



**Minutes of the Annual Assembly of the Parish, held at 7.30pm on
Monday 25th April 2016, at the Chevening Parish Church Hall, Homedean Road, Chipstead**

Present:	Mr H Dilley	Chairman
	Mr A Clark	Vice Chairman
	Mr J Branton	Councillor
	Mrs T Dalton	Councillor
	Mr A de Turberville	Councillor
	Mr J Eastwood	Councillor
	Mrs B Ide	Councillor
	Mr R Surrey	Councillor
	Mrs L Weavers	Councillor
Speakers	Mr J London	Sevenoaks District Council
	Mr R Parry	Kent County Council
	PCSO Dave O'Neill	Kent Police
	Sgt Mark Beresford	Kent Police
	Steve Dalton	Chipstead Lake Association
	Chris Becker	Holmesdale Angling Club
In Attendance:	Ms A Firth	Sevenoaks District Council
	Mr R Piper	Sevenoaks District Council
	Mrs J Hayton	Clerk
	Members of the Public	62

Action

01 Introduction

The Chairman welcomed Parishioners to the meeting, introduced the Members of the Parish Council and the Guest Speakers

02 Minutes of the Previous Annual Assembly

The minutes of the meeting held on 27th April 2015 were signed as an agreed true record

03 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

04 Finance & Accounts for 2015/6

Cllr Eastwood presented the accounts with the summary statement handed out at the meeting.

He confirmed that the Council was net underspent with major expenditure, the new playground and drainage for the recreation ground, funded by Grants.

All the accounts are up to date and have been submitted to the Internal Auditor

A question was raised as to why rates are budgeted for if none were payable in 2015/6. Cllr Eastwood confirmed the Pavilion is currently exempt from Rates but this is an annual decision so we have to budget in case they become payable again

05 **Chairman's Report**

The Chairman referred to his Annual Report

a) **Westerham Road junction with A25.**

Richard Parry confirmed the study into the feasibility of changing the junction had not yet started. He will investigate and report back

Richard
Parry

b) **M25 Slip Roads**

The first draft of the report has been distributed to KCC, Tonbridge & Malling DC and KALC. Conclusion is that there is not an economic case for East facing slips. Richard Parry commented that the Village should not be concerned by the outcome

c) **Parking Schemes**

Park Place scheme is complete. Just awaiting signs for the gates

Springshaw Close. Awaiting consultation from SDC

A parishioner asked about the potential for parking restrictions in Larkfield Road/Bessels Way which has issues caused by MarkerStudy. The Chairman confirmed this had been raised a few years ago, but the nature of the scheme hadn't been agreed by the residents. The Parishioner will consult with his neighbours. In the meantime parishioners should report inconsiderate parking to Kent Police with photos, dates and times.

d) **Chipstead 20 mph zone**

The proposal to introduce a 20 mph zone in Chipstead village was welcomed by all Parishioners.

A question was raised as to whether the zone could be extended to commence outside Sunrise. The Chairman confirmed that in the first instance it is important to get the zone in. Any extension of the boundary would potentially be very costly as some traffic calming may be required.

e) **Speedwatch**

The Chairman thanked the volunteers who undertook regular Speedwatch checks. It was an invaluable service to the village

f) **Potholes**

The Chairman reported to Richard Parry the poor quality of repairs which had been undertaken. Richard Parry reported that there is some funding for a pothole "blitz" and he recommended collating details and photos of potholes, sending to the Clerk who will submit to KCC which may get results. There is no money for road resurfacing.

Richard Parry confirmed that if repairs deteriorated within 6 months the contractor is obliged to come back and repair it. The Highway Steward for the area is very active in getting these issues resolved.

g) **Chipstead Lake**

The report on the Lake comprises the purchase of the Lake and the footpath.

Sale of the Lake

The Lake was a Community Asset which meant any interested parties had to register their interest and then had 6 months to put together a bid. The Community was trying to raise money and a separate organisation, the Chipstead Lake Association was formed to raise money. The Council did not have enough money to make a bid by the deadline and there is now an 18 month period where the Lake could be sold to anyone willing to put up the money. After that it reverts to Community Asset protection again.

Footpath.

The Parish Plan expressed a desire to have a footpath round the Lake. This involves diverting the existing footpath around the lake not diagonally across the land as at present. The Chairman distributed a map showing the existing vs proposed routes. The proposal to move the path was welcomed in a show of hands, with 4 opposing.

