

8. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

New Members – Following the Elections last May the following new members have joined the Council. Steve Mitchell, Jen Gardiner and Camilla Kennedy Harper.

As you have heard a lot of the Council time and effort has been spent on the provision of Superfast BB and organising the Jubilee Celebrations.

We have also had a increase in the take up of allotments and to help manage the day to day running of the site have formed an allotments committee made up of Cllrs and allotment holders, the Chairman of the committee Mr Colin Coulson will make a report later in the meeting.

PCSO – Annemarie Benson who was our PCSO for the past three years has moved to a different area and had been replaced by Nathan Prentice. We welcome Nathan and hope he enjoys working here; Annemarie is a hard act to follow.

Skate Park – As you may have seen in the local paper, the council have been successful in securing funding for a new skate park. The work to install the new park will take place in the next few months.

Finances – A copy of the Council accounts is included in the meeting pack and will be printed in the parish magazine. If you have any questions the Clerk will be happy to answer them.

Grants - Last year grants were given to Eastry Village News, Humpty Dumpty Mother and Toddler Group, Eastry Neighbourhood Watch and Eastry Joint Services Club.

The 2012 grant process has now been opened, application forms can be found on the Parish Council web site.

The Council also continues to sponsor Coffee Break and feel this is a very worthy event and invite anyone that has not been before to come along.

Hospital development and Chapel.

This is still waiting for documentation for 106 agreement to be completed by DDC and the developer.

Highways – Several residents for Felderland Lane have attended Council meeting ref speeding along the lane. Although the speed limit has been lowered quite recently there is still concern. The Council has been in contact with KHS and the Local KCC members to see if any action can be taken. Unfortunately KHS are quoting the same safety-critical criteria in all areas and have not been very helpful. We have however asked for a speed count to be undertaken by KHS, funded by Cllr Ridings.

In addition we have had complaints about all day parking in the parade lay by, we are in discussion with DDC about getting a waiting restriction imposed.

Finally I can not close with out saying thank you to the following people that work tirelessly for the parish. Richard Swain for his continued hard work at the toilets, not the most pleasant of jobs but very important. Mr John Kemp – who although “retired” still does the councils odd jobs Mr Colin Coulson for his hard work at the allotments and with the Jubilee Committee. Shelia and Malcolm Broster who keep the Village looking clean and tidy. Iris Mollart and Chris McMeakin for continuing to help Cllrs Hooper and Pemble at Coffee Break. David Carr, former Chairman of the Parish Council, who still continues to run the Council's web site. Picnic Site volunteers who open and close the site regardless of the weather. My fellow Councilors for there continued help and support. Bob Priestly our community Warden. And finally our Clerk Mrs Sarah Wells for keeping us all in order.

9. REPORTS

DDC – Cllr Steven Manion & Cllr Nick Kenton

This year has been a difficult one as DDC finds ways of saving money without losing frontline services. Of course this means re designing some services.

At district level we think of the new green waste service which after 6 years of being free is now charged for. Before, this service was not available to all residents, now we are charging it as a service that can be offered to everyone.

There are new ways of working to be designed and the new locality board is a step in this direction. This is a partnership between county and district councils. Joint working has shown to be effective and the recycling service shows the benefits of this; Dover is now the best performer in Kent at kerbside recycling with levels of 50%. Residents are able to have food waste collected weekly and have it recycled instead of going to costly landfill. Locality boards will be looking at local priorities to commission services which will have an impact in each district.

This year the popular "you decide" events will be running again. We have had some success at these events and I would encourage local organisations to take advantage of this funding stream.

KCC – Cllr Leyland Ridings

Finance

At last year's AGM I indicated that KCC were required to make savings in 2011/12 of £95m. This was achieved and prelim figures for March 31st 2012 indicate an underspend of about £8m, which is just as well as Central Government are now requiring savings of £97m in 2012/13 rather than the £65m indicated last year.

Last year I said that KCC would get back a minimum of 92% of the £50m invested in Icelandic Banks a few years ago. I am pleased to say that we now expect to recover more than the £50m in total. £30m has come back already and the remainder is due over the next year. Had that money been invested in the stock market we would have lost more than £4m.

Education

We are very lucky to have excellent secondary education in this area, with one OFSTED rated outstanding school and one with a Good rating.

Of the 9 Primary schools in the area we have 1 outstanding, 6 good and 2 satisfactory.

Wayfarers

I have been pressing the Cabinet Minister for Adult Social care since he made the decision to sell Wayfarers in January 2011 to reconsider his proposal. I am pleased to say a few weeks ago he did reconsider that decision and has now agreed that "Wayfarers will therefore continue to operate as it currently is, managed by KCC, for the foreseeable future."

Libraries

All Dover District Libraries will remain open. Ash Library was causing me considerable concern, but joint proposals by Ash Parish Council, Ash WI, the Ash Heritage group and others together with some funding from KCC, means it will remain open for substantially the same number of hours.

Richborough household waste site

I spoke against closure of this facility at the full council debate on 29 March and since then have badgered the Cabinet Member to consider alternative proposals. I don't want to start cheering yet, but a business man has come forward saying he can run the facility at nil cost to KCC. This is very exciting news and I will keep you informed.

