for these to remain but asked that no more be planted. Trees planted on Parish Land become an ongoing cost / maintenance issue for the Parish Council in the long-term. The Clerk had informed that if any more saplings were planted, they would be removed without notice.

- 1293.** TREE WARDEN: The Clerk had emailed Mr Talboys to state that the Parish would be happy for him to remain as a Tree Warden. The Clerk had also updated Cllr Germain.

Future Tree Projects

- 1294.** The Clerk had emailed Cllr Chaplin giving him the details for Mr Talboys who would now join the working party as Tree Warden. The Clerk had asked Cllr Chaplin to call a meeting of the working party.

[Action: ongoing]

- 1295.** FUTURE TREE PROJECTS: Parish to action some tree planting before the Spring (if there is scope). Highview Services were aware of areas which were looking bare. Clerk to speak to Highview Services for an update.

[Action: Clerk]

10] Planning

Local Authority Tree Preservation Applications

- 1296.** 40 The Coppice. Sweet Chestnut: reduction in lateral height and spread from 19m & 7m respectively, to 13m & 5m to minimise debris and overshadowing. Application number 20230101. No objections.

Full Planning Applications

- 1297.** 34 Churchside. Demolition of existing garage, erection of new single storey on the rear of the property. Application number 20230092. There were no objections to this application. Clerk to respond to Gravesham Borough Council Planning Department.

[Action: Clerk]

Covenant Three Applications

- 1298.** Timberbank: Replacement of two windows to the side (replacing clear glass with leaded to match the rest of the house) & replacement front door. The Clerk had written to the resident to reiterate that the Parish would not give permission for leaded windows. The Clerk asked the resident to resubmit an application further to this advice.

The resident had informed their plans to carry out work had been put on hold. The Clerk informed the resident that they must seek approval before any work was carried out. Filed as pending.

- 1299.** Highview: Replacement windows and doors. The Clerk had written giving approval as agreed.
- 1300.** Stonecroft: Replacement doors. The Clerk had not yet written giving approval but would do so as soon as possible.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1301.** Woodside: Installation of a log burner. The Clerk had written giving approval as agreed.
- 1302.** Timberbank: Installation of a driveway. The Clerk had written to the resident giving approval as agreed.
- 1303.** Stonecroft: Replacement windows. The Clerk had written giving approval.
- 1304.** The Coach Drive: Replacement cladding. The Clerk had written to the resident to say that render would not be permitted, but Hardy Plank cladding would be acceptable (in white or grey). The Clerk had advised the resident to put in a formal application with details of the cladding colour, for approval, prior to any work being carried out.

1305. Highview: Replacement front door. The Clerk had written giving approval.
1306. Beech Mast: Replacement windows, patio doors (rear) and front door. Details of the proposal had been provided. There were no objections as the replacements would be white framed with clear glass. Clerk to write giving approval.

[Action: Clerk]

1307. Croftside: initial enquiry regarding what information would need to be provided to get permission to replace some sections of fence/wall and a replacement shed. The Clerk had advised the resident accordingly. A formal application had not yet been received and the matter was therefore filed as pending.

Other Planning Matters

1308. Timberbank: Porch built in front of building line. The Clerk had written to the resident to explain that the planning approval letter had been sent to him, via his agent (Mr Tim Spencer). The planning approval letter gave an informative that the Parish Council should be approached for covenant approval. The Clerk explained that if approval had been sought prior to the build commencing (as advised) approval would not have been given. The Clerk confirmed that the restrictive covenants were enforced by the Parish Council, and as such the Parish looked forward to hearing from the resident in due course.

The porch remained in front of the building line. No acknowledgement or response had been received as yet. The Clerk was to chase this up.

[Action: Clerk]

Fowlers Stone Wood Update

1309. No update. Clerk to write to Wendy Lane (GBC) for an update.

Enforcement Issues

1310. Churchside. The Clerk had emailed Planning Enforcement for an update (15 February) – no response had been received as yet.

[Action: ongoing]

1311. Timberbank: Unauthorised outbuilding to the rear of the property, partially on Parish Land.
The Clerk had responded to the agent acting on behalf of the resident. The Clerk had stated that the Parish Council were unable to consent to the structure remaining on Parish land, and as such would ask that arrangements were made to remove it as soon as possible.
The Clerk had also suggested that it may be useful if the agent, or the resident, were to speak to the Parish Council in advance of any Planning Applications being made, to establish if covenant approval would be given.
The agent had confirmed receipt of the letter and informed that he had updated his clients in this regard.

