

Upper Hardres Parish Council

Chairman Paul Gordon

Clerk/RFO Clare Hamilton | uhpc.clerk@gmail.com | 01303 257321 | www.upperhardrespc.co.uk

Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 12 May 2020, 7.30pm, via remote conference call (Zoom)

1. **Attendance and apologies for absence** 10.03.2020_1
Attending: Chairman Paul Gordon, Cllrs Angela Waldron, Nick Waldron, Rob Quincey, Clerk/RFO Clare Hamilton, CCC Cllr Rob Thomas, and 3 members of the public. Apologies: Janice Rosen.
2. **Acceptance of Minutes of previous meeting** 10.03.2020_2
It was resolved to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 10.03.2020 as a true record.
To be signed at a later date.
3. **Members' declarations of interest on Agenda items** 10.03.2020_3
Cllr Cllr Nick Waldron 6.1, Cllr Angela Waldron 6.1.
4. **Public participation on Agenda items** 10.03.2020_4
4.1 Decisions on planning applications were queried. CCC Cllr Rob Thomas informed that there have been delays due to Covid-19 restrictions, but that planning applications will be considered in due course.
5. **Matters Arising from meeting held on 10.03.2020** none 10.03.2020_5
6. **Development Management & Planning Applications** 10.03.2020_6
Planning applications may be viewed online at:
<https://publicaccess.canterbury.gov.uk/online-applications/search.do?action=simple>
 - 6.1 19/10159 Great Bossingham Farm, Manns Hill, Bossingham CT4 6EB
Proposed 5 no dwellings and a workshop together with new access and parking following demolition of existing agricultural buildings. UHPC Neutral. One Objection. Two Abstentions.
See Appendix for comments submitted to CCC.
Awaiting decision from CCC
 - 6.2 19/10116 Land Off, Pett Bottom Road, Lynsore Bottom, Upper Hardres CT4 6EQ
Retrospective application for Change of Use from agricultural field to a dog walking field with associated hardstanding, access and fencing.
Awaiting decision from CCC
 - 6.3 19/01902 Land at The Street, Bossingham, Upper Hardres
Proposed erection of 4 no. detached two-storey dwellings together with double garages and new vehicular access to The Street, Bossingham.
Revised drawings and Design & Access Statement received 10.03.2020 from Hobbs Parker, comments submitted to CCC. Response to comments received from Hobbs Parker.
Awaiting decision from CCC
7. **Highways** 10.03.2020_7
Potholes: Parishioners may report potholes directly to KCC - <http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem>
 - 7.1 Enquiry Number 498849 - Multiple Potholes, Hardres Court Road - works completed
Enquiry Number 498847 - Multiple Potholes, Bossingham Road - works completed
Enquiry Number 498845 - Multiple Potholes, Lime Kiln Lane - works completed
KCC Highways Steward has been checking conditions on Manns Hill.
8. **Reports** 10.03.2020_8
 - 8.1 **Footpaths**
See Appendix for Footpath Warden's report. Fallen trees are blocking CB375, Clerk to contact landowner.

- 8.2 **Trees**
Report received from Philip Wilson Arboriculture and circulated to councillors; to review action at a later date. Trees on Hardres Court Road have been attended to. See Appendix for Tree Warden's report.
- 8.3 **Bossingham Village Hall Management Committee**
See Appendix for report.
- 8.4 **Bossingham Playing Field**
Following Government advice on Coronavirus, the Playing Field was closed on 2 April until further notice. Parishioners are reminded to respect the closure.

