

some talks with DDC on this matter and hope that they will fund the provision of the building from the sale of the old toilets which are very old and in need of a total refurbishment.

Beating of the bounds it has been some years since we last walked the village boundary so we have decided to undertake this on Sunday 17th October 2010. Before the advent of ordinance survey maps this was an important event that ensured that young boys were shown the boundary of the local parish by the older members of the community. Cllr Hooper is leading on this project and would love to hear from any keen walkers willing to help.

Pond – I hope you all agree that the pond is looking much better following the work to revitalise it. This work is set to continue this autumn and I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Pond Warden Simon Dundas, Trevor Burton and other volunteers that helped with this work.

Ground work– Major work was undertaken this winter to tidy up the Church Yard and Cemetery. The box hedges have several dead trees been removed. The grave stones have also been cleared of ivy and other vegetation, I hope you all agree this have been a vast improvement. We have also paid to have overgrown allotments cleared, this has freed up 4 additional allotments for use, these have all been let and are currently looking very good. A new ground work contractor has been employed this year, we have received lots of complements about his work, especially about the Church Yard and Cemetery. We have commissioned a full inspection of all trees the Council is responsible for is under way. This will probably identify the need for tree works in coming year.

War Memorial – There have been numerous conflicts since the War Memorial was last updated, therefore the Council have agreed to pay for the addition of names to the war memorial. The existing names will also be repainted. Cllr Shevde has been gathering additional names to be added and it is hoped the project will be completed by Remembrance Sunday 2010.

Traffic Calming – Traffic problem in Lower Street have been discussed at the meeting for many years. Therefore I am please to inform you that as part of the KCC Members Highways Fund a scheme to provide a village gateway has been approved and should be completed during the coming year. Cllr Leyland Ridings will be funding this project from his Highways allowance. As the Parish Council had budgeted for this work during the coming year, I would like to ask your views on the provision of a similar scheme at Sandwich Road, this scheme to be paid for by the Parish Council. The Chairman asked for a show of hands to indicate those in favour of this proposition, the vast majority of the audience agreed.

Grant Applications are now being accepted from Village Organisations– closing date 25th June 2010. The application form can be downloaded from the Parish Council web-site or hard copies can be obtained from Sarah Wells, Clerk to the parish Council. Last year grants were given to Eastry Village Hall, Eastry Neighbourhood Watch, the Joint Services Club and Eastry Village News.

Thanks - I would now like to thank the following people for the hard work and service to the community over the past year. Richard Swain for his continued hard work at the toilets, Shelia and Malcolm Broster for keeping the Village looking clean and tidy. Iris Mollart for continuing to help Cllr Hooper and Pemble at Coffee Break. David Carr, former Chairman of the Parish Council, who still continues to run the Council's web site. Finally I would like to thank Sarah Wells, the Clerk for her work that keeps us all in line.

Before I close I would like to announce that after 36 years as the village grave digger Mr John Kemp has decided to retire. John also worked for the Council as a general builder and handyman, he has been a invaluable asset to the Parish and will be greatly missed. John has also put up the Christmas trees for many years. The Council would like to recognise his service to the community by presenting him with this gift.

The Chairman presented Mr. Kemp with a small gift to show the Councils appreciation. The Clerk presented Mrs. Kemp with flowers to say thank you for the years she has spent taking telephone messages.

I will close now and hand over to the Clerk for the Finance report.

The Clerk reported on the Receipts and Payments for 2009/10 and the Budget for 2010/11. A full copy of the accounts was in the meeting report pack.

7) REPORTS

KCC – Kent County Councillor Leyland Ridings had been unable to attend the meeting, below his written report.

Children's Social Services and Education - In my position as Deputy Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education, I am delighted that this has been another successful year for Kent's students. In the summer of 2009, 52% of GCSE students achieved 5 A*-C grades including English and Maths, a 2% increase from the year before. It has also been another record year for A-level results in Kent schools with the number of students achieving two A to E passes three percent higher than in 2008.

This year's Kent School Games were officially launched on 1st October 2009 by Dame Kelly Holmes, along with Hugh Robertson M.P. and KCC Leader Paul Carter at Hayesbrook School, Tonbridge, Bower Grove Special School, Maidstone and Allington Primary School, Maidstone. This event has turned into a great success and has resulted in many children participating in competitive sport on a regular basis: there were 900 children and young people at the opening.

The Children, Families and Education directorate is currently being restructured so we are better organised to meet the service demands of the community whilst making necessary efficiency savings. There will be a slim strategic centre, improved frontline service delivery and increased efficiency.

Audit Commission Inspection - In December 2009, the Audit Commission published the league table for the performance of all local authorities in England. There are two inspection reports. One report covers Kent County Council as an organisation. The second report covers Kent, the county, in partnership with the public sector, voluntary organisations and the business community. Kent excels in both reports. Kent County Council is joint top among all county councils in England - it is one of only three county councils that are "performing excellently". So, for the eighth year running, Kent County Council has scored the highest possible overall rating. The county is also singled out for exceptional achievement. In the partnership assessment, Kent gets two exceptional accreditations for improving young people's education and skills, for providing job opportunities to match Kent's growing economy and for the Gateways, which bring a wide range of public, community and voluntary services under one roof.