Highways

I have agreed to pay for traffic counts in Felderland Lane following a request from the Parish Council on behalf of the Felderland Lane residents. I will also be funding the mobile SID device that will move around 10 or so sites during the year, one of these sites will be Felderland Lane.

Eastry School - Mr Tim Halling

We had a Science OFSTED inspection this year and I'm proud to say we got an outstanding classification. We are now in the top 2% of high achieving Primary Schools in the UK. Our numbers have risen to the highest ever and we are over subscribed with waiting lists in most year groups.

My staff and I are now helping to support one of the Dover schools that is under achieving, we spend time in that school and their teachers come to visit ours.

KCC have finally replaced the school roof and we are now warm and dry, in fact the classrooms are now occasionally to warm.

The School Choir has been very busy this year, and are planning another concert with The Snowdown Male Voice Choir in July. Simon Dundas has constructed a living willow dome on the school field and it is fascinating to watch it growing. Bob continues to visit on most days to help with the parking problems and the schools allotment.

The children had been on numerous visits and as usual the PTA runs fund raising events to help with funds for the school.

I would like to close by thanking my wholly committed and talented staff, wonderful children, extremely supportive governors, PTA and parents.

Allotments Committee – Colin Coulson

Good evening thank you for inviting me to give a report on the Allotments.

It was about this time last year when I put a suggestion to the Parish Council that due to the increasing interest in renting allotments whether it would be a good idea to form an 'Allotment Sub—committee' consisting of 3 Tenants and 2 Councillors who could take over the everyday running of the allotments and hopefully relieve the pressure on Sarah.

The Council subsequently agreed with the idea and drew up a list of duties that the Sub-Committee would deal with.

A Sub-Committee was formed and we held our first Tenants Meeting on Sunday 21st August last year. This proved to be very productive. The Tenants raised lots of queries which of most were answered on the day. Other queries were noted and passed onto the Council.

One of our aims is to create a Community spirit amongst the Tenants and we organised a Tenants Bar-B-Que. For a first attempt it was well supported, but typical English weather, after a long dry spell it decided to rain that afternoon. Although we got wet, it didn't dampen our spirit a hardy lot us gardeners, and after few drinks and burgers we all went home quite happy.

At this stage all vacant plots now had tenants, but there were still a few on the waiting list.

Unfortunately a few tenants who were not attending their plots correctly were given notice to quit.

It had become quite obvious that some tenants who just wanted an area to grow a few veg found that having a full size plot too much to handle.

Over the winter we re-marked the layout of some of the plots and we were then able to offer those on the waiting list either half or quarter plots.

I'm pleased to say that as at today we only have one lady on the waiting list who only wants a quarter plot.

A new Tenants Agreement was drawn up which all Tenants now have. At our Tenants meeting in April we were able to explain the reason for some of the changes and for the additional Clauses, and in turn the Tenants had the opportunity to raise various questions.

A lot has happened on the allotments over the past twelve months all of which I feel for the good, and it is very rewarding to see everyone busy tending their plots, especially the increase in Family Tenants.

I would like to thank the Sub-Committee, Sam Shevde, Margaret Pemble, Sheila Broster and Bob Barwick for their help and assistance, but most of all Sarah our Clerk for dealing with all the email's I have pestered her with and for her help and assistance in getting this off the ground,

Thank you.

Church Report – Elizabeth Kinns - Church Warden

The following written report had been received and had been made available to all those present, Mrs Kinns was available to answer questions.

We are still without a resident Priest, and are very grateful for all the help and guidance given to us by Rev. Cannon Mark Roberts who has taken on the task of Priest in Charge, this comes to an end in November this year.

With Revd. Jennifer Pilcher, Revd. Philip Clements, Revd. David Willis, retired, and other Clergy in our Diocese we have been able to keep all the Sunday services covered. They have also helped with visiting, and leading services at Eastry House and The Old Vicarage, Tilmanstone.

Revd Philip Clements has maintained our link with our Primary School either by taking assemblies or leading special services in the Church, at Easter, Christmas, the Newcomers service and the Leavers service, when the children are presented with books and Bibles paid for by St Mary's PCC. There is also a flourishing Prayer Group in the school led by Mrs Rosemary Barwick one of our Pastoral Care team.

Our Sunday Club has been reformed and meets in the Church Hall on the 2nd and 4th Sunday each month, they then join their parents for communion, and show the congregation what they have been doing in the hall. The 1st Sunday is All Age Worship, the 3rd Sunday is Informal Family Communion. The Children and their parents are encouraged to come to these services on those Sundays.

Our Uniform groups have taken part in Remembrance Day and Thinking Day, and Harvest festival services.

Our new kitchen and toilet have been fully functional for a year now and are much appreciated by all who use our Church. We have put on two concerts this year and the kitchen made catering much easier.

The theft of lead from the North and South Aisle roofs has caused a lot of trauma to those who care for our beautiful building and we are now working hard to raise funds to replace the money used to pay for the repairs.

Thanks must be given to the Events Team who have worked hard in arranging social activities and outings to fund raise for our Church. Plans are well on the way for our flower Festival and Fete which are the main fund raisers this year. Other events will be detailed in the Village News, and Eastry column and by posters round the village.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and invited them to stay for refreshments.