[Action: ongoing]

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

1312. TIMBERBANK: Hedge on Parish Land.

Front hedge: In 2021 it had been agreed that the front boundary hedge constituted a covenant breach – however it had been agreed that it could remain (due to the location of the property) as long as it was maintained by the resident and kept below 1.0 metres in height. It was noted that this was not currently the case, and the hedge was too high and overgrown. The Clerk was to write to the resident regarding this.

Side hedge: in 2021 it was agreed that the resident could plant a side hedge on the correct boundary, and that the Parish Council would permit the existing hedge (on Parish Land) to remain whilst the new hedge established. It had been agreed to remove the hedge on Parish land in 2023. Highview Services had informed they would be able to remove the existing hedge on Parish Land in July / August 2023. The Clerk was to write to the resident giving them notice of this work.

[Action: Clerk]

1313. ASH KEYS: Gravesham Borough Council had informed that they had not heard anything from the owner since October 2022, when he informed the Council that the property was occupied and not empty. GBC had emailed the owner again to ask for an update on works to be carried out.

The Clerk had been given details of two new officers who were responsible for Empty Homes, who would continue to look at this matter.

[Action: ongoing]

12] To Discuss Requests from and Matters Regarding Residents.

1314. Paving Area outside Vigo School. No update.

[Action: ongoing]

1315. Croftside: It was reported that the resident was still storing items on their front garden, which was felt to be unsightly. The Clerk had written to ask that they stop doing this and clear the garden.

[Action: ongoing]

1316. Garage Area near 108 Highview (leading to Commority Road and used as a cut through for the Rugby Club). The Clerk had emailed Cllr Hawkins with regard to this.

It was noted and agreed that the maintenance of the garage block areas would be the responsibility of the garage owners, and not Vigo Parish Council.

1317. Beech Mast: The Clerk had received an enquiry regarding a hedge to the side of this property – the person enquiring felt that the hedge was beginning to get overgrown and needed to be cut back. The Parish Council had inspected the area and felt that the hedge was not a problem at present. The Clerk advised the person enquiring that if they felt it was an issue, they should report it to Kent Highways.

1318. Complaint regarding litter along Harvel Road and Waterlow Road and Speeding Vehicles on Waterlow Road. The Clerk had responded to the resident as agreed.

13] The Bay

- 1319.** Post Box in need of refurbishment. The Clerk had received a response, asking for photographs to be supplied. The Clerk had sent photographs previously, but had resent them, again. The Clerk had expressed her frustration that this matter was taking so long to resolve.

[Action: ongoing]

- 1320.** 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]

- 1321.** Shop Rents: Cllr Chaplin had not spoken to the Managing Agent yet.

[Action: Cllr Chaplin]

- 1322.** SHOPS SERVICE CHARGE: The Clerk had been told that the people renting the shops had notified that their service charge would be increasing significantly. The shop owners were clearly frustrated and felt that the increase was unfair, they were not even sure what services they would get in response to this large increase. One of the shop owners asked if the Parish Council could facilitate a meeting between the shop owners, the Parish Council and the Management Company to discuss these issues. The Clerk had emailed Cllr Chaplin regarding this who said that he would be happy to liaise with the Management Company regarding this.

[Action: Cllr Chaplin]

- 1323.** Cllr Banks noted that the area to the rear of the shops appeared to be quite tidy and litter free. The Clerk noted that the local lady who did a volunteer litter pick every day in the village had been clearing quite a lot of rubbish from this area. The Clerk had asked the lady to stop litter picking here, as the shop owners paid a service charge to a management company which should cover cleaning and removing the litter here. It was agreed to monitor the situation now that the Clerk had asked the lady to stop. If the amount of litter significantly increased, the Clerk would speak to the management company.

[Action: ongoing]

- 1324.** The gaming café "Eat, Sleep, Game, Repeat" appeared to be going well, with positive reviews received.

14] To Discuss any Highways and Gravesham issues

- 1325.** WATERLOW ROAD SURFACE BREAKING UP: Cllr Banks had reported the areas of concern to Kent Highways (via the online reporting portal). It was noted that the potholes had already been marked with white paint in preparation for repairs to be carried out.
- 1326.** DOG DIRT BINS: The Clerk had sent an email to Gravesham Borough Council for an update on this. No update as yet.