9. Finances

10.03.2020_9

- 9.1 1. Exemption from limited assurance review for the year ended 31 March 2020:
Upper Hardres Parish Council certifies that during the financial year 2019/20, the higher of the authority's gross income for the year, or gross annual expenditure for the year, did not exceed £25,000. Having met the full criteria for exemption from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015, the Certificate of Exemption will be signed and submitted to external auditor.
2. Effectiveness of the system of Internal Control for the year ended 31 March 2020:
It was resolved by all councillors to accept the findings of the Internal Audit carried out by Simon Warner on 1 May 2020. It was recommended to include a 'risk calculation matrix' in the Risk Assessment.
3. Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31 March 2020:
It was resolved by all councillors to approve the Annual Governance Statement which be duly signed and dated.
4. Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2019:
It was resolved by all councillors to approve the Accounting Statements which be duly signed and dated.
5. Balance Sheet and Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2020:
It was resolved by all councillors to approve the Balance Sheet and Notes to the Accounts which be duly signed and dated.
- 9.2 Balance of Accounts and Bank Reconciliation at 12 May 2020:
Current account balance £7,759.89. Deposit account balance £13,295.86. Total funds £21,055.75.
Revised Restricted & Unrestricted Reserves Policy 2020/21 was approved.
- 9.3 Receipts and payments since last meeting:
16.04.2020 £5,512.00 CCC Precept 2020/21 received
23.04.2020 £1,750.00 CCC Concurrent Functions Funding 2020/21 received
23.04.2020 £1,596.49 CCC Capital Grant 2020/21 for BVH received and transferred to BVH account
See Appendix for cashbook extract and Bank Reconciliation.
- 9.4 Expenditure due before next meeting:
a. Applications to Parish Council Grant fund:
Annual Grant Fund budget is £500. Applications received from:
Hardres & Stelling News £250
Bossingham Pre-School £250
It was resolved to award funds to both applicants.
- b. Request from British Red Cross for donation: not budgeted, declined.
- c. Request from Air Ambulance for £250 donation: not budgeted, declined.
- d. C Hamilton
- | | | | |
|------------------------------|------------|----------|---------------------|
| Clerk's Salary | May | £ 286.00 | |
| Clerk's Salary | June | £ 286.00 | |
| Zoom subscription | one month | £ 14.39 | vat £2.40 |
| KALC Subscription | 2020/21 | £ 224.52 | vat £37.42 |
| Zurich Insurance premium | due 31 May | £ 427.53 | (£423.15 last year) |
| Wraights Grounds Maintenance | April | £ 244.80 | vat £40.80 |
| Grounds Maintenance | May | £ 244.80 | vat £40.80 |

	Grounds Maintenance	June	£ 244.80	vat £40.80
PCC	Annual donation	2020/21	£ 150.00	s.137
PC Grants	Hardres & Stelling News		£ 250.00	s.137
PC Grants	Bossingham Pre-School		£ 250.00	s.137
	Turtle Engineering Defib Cabinet servicing iro		£ 75.00	

It was resolved to approve expenditure. Proposed by Cllr Nick Waldron, seconded by Cllr Rob Quincey, approved by Chairman.

10. Village Tidy Day

10.03.2020_10

- 10.1 Fallen branches were cleared from the Village Hall car park on 21 March. Tidy Days are on hold. Councillors wish to thank parishioners who pick up litter on their daily walks as this contributes to keeping the area clean, tidy and a pleasure to live in. CCC Cllr Rob Thomas will enquire if litter pickers are available from CCC, these could be stored at VH. Cllr Rob Quincey will review the provision of litter bins in the parish. Chairman will transfer salt from bag to salt bin outside VH.

11. Bossingham Oak tree wood and marker posts

10.03.2020_11

- 11.1 These are ready to be installed. Locations discussed - outside VH next to 2012 bench, and on verge next to bench on Manns Hill.

12. Correspondence received

10.03.2020_12

See Appendix.

13. KCC Parish Highways Improvement Plan

- 13.1 This scheme provides an opportunity for Parish Councils to engage with their residents to identify highway priorities in their area and then work with KCC on what highway improvement(s) could be taken forward in their area and how this might be funded. NB: improvements costs are to be met by the parish. This item was to be highlighted to parishioners at the Annual Parish Meeting on 19 May, now cancelled. No obvious improvements were identified, as the most pressing matters are attended to by KCC Highways.

14. Defibrillator

10.03.2020_14

- 14.1 Signs to be fitted.
14.2 Turtle Engineering offering cabinet servicing from £75.00; testing all electrical components of the cabinet, servicing the lock mechanism, cleaning the cabinet and providing a health report on the Defibrillator. Clerk to arrange.

