

VIGO PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Full Parish Council Meeting
held in Vigo Village Hall on Monday 19th February 2024 at 7.30pm.

Present	Cllr Pat Banks (in the Chair); Cllr Simon Chaplin; Cllr Sharon Cottam; Cllr Jim Haslem; Cllr Mandie Jones; Cllr Alan White; Cllr Andy Woolway. Mrs Joanne Glass (Clerk).
In Attendance	One Member of the Public.

Council Members began the meeting by observing a minute's silence in memory of Councillor Mike Germain, who had sadly passed away in January.

1] To receive Apologies for Absence

1094. Cllr Ejaz Aslam (GBC); Ms Mandy Cason (KCC Community Warden).

2] To receive Declarations of Interest from Council Members (if any)

1095. None.

3] Questions from the Press and Public

1096. One member of the public had come to discuss the Covenant Application at Timberbank. This is noted under the relevant agenda item.

4] Casual Vacancy

1097. The Clerk reported that she had notified Gravesham Borough Council of the death of Cllr Mike Germain. GBC had posted a Notice of Vacancy on 24th January, which had also been published on the Parish Council noticeboard and website. GBC had not received any requests to call a by-election, and therefore the position could be filled by co-option. The Clerk would advertise the Casual Vacancy in due course.

[Action: Clerk]

5] Borough and County Council Representative Reports

1098. Cllr Aslam had supplied a report in his absence, which had been forwarded onto all Members. It was noted that a Full Council Meeting of Gravesham Borough Council was due to be held on Tuesday 20th February, at which the Council would seek to confirm the budget, with an anticipated increase.

6] Police and Community Warden Reports

1099. PC Jo Hammond had provided a Parish Council monthly update for January 2024, which had been forwarded to all Members. PC Hammond would now update the Parish on a regular monthly basis going forward.

1100. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT MEETING: PC Hammond would be holding a public engagement meeting on the first Friday of each month (starting 2nd February) at the St Johns Centre, Wrotham Road. The meeting would be held between 10am and noon, but the time may change to later in the day on occasions, to accommodate residents who work during the day. Local Council Members were also very welcome to attend to give residents an opportunity to engage with them. The Clerk would advertise these engagement meetings on social media.

[Action: Clerk]

1101. PC Hammond would continue to conduct high visibility patrolling in Vigo as often as possible. The Neighbourhood Task Force from the Community Safety Unit were also available to support as and when necessary.
1102. The Clerk had arranged for PC Hammond to attend the Annual Parish Council Meeting on 13th May. The Annual PC Meeting would normally start at 7.30, but it was agreed to push this back until 8pm. PC Hammond would then have an opportunity to speak to Council Members and any local residents between 7pm & 8pm. The Clerk would advertise this in advance of the meeting, inviting residents to attend and discuss any matters of concern with PC Hammond. Clerk to confirm arrangements with PC Hammond, and ensure the hall was available for the earlier time slot.

[Action: Clerk]

1103. The minutes from the Full Parish Council Meeting held on 15th January 2024 were noted and agreed, then signed by Cllr Banks (as Chair) having been accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

One typographical error was noted and amended.

1104. GAS CANNISTERS: Cllr Chaplin noted that a large number of nitrous oxide cannisters had been found in the wooded area to the east of Churchside. Cllr Chaplin had gathered up what he could, but they were scattered around. Cllr Chaplin agreed to report this issue to the police on the non-urgent reporting number (101).

7] To approve the minutes of the Full Parish Council Meeting held on 15th January 2024

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

1105. SUCESSORS IN TITLE: The Clerk had chased this up with Mr Baker, who assured the Clerk that he would deal with this as soon as possible.

[Action: ongoing]

1106. COMPLAINT REGARDING NO PARKING SIGNS ON WATERLOW ROAD: Please see agenda item 35.

1107. KALC Community Awards Scheme for 2024. The Clerk had emailed all Council Members and taken a majority vote with regard to the award nomination. The Clerk had sent the details to KALC, the certificate would be available in time for the Annual Parish Council meeting on 8th April 2024. The Clerk would make arrangements to purchase an appropriate gift to be presented with the award.

[Action: Clerk]

1108. Insurance Claim: alleged subsidence: 49 Timberbank. Hiscox had confirmed they had not received any further correspondence from the resident regarding this matter.

9] Services

Grounds Maintenance

1109. Overgrown vegetation in the garage area to the side / rear of 30 The Coppice. The Clerk had asked Highview Services to cut back and tidy this area as much as possible. The Clerk had also written to the resident at no. 20, who had offered to maintain the area in future, to say that the Parish Council would not object to this.

1110. The Grounds Works record sheets for December / January had been sent out. *Post meeting note: the January / February 2024 sheet had also been sent.
1111. Parish Land adjacent to 201 Highview. The Clerk had informed Highview Services that the Parish Council were happy for bollards to be installed in this area. *Post meeting note: these bollards had now been installed.
1112. Beech Mast Garage Area: It transpired that it was not the woodland that was encroaching into this garage area, but rather a large pile of spoil, garden waste, vegetation and dumped rubbish that had accumulated over a period of time. Highview Services informed that they had removed this some years ago, but it had since built up again. Highview Services had attended site and cleared back the debris so that it was no longer encroaching onto the garage area, and residents could now easily access their garage.