[Action: ongoing]

- 1327.** SIGN FOR ADMERS WOOD ENTRANCE (Small turning circle, delivery drivers beware). The Clerk had ordered the sign as agreed.

[Action: ongoing]

- 1328.** 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. Gravesham Borough Council had informed that a replacement sign was on their list, but was low priority as the sign could still be read clearly. Broken or illegible street name plates took priority due to budget restrictions. It was agreed that the Clerk should speak to RBLI to see if a sticker could be purchased to go over the faded graphic.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1329.** LOWER END OF TIMBERBANK (no through sign in wrong position): Kent Highways reference 696039. Kent Highways had confirmed they would move this sign to the correct position.

[Action: ongoing]

- 1330.** LOWER END OF TIMBERBANK (directional sign for property numbers), sign being obscured by vehicles. Sign also had a faded "no through road" graphic. Kent Highways had informed that these issues were under the remit of Gravesham Borough Council. As such, the Clerk had redirected the enquiry.

[Action: ongoing]

- 1331.** CHILDREN (warning sign): Cllr White had noted that a new sign had been put up on Waterlow Road, near the Timberbank entrance. It was unclear what the purpose of this sign was, and if it was in the correct place. Highways had confirmed that the sign was to alert drivers that pedestrians may be in the road, due to a lack of footpath. Highways also confirmed that the sign had been put at the wrong end of Timberbank. The sign should be at the lower end of Timberbank, to warn people of pedestrians in the road on Harvel Road. Highways had confirmed that they would have the sign relocated.

- 1332.** SALT BINS: 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. The Clerk had not yet made contact with Kent Highways but would do so as soon as possible.

- 1333.** LACK OF GRITTING: The Clerk had updated the resident as agreed.

Highways Improvement Plan

- 1334.** 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. The Clerk was due to meet Ms Norris online on 27th February to discuss this matter further.

[Action: ongoing]

1335. 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. The Clerk would highlight this issue again when she met with Ms Norris on 27th February.

[Action: ongoing]

1336. HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENT PLAN: The Clerk had emailed Ms Norris to change the order of priority on the draft HIP which would now read as follows:

- Waterlow Road Speeding (would Highways consider assisting with a flashing speed sign)
- Erskine Road – SLOW upright signs requested, add Beware of Children road markings
- Parking in Admers Wood – installing parking bays and removing 2 x grassed areas next to the garage block
- Chestnut Cottage – to look at putting in a formal footpath from the cottages to the bus stop on Harvel Road.

The Clerk would meet with Ms Norris on 27th February to discuss further.

[Action: ongoing]

1337. The Clerk had been contacted by Kent Highways regarding overgrown vegetation / mud on the footpath to the rear of 2 – 28 Highview. The Clerk reported that the vegetation was on private land, and had send photographs to Kent Highways to illustrate this. The Clerk had arranged for Highview Services to clear the muddy footpath. No further action needed at this time.
1338. Two fridges had recently been dumped in the village, one to the rear of Croftside, and one in Admers Wood. Both had been reported to Gravesham Borough Council who had kindly agreed to remove them at no cost to the Parish Council.

15] Grounds Maintenance – to receive an update on the tendering process

1339. The grounds maintenance tender advert had been placed in the Kent Messenger (Dartford & Gravesham) as agreed. No responses had been received.
1340. CONTRACT FINDERS WEBSITE: The Clerk had re-read the financial regulations and informed that the contract DID have to be put on the Government's Contract Finders Website. The Clerk had made arrangements for the vacancy to be posted there, with a revised closing date of 28th February (the notice had been published on 7th February).
1341. The Clerk had received some questions from people interested in submitting a tender, which had resulted in the following clarifications being made:
- Was the contract subject to TUPE. The answer was no.
 - The people currently carrying out the work are on a fixed term contract which expires on 31st March 2023.
 - The value of the contract on the Contract Finders website is for the annual amount.
 - The terms and conditions of the contract will be taken from the standard JCLI Landscape Maintenance Works Contract.
 - The price for subsequent years may be adjusted to reflect a cost-of-living increase at the discretion of Vigo Parish Council. Any increases will be

considered by the Parish Council during their budget setting discussions, which takes place in October / November of each year (to be implemented the following April).

It was agreed, in the interest of transparency, the Clerk would email all those who had made enquiries (even if they had not asked one of the questions above) to inform them of the questions that had been posed, and the relevant answers.

The Clerk would also update the Contract Finders Website.

