

Draft Minutes of the ASH ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

**Held on Monday 14th April 2014, at 7.30pm
In the Ash Village Hall, Queen's Road, Ash**

Chairman: Mr G Foat – Chairman of Ash Parish Council
Present: Thirty-three parishioners, seven Ash Parish Councillors, Kent County Councillor Ridings, Dover District Councillors, Bartlett, Chandler & Conolly, PCSO Batley, KCC Warden Priestly, Mr Crick (Headteacher Cartwright & Kelsey School), Mrs Haggart (Minute Taker)
Apologies: None

14.01 Police Report PCSO Batley (it was agreed to take this item on the agenda first)

The main priority for the year had been to deal with anti-social behaviour. There had been 14 calls from Chilton Place about youths causing a nuisance and this had been dealt with by patrols of the area. There had been 6 calls regarding mopeds causing problems and the registered owners had been contacted by the police. There had been 13 reports of graffiti and they had been added to the data-base of tags kept by the police. There had been serious issues which had resulted in the withdrawal of the late night bus service which had been re-instated after evening patrols of the area and a leaflet campaign to identify the culprits. There had been a serious crime in the local Co-operative Shop. Co-operative Shop.

It was planned to continue with the Police Contact Point, visits to local schools, working with the Rugby Club's under-10s and surgeries held in the Ash Village Library.

Q: How many parishes are covered by the PCSO and what was the best number to contact her on. A: Currently PCSO Batley covers the 6 local parishes around Ash. 101 is the best number as they can put callers through to the PCSO or if she is unavailable take a message for her to contact or visit the caller.

Q: Is it possible to get rid of graffiti. A: Some needs to be painted over if chemical or jet washing is not suitable for the surface.

Kent County Cllr Ridings reported that from May there will be speed measurement cables that are going to be used in the local area and the police / PCSOs will be able to work with Kent Highway Services to tackle speeding vehicles.

14.02 Minutes

The minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting Held on 15th April 2013 were available before the meeting. The minutes were proposed by Mr Chris Busby, seconded by Mr Michael Cooper, agreed as a true record and were signed by the Chairman.

14.03 Community Activity Teams Working in Ash (unfortunately the speaker did not arrive)

14.04 To receive reports and take questions on the Parish Council

i) Ash Parish Council Chairman Mr Graham Foat

A full report had been made in the Chairman's letter to parishioners delivered to every home in the parish. Some of the main points of note was the election of Mr Chris Turner as Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council who has taken the lead on developing the Ash Neighbourhood Plan. One of the

new councillors who joined this year was Mr Neil Aplin. The death of Mr Robin Darvell who had been very ill was a sad loss to the parish and the Council and amongst the many contributions Robin made to the parish which will be sorely missed was his unique and very readable Onlooker contributions. Mr Karl Roger joined the Council to fill this vacancy.

On the Recreation Ground, the toddler slide was installed as were the floodlights on the rugby pitch. The Keep Ash Tidy Day was very successful and another will take place on 5th July this year. The cost of maintaining the toilets in the centre of Ash rose to £10,000, although a new tender for the contract has been awarded at a reduced cost of £7,500 for the following year. There is a case of the missing footpath. EE465 at the top of Queen's Road running parallel to the A257 to Burfords Alley is very overgrown at the east end. However, Kent Public Rights of Way Department has said that they will not clear it, as is not a public right of way according to their records. There had been problems with youths disrupting the late night bus service which has been resolved. In the centre of the village, not observing the parking restrictions where there are double yellow lines continues to cause problems.

There will be major works to the gas mains this summer along The Street from the Churchyard to No 93; then along New Street west of Cherry Garden Lane to the bottom of New Street. There will be temporary double yellow lines while the work takes place to help keep the traffic moving. The broken street light outside No 6 Chequer Lane is unable to be replaced as no resident is willing to have it put in their garden. A year ago there had been worries that the Ash Library service would be withdrawn, however the problem seems to have gone away for the moment. There are two vacant allotments available to local residents. Some of the road lights at the Ash junctions with the A257 are due to be switched off. On the weekend of November 7th, 8th and 9th there will be a commemoration of World War I in the Ash Village Hall.

Q: When will the gas mains work start? A: In May, then The Street will be closed from 25th July for some of the time until the work finishes in September.