It appeared that a solution to prevent this happening in the future would be for residents to install a fence (ideally with concrete gravel boards) to protect the garage area. The Parish Council would not object to this, as long as it did not exceed three feet in height and would be happy for the fence posts to be located on Parish Land if necessary. The fence would be the responsibility of the residents however, and this should be made clear.

The garage area in general was in a very poor state, with fly tipped rubbish, what appeared to be an abandoned vehicle, and the garages themselves in disrepair, with one garage not even having a roof anymore.

The Clerk was to write to all owners regarding this matter and ask for the area to be tidied up and garages to be repaired as necessary.

The Clerk would also speak to the Community Wardens and Gravesham Borough Council to see if anything could be done about the abandoned vehicle and flytipping issues.

[Action: Clerk]

1113. Overgrown vegetation: Highview car parking area. The Clerk had written to the owner of the land where the vegetation was located, asking for it to be cut back. No response had been received as yet.

[Action: ongoing]

1114. The Clerk noted that positive feedback had been received following a litter pick being carried out along Harvel Road by Highview Services / SC Ground Care. The positive feedback had been posted onto the Vigo Village Life Facebook page. The Clerk had ensured this had been passed onto the Grounds Team.

Grass Cutting

1115. Nothing to report.

Trees

1116. Chestnut Lane, Cherry Tree to the rear. The Clerk had chased the Tree Warden for a report on this tree, but there had been no response. The Clerk had asked Cllr Banks to have a look instead – Cllr Banks reported that she agreed with the view of Highview

Services, in that the tree was not overhanging and did not appear to need any work. The Clerk noted that the tree had been worked in March 2023. It was agreed that unless something significant happened (storm damage, dead branches etc) then generally there would be at least a five-year gap between tree works being reconsidered / carried out. It was agreed to respond to the resident to inform that there was no arboreal justification for any work at this time. Clerk to write.

[Action: Clerk]

1117. BUS ROUTE TREES: This work had now all been carried out.

1118. ADMERS WOOD: Resident enquiry regarding trees on Parish land in Admers Wood (Oak and Silver Birches). No formal update from the Tree Warden. The Clerk would check she had the correct email address for the Tree Warden.

[Action: ongoing]

1119. Highview: Trees to the rear (project work of approximately 5 days). No update at present, Clerk to chase Highview Services.

[Action: Clerk]

1120. Trees identified by Kent County Council as needing to be removed.

- Birch Trees opposite 34 Churchside & opposite 47 Churchside
- Wych Elm in Croftside

*Post meeting note: it had been established that the Wych Elm needed to be dismantled by using a cherry picker as it was not safe to climb. The cost for this had been agreed by Parish Members. All three trees identified by KCC would be dealt with at the same time by using the cherry picker. The date for this work was noted as 29th February 2024. The Clerk would write to the nearby properties to ensure that the road was kept clear of vehicles on this day.

[Action: Clerk]

1121. Hornbeams: tree to the side (likely on Parish Land). Highview Services had spoken to the resident, to inform them that the tree on Parish land would be removed. The resident had no objections. This was now on the tree list to be carried out before the Spring.

1122. Highview: re-pollarding of tree to the front. The Clerk had updated the resident. The work had been added to the winter tree list.

1123. Highview: The Clerk had been contacted again by the owner of 132 Highview. The owners of 134 had informed that they were happy to have the tree removed, but so far, they had not written to the Parish Council to apply for approval. It was agreed, in an effort to expediate matters, the Clerk would write giving approval (to remove the tree) to the owner of 134, where the tree was located.

[Action: Clerk]

1124. MEMORIAL TREE: The Parish had been contacted by the Senior Partnership Officer at the North West Kent Countryside Partnership. Mr Gallant wished to plant a native Ash tree in Vigo in memory of Mike Germain who had volunteered for the Partnership for many years. The Parish Council did not have any objections to this, Cllr Banks would meet Mr Gallant to discuss.

[Action: Cllr Banks]

Future Tree Projects

1125. Cllr Chaplin would call a working party meeting.

[Action: Cllr Chaplin]

10] Tree Warden

1126. Due to the passing of Mike Germain, who had been a Parish Tree Warden as well as a Parish Council Member, it was agreed to try and recruit someone else into this voluntary position. Ideally, it would be good to have another two people in post, alongside Mr Talboys who was already acting as a Tree Warden.

Mr Gallant (North West Kent Countryside Partnership) had an idea of someone who lived in Vigo who may be interested. He would make contact and revert to the Parish Council in due course.

1127. The Clerk would also put an article in the Annual Newsletter, to ask if anyone would be interested in volunteering as a Tree Warden for Vigo.