[Action: Clerk]

1342. Cllr Woolway (Chair of the Grounds Working Party) had met with Cllr Banks and the Clerk. The tender documents had been drafted and approved by the Working Party. The documents had now been submitted to Full Council and approved.
1343. 1200: The Clerk had purchased an up-to-date JCLI contract for Grounds Maintenance.

16] Drainage & Flooding

1344. Sunken ground around drainage / sewage cover in Waterlow Road. The Clerk had sent an email to the Drainage Team to ask for an update.

[Action: ongoing]

1345. HIGHVIEW: Flooding in the area of 90 – 100 Highview. The Clerk had emailed the drainage team regarding this. Mr Brauningner had responded to say that, as far as he was aware, there were no significant issues in this location, and that he had not received any reports of flooding issues since 20th October. Mr Brauningner felt that any flooding at the beginning of November was likely caused by the overwhelming of the drainage system due to extremely heavy rainfall. No further action was planned.

17] Street Lighting

1346. ELECTRICAL TESTING RESULTS / STRUCTURAL SURVEY RESULTS: No update on the electrical and structural testing certificates.

[Action: ongoing]

1347. OUTSTANDING REPAIRS (PRIOR TO 01.04.2022): The Clerk had emailed Mr Nick May with a list of what the Parish believed to be outstanding repairs / works on the Vigo Street Lights. No response had been received as yet.

[Action: ongoing]

1348. The Clerk had asked Streetlights Limited to go ahead with a full inspection at a cost of £220 plus VAT.

[Action: ongoing]

1349. Spread of light on streetlights. Mr Bonner (Streetlights) had emailed to say that Gravesham had fitted four different sizes of one manufacturer's LED lantern, and yet another size from an alternative manufacturer. Mr Bonner said he would need to know which lights in particular was causing concern.

Mr Bonner noted that round LED lights were available, but they are more than double the price of the side road lanterns, and the LED version would look a lot brighter to the naked eye, but actually have less light output. They also sprayed light in every

direction so usually more complaints were received, especially from those who live in close proximity to the light, the lack of shields can be a real issue.

Cllr Jones noted that the issue with the spread of light was from all of the lights along the spine path. Clerk to update Mr Bonner.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1350. BTBY009 (column 18) (outside 44 Timberbank). The Clerk had emailed Streetlights to ask them to carry out this repair.
- 1351. BHAC009 (column 48) rear of 174 Highview (poor repair carried out by KCC). Remedial work to correct this poor repair was still outstanding. Clerk to update Gravesham Borough Council.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1352. BAAK002 (Column 68) Opposite 9 Admers Wood. This lamp had now been repaired.
- 1353. COST TO REPAIR VANDALISED LIGHTS: The Clerk would add up the total cost of repairs to vandalised lights at the year end, with a view to posting it in the Annual Report and on social media.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1354. BBAS001 (Column 66) outside 9 Beech Mast (sunken tarmac). This issue had now been resolved, as the tarmac had been re-laid and was level.
- 1355. BHAC007 (Outside 144 Highview). This light had water ingress in the photocell and there were issues with the ballast also, so it was not cost effective to repair. A new SL8 LED lantern would cost £325 to supply and install. All agreed. Clerk to authorise the work.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1356. BEAS003 (Erskine Road, opposite junction with Hornbeams) was a vandalised lantern with a smashed glass diffuser and a smashed lamp. It was noted that this had been the case since before 01 April 2022, and therefore should be dealt with by GBC. Clerk to speak to Mr. May.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1357. BTAN004 (Adjacent to 40 The Coppice) was not working. This lamp was on the GBC repair list, but only because of a leaning column. It was therefore agreed to ask Streetlights to do the necessary repairs to get the lantern back in light.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1358. AUTHORISING REPAIRS: In a bid to expediate repairs, it was proposed by Cllr Hawkins that the Parish Council give the Clerk authority to agree all street light repairs as long as the costs were within the set budget. This was agreed by all Council Members.

18] 306 / 308 Bus Service

- 1359. Mr Jones (Public Transport, KCC) had sent a briefing note explaining why the service was being revised. Mr Jones stated that the changes were considered proportionate

and were needed to protect scarce driver resources and enable continuation of the service at a more affordable cost.

Mr Jones had enclosed a new timetable which would come into effect on Monday 3rd April. Mr Jones stated that the new timetable was intended to better match service levels to current demand and secure the service in the longer term, but (despite the reductions at some times of day) the majority of passenger movements will still be possible, including journeys to school.