A Parishioner asked the feasibility of changing the footpath given that it was part of the Darent Valley Walk and on Ordnance Survey maps etc. The Chairman confirmed that the cost to change a right of way (if agreed by KCC) was around £2200

A question was raised as to whether the fishermen had the right to fish (& walk) the North Shore. The Chairman confirmed the fishermen have fishing rights to the North Shore and it will be up to the landowner to consult with his tenants about any change.

h) Dryhill

Dryhill was subject to a consultation to sell it which was subsequently temporarily withdrawn by KCC. If the Parish purchased Dryhill the upkeep costs would then be passed to the new owners. A show of hands gave a unanimous vote in favour of the Parish Council buying the Park in principle.

A question was asked as to whether the site was ever likely to obtain planning permission. The District Council representatives said a categorical no.

i) School Policy

The current admission policy, whereby a child from many miles away who attends church (but not at Chevening) will be given preference over a non churchgoing child from the village remains unchanged despite Council protestations

j) Burial Ground

The Chairman confirmed the Burial Ground was opened to Parishioners and former Parishioners and in exceptional circumstances someone who has made a significant contribution to the community

k) Playground

The Chairman confirmed how popular the new playground equipment is. The small slide has been turned round as it got very hot in the sunshine

l) Flood Prevention

The Chairman thanked the Flood prevention committee and confirmed it was imperative to keep up all the work which has been done.

There was concern over the impact the groundworks on the former Durtneills land are having on the village. The Environment Agency and KCC have been consulted. Richard Parry requested a briefing on the issue from Mick Ryan.

06 Questions from the Public

a) Chevening Cross.

It was asked when Chevening Cross would be repaired. The issue is the turning circle of large lorries and tractors and trailers – so rather than repair as is it would be better to make it curved. A site meeting to be arranged between Highways Engineer, Richard Parry, Chairman and Clerk to look at the problem and possible solutions Clerk

b) White Lines – Chevening Road and High Street

The yellow lines on the junction between High St and Chevening Rd in Chipstead need repainting

c) Drain on A25 Westerham Rd

There is a drain between Springshaw Close and Yew Tree Close which continually has water in it. There is a need to re-audit all drains to ensure they are kept clear. All blocked drains should be reported to Mick Ryan as part of his Flood Defence work Clerk

d) Footpath Cheshire Home to Tesco.

It was asked whether the plan to put a footpath from the Cheshire Home to Tesco was a spurious rumour. It is part of the aspiration of the Chipstead Lake Association coming out of the Parish Plan to have a footpath all round the lake which would include this area

07 SDC - James London

James London thanked the Parishioners for voting in himself and his two colleagues Anna Firth and Robert Piper.

James London explained SDC's Asset Purchasing strategy. The District Council spends £13m on services which historically has been 50% funded by government and 50% through Council Tax. In 2011 SDC set a 10 year budget which has been a useful tool in making savings going forward and to model Council Tax rises required to balance budgets.

Ongoing reductions in Govt subsidy (10% 2010, 20% 2012/3 and 2013/4, 40% 2014/5) meant SDC decided to use Assets as a major plank to supplement the reduction. The first initiative was to bring together 2 car parks and create the Marks & Spencer site in Sevenoaks.

There are 2 key rules.

- Property must be in the District
- The return must be 6% or above. (currently reserves generate 0.5%)

SDC now owns Swanley Working Men's Club and adjacent property & an office Building on the junction High St & Pembroke Rd in Sevenoaks.

SDC was allowed to release a further £8m from reserves to buy a petrol station and shop in Swanley

SDC is also looking to sell small parcels of land as part of its programme which will make it non reliant on Govt support from next year.

Within Sevenoaks, SDC is looking at decking the Bradbourne Car Park and building Premier Inn on the Sennocke Car Park site. Both will generate the required 6% return.

A question was asked concerning Bradbourne Car Park James London confirmed it was owned by the District Council not the Town Council

A parishioner questioned the Planning process whereby the same organisation owns land and grants planning permissions. All 3 Councillors from SDC and Richard Parry all confirmed the independence of the Planning Dept. The Asset Purchase arm of SDC has been set up as a separate company to ensure independence between the two.

A question was raised concerning the former Farmers site which is the first thing visitor to Sevenoaks by train see, and is a blight on the town and whether SDC would compulsorily purchase the site in order to remove the eyesore. Using a CPO is a very expensive and involved process and there may not be grounds for a CPO. Ultimately this site and the one in the High St (Edwards Electrical) are privately owned and were bought at the top of the market. No-one can force someone to do something with their land

08 KCC –Richard Parry

Richard Parry explained that the proposed Kent boundary changes to Sevenoaks South West have not been implemented. The constituency includes Riverhead and Badgers Mount and retains the synergy of the representing areas on the M25 corridor. Sevenoaks Town has also been retained for the elections which take place May 2017

Richard Parry confirmed that the biggest problem facing KCC is Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers. There are 1000 under 18 and their needs mean that children requiring foster homes from Kent are being fostered in other counties. In addition there are 5000 under 25 who need education and housing support. This gives an enormous financial burden and the system is close to breaking point. There is enough money for essential front line services but for very little else.