[Action: Clerk]

11] Ruts & Damage to Community Land

1128. A delivery truck (DX van) had caused considerable damage to the Parish land outside 146 Timberbank. The Clerk had emailed customer services at DX to ask for the land to be repaired. Once this area had been repaired, the Parish Council would consider bollards to prevent any further issues.

[Action: ongoing]

1129. A delivery vehicle (Amazon) had caused considerable damage to Parish Land on Waterlow Road (near 1 Churchside). The Clerk had emailed Amazon, who had asked for an estimate to repair the work, which the Clerk had provided. Amazon had now agreed to fund the repair work. Highview Services would carry out the repair work and bollards would be installed to protect the land. The cost of the bollards (from Hoists) would be £165.50 (8 posts). This was agreed by all Members.

[Action: ongoing]

12] Planning

Local Authority Tree Preservation Applications

1130. Chestnut Cottage, Harvel Road: Prune back 4 / 5 branches on a Hornbeam / Chestnut Tree. 20231271.
The Clerk noted that before a reply had been sent to GBC giving the Parish comments on this, the application had been approved (decision dated 16.01.24). The decision notice informed that the applicant was advised to contact the Parish Council prior to carrying out any work, as the trees were on Parish Land. (Overhanging branches could be removed up to the boundary line without consent of the owner).
The Clerk reported that significant work had already been carried out to the Hornbeam, with branches having been cut back much further than the boundary line.
The Clerk was to write to the resident (copying in the Tree Officer at GBC) as follows:

- No consent had been given, by the Parish Council, to the resident to cut back overhanging branches.
- The TPO application stated that Vigo Parish Council had approved the removal of any branches. This was not the case; the Parish had approved root pruning only.
- The branches had been cut back much further than the boundary line. This was in contradiction to the TPO approval letter.
- There was now concern for the health of the tree – the Parish Council would monitor closely.

[Action: Clerk]

1131. 12 The Paddock: One silver birch in rear garden to be removed. 20240087. No objections.
1132. 43 Timberbank: Re-pollarding of Oak Tree. 20240046. No objections.
1133. 7 Downs Wood: Crown reduction to Oak Tree. 20240037. No objections.

Full Planning Applications

1134. 17 Churchside: Erection of a two-storey front extension and insertion of roof light in front elevation. 20240027. There were no objections to this application.

Covenant Three Applications

1135. Highview: Application to relocate side / rear fence. Covenant Approval had now been given.
1136. CROFTSIDE: The Clerk had emailed the resident as agreed, to ask for details of the cladding colour, before a formal letter could be sent. The resident had responded to inform that this project was on hold for now, but they would be in touch in due course. Filed as pending.
1137. Timberbank: New windows and doors. Installation of insulation under existing tile cladding. Extension of existing driveway. Installation of post and rope fence. The Clerk had written to the resident as agreed.
1138. Beechmast: change of exterior (painting existing red tiles grey). The Clerk had written to the resident as agreed. Further correspondence would be sent when further information had been received from the Parish Council solicitor (see minute 1107).

[Action: ongoing]

1139. The Paddock: retrospective approval for garage conversion. The Clerk had written giving retrospective approval as agreed.
1140. The Paddock: change of cladding from white to grey. The Clerk had written giving approval as agreed.
1141. Bramblebank: Retrospective application for change in cladding (white wood to white upvc); bricking up lower part of downstairs windows; change in windows (white wood to white upvc); replacement porch door. It was noted that the retrospective covenant application fee had been received. There were no objections to this work – retrospective covenant approval would be given.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1142.** Timberbank: To extend driveway (utilising small area of Parish owned land). Photographs to illustrate this proposal were shown to all Members. The proposal was to remove part of a boundary wall, to allow an extra two cars to park off road on the garage forecourt. At present, the position of the wall meant that due to access issues only one car could park in front of each garage. To give the required access to park off road, a small corner of Parish Land would need to be utilised. This area (right angled triangle) would have the grass replaced with grass-crete or similar, so that it could continue to be maintained as grass. The land would remain in the ownership of the Parish Council. All agreed. Clerk to write to the resident accordingly.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1143.** Ferndown: Replacement front window and front door. Drawings had been supplied to illustrate this proposal and were noted by all Members. The windows would be white framed with clear glass. The front door would be blue. There were no objections. Clerk to write giving approval.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1144.** The Clerk had been contacted by someone who had recently moved into the village. The new resident had asked the following questions:

- Could they install a resin bound driveway and apply for a dropped kerb. The Clerk had responded to state that covenant approval should be sought and advised that KCC should be consulted about a dropped kerb.
- Could they install an EV charging point. The Clerk noted no approval was required for this as long as the vehicle was parked on the drive whilst charging (no cables should cross footpaths).
- Changing the front outside cupboard door – covenant approval should be sought for this.
- Installing solar panels – the Clerk had provided the Parish Council Solar Panel policy to the resident for their information.
- Reducing the height of a neighbour's tree: advised that the neighbour would need to consent, and an application should be made to Gravesham Borough Council as the tree would likely have a preservation order.
- Installing an air source heat pump: the Parish Council would need more information on this before any approval could be given. Clerk to update resident.