15. Noticeboard and Signage repairs

10.03.2020_15

- 15.1 Hop Pocket noticeboard: repaired, and in storage until work at the pub complete. In the meantime, PC notices to be pinned on BVH noticeboard.
15.2 Restoration of second Bossingham sign (triangle at Lime Kiln Lane/Hardres Court Rd): in hand, delayed by Covid-19 situation.

16. Website and GDPR

10.03.2020_16

- 16.1 Clerk has built new PC website; hosting with HugoFox is free, domain name renewal is iro £12.00 p.a. HugoFox to provide Accessibility Statement. Councillors thanked Clerk for work on the new website, and parishioners for providing local photographs for the Home page.
16.2 Information on Coronavirus (COVID-19): information from CCC, KCC and KALC is shared to email list and on website under Community tab. Several parishioners have emailed with thanks for the updates.

17. The Hop Pocket

10.03.2020_17

- 17.1 Meeting with owner on 9 March was postponed due to illness. Update received on 5 May:
- Scale of the Hop Pocket project is under review due to Covid-19. Still wants to provide community pub, tea room and reading room. Shop, offices and holiday lets are under review

- Side gate has been fitted to secure the site. Sash windows will be replaced when supplier is back at work
- Current bus shelter is on Hop Pocket land. KCC Highways has been consulted and safety issues were cited as shelter is too close to the road
- A Highways Consultant will be making a planning application on behalf of the owner to move the bus shelter. The proposal involves moving shelter approx. 6' to the right and 3' - 4' back. All work would be funded by the Hop Pocket, at no cost to the parish council. Proposed new shelter would be similar to one in Petham (oak, flint, tiled roof) and be respectful of the local vernacular
- Unsure of timings due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Councillors would prefer a proposal for a new shelter to be the same style as the present shelter which is consistent in style with the shelters on Bossingham Road/Split Lane and outside the Rose & Crown, Stelling Minnis. The post box attached to the bus stop will need to be retained.

18. **Bus Shelter**

Information received from KCC:

- All installation and maintenance of any shelter is the Parish responsibility
- KCC are responsible for bus stop infrastructure (i.e. pole, flag, timetable case) but excluding shelters
- A request to relocate a bus stop pole would need to be made to KCC in the first instance to see if the request meets certain criteria and whether a bus stop relocation is viable
- If a shelter was in the same location as the bus stop, then the shelter owner (the Parish Council) would also require consulting on a potential shelter relocation as they would need to arrange any such work as well as cover the cost
- Bus shelter relocation should be addressed at planning stage, with the shelter owner consulted along with the bus stops team from KCC from a bus stop perspective only, along with the bus company that serve the shelter to ensure they are happy with any new proposed location.

19. **CCC Concurrent Functions Funding Consultation**

Consultation on CFF for 2021/22 onwards was circulated to councillors and response submitted 21.04.2020.

20. **Casual Vacancy for a Parish Councillor**

Janice Rosen tendered her resignation as Councillor from today, 12 May 2020. Councillors wish to thank Janice for her long service as Councillor and bookings secretary for Bossingham Village Hall. Clerk to inform CCC, who will provide a Notice of Vacancy to be displayed on VH noticeboard and Parish Council website for the statutory 14 day period.

21. **For information**

10.03.2020_19

- 20.1 CANCELLED: VE Day celebrations with SMPC
- 20.2 CANCELLED: John Pitcher, Tree Warden, due to attend presentation by representatives of Kent Police at the Herne Centre on 2 April
- 20.3 SMPC: Councillors recognise the efforts made by SMPC to support their parishioners. UHPC has not received direct requests for help, and it has been noted that friends, family and neighbours are supporting each other
- 20.4 Hardres & Stelling News: May edition is pdf only and available on SMPC website and UHPC website
- 20.5 UHPC May Newsletter: With no APM this year, Clerk will produce pdf only newsletter. Notices to be posted locally to encourage parishioners to register for the Email List in order for the Newsletter to reach as many people as possible
- 20.6 Christmas Lights: Quotes being sourced for solar lights - add to July Agenda
- 20.7 Green bins: chargeable from July, any information received from CCC will be circulated
- 20.8 2020 meeting dates: under review due to Covid-19: 19 May (APM) CANCELLED; 14 July (online); 15 September; 10 November
- 20.9 Next PC meeting: 14 July (online).