- 1360.** Members noted that the reduction / removal of buses during the rush hour would directly affect those who used public transport to commute to work. The Clerk had been made aware of people who may no longer be able to work due to this.

The Clerk had posted the new timetables on Facebook and encouraged people to email KCC Public Transport, and Red Route Buses to express their opinions on the matter. The Clerk had been copied in on a number of emails already.

- 1361.** Mr Jones had responded to the latest letter sent by the Parish Council.

It was noted that there had not been a formal consultation as this was not normal practice for every bus timetable change as it was administratively impossible given the resources available. The briefing note of 1st December was the first stage of an informal consultation.

Correct contact details for Red Route Buses were supplied. It was noted that the email address on the Red Route website was obsolete – Mr Jones would speak to Red Route regarding this. All examples of poor service sent to KCC would be forwarded to Red Route by Mr Jones.

"Green Agenda" – Mr Jones stated that political objectives, such as the Green Agenda, did not translate directly into increased and ongoing funding from central Government for public transport, and bus services in particular at a national level. The County Council could not spend money it did not have.

Mr Jones would ask Red Route to investigate the other points made especially if specific dates and times had been provided.

- 1362.** Cllr Sweetland had informed that he had highlighted the need to consult on changes to bus services with KCC. He had not been able to mention specific services, but he had made the point.
- 1363.** Adam Holloway's office had contacted the Clerk to say that Mr Holloway was keen to help if the Parish felt there were any concrete steps that he could take to assist.
- 1364.** Mr Graves (ex-Parish Council Member) had informed that he was continuing to write to KCC to express his concerns and objections to the reduced service.
- 1365.** Mr C Nield & Mr A Nield had come to speak to the Parish Council regarding the proposed timetable reduction. Mr Nield explained his personal situation and stressed how reliant he was on the bus service which he used both early in the morning and late at night (where the service was being cut). The Parish Council acknowledged the

situation and explained that they would continue to do what they could to oppose the cuts.

1366. Cllr Hawkins noted that he had recently caught a bus (within the last week) where he had been “waved on” and not asked to pay or show a bus pass. It was therefore clear that despite many complaints being made regarding this, passenger numbers were still not being recorded directly.

Equally, more examples of buses not turning up on time, or not turning up at all had been received.

1367. It was agreed that the Parish Council should write to Mr Jones again.

[Action: Clerk]

19] To agree the draft “Guidelines and Requirements for any Events held on the Village Green”

1368. The Clerk had drafted a policy “Guidelines and Requirements for any Events held on the Village Green”. This had been circulated to all Members.

It was felt that the introduction could be more positive, and highlight the importance of events to the community, noting that the Parish Council encourages the use of the village green. The following additional text was agreed and would be inserted in the first line, second paragraph: “Vigo Parish Council positively encourages the use of the Village Green by our Community and recognises....etc.”

It was agreed that “any other sources of fire” be deleted from the 3rd bullet point “Management of the Site” as this may cause issues should the Parish wish to have a beacon on the green in the future.

Where the policy says “dogs to be kept on lead” this should be amended to say “short lead”

With the above amendments agreed, the document was approved by all present. The Clerk would amend the document and publish it on the Parish website.

The Clerk would also provide a copy of the document to the resident who was going to hold a charity event on the village green in the summer.

[Action: Clerk]

1369. The Clerk would now work on a booking form to be used in conjunction with the above agreed policy.

[Action: Clerk]

20] To agree the draft “Policy Regarding the Installation of Solar Panels in Vigo Village”

1370. Cllr Banks had drafted a policy which had been circulated to all members. There were no comments or amendments and therefore the policy was agreed unanimously. The policy would be published on the Parish Council website and given to any resident who wished to install solar panels.

[Action: Clerk]

21] Memorial Benches

- 1371.** Alan Basford Memorial Bench. The Clerk had written to numbers 101, 103 & 152 Timberbank to let them know about the installation.

Cllr Haslem did not enter into this discussion.

One resident had responded with minor concerns about the placement and suggested an alternative. After some consideration, it was agreed to install the bench in the original position as planned. Clerk to respond to the resident.

Clerk to speak to Highview Services regarding the bench installation and update the donor as necessary.

[Action: Clerk]

22] Flytipping

- 1372.** The Clerk had written a letter to all properties in The Covert, asking that they cease dumping grass cuttings and garden waste on Parish Land.