[Action: Clerk]

Other Planning Matters

- 1145.** None.

Fowlers Stone Wood Update

- 1146.** Fowlers Stone Wood: Enforcement: The Enforcement Notice came into effect on 22nd January 2024, and records showed that no appeal was lodged against this. The first requirements of the notice must be complied within 3 months from the effective date, by 22nd April 2024, with the restocking of the woodland to be completed within 6 months of the effective date.

[Action: ongoing]

Enforcement Issues

1147. Churchside. No update. Clerk to email Planning Enforcement.

[Action: Clerk]

1148. 46 Timberbank: unauthorised outbuilding in rear garden. Planning had emailed to confirm that an inspection of the outbuilding had been concluded. The building had been reduced in size and is now a single room which contained no living accommodation. A small open log store had been installed to one of the sides. The building is placed on an elevated section of the garden which is similar to the two neighbouring properties. The building is approximately 2.5 metres high from the adjacent elevated ground level.

The building had been moved forward of its original position, and it would be a matter for the Parish Council to consider in terms of land ownership and covenant approval.

The outbuilding was now within Permitted Development and required no further planning approval.

In the opinion of the Parish Council, it did not appear that the building had reduced in size. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to Planning Enforcement to ask for confirmation of what the size of the building was originally, and what it had been reduced to. The Clerk was also to clarify what the dimensions were for it to be within Permitted Development.

Once clarification had been received from Planning Enforcement, and the Parish Council were satisfied, a letter would be sent to the resident to state that the building remained on Parish Council land and as such covenant approval could not be given. This would result in difficulties when the property was sold in the future.

It was unclear if the resident intended to apply for Adverse Possession, no application had been received by the Parish Council as yet.

[Action: Clerk]

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

Properties in breach of covenant:

1149. HIGHVIEW: To relocate side & rear garden fence. Work to be carried out by the beginning of December. No update.

[Action: ongoing]

Update on properties in disrepair:

1150. Admers Wood property in disrepair: As agreed, the Clerk had sent copies of correspondence to the resident by recorded delivery. No response had been received. The Clerk had checked the tracking number on the Royal Mail website, and it did not give any delivery details – the tracking simply stated that the letter had been “accepted at Vigo Village Post Office”. The Clerk was to contact Royal Mail to see if the letter had been delivered.

[Action: Clerk]

To discuss businesses being run from home (covenant breach).

1151. BUSINESS IN BREACH OF COVENANT: The Clerk would contact the resident to arrange a site visit to inspect the soundproofing. Once this visit had taken place, further "spot checks" (up to three over an 8-week period) would be carried out.

[Action: Clerk]

14] To Discuss Requests from and Matters Regarding Residents.

1152. Waterlow Road Post Box: The Clerk had contacted Royal Mail about the incorrect information (nearest Post Box) on the front of this post box.
1153. Bench dumped on Parish Land behind Timberbank properties (low numbers odd). This had been reported to the Parish Clerk. The Clerk would write to the nearby residents to ask for this to be removed.

[Action: Clerk]

1154. The Clerk had been contacted about some overgrown vegetation in a Highview Car Park. The Clerk had established who owned the vegetation and had written to them asking for it to be cut back. The Clerk would write again if necessary.

[Action: Clerk]

15] The Bay

1155. Post Box in need of refurbishment. No response from Mr Holloway, the Clerk had sent a chase up email.

[Action: ongoing]

1156. The Clerk had supplied Glam Squad with a detailed map of which authority was responsible for which area of The Bay.

16] To discuss any Gravesham Borough Council issues and / or Kent Highways Issues

1157. DOG DIRT BINS (provision of new bins throughout the village). The Clerk had chased this up with GBC.

[Action: ongoing]

1158. SIGN FOR ADMERS WOOD ENTRANCE (Small turning circle, delivery drivers beware). With Highview Services for installation.

[Action: ongoing]

1159. ADMERS WOOD: Faded "No Through Road" graphic. These stickers had now been received. The Clerk would get one installed on the Admers Wood road sign.

[Action: Clerk]

1160. It was noted that two armchairs had been dumped in Commority Road, Highview Services had moved these to the area at the back of the Village Hall, to get them out of the way. The Clerk had emailed Gravesham Borough Council to ask if they could assist with removing these.

[Action: ongoing]

1161. Gravesham Borough Council small electrical recycling banks. Promotional material had been received from GBC. The Clerk would put a poster in the noticeboard. The scheme had been advertised on the Parish Facebook page. The Clerk reported that, during the first three months of this service, 642 small electrical items had been recycled in Vigo (the highest amount of all the 5 recycling points where these banks were available).

1162. "Pedestrians in Road" warning sign in the wrong position at the Waterlow Road / Timber bank junction. This sign had still not been moved. The Clerk would liaise with the Community Warden and Kent Highways accordingly.