Richard Parry confirmed that there is lobbying currently taking place as there is no right to appeal by those who oppose a planning application once it has been granted. The House of Lords has voted to allow the right of appeal and Richard Parry urged the Assembly to write to our MP to ensure the right to appeal is provided

09 Police

PCSO O'Neill confirmed the potential for theft from sheds and outbuildings and Parishioners should ensure these are secure. It is also important that property is with a UV pen to prove ownership if items are stolen (post code & house number/name)

Major threat in our area is breaking into houses only to steal car keys and therefore cars.

No reports of Anti-Social behaviour or rogue Scrap Metal dealers in the Parish.

He reminded Parishioners of the dangers of Phone Scams and not to give any details over the phone

A question was raised about Fly tipping and that Councils are not hard enough on perpetrators. Sgt Beresford confirmed the cost to dispose of rubbish is increasing and it costs the District Council for rubbish disposal, hence the cost for anyone using the tip for non-Domestic purposes. He confirmed it is the Local Authority's responsibility to prosecute. Anna Firth confirmed that SDC were appointing a designated person to catch Fly-tippers

CLLr Clark asked the success rate for catching shed burglars and general theft. Kent Police have a CID operation aimed at it and arrests have been made. Although resources are restricted there are plain clothes and undercover officers focussed on organised crime and repeat offending. Exact numbers of arrests and prosecution are available from the Kent Police Website

A parishioner reported problems with motorbikes on the North Shore of the lake. As it is Private land it was asked whether the Police would take any action. PCSO O'Neill confirmed these should be reported as there is action the Police can take

A question was raised as to whether anything could be done concerning pavement parking. PCSO O'Neill has provided the Clerk with a notice to put on cars and confirmed reporting cars using 101 should still be done. CLLr Clark recommended taking photos of the offending vehicles, with the date and immediately sending to Kent Police to ensure timely action can be taken.

Richard Parry mentioned that although parking on pavements is not illegal (except in London) the Govt is minded to introduce that law to the rest of England

10 *Chipstead Lake Association (CLA) – Steve Dalton*

The CLA currently has pledges of £125k from 37 people towards buying the lake. This has shown them it may be possible to raise sufficient funds to buy the lake but is not conclusive.

The CLA is now looking to extend it's publicity to engage with a wider group of people. As soon as the CLA have concluded their initial pledging exercise they will then work on share structures and governance as soon as the size of the pledges is known. The

Chairman asked for a likely timescales. Mr Dalton confirmed 2-3 weeks for collecting pledges then 2-3 months for making progress in terms of having the recommended financial structure, governance and documentation.

Steve Dalton

11 *Holmesdale Anglers – Chris Becker*

Mr Becker is the new Chairman of Holmesdale Anglers. He confirmed his priority is to get the Club on a sound financial footing. They are looking to generate goodwill from the community and they have introduced social membership to the Angling Club. Social Membership gives the right to walk on all land the anglers own, and to fish in the lake at Montreal Park.

The Club is spending £4k to set up a match stretch on the South shore, with 30-40 pegs to run matches from. Work is already underway and this will generate much needed income for the club. They hope to have a stretch for disabled fishing within 4 years.

The Club is having an Open Day 5th/6th June on Chipstead Green to raise money to develop the disabled stretch. On the Open Day anyone can fish for free (providing they have a fishing licence)

12 Family Fun Day – Cllr Trish Dalton

The Family Fun Day will take place on 19th August 10.30am - 1.30pm on Chipstead Recreation Ground. All are welcome

13 Parish Picnic– Cllr Trish Dalton

There will be a Parish Picnic to celebrate the Queen’s birthday on Sunday 22nd May 1.00pm – 4.00pm. There will be live music (a hat will be passed round to thank Ian Fox). Bring a blanket and a picnic.

14 Dragon Boat Racing Monday 29th August – Cllr Andy Clark

The annual Dragon Boat Race will take place on Monday 29th August. If you want to enter a team, contact Andy Clark.

15 Calendar –Andy Clark

Andy Clark is creating a calendar with photos of the village for 2017. This will be sold for Charity. Please send any photos to Cllr Clerk.

Cllr Clark thanked the Chairman for his leadership of the Council over the past 8 years. The Chairman is be remaining on the Council