- 1373.** Great British Spring Clean. Cllr Jones informed that she would like to lead a volunteer litter pick in Vigo. It was agreed to do this under the "Great British Spring Clean" umbrella, with support from Gravesham Borough Council. The agreed date was Saturday 18th March, 10am, Vigo Village Green. The Clerk would advertise the event and liaise with Cllr Jones regarding the logistics and equipment required.

[Action: Clerk]

23] Land Not in the Ownership of Vigo Parish Council

- 1374.** Land adjacent to 21 Churchside: The Clerk received an email from Burgess Salmon (solicitors for the Crown Estate). The email informed that the title K95205 had been disclaimed, and that the freehold interest had been extinguished, with the land becoming the subject of escheat. The Crown Estate had gained the right to deal with the property, and any future enquiries should be directed to them.

The Clerk had contacted Mr Eastland (Parish Solicitor) regarding this matter and had been informed that he would liaise with Burgess Salmon on behalf of the Parish Council, but that he would need £500 on account of costs. Mr Eastland felt that if no agreement could be reached, there may be no alternative other than to apply for adverse possession.

However, a Barrister's opinion may be appropriate, as when dealing with crown land, there was a requirement to prove a period of adverse possession for a period of 30 years commencing from 01 January 1970. Mr Eastland would advise on the costs to appoint a barrister at the appropriate time.

After some discussion, it was agreed that initially the Clerk should email Burgess Salmon to see if the matter could be resolved.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1375.** Land to the rear of 112 – 200 Highview. The Clerk spoken to JC White Geomatics Limited (Near Hythe) who had informed they would be able to assist with surveying this area. The enquiry had been passed to a boundary surveyor who would be in touch in due course.

[Action: ongoing]

24] Insurance:

Subsidence Claim Implicating Parish Council Owned Tree

- 1376.** SCHOOL BUNGALOW: The Clerk had received an email from Gallagher, advising that the Parish Council remove the Alder to abate the nuisance. This was based on further evidence that highlighted that the Alder was causing a nuisance.

The Clerk was to apply to have the Tree Preservation Order lifted on this Alder before any work commenced. Once the TPO had been lifted, the Parish were agreeable to the tree being felled.

[Action: Clerk]

Increasing the Current Cover (Legal Expenses and Key Person Cover)

- 1377.** Insurance.

The Clerk informed that the Legal Expenses Cover could not be increased, as £100,000 was the maximum cover provided.

The Clerk informed that currently the Key Person Cover was £250 per week, for 10 weeks (maximum £2,500). To increase this to the maximum of £400 per week would cost £94.08 for the remaining 43 weeks of the current policy. The Clerk estimated that this would equate to an extra £115 per annum on top of the existing premium.

It was agreed to keep the cover at £250 per week for now, and to review when the insurance was next due for renewal.

25] Quads / Anti-Social Behaviour

- 1378.** Quad bikes had damaged the grass to the front of the MUGA. This had been captured on CCTV and reported to the police (reference DP 6540 23 4646 01).
- 1379.** QUAD BIKES: Two bollards had been installed at the top of the bund which led from the ball park towards Harvel Road. It was hoped this would stop quad bikes accessing the ballpark via this route. It was reported that youths had already been seen trying to dislodge the bollards, but as they had been concreted in, it was unlikely that any damage would be caused.
- 1380.** In addition to the installation of the bollards (noted above), Highview Services & SC Groundcare had installed a large post and rail fence on the grass which bordered the car park outside the school. This would stop access onto the grass area, which had been quite badly damaged by quad bikes recently. The fence looked very good and had taken some three days to install. The cost for materials had been minimal, as coppiced chestnut had been used. The Parish Council passed their thanks onto Mr Agley and Ms Calvert for their hard work on this project.

26] CCTV

- 1381.** Various incidents of antisocial behaviour had been captured on the CCTV system:
- Youths throwing snowballs at the village shops and flat windows
 - Graffiti in The Bay
 - Youths causing disruption by accessing the village hall.

The police and / or Community Wardens had been contacted about these issues.

1382. There had been issues with some of the CCTV camera recordings dropping out. The Clerk had arranged for IT Solutions Kent to come and inspect the system. The firmware had been upgraded and it was hoped this would resolve the issue. The Clerk would monitor the system and report back.