A parishioner expressed thanks to the Parish Council for all its work.

Meeting closed at 9:20pm.

Appendix

6.2 UHPC response to CCC re. planning application CA/19/01902 - Revised drawings

Previous feedback from Upper Hardres Parish Council requested a mix of housing sizes which would be more appropriate and beneficial to the village. This has not been addressed.

Previous parish council feedback requested moving back the existing hedge in order to provide more non-designated parking perpendicular to The Street in order to increase the amount of parking on The Street and be of more benefit to all residents. This has not been addressed. Some visitor parking bays have now been included within the site, but there remains a need for improved and increased on-street parking.

A proposed turning point on the site for a 7.7m fire tender is noted. A standard refuse vehicle at 10.4m or 11.4m may not be able to turn in the proposed space.

The proposed refuse collection point for plot 1 means the refuse vehicle will have to remain on The Street while these bins are emptied causing an obstruction. Councillors are concerned that this proposed separate refuse collection point for plot 1 could become another access point onto The Street for pedestrians or other access.

It is stated on Doc037 'Field access to be retained', although there is currently no field access at this point.

Re. statement on page 6 of the Design and Access Statement - 'The site is currently primarily used for agricultural purposes, and the public footpath that crosses from East to West is used by many residents of Bossingham as a short cut from one side of the village to the other. The site naturally has two openings to the east and west which addresses both key roads through Bossingham' - Councillors wish to clarify there are currently only three access points, two to/from the field on Manns Hill, and only one access point to/from the field onto The Street to the west, via the public footpath.

Considering the size of the application, Councillors remain concerned at the lack of detail regarding visibility, access, parking and refuse collection.

8.1 Report from Footpath Warden, Robert Veltman:

I have reported the fallen trees and blocking vegetation on CB375 to KCC/PRoW several times online and in person: on 30th December 2019: ProW Refs 191220653 (upper blockage) and 191210794 (lower blockage), and to Louise Adams at the quarterly East Kent LFO meeting at Brabourne on Friday 6th March 2020. Louise's and her chief, Andy Hutchison's, view is that CB375 is not a priority since it is not in the vicinity of an urban area like a Canterbury or Faversham. I stressed to them that I had first reported the main tree fall at the top of the path in April 2019 and that CB375 is not any old footpath - it is 'arterial' in the sense that it is quite long and is part of cross-country routes.

On 10th March 2020 I went to the Pett Bottom Lane end of CB375 alone armed with tools and cleared much of blocking vegetation from fallen trees from CB375 at the lower end of the CB375 and emailed Louise to inform her of this action. Averil and Steve Brice, East Kent footpath maintainers, have visited the site of the upper blockage in Bursted Wood and declared that this is a major obstacle and should be removed. The duty for removal of fallen vegetation falls on the landowner under Highways Act s.154.

Since the lockdown tightened, I have not driven to any place of exercise, walking footpaths from my home in south Canterbury.

On 25th January I reported (PRoW ref: 200186717) an illegal act affecting CB287 in Atchester Wood, where a person - one can assume it was the landowner - posted notices at either end of CB287 claiming that the path was not to be used by the public. Part of this path is in Stelling Minnis parish, so I co-operated with Martin Hart, SM PFW, on this matter.

On 31st January I reported a fallen tree (PRoW Ref: 200181487) on CB287, which a local resident alerted me to. A site visit I made on 10th March revealed to me that the offending notices and the fallen tree on CB287 had been removed.