Transport and travel - This year, we have rolled out the Kent Freedom Pass across the entire county of Kent. We have also agreed to extend the scheme to those students who live in Kent but attend schools in other local authority areas, such as Medway. The Pass, which costs £50 currently, allows students to travel on any public bus at any time, including weekends and school holidays.

The heavy snowfall is likely to have damaged pavements and roads to some degree and I would ask you to report any damage and potholes to Kent County Council. This can be done by telephoning 08458 247 800. The road repair crews are working across the county and fixed over 10,000 potholes on Kent's roads in January 2010 alone. The repairs have been carried out ahead of more permanent work which Kent County Council is preparing to spend an extra £1million on from March onwards.

A new initiative this year was to give each County Councillor £25,000 to spend on Highways work in their division – If you have any suggestions for road improvements please let me know.

Roadworks should also be more streamlined in 2010 as we have introduced the Kent Permit Scheme, which means a company planning to dig up a road must apply for a permit from Kent Highway Services. This will allow Kent Highway Services to better co-ordinate the timing of roadworks, so that gas, water, telecoms, electricity companies and our own crews work on the same part of the road at the same time,

reducing the number and duration of roadworks – and minimising their impact on motorists and other road users.

Adult Social Services and Community Safety - Managed by Help the Aged/Age Concern, but funded by our Community Safety Unit, we have provided five ‘Handy Vans’ to work across the county to provide advice and guidance and fit a range of safety and security products for people over the age of 60. Some of the products currently installed include smoke alarms, window locks, door chains, door viewers, mortice locks and mortice bolts. The free service is available to anyone aged 60 years or over, who has disposable savings/assets not exceeding £20,000 (not including the value of their home) and lives in an area where Handy Vans operate. To make a referral please phone 0845 026 1055 or email communitysafetyunit@kent.gov.uk.

Health - For those with health concerns we have established, in partnership with the NHS, ‘Kent Health Watch’, a service to help local residents express their views about health and social care in the county and get through to the right people. It operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In February 2010, we ran a ‘Health Watch’ road-show to talk face to face with people to see what issues are important and where. This information will help Kent County Council and the NHS work together to improve the health services.

Communities - KCC is building of the largest new art gallery in the South East called Turner Contemporary. The construction work is currently on budget and on schedule to be completed by the end of 2010, opening the following spring. It is designed by David Chipperfield, an internationally renowned architect.

Council Tax for 2010 – 2011 - On 18th February 2010, Paul Carter announced the lowest ever Council Tax increase (since Council Tax began 17 years ago) of 2.1%. The rise of 2.1% means that a Band D property will increase from £1,026.27 to £1,047.78, an extra payment of 41 pence a week. It is expected that this will give Kent the 9th lowest Band D rate of any comparable authority.

Kent County Council will provide an additional £6.5million to support vulnerable adults, £5.3million to strengthen children’s social services, mostly to meet the 21.2% increase in referrals in the wake of the tragic Baby Peter case, plus £10m to meet the additional costs in 2010/11 of supporting a £1.5billion capital programme.

Member Community Grant - This year, I have given: £600 to the Eastry Twinning Association to enable them to make an official visit to Longpre-les-Corps-Saints; £549 to Sandwich Technology School to pay for the internal roof to their restaurant extension; £1,000 to Walmer Cricket Club for the refurbishment of the artificial pitch; £200 to Sandwich Town Council for the Sandwich Festival portable toilets; £500 to Preston and Elmstone Village Society to help them rebuild the village hall; £2,000 to Ash Village Hall Management Committee for the Ash Heritage Centre; £500 towards the 2010 visit of the Sandwich – Honfleur Twinning Association; £2,000 for the Sandwich Community Christmas Lights and Carnival; £1,129 to Sandwich Town Cricket Club for the installation of lighting and security system at the Butts Recreation Group; and finally £1,522 to Eastry Village Hall Management Committee for the refurbishment of the kitchen.

DDC – Cllr Steven Manion & Cllr Nick Kenton

Cllr Manion and Kenton gave a power point presentation.

Regeneration remains the Council’s main priority in both the longer term and Interim Corporate Plans. The Council can and does take the role of both delivery agent and an advocate and enabler of change and development in the District, facilitating both ourselves and partners to move forward with the means to address the current and projected challenges presented in this report.

Regeneration is the lynch pin that seeks to address the demographic projections, the housing needs and developments, health inequalities, the skills and learning agenda, economic projections and needs of our

communities. Physical regeneration is however, one of the hardest to promote as delivery of an end product does take time.

However, for the reasons outlined, it is the main ambition of the longer term Corporate Plan. The Interim Plan remains committed to these ambitions but also recognises the full impact of the economic downturn and uncertain financial climate. It makes clear the Council is still working hard to turn aspirations into real delivery, and, with all partners facing budget pressures, it recognises the importance of working together and enabling others, setting out clearly what the Council is committed to doing and what we will support and enable partners to undertake – all for the benefit of the District and residents.