[Action: Clerk]

1383. IT Solutions Kent had asked to have remote access to the CCTV system for when issues needed to be resolved and the Clerk was not in the office. This was agreed. The Clerk had drawn up a disclaimer which had been signed by IT Solutions. The disclaimer stated:

- No footage should be downloaded or saved externally.
- No footage would be shared or viewed by anyone other than IT Solutions Kent,
- The CCTV system would only be viewed whilst repairs and / or maintenance was being carried out.
- Authorisation would be sought from the Clerk in advance of the system being accessed.

27] Parking Issues / Electric Vehicle Charging Points

1384. Highview: Electric Vehicle Charging Point. The Clerk had emailed Cllr Hawkins regarding this. Cllr Hawkins noted that there were six available charging points in the car park next to the school. It was however felt, that it would be a good idea to explore more "on street" charging points, perhaps on lamp posts. There would be no funding available, but it might be that local companies would wish to get involved. It was agreed that Cllr Hawkins would meet with Cllr Haslem (as Chair of the Environment Infrastructure Working Party) to discuss this initiative. The Clerk would update the resident.

[Action: Clerk]

1385. Timberbank: Request for alternatives to bollards to be placed on Parish Land to the front. No further update.

[Action: Cllr Banks / Clerk]

28] To Receive an Update and Discuss Play Areas Issues (Play Park and Ballpark)

Ball Park

1386. Nothing to report.

Village Green Play Park

1387. Missing D shackle on basket swing. The Clerk had chased GBC about this.

[Action: ongoing]

1388. Goal Mouth on village green in need of reinstatement. This area had now been reinstated.

- 1389.** Annual Play Park Inspection Report: Cllr Woolway to call a meeting of the Play Park working party.

[Action: Cllr Woolway]

- 1390.** No Ball Games for the playpark. Highview Services had not yet installed this as they needed to purchase the necessary brackets.

[Action: Highview Services]

- 1391.** "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]

- 1392.** Play Park Surface Repair Kit. The Clerk emailed Abacus to get a formal quote for a repair kit. Abacus had quoted £175 for a repair kit. This was agreed. Clerk to purchase.

[Action: Clerk]

29] Finance

To note any payments made since the last meeting

- | | | | | | |
|--------------|----------|-----|--------------|--------|------------------------------------|
| 1393. | 18.01.23 | D/P | Joanne Glass | 299.94 | Expenses – Electric Throws (Grant) |
| | 18.01.23 | D/P | Joanne Glass | 491.71 | Expenses – Tender Advert |
| | 10.02.23 | D/P | Nest Pension | 116.14 | Clerk Pension – January |

To authorise payments due

- 1394.** The following payments would be authorised by Cllr Haslem & Cllr White

20.02.23	D/P	Joanne Glass	45.60	JCLI contract document for tender
20.02.23	D/P	Joanne Glass	25.49	USB sticks to download CCTV footage
20.02.23	D/P	Joanne Glass	14.39	Zoom February 2023
20.02.23	D/P	Joanne Glass	16.32	Stamps
20.02.23	D/P	Joanne Glass	59.99	Microsoft renewal
20.02.23	D/P	Streetlights Ltd	1266.30	Quarterly Charge plus repairs
20.02.23	D/P	Viking Stationery	214.89	Inv 9892518 / 9972082
20.02.23	D/P	Heart of Kent Hospice	250.00	Grant in Aid
28.02.23	D/P	Joanne Glass	1734.22	Clerks Salary – February

- 1395.** The following Standing Orders / Direct Debits were authorised:

21.02.23	D/D	Gravesham BC	100.75	Paladin Bin monthly payment
28.01.23	D/D	J&F Accounts	31.80	Payroll Charges - February
28.02.23	D/D	British Telecom	54.17	Telephone / Broadband
28.02.23	D/D	Highview Services	5110.00	Grounds Maintenance Contract

To note any income received

- 1396.** None.

Other Finance Issues to Note & RFO's Report

1397. Finance Councillor Quarterly Checks: The records were up to date to the end of January 2023. *Post meeting note: Cllr Hawkins had been given the records for inspection.

[Action: ongoing]

1398. Internet Banking for Cllr Jones & Cllr Woolway. The Clerk had made a new application – a mandate form was provided and signed by Cllr Haslem & Cllr White. The Clerk would now send this to Unity Trust Bank.

[Action: Clerk]

1399. Electric Blankets: The Clerk had purchased 5 x electric throws at a cost of £299.94 (including VAT) from B&Q. These had now been given to the Community Wardens for distribution within Vigo.
1400. Mr. Lionel Robbins would attend on Wednesday 10th May to carry out the annual internal audit. The Clerk had booked the small hall.