There is the planning issue of CB377 which crosses Stars meadow from Mann's Hill to the vicinity of the Village Hall, about which I drew the attention of the officers to the unwalkable surface at the Mann's Hill end due to the presence of cattle and cattle grid there. However, the new line of CB377 is satisfactory terminating more closely to the public footpath opposite the Village Hall which leads across the valley to St Marys Stelling and joining up with other public rights of way. *(Clerk's note: line of CB377 will not be changed)*

8.2 Report from Tree Warden, John Pitcher:

A year thrown into chaos by Covid 19! How things have changed everywhere including in the Parish. However, the trees continue to display their beauty at this time of the year and throughout the season as indeed do all other plants, hedgerows and shrubs etc.

Trees of course do have various diseases but somehow always manage to withstand such, perhaps better than the human species! Of course, there are tree diseases that threaten large areas of the tree population in this country, ie ash dieback and the oaks of the land also. A lot of research is in progress to find cures where trees become more resistant to diseases, or indeed

planted in different situations to avoid huge clusters ie. in large woodlands where fungus spreads more rapidly as opposed to in hedgerows etc or in small clusters etc. Seems a bit like us trying to prevent the Coronavirus spreading - no large gatherings.

We have recently in the Parish engaged a tree survey in the grounds of the village hall and Bossingham Playing Field and a full report is with the Parish Council for discussion. A comment I may make is that trees are becoming a costly subject, particularly since the legal case in 2012 whereby a Council was held liable for not taking sufficient care of the management of a tree.

The Woodland Trust and Kent Tree Council are encouraging tree planting wherever land is available in Parishes but one has to consider, despite my love of trees, future costs in the management of such trees. I have attended meetings concerning tree matters and cannot fault their desire to plant millions of trees in the Country, but it can turn out to be a costly exercise but worth it in the longtime.

I continue to plant and maintain the village hall and War Memorial gardens and hope that brings a bit of cheer to residents and those passing through the village at this difficult time.

8.3 Report from Gabby Fisher, Chair of Bossingham Village Hall Management Committee

COVID-19

The hall has been shut in line with government advice since Friday 20th March 2020

Linda Warner, Treasurer has successfully applied to Canterbury City Council for a Retail, Hospitality and Leisure grant fund for the COVID crisis. The Committee are delighted to confirm we have been granted £10,000 and the money has been paid into the Deposit Account. This money will enable the costs of closing the hall to be covered and on-going bills to be paid. Linda will ensure money used from the grant is identified in the Accounts. Any grant money left over is not required to be paid back and will go towards the plan to update and enhance the hall. We have already used some of the grant to fill the oil tank to take advantage of the low oil price.

The Committee will continue to follow government guidelines, liaise with other local Village Halls to monitor when they are likely to re-open and keep in close contact with UHPC. Details on social distancing and any other specific requirements required to be put in place when opening the Hall will be added to the relevant documentation at that time.

Prior to the Hall being able to open again, work is needed in the Gents and Ladies toilets as there is not any hot water to wash hands. This is referred to later in the report.

Our Insurance Company have been in touch to advise the Hall should shut off the water supply after being closed for 45 days, as any water leaks or damage will not be covered. Weekly checks on the Hall need to be in place. A checklist will be put up in the entrance to sign and date to show proof this is taking place should this be needed for any reason.

Contact has been maintained with the Hall Cleaner during the closure.

Subsidence

The on-going saga continues. I have been contacted by the Crawfords who have advised that the contractors will be making contact to arrange a date to complete the work as identified in the insurance claim which was missed before. The work will be carried out in line with COVID-19 restrictions. As the repair work is on the exterior wall this should be straightforward to complete.

Grants and Donations

The Committee were delighted to receive a further cheque from Making A Difference for £192.68 from the Co-Op.

Clare Hamilton paid in the grant obtained from CCC for £1,598 which has been earmarked to upgrade the kitchen facilities.

With the Windmill Fete and other planned fundraising events being cancelled, this would have had a significant impact on the Hall. However, as stated above, the grant has reduced the financial risk to the continued operation of the Hall.

