

VIGO PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE 23rd ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
HELD ON 3rd APRIL 2023 at 7.30pm in Vigo Village Hall

Present:	Cllr Pat Banks; Cllr Simon Chaplin; Cllr Mike Germain; Cllr Jim Haslem; Cllr Dave Hawkins; Cllr Alan White; Cllr Andy Woolway.
In Attendance:	Cllr Denise Tiran (Gravesham Borough Council Member for Vigo); PC Joanne Hammond (Kent Police) Ms Jacquie Fuller & Ms Mandy Cason (KCC Community Wardens) Cllr John Grey & Cllr Liz Jeffery (Higham Parish Council) Cllr Sheila Buchanan & Cllr Graham Green (Meopham Parish Council) Mr Mark Gracey & Mr Richard Lees (Trosley Country Park) Mr Christoph Bull & Ms Kirsty Gaunt (Speakers) Mr John Richards, Mrs Liz Richards, Ms Amy Richards (Culverstone & Vigo Scouts) Mr Mark Mickleburgh (Culverstone & Vigo Scouts) Caroline Maclean (Vigo Brownies) 26 Members of the Public

1] Apologies for Absence

- AP01** Cllr Mandie Jones & Cllr Sharon Cottam (Vigo Parish Council)
Cllr Ejaz Aslam (Gravesham Borough Council Member for Vigo)
Mr Roger Barber (Vigo School)
Mrs Lesley Boycott
Mr Ben Jacklin (Trosley Country Park)

2] Chairman's welcome to Guests, Electors, Members of the Public and Press

- AP02** Cllr Banks welcomed everyone to the meeting.

3] To confirm the minutes of the 22nd Annual Parish Meeting (held on 9th May 2022)

- AP03** The minutes of the 22nd Annual Parish Meeting (09.05.22) were signed by the Chair, having been accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

4] Chairman's Annual Report

- AP04** The first and probably most memorable event was the celebration of the Queen's Jubilee. We began on Thursday evening with the lighting of a Beacon on the village green, accompanied by a talented bugler. This was followed, on Friday, by a party in the Bay, which was a great success and enjoyed by all who attended. Then, we finished with the lighting up of the water tower, which made a splendid display on the Saturday evening. Many thanks have to go to our clerk, Jo Glass, for all her time and organisation that she put into running this event. Sadly, as we know, Her Majesty passed away in September and many residents signed our book of condolence.

The next issue to take up a lot of Council time, has been taking over the streetlights from Gravesham Borough Council (GBC). We are still waiting for some repairs to be finalised, but we have now appointed our own contractor and any new repairs that are reported to us, are quickly dealt with. It is sad that some of the repairs that have been needed, have been caused by vandalism! And a definite downside of owning the lights is that we will have to pay for the electricity.

We now have 6 electric vehicle charging points in our car park – courtesy of GBC. These are covered by CCTV and people are beginning to use them.

No Mow May was a success last year and we are proposing to continue this again for this year. We did have lots of pretty flowers pop up and Paul and Steph, our maintenance contractors have sown some wild seeds, hoping to add to this. However, as we live on the top of the North Downs, with heavy clay soil and lots of tree shade, we are unlikely to achieve a wonderful wildflower meadow!

Trail bikes and quad bikes have been ridden on Parish land and resulted in the grass being totally obliterated in places. Paul and Steph have put fencing up by the MUGA (Ball Park) and posts at the end of footpaths, in the hope that these vehicles will not have such easy access to these areas of the village.

There has been a lot of graffiti in our play park, (now cleared away). We have now bought a powerful CCTV camera which covers the play park and the village green.

The issue of Fowlers Stone Wood is still of great concern. We understand that Gravesham Borough Council are still following legal proceedings in order to try to resolve this very difficult problem.

The cutting of the hours of the 306/308 bus service has been a cause of great concern. Post Meeting Note: We have learnt that KCC are intending to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment, which will, hopefully give people a chance to explain how the changes will adversely affect them.

Back to some happier items. We have had volunteers working in the Bay, to improve the area around the seating and volunteers litter picking.

The Pop-up café, organised by our clerk Jo, is a great success. It meets (unless other events get in the way) on the 1st Friday in the month. Our Clerk, Jo, does this as a volunteer; Friday is her day off!

We have plans to paint the underpass and will be looking for volunteers to help with this – more information to follow.

There were a lot of people that I needed to thank for their help and support over the last year. I would like to list just a few here and apologies to those who aren't mentioned. Firstly, as always, thanks to Jo Glass, our Clerk – we really couldn't manage without her! And then thanks to our councillors for their hard work and commitment to the village.