30] To receive the Chairs announcements

1401. Briefing Notes for the Parish Council Chairman's Meeting (Wednesday 18 January) had been circulated to all Members.

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

1402. "There's No Place Like Vigo" poster. The Clerk noted that the cost had increased from £75 to £80 (A1 framed print). The Clerk had placed an order and the print should be received in the next week.

[Action: ongoing]

1403. Community and Sports Development Coordinator for Mencap. The Clerk sent an email to ask if the coordinator would like to attend the Annual Parish Meeting on 3rd April 2023. No response had been received as yet.
1404. Request from postgraduate students for information on Parish Meetings (photographs of venue etc). The Clerk had emailed but no response had been received. Filed as pending.
1405. The Gravesham Civic & Community Awards 2023 were open for nominations: any individual, group, business or even whole street that had gone the extra mile and made a difference could be nominated.
1406. The Clerk reported that an up-to-date Register of Electors had been received, now in an electronic format which was much more useful than the old paper version.
1407. The Clerk noted that there had been an accident on Waterlow Road, where a bus had hit a parked car. This had happened near Churchside. There had been some broken glass on the grass verge, which the Clerk had asked Highview Services to clear.
1408. Information on Neighbourhood Watch had been received and circulated to all Members. The Clerk had also posted the information on Facebook.
1409. The Clerk noted that she had 9.5 annual leave days left, and would likely take five of them in March. The rest would be carried over into the forthcoming year.

1410. The following items of correspondence had been received and made available to all members:

- KALC Newsletter February 2023
- NALC Newsletter February 2023
- KCC Commercial Services Consultation (running until 26 March 2023)
- Kent PCC News

32] Pop Up Café

1411. The Clerk had spoken to the Parish Council Insurance Company who said that the Pop-Up Café would be covered under the Parish Policy as long as the Parish were the responsible organiser. As the Clerk ran the café, along with two other Councillors (Cllr Banks and Cllr Jones) then it was felt the insurance cover would be valid.

The Clerk was to write a Risk Assessment for the café events.

The Clerk noted that the new preschool would be running on a Friday when the Pop-Up Café was taking place – the preschool owner had been told that access must be available through the main hall for the disabled entrance and toilets. This had been agreed.

The Clerk had set dates for the café through til December 2023. The café continued to be successful, with around 30 people at each event.

[Action: Clerk]

33] King Charles III Coronation

1412. Possible ideas: Sunflower growing competition. Commemorative mugs (Clerk to explore costings. Lottery funding to give small grants for local street parties. Discussions deferred until the next meeting.

34] Kent Association of Local Councils – Community Awards Scheme – to discuss nominations

1413. There was unanimous agreement for the nomination which had been proposed. Clerk to send the nomination form to KALC. It was hoped to give the award at the Annual Parish Meeting on 3rd April.

[Action: Clerk]

35] Elections 2023

1414. KALC were running sessions on “Becoming a Local Councillor”. These were free sessions, open to all members of the public. The Clerk had advertised these on the noticeboard and on Facebook.
1415. Information on the requirement for Voter ID had been received and published on the Parish noticeboard, and on Facebook.
1416. The Clerk would have more information on the nomination process at the March Parish Council meeting.

36] Training

1417. Cllr Cottam would attend the Dynamic Councillor course (online) on 23 March. The tickets had not yet been released, but the Clerk would book a space as soon as she could.

[Action: Clerk]

37] Reports from other organisations

1418. None.

38] Councillor Patch Reports

1419. Cllr White informed that he would not be carrying out his Councillor Patch check from now on. The Clerk would look at reallocating this area to another Member.

[Action: Clerk]

1420. The Clerk had started to look at, and action the reports made by Councillors. A formal update would be made to members in due course.

[Action: Clerk]

39] Working Party Reports

Environment infrastructure Working Party: Energy Saving Vigo Questionnaire

1421. The Environment Infrastructure Working Party had drafted an "Energy Saving for Vigo" questionnaire for approval.

It was suggested that one of the introductory sentences "Is there something Vigo Parish Council could be doing to help you manage energy costs better" was a bit vague / inexact and could be better structured.

Other than that, Members were very happy with the questionnaire.

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

1422. None.

**There being no other business,
the meeting Full Parish Council Meeting was closed at 21.47 hours.**