Maintenance and Repairs

In the week leading up to the hall being closed, there was an electrical fault which caused the boiler to trip out and as a result, Pilates had to be cancelled due to lack of heating. The cause of the problem was the water heater in the Ladies toilets. An Electrician was called who made this safe and isolated the problem to enable the boiler to continue working. Arrangements are being made to get a quote to replace the water heaters in both toilet areas and for the work to be completed whilst the Hall is closed to the public. The monies donated by Making A Difference Locally will go towards the costs. We still have money available from the first donation made in October 2019.

A section of the roof between the back of the Gents toilet block and the exterior wall needs to be repaired as in heavy downpours, rainwater is tricking down the interior wall in the main Hall.

Some wooden tile slats on the front of the building are missing.

The kitchen will need to be fitted with new equipment obtained through the CCC grant referred to in Grants and Donations. Quotes to have this fitted and for any alterations, making good etc. need to be obtained.

The leak under the hand washing sink in the kitchen has been repaired and the sink is now stuck down and secure.

A tamper proof cover has been fitted on the thermostat in the kitchen to prevent the temperature being altered.

AGM

This was due to be held on 28th May 2020. I am in discussion with the rest of the Committee to look at postponing this until September depending on the circumstances at that time.

Gabby Fisher, Chair, Bossingham Village Hall

9.1 Bank Reconciliation 11 March 2020 – 12 May 2020:

Current Account:	£	£
Balance as current account at 12.05.2020		7,759.89
The net balance reconciles to the Cashbook (receipts & payments account) as follows:		
Balance brought forward at 11 March 2020		991.44
ADD: receipts 11.03.2020-12.05.2020		9,810.67
LESS: payments 11.03.2020-12.05.2020		3,042.22
Closing balance at 12 May 2020		7,759.89
Deposit Account:		
Balance brought forward at 11 March 2020		13,295.86
ADD: receipts 11.03.2020-12.05.2020		0
LESS: payments 11.03.2020-12.05.2020		0
Closing balance at 12 May 2020		13,295.86
Total funds at 12.05.2020	£	21,055.75

9.2 Cashbook extract Receipts and Payments since last meeting:

					receipts	payments	ref	balance
1.4.20	Balance carried forward = £1,280.89							1280.89
APRIL								
16	CCC	Precept	2020/21	PRECEPT	5512.00		CCC PRECEPT	6,792.89
23	CCC	CFF	2020/21	CFF	1,750.00		UPPERHFUNC20/21	
23	CCC	Capital Grant Village Hall		BVH	1,596.49		UPPERHAGRANT2021	10,139.38
23	BVH	Capital Grant Village Hall		BVH		1596.49	CCC CAPITAL GRANT	8,542.89
28	P Wilson Arb.	Tree Report				200.00	INV NO 895	
28	C Hamilton	Salary 1/12		SALARY		286.00	SALARY 1/12	
28	C Hamilton	Website fee		WEBSITE		297.00	WEBSITE FEE	7,759.89

12. Correspondence received

As listed in Clerk's weekly email update to Councillors, including:

Manston Airport Design Option Review Stage 2 CAP1616

Kent Mineral Sites Plan - Early Partial Review of the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013-30

Regular PHE COVID-19 updates

KALC, NALC, KCC and CCC information on COVID-19

May 2020 Report from Robert Thomas Councillor, Chartham and Stone Street Ward, Canterbury City Council

As you'd probably expect this month's update is almost exclusively what is or isn't happening at Canterbury City Council and Kent County Council due to the global pandemic.

Emergencies are coordinated through local resilience forums up and down the country and in Kent we have the Kent Resilience Forum (KRF) which brings together a number of key agencies and partners. Plans are put in place and reviewed ahead of any

emergency and a pandemic is one of those emergencies planned for. Within the KRF there has been a strategic coordination group, and a number of sub groups, working on key areas meeting on a daily basis. An issue which I know of of particular importance to everyone is the situation with regards to personal protective equipment (PPE) and I thought it was worth highlighting that Kent County Council has so far taken urgent decisions to purchase £5m worth of equipment.
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=54565&optionId=0>

One of the biggest challenges in Canterbury has been to set up a community hub from scratch. This includes sourcing the food supplies, ppe and distribution network with a thousand volunteers signing up to help and donations of approximately £30k to support our efforts which is truly heartening to see.