The backward look in the Interim Plan demonstrates how the efforts of the Council and partners are addressing the challenges faced by the District, ensuring effort is co-ordinated and targeted to those areas most in need, whilst proving benefits to all.

Rev Pilcher – Church Report

Unfortunately the Rev Deer is quite ill and was unable to attend the meeting. The Rev Pilcher had kindly attended to give a report on behalf of the Church.

The Church is also trying to regenerate, in October 2009 a meeting was held to discuss the way forward for the Church, to discover what people want from the Church. This had been an open meeting but unfortunately only PCC members had attended. They had put together a list of 30 points that they hope will bring the Church out into the community.

Mr Tim Halling – Head Teacher at Eastry School

You are probably aware that the school's inspectors, OFSTED, graded the school as an outstanding school in October 2009. This is one of the highest achievements that a school can achieve so we are naturally really proud of this and it recognises the dedication of all the staff at the school. As a Church School we also have a Church inspection, we were also classed as an outstanding School in this report.

Our school provides a safe, happy and secure environment where we strive for the children to reach their potential; academically, physically, socially and morally. We foster the ethos of compassion and endeavour, encouraging the children to understand the feelings of others, respect the values of others and to consider their own attitudes, values and beliefs. We have close links with our village church, St Mary the Virgin, and we are proud of the links we have with other village organisations.

Mr Halling went on to list some of the activities and trips undertaken by Children at the school this year.

Mr John Waring – Greville Homes

In 1834, William Fulke Greville, a retired Naval Captain, living at Statenborough, offered to provide a Terrace of 6 Almshouses for the needy Eastry Residents, if the Parish would find a suitable site. The offer was accepted, the houses built, and the first residents moved in in April 1835. Since then in 1990 those houses were completely refurbished and 3 bungalows built on the site. The reason that I am relating this is that you will possibly have gathered that the homes are 175 years old this year and the Trustees intend to celebrate and commemorate this by holding a Garden Party on the site on 6th August next.

They are hoping to have a tree planted by a Special Guest in the grounds and to invite other guests who have a special connection with the Charity. The 7 Trustees, consisting of 4 representatives of this Parish Council, will be applying to the Parish Council for the consideration of a grant towards the cost of this Celebratory Garden Party, I hope this will meet with your general approval.

Mr Terry James – Village Sign Committee

I am very pleased to have been asked to report on the progress made by the Eastry Village Sign Committee. Following representations to Eastry Parish Council in November 2009, the EVS Committee was set up in February 2010, under the auspices of our Parish Council. The committee has met three times since then, roughly once a month. The committee is very grateful to Eastry Parish Council for the use of the Parish Rooms for our meetings.

The EVS Committee is formed by representatives from the following organisations: Church, Scouts, Guides, School, Youth Club, WI, Twinning Association, NW and Horticultural society. If your organisation is not represented yet, please note our next meeting will be at 7.30pm on Thur 17 June, and that we would welcome wider participation. We have invited business participation but as yet no one has come forward.

Our Plan is to erect a sign or signs that announce our civic pride in our village's heritage. You may know that we ran a design competition to highlight our project and to give us some ideas. Hazel Kendrick won that competition and her winning design along with others is now with Paul Harrison, a designer from Northbourne who has experienced in this field.

Our current thinking is that we would like to have two signs – one each at the northern and southern entrances to the village. At present we are favouring a moulded sign that would be made for low-maintenance resin.

We hope in the future to have some costings done for the construction and erection of the sign, because it may be that in the first instance we may only be able to afford one. However, the advantage of the moulded design process is that, once we have the original mould, extra or replacement signs may be cast as relatively less expense.

At present we have some working capital through the generous donations or interest free loans from participating organisations. However, we have begun to identify some sources of grant funding for this project and will be taking further advice on this at our next meeting. We also hope to get some business sponsorship in due course.

I trust that brings you up to date with what we've been trying to do. I'll be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Mr Dick Lasslet – Eastry Young Peoples Club

Unlike Ash, Wingham and Woodnesborough Eastry is very lucky to have an excellent Youth Club facility in the Village. I have been the Chairman of the committee for 15 years and although I have enjoyed my time and do not intend to give it up in the near future, both myself and the rest of my committee are aging, it is time that new and younger people stepped up to help with the running of this facility. We currently open 3 nights a week, Tue, Wed and Thu it is the same three people that run the sessions and I would like to ask for help and support from the local community to ensure the future of the Club.

8) POLICE ISSUES

PCSO Annemarie Benson

Eastry still has a relatively low crime report level, the main issues are currently speeding in Mill Lane, Gore Lane and Sandwich Road, now that the better weather has arrived I will be deploying the Speed Indicator Device (SID) in these places. Earlier in the year the priorities were nuisance motor bikes and dog fouling.

I still hold surgeries in the Parish Room once a month, I have cut these down to one hour as few if any one attends. I still continue to attend community events and hope this is why you do not feel the need to attend the surgeries. I can be found at Coffee Break, the indoor market and a Youth Club.

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

The meeting closed at 9.25pm.