[Action: Clerk]

1163. Single Point of Access Number. Clerk to liaise with Cllr Hawkins.

[Action: Clerk / Cllr Hawkins]

1164. The Clerk had received a complaint about the amount of rubbish on Harvel Road, from the A227 down to Erskine Road. No response had been received from the Borough Councillors. However, the Clerk was under the impression that the rubbish had now been cleared.

1165. Trade Waste Agreement. The Clerk had completed and returned this.

1166. Muddy Puddle – Spine Path near Downswood. Cllr Banks had reported this to Kent Highways (reference 770883). The matter was noted as "enquiry under investigation" on the Highways online portal.

[Action: ongoing]

1167. ATC SURVEY: Next survey anticipated to be undertaken in March 2024.

[Action: ongoing]

1168. SALT BINS: The Clerk had emailed Cllr Sweetland regarding this matter.

[Action: ongoing]

1169. WINTER MAINTENANCE: The Clerk not yet spoken to Highview Services to confirm which areas they salted when it snowed.

[Action: Clerk]

1170. WINTER MAINTENANCE: The Clerk would speak to the Highways Liaison Officer to find out if there was any way that Vigo could be prioritised when it came to gritting roads.

[Action: Clerk]

17] Parking Issues / EVCP issues

1171. Highview. Parking on driveway with no drop kerb in place. The Clerk had not yet written to this resident but would do so as soon as possible.

[Action: Clerk]

1172. Timberbank: Highview Services had constructed a planter to the front of this property, to protect Parish Land from being damaged. Shrubs had been used to fill the planter.

Parish Members were very pleased with the result. The resident at no.13 had also emailed to say how pleased they were.

The Clerk was to ask Highview Services if they felt the planter would need to be watered over the warmer months, and if this was the case, perhaps the resident at no.13 could undertake this.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1173.** Pavement Parking in Vigo. The Clerk had responded to the resident as agreed. This was raised at the Chairs Meeting. Please refer to minute 1213.
- 1174.** The Clerk had been contacted by a resident who was in the process of selling their property. The property had an allocated parking space, and the solicitor acting for the resident had raised a query regarding the space, asking for the contact details of the freeholder, Jondy Investments. As Jondy no longer existed, the resident asked who they should contact. The Clerk responded to say that the land was now likely subject to escheat, and as such reverted to being in the ownership of The Crown.
- 1175.** The Clerk had received a complaint about a car which had been parked for some months in a disabled space in Vigo. The car was not taxed and did not have a current MoT. The Clerk had reported this to Gravesham Borough Council.
- 1176.** EVCPs in Vigo. Cllr Banks had raised the following issue at a previous Chairs Meeting:
- Upgrading the Charge Points to "Fast Charge"
 - Painting white lines to mark out the available spaces and to prevent people parking poorly.

Mr Nick May (GBC) had reported that the usage figures for the Vigo EVCPs were very good. Mr May was happy to discuss rapid / ultra rapid chargers, but prior to raising this issue with Connect Kerb, Mr May would like to meet VPC (on site or by zoom) to discuss further.

Mr May also said he would attend the site to see how the bay markings could be improved, he would send over a proposal.

The Clerk had forwarded the email chain to Cllr Hawkins, for him to arrange a meeting with Mr May.

[Action: Cllr Hawkins]

18] Drainage & Flooding Issues (to include a discussion on tree works in Timberbank).

- 1177.** Sunken ground around drainage / sewage cover in Waterlow Road. The roadworks had been cleared here, and as such it was assumed the issue had been rectified.
- 1178.** Highview drains blocked: the Clerk had reported this to Kent Highways (stating that more than one drain was totally blocked with silt). Reference no. 766331. This was currently marked as "enquiry under investigation".

[Action: ongoing]

- 1179.** Drainage and Flooding Issues in Timberbank (particularly around the Downs Wood junction). The Clerk had reported the blocked gully grates in Downs Wood to Kent Highways (reference 766334). This was currently marked as "enquiry under investigation".

[Action: ongoing]

1180. SWEET CHESTNUT TREES IN TIMBERBANK (junction of Downs Wood). Cllr Banks had met with Highview Services to discuss the trees in this area. This matter was discussed by members, and it was agreed to remove two trees, and crown lift a number of others (photographs and details had been provided by Cllr Banks).

Cherish Trees would be engaged for one day to assist with the work – the funding for this was agreed. Clerk to liaise with Highview Trees regarding this work.

It was agreed to review these trees on a five-year cycle to ensure that the leaf fall remained as under control as possible.

[Action: Clerk]

19] Street Lighting

1181. OUTSTANDING WORKS TO STREETLIGHTS, TO BE CARRIED OUT BY GBC / KCC (including electrical faults). No update.

[Action: ongoing]

1182. The Clerk was to ask Mr May (GBC) if the Parish Council would get an official hand over letter, once all the outstanding issues had been resolved. Agreed not to pursue this until an update had been received on the two outstanding repairs.