Then we must say thank you to Paul Agley and Steph Calvert, for all that they do to keep the village looking good, to our Community Wardens, who do sterling work in the village and are always around to help out. They also did amazing work collecting items for Ukraine. Thanks also to Denise Tiran, who is standing down after 4 years as our Borough Councillor.

5] To receive reports from County and Borough Councillors

AP05 Cllr Tiran briefly spoke to the meeting and gave a short report. Some questions were posed to Cllr Tiran about Fowlers Stone Wood.

6] To receive reports from the Police and the Community Wardens

AP06 PC Joanne Hammond introduced herself as the new beat officer. Although PC Hammond would not be in post until June 2023, she had taken some time to look around the local villages where she would be policing. PC Hammond would take a traditional approach to policing and hoped that she would be seen walking around the village in due course.

7] To receive any reports from Local Village Bodies and Organisations

AP07 Brownies: Mrs Maclean noted that numbers were good, with a waiting list in place. More volunteers were needed to run the group.

AP08 Scouts: Mr Mickleburgh & Mr Richards gave a short update on the local scout group.

AP09 Trosley Country Park: Mr Gracey & Mr Lees gave a short update on Trosley Country Park; the goats had been moved to Great Pell.

AP10 Vigo Village Hall: Cllr White read out the following report:

Our income was £27,966.28 which was up by £11,587.19 on last year. Expenditure was £30,660.97 up by £10,230.27 on last year.

The income included £2,667 a covid related omicron grant from the GBC. Also included was £4,354 which was a settlement from our water leak insurance claim.

The result was a loss of £4,051.61. This compares with the previous year's surplus of £9,335.99. However, it should be remembered that last year's income included a £10,000 Covid grant.

The main expense was the replacement of the front entrance doors including the side panels. This was necessary because they were showing their age and were becoming a security risk. The total cost was £8,931, the Parish Council gave us £1,200 towards this for which we are very grateful.

I am pleased to say that during the course of the year we gained two regular users, a Yoga class and a fencing group.

The 800 Club: We sold tickets to the value of £1,181 which was down 31 on last year. We paid out £700 in prize money. Remembering that there are around 800 houses in the village, it is disappointing that only around 56 households participated in the draw. These 56 households purchase 104 tickets between them.

Increasing income: Most of the hall hire prime hire slots are taken and therefore there is limited opportunity to increase our hall hire income. We therefore realise we need to look at other ways of raising income including a fresh drive to increase 800 club members.

We would like to thank our hall Manager, Dani Howard, for continually looking for ways of saving money, looking for any grants and other sources of income, also for her part in gaining the Yoga and Fencing groups.

8] Finance Report

To receive the Financial Statement of the Parish Council's Audited Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022

AP011 These were noted and received.

To receive the DRAFT actual vs budget spend for the year ended 31 March 2023

AP12 This was noted and received.

9] Presentation of the KALC Community Awards for 2023

AP13 The KALC Community Award for 2023 was presented to Mandy Cason: With grateful thanks and recognition of her hard work and long continuing service to the people of Vigo Village.

- AP14** The KALC Community Award 2021 was also presented, as the nominee had not been able to attend the 2021 Annual Meeting. The award was presented to Sheila Oag: For many years' service to Vigo, including as a school governor, but more recently for tirelessly co-ordinating food donations from local residents for the Community Cupboard during the Covid Pandemic.
- AP15** Lastly, the KALC Community Award for 2020 was presented, as the 2020 meeting had been held online during the covid pandemic. The award was presented to Carol Cox; With grateful thanks from Vigo Parish Council for many years of voluntary service in editing the Vigo Journal, which was an invaluable source of information for all residents in Vigo.
- 10] Presentation from Kirsty Gaunt, Gravesham Borough Council's Community Engagement Officer, on Photographic ID requirements for upcoming elections.**
- AP16** Ms Gaunt spent some time explaining the new rules which meant photographic identification would be needed to enable people to vote in the upcoming elections. Ms Gaunt explained what photo ID would be accepted, and what to do if you did not have this.
- 11] Presentation from Christoph Bull, Local Historian. "Meopham A-Z (including V for Vigo)".**
- AP17** Christoph Bull, local historian, gave a presentation on Meopham A-Z (including V for Vigo) which was well received by all present.
- 12] Questions from the Press & Public.**
- AP18** None.
- 13] Any Other Business (at the Chairman's Discretion)**
- AP19** None.

The Meeting Closed at 9.20 pm and was followed by refreshments.