As Leader at Canterbury City Council I've been keen to ensure that councillors are kept up to date with business and so we have regular question and answer sessions with key council staff. We have also been rolling out a number of briefing sessions on specific topics so that checks and balances are in place but also to ensure we can continue to hit the ground running when we get back to the usual cycle of meetings. At County leader Roger Gough has done a number of radio interviews and keeping his blog up to date. Roger Gough

Hopefully by now residents and businesses know that support can be found at: CCC: Canterbury City Council KCC: Coronavirus (COVID-19) Other guidance is available on the gov.uk website or from South East Local Enterprise Partnership, Federation of Small Businesses and so on.

During the past two months it's been an interesting challenge to deal with council business and working with colleagues on a remote basis. With that said I don't have a dedicated council office to work from in any case and have always had somewhat of a nomadic lifestyle working from a laptop or tablet and usually on the road in any case. Food for thought as to all of our working practises post lockdown I'm sure.

I must say a personal thank you to the whole community, including the council staff, for the way they have stepped up to the challenge and got on with their duties as key workers and health staff and indeed those people who have been following the government guidelines of staying at home, protecting the NHS and saving lives.

By way of an update I've listed a number of topic areas below:

Waste

Household Waste Recycling Centres Given the government's initial four reasons to leave the house the HWRCs were shut as a non essential service. Staff from these centres were used to support district councils with their waste collection service. As you'll see bookings can be made from 13th May with the centre re-opening from 15th May. <https://kccmediahub.net/kents-household-waste-recycling-centres-to-open745>

Green Waste In order to ensure that household collections of recycling and residual waste (black bin) were maintained during staff shortages at Serco the decision was taken to cease green waste collections. However, good news is that the service has been restored from Monday 11th May. <https://news.canterbury.gov.uk/news/article/109/garden-waste-collections-to-restart>

Side Waste Given the challenges of the above two updates Kent County Council funded 3 Viridor waste trucks to collect up to two black sacks per property. As a new service during challenging times it was never going to be a seamless service and so it's probably proved, however, it was there to support families who were generating more waste than usual. This service will end at the end of the month. <https://news.canterbury.gov.uk/news/article/105/two-extra-black-sacks-to-be-collected-on-temporary-basis>

Business Support As I'm sure you will have seen the government has announced a number of measures to support business. Locally that has seen about two thirds of the business rates bills covered in full by the government. Additionally the city council has been hard at work issuing government grants to businesses too in hospitality, retail and leisure. This has been based on business rates and we've urged companies to come forward and not to wait but we have written to businesses and followed up with phone calls where we have not had contact. Additionally, the government has agreed to provide additional funds to be given to businesses at the councils discretions. We're awaiting guidance from government to finalise our approach to providing this support. Queries can be directed to businesscashgrants@canterbury.gov.uk Cash grants for businesses (COVID-19) | Cash grants for businesses (COVID-19)

Homelessness One of the most important areas for a council at any time is housing and homelessness. The council has a number of strategies to provide housing as well as homelessness prevention measures. The government recognised that the homeless were amongst the most vulnerable groups in this pandemic with about two thirds having underlying health issues I'm told. I'm extremely proud of the city council's team who, while working with partner agencies, have managed to get most of the rough sleepers of the streets and achieved some wonderful results during their time at Travelodge accommodation. ● 56 rough sleepers housed since the start of the crisis ● 4 of those rough sleepers now have jobs ● 20 now receiving support for drug and alcohol dependency ● 5 have been supported into long-term accommodation. 2 more have offers. ● 8 have received support to reconnect with friends, family and the area they originated from The challenge moving forward will be making sure we keep every rough sleeper off the streets as well as supporting all the "hidden homeless" and the government has set up a task force to look

specifically at this issue. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/dame-louise-casey-to-spearhead-government-taskforce-on-rough-sleeping-during-pandemic>

Council Finances In an attempt to maintain all the services Canterbury City Council provides in recent years there's been a desire to maintain services by achieving additional incomes most notably through property and parking on the backdrop of reduced government grants. I believe that has been the right approach, however, this makes the council's finances more susceptible to the economic cycle. This is in addition to all the essential support given to the community during the pandemic and following government guidelines such as providing free parking to all key workers. As such the council is going to have to do some serious belt tightening in order to steady the ship with budget changes expected by the end of the month having already frozen recruitment, closed a number of services for the foreseeable future and maintaining contractual expenditure only at this stage.