[Action: pending]

1183. Spread of light on streetlights (centre path). The Clerk had emailed Mr Bonner to ask that streetlights no. 7 & no. 35 be replaced with SL8 units to provide uniformity along the centre path.

[Action: ongoing]

1184. LED UPGRADES: The Clerk had emailed Mr Bonner and asked him to carry out an LED upgrade programme in the sum of £5,000.

[Action: ongoing]

1185. ANNUAL STREETLIGHTING INSPECTION REPORT: The Clerk had emailed Mr Bonner and asked for the necessary repair work to be carried out.

The Clerk would liaise with Highview Services regarding pruning works, and the CCTV contractor regarding cleaning the cameras.

[Action: Clerk]

20] Adverse Possession

1186. LAND IN THE OWNERSHIP OF THE CROWN ESTATE. The Clerk had emailed Kingsley Smith as agreed. This matter would now be filed.

1187. Adverse Possession: Land to the rear of 112 – 200 Highview. The Clerk had not yet looked at applying for Adverse Possession but would do so as soon as possible.

[Action: Clerk]

21] Rural Housing Needs Survey

1188. The Clerk had contacted GBC / RACE as agreed. No response had been received as yet.

[Action: ongoing]

22] KCC Kent Parish Winter Support Scheme

1189. Kent Parish Council Winter Support Scheme: The Clerk had liaised with the Community Wardens and Cllr Banks. It had been agreed to apply for the £1,000 grant, to fund 40 x £25 Supermarket Vouchers. This was based on the fact that, according to Parish Online, 5.5% of households in Vigo were in fuel poverty (44 properties).

The Clerk was pleased to report that the grant application had been successful. The Clerk would now arrange to purchase the vouchers.

[Action: Clerk]

23] To Review & Agree the Vigo Parish Council Emergency Plan

1190. Gravesham Borough Council had come and checked the contents of the Emergency Case which was held in the village hall.
1191. The Clerk had updated the Emergency Plan and sent it to Cllr Banks and Cllr Haslem for comment. The Plan would be sent to all other Members and put on the agenda for the March Parish Council Meeting.

[Action: Clerk]

24] Councillor Patches

1192. It was noted that only three checklists had been provided for the December walkaround. The next Councillor patch check lists were due at the end of March.

[Action: all Councillors]

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

Ball Park

1193. Nothing to note.

Village Green Play Park

1194. Nothing to note.

26] Finance

To note any payments made since the last meeting

1195. 09.02.24 D/D Nest Pension 128.99 Clerks Pension

To authorise payments due

1196. The following payments would be authorised by Cllr Banks & Cllr White

19.02.24	D/P	Contacta	117.00	Hearing Loop Survey
19.02.24	D/P	S Calvert	68.59	Plants for Timberbank Planter
19.02.24	D/P	Viking	72.07	Stationery
19.02.24	D/P	J Glass	6.00	Land Registry Fees x 2

19.02.24	D/P	J Glass	59.99	Microsoft 365 renewal
19.02.24	D/P	J Glass	15.59	Zoom Fees
19.02.24	D/P	G W Shelters	307.96	Bus Shelter Repair
19.02.24	D/P	D Mackay	15.00	Bus Shelter Clean
28.02.24	D/P	Joanne Glass	1875.13	Clerks Salary – February

1197. The following Standing Orders / Direct Debits were authorised:

21.02.24	D/D	Gravesham BC	109.5	Paladin Bin monthly payment
25.02.24	D/D	J&F Accounts	33.96	Payroll Charges - February
26.02.24	D/D	British Telecom	52.74	Telephone / Broadband
28.02.23	D/D	Highview Services	5212.20	Grounds Maintenance Contract

1198. Transfer of £5,000 from deposit account to current account to cover outgoings: agreed.

To note any income received

1199. £50: retrospective covenant three application fee: 3 Bramblebank

To discuss & agree Corporate Multi Pay Card application.

1200. The Clerk had not yet completed the application form for this card, but would do so as soon as possible.

[Action: Clerk]

Other Finance Issues to Note & RFO's Report

1201. British Telecom D/D increase. Cllr Hawkins would look into the deals available and make a recommendation to Parish Council in due course.

[Action: Cllr Hawkins]

1202. Adobe Acrobat licence. Purchasing this was deferred pending the application for a Corporate Multi Pay Card.

[Action: pending]

1203. Cracked polycarbonate panel in Erskine Road bus shelter. This work had now been carried out.

1204. Additional One Drive storage: Purchasing this was deferred pending the application for a Corporate Multi Pay Card.

[Action: pending]

1205. The Clerk noted that the Village Hall had written to state that the rent charges would be increasing by 5% from March. There was some significant discussion about this, as the increase was higher than expected. It was noted that it would be helpful if the increase could be notified earlier, so that the Parish Council could take it into account when setting their precept / budget in October. Cllr Cottam would take this comment to the next hall committee meeting.