Q: Road works signs block the exit from Moat Lane and restrict sight lines, can they be moved? A: During the summer traffic will not be able to come out of Moat Lane. The moving of the signs that are there will be passed to Kent Highway Services.

Q: There have been complaints that the scheduled work in Sandwich has not happened on time. Can this be avoided for Ash? A: The Parish Council Chairman and Vice-Chairman have been at the meetings with Kent Highway Services and the contractors. It has been said that the work will continue 10 hours a day and on Saturdays during the closure of the roads.

Q: Can a rubbish bin be put at the bus stop at Gilton? A: This will be considered by the Council.

Q: Litter is an increasing problem and there needs to be more litter bins. Are there any problems in getting more? A: The main consideration is the cost for emptying them. A parishioner offered to empty them. It would be referred to the Council.

ii) Finance Report on the Parish Council Accounts – Mrs Haggart

The audited statement of the accounts for 31st March 2013 had been displayed along with the Auditor's Certificate. The un-audited summary of the accounts for the current financial year end are on the Parish council web-site.

The 2013 receipts were £73,978 and there was a balance carried over of £60,164. The precept of £54,390 was the total gathered from keeping the contribution per Band D property at the same rate as the prior year, with the transitional payment of £7,388 coming from central government.

Payments of nearly £51,466 included the contribution to Dover District Council of £10,216 for The Street Public Conveniences. The insurance charge of £1,354 had decreased as a new provider has been used. It is for a three year term and no longer covers the Pavilion. A grant of £947 went towards the installation of the floodlights on the Recreation Ground. The new slide for the toddlers cost £1,800. The tree surgery cost was low as work planned for last winter could not be carried out due to the bad weather. This cost is held in reserves for when it can be carried out.

The closing balance of £27,194 for ring fenced expenditure covers security, road safety measures, a contribution towards an Outdoor Gym, as well expenditure of £3,000 that already had been committed. The allocation for Saunders Wood has been transferred into general reserves as the Council has decided not to go ahead with the purchase of this land. The general reserves of £55,482 is especially high as there is some uncertainty over future costs that parish councils may be expected to cover.

The current budget is available on the web-site. The precept has been held at £59.33 a year per Band D property and this will raise a precept of £64,639 with the Council Tax Support Grant reduced to £3,694 making a total income of £68,333. The budget deficit of £2,150 and the £6,000 allocated for Contingencies will come from Reserves.

The projected expenditure for the current financial year will be just over £71,864. There is an allocation of £5,000 for tree surgery costs in case work needs to be done on the silver birches at Pound Corner. £11,000 has been allocated for the DDC The Street Public Conveniences which includes the new cleaning contract at £7,500 per year plus costs for repairs, internal painting and planned maintenance. Grants were allocated at £4,900 including £700 to PACE for activities for young people and an allowance in the budget of £6,800 for the Neighbourhood Development Plan. Work on the Ash and Westmarsh War Memorials will be part funded by the Council at £1,000 and part grant funded. All other costs will be held as close as possible to current levels of expenditure.

14.05 Community Safety Report – KCC Warden Priestly

Mr Bob Priestly opened by explaining that he had been a warden for twelve years looking after Eastry and Ash, except when there had been the PCSO contract with Ash Parish. Currently, he had been working with PCSO Batley. He had assisted the PCSO with the use of the Speed Indication Device (SID). He had also helped with the issuing of warning letters and the visiting of those who received them. A lot of time had been spent on dealing with clearing fly tipping and trying to identify the culprits. It is important that fly tipping is reported as quickly as possible both to Dover District Council as well as to the PCSO and the Warden. There had been some problems over Christmas period with people being targeted with snow balls. The lighter nights and warmer weather is usually when there is an increase in some types of anti-social behaviour. If there are problems it is important to report them on 101 (or if it is an emergency 999) as patrols will only be increased if the records show that there is a need for them.

There have been a number of e-mail scams and it is important to be careful and not to open attachments unless you know the sender.

Q: If fly tipping is reported what happens? A: It can be inspected for any information that could lead to the owner being traced and then they can be charged.

Q: If the fly tipping is on private land? A: It can still be inspected for any information.

14.06 Reports from and questions for local charities and trusts:

i) Ash United Charities – Mrs Mary Smith

The Benevolent Fund exists as the result of a number of small endowments made in the nineteenth century. In 1970, the funds were amalgamated to create a single