<https://news.canterbury.gov.uk/news/article/106/council-determined-to-rise-to-financial-challenges-caused-by-covid-19>

As a snapshot overview council income is made up of:

Property 26.9% Parking 19.3% Council Tax 19.2% Business Rates 9.6% Government Grant 1.9% Other 23.1%

Lobbying Government For the past two months there have been weekly dial in conference calls with various government departments and other sector organisations such as the District Councils Network and Local Government Association. A number of well made points have been put to the Secretary of State, government ministers and other personnel about the challenges facing local government but also the opportunities that could be there around the recovery phase and so on. Kent Leaders, the leaders of the fourteen councils in Kent, have agreed to write to the government to highlight the financial pressures facing the councils. £100m has been received (£66m for KCC and £1.7m for CCC) and while this is a lot of money it's likely to be a fraction of the costs of dealing with the crisis as well as other impacts being felt.

It's not just the financial challenge but as I say the opportunities too. The chairman of the District Councils Network has been hammering home the point "that councils know every business because we oversee business rates, licensing, planning and so on and are well placed to help with the recovery".

Virtual Meetings Canterbury City Council has spent the past few years becoming more digital and less paper based and through that investment the city council has been well placed to have virtual meetings through the google apps. Indeed meetings are streamed on our own YouTube channel Canterbury City Council

CCC has set up a Covid19 Emergency Committee to oversee business until September as no councillor has delegated powers as business is agreed through the committee structure and the need for a simple way of transacting business.

Planning meetings are due to commence shortly with the same set up agreed, however, on a virtual basis. Due to a small backlog and the necessity to ensure sound decisions it is likely that there will be one committee meeting per week for non strategic site applications and one off meetings for strategic site applications. There are a handful of applications from the Chartham and Stone Street ward which are waiting to come to the committee.

Kent County Council uses Microsoft technology primarily and so live meetings are streamed on Teams. As KCC operates through a leader and cabinet model no significant changes have had to be made. A number of meetings have been cancelled initially but many will be continuing as usual in the near future Monthly meetings calendar - May 2020

Recovery While it's a bit too soon to talk about specific plans for the recovery stage, both post lockdown and longer term, there are clearly a number of challenges across the board not least of all as a district that is largely reliant on education, tourism and retail which will all feel the impact of the crisis. Part of the challenge is a number of unknowns around the pandemic and its wider effects.

Miscellaneous

Kent County Council's Biodiversity Strategy has been approved <https://kccmediahub.net/kent-biodiversity-strategy-approved745>

Car parking has been provided for free to key workers and some car parks were shut to reduce the cost of keeping these open. Councils have to pay business rates on car parks for example. <https://news.canterbury.gov.uk/news/article/102/four-car-parks-to-temporarily-close>

East Kent Housing staff will be transferred back in-house to the city council by the end of September.

<https://news.canterbury.gov.uk/news/article/104/east-kent-housing-staff-and-services-to-transfer-to-councils-at-the-end-of-september>

A number of events have had to be cancelled unfortunately <https://news.canterbury.gov.uk/news/article/101/whitstable-oyster-festival-2020-cancelled> <https://news.canterbury.gov.uk/news/article/108/canterbury-on-ice-cancelled-this-year>

The National Association of Local Councils has put together an overview of what some parish councils are doing up and down the country which might give food for thought on what else could be done locally? <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/library/news-stories/3221-coronavirus-case-studies/file>
Should you have any questions or concerns do get in touch.