[Action: Cllr Cottam]

1206. The Clerk noted that the following errors had been made in previous minutes (October 2023 – February 2024) and as such the financial records had been amended accordingly:

Oct 2023	Vision ICT payment should be minuted as £22.60, should be £21.60.
Oct 2023	Gravesham Borough Council payment for Paladin Bins minuted as £88.88, should have been £88.80.
Nov 2023	Nest Pension date minuted as 9.10.23, should be 10.11.23.
Dec 2023	Nest Pension date minuted as 09.10.23, should be 04.12.23.
Dec 2023	Bank interest received, not noted: £472.30 on 31.12.23.
Jan 2024	British Telecom date should be 27.01.24.
Jan 2024	Highview Services payment date should be 28.01.24.
Jan 2024	Payment to P J Banks (£95) noted in error. This payment had already been noted in the December minutes and paid in December. Financial records are correct, just the minutes need to be amended.

27] Defibrillator Upgrade Programme

- 1207.** The four new defibrillators had now been installed. The Clerk would update the Asset Register and check the insured values.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1208.** The Clerk had not yet spoken to the village hall committee to see if they would have any objections to a defibrillator being mounted on the outside of the village hall. The Clerk would do this as soon as possible.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1209.** Existing Defibrillators: Vigo Scouts expressed an interest in rehoming one of the old Parish defibrillators. The Clerk would ask Cllr Hawkins to get in touch with the scouts to discuss.

[Action: Clerk]

- 1210.** Cllr Hawkins had emailed the Clerk to ask if a spare set of electrodes could be purchased, so that if one of the defibrillators were used, it could be put back in service on the same day. The cost was approximately £100. This was agreed, the Clerk would update Cllr Hawkins and ask him to place the order.

[Action: Clerk]

28] To receive the Chair's announcements

- 1211.** The following responses had been received via the Chairs Meeting:

- Pavement parking: GBC Officers can only take action where a vehicle is parked on a footway or a verge adjacent to a single or double yellow line. Without restrictions GBC officers are unable to enforce. If a vehicle is causing an obstruction, then it should be reported to Kent Police on 101.
- Parking on driveways where there is no dropped kerb. If there is no vehicle crossing, then the resident has no rights to cross the footway to park on a driveway. If a vehicle parks across the frontage of the property without a drop kerb, no offence is being committed. It is an offence (that KCC can enforce) to

bump up a kerb to gain access to a private driveway where an official crossover has not been installed.

- Fibre broadband. It was noted that Vigo has a patchwork of existing or forthcoming provision. The Borough Council relies on publicly available information made available by Broadband Delivery UK.

1212. VIGO SCHOOL ROOF REPLACEMENT: Cllr Sweetland had contacted the Parish Council to ask if they had any comments on the proposal to replace the school roof. This was discussed in full and there were some concerns, specifically about the projected costs. The Clerk would respond to Cllr Sweetland accordingly.

[Action: Clerk]

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

1213. Plan Bee – the Clerk was to write an article about No Mow May, and provide photographs of the Vigo orchids, for a future edition of KALC News.

[Action: Clerk]

1214. KCC Resident Hubs (to be used in response to a national extended power outage). The Clerk had not yet spoken to the Village Hall Manager about this but would do so as soon as possible.

[Action: Clerk]

1215. ACCESS TO VILLAGE HALL: the Clerk not yet spoken to the Hall Manager about this but would do so as soon as possible.

[Action: Clerk]

1216. The Clerk had been informed about the Gravesham Civic and Community Awards 2024. If anyone knew of an individual, group, business or even a whole street that had gone the extra mile, nominations were welcome (please contact the Clerk).

1217. Your Borough Magazine. A decision had been taken to reduce the frequency of this magazine from quarterly, to two editions a year (Spring/Summer & Autumn/Winter). This meant that the Parish news section would only go in the Spring/ Summer edition which would distribute in March.

1218. Gravesham Borough Council had declared 2024 the "Year of the Volunteer" as part of its 50th anniversary celebrations. They were encouraging staff to volunteer and were keen to develop a programme of volunteering opportunities in the Gravesham area that would benefit the local community. GBC were asking for details of any help that would make a difference to the local area. It was agreed to suggest tidying up / weeding the area around the seating area in The Bay. Clerk to fill in the online form.

[Action: Clerk]

30] Repair Café

1219. The Clerk had spoken to the person who ran the Gravesham Repair Café. They were interested in setting up a café in Vigo (on a Saturday). The Clerk was aware that Meopham Parish Council were also interested. The Clerk would liaise with MPC. The

Clerk would also attend the next Gravesham Repair Café (in Northfleet) to meet the person who ran it and discuss possibilities for Vigo.

[Action: Clerk]

31] D-Day 80 Year Commemorations

1220. The Clerk suggested the following for commemorating the D-Day 80 year anniversary:

- Paul Baylis (local historian) to give a talk on "The Army Camp" Vigo.
- Paul Baylis to provide an informative display in the village hall.
- Refreshments to be provided.
- Beacon lighting on the village green.

Date of event: Thursday 6th June.

The Clerk noted it would cost £345 to upgrade the Platinum Jubilee Beacon to a D-Day version. It was agreed just to remove the metal work that referred to the jubilee, and not update the beacon itself. Clerk to speak to Highview Services.

Clerk to arrange gas cannister for the beacon and ask Mr Agley to light the beacon.

Clerk to book the hall for the event and confirm details with Mr Baylis.

Cllr Cottam and Cllr Jones agreed to help with serving refreshments for the event. The Clerk would also be in attendance (Cllr Banks was not available).

All agreed.

[Action: Clerk]

32] Hearing Loop for the Village Hall

1221. HEARING LOOP FOR SMALL VILLAGE HALL: The Clerk reported that no other Parish Councils in Gravesham had hearing loops in the venues where their Parish Council Meetings were held.

The Clerk asked the Parish Council to consider funding £97.50 (net) so that a survey could be carried out at the village hall to establish what sort of hearing loop would be best, and the expected costs. This was agreed, Clerk to set up the payment and arrange the site survey.

33] Memorial Bench

1222. The Clerk had updated Glam Squad regarding the costings for a memorial bench. No response had been received as yet. Matter filed as pending.

34] Equality Impact Assessment: 306 / 308 Bus Service

1223. BUS: EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT: Cllr Banks had liaised with the Clerk and a response had been sent to Kent County Council. A copy of the original letter (including the EQIA) and the Parish Council response had been forwarded to all Members for information. A further response had now been received (dated 19th

February) which was read out and noted by all Members. It was agreed that there was nothing further that the Parish could do regarding this matter.

35] To receive a report on the Formal Complaints Committee held in January 2024

1224. COMPLAINT REGARDING NO PARKING SIGNS ON WATERLOW ROAD: The Complaints Committee had been held. Cllr Haslem (as Chair of the Complaints Committee) updated Members.

Minutes of the meeting had been sent to the complainant and were filed in the Parish Office. Vigo Parish Council would not be taking any further action.

36] To agree the advert for two positions: Casual Gardener & Clerical Assistant

1225. Job specifications / adverts for these two positions had been drafted and sent to Council Members. These documents were agreed.

The Clerk would speak to the Parish Council insurers regarding public liability insurance for the Casual Gardener position.

The Clerk would speak to J&F accountancy regarding payroll (and oncosts) for the Clerical Assistant position.

It was agreed to advertise both positions on the Parish Council noticeboard, the Parish Council website, and the Parish Council Facebook page. KALC had confirmed this would be more than adequate. Clerk to make arrangements.

The Clerk would also work on a timetable for when the applications should be submitted, when shortlisting would take place, and when interviews would be held.

[Action: Clerk]

1226. A decision would need to be made regarding providing a laptop for the Clerical Assistant. Clerk to look into costs for this.

[Action: Clerk]

37] Annual Parish Meeting arrangements (8th April 2024)

1227. The Clerk informed that Paul Baylis, local historian, was happy to give a talk on "The Waterlows" at the Annual Parish Meeting. Council Members were happy with this. Clerk to make arrangements and advertise the event to residents / send invitations.

[Action: Clerk]

38] Training

1228. Information on the latest training available from KALC had been circulated to all Members.

39] Reports from other organisations

1229. None received at time of Agenda publication.

40] Working Party Reports

Environment Infrastructure Working Party

1230. Lightbulbs (for those who had completed the Energy Saving Questionnaire). The Clerk had not distributed these at present but would do so as soon as possible.

[Action: Clerk]

1231. REPAIR SHOP CAFÉ: Please see agenda item 30.

1232. Notes from the Environment Infrastructure Meeting held on 23rd January had been circulated. Cllr Banks had fed back on the Climate Change course that she had attended.

Households in Vigo are higher emitters of carbon than both the average for Gravesham and for Kent. This was likely due to the housing stock and the demographic of the village, but it did demonstrate that there is potential to reduce emission in keys areas – particularly housing where per household emissions for Vigo are 4.2 tons of CO₂ compared with 3.4 for Gravesham and 3.5 for Kent.

The Working Party agreed on actions to tackle this:

- To target houses which may be in a financial position to invest in energy saving measures. Households which already had solar panels should be approached, as the fact they have invested in solar power may demonstrate that they are empathetic to the need to reduce carbon emissions and they may also have the financial capability to invest.
- To approach houses with solar panels to enquire whether they may be interested in contributing information about the benefits / savings they are realising which might be of benefit to others in the community, and to ask whether they might be interested in working together with VPC to explore further options.
- To explore the feasibility and costs of improving insulation for houses with tile hung facings behind which there is no insulation currently.
- The Parish Council was aware of a property which was currently installing insulation behind a tile hung facing and it was agreed to contact the householder to find out if they would be willing to share their experience and the costs / anticipated savings, to assist others in the community.

1233. Lastly, the Working Party felt a debate should be instigated about switching off streetlights at night after a set time. This could be accompanied by researching experience of other communities. Alongside this the likely savings from doing so should be quantified.

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

1234. None.

**There being no other business,
the Full Parish Council Meeting was closed at 21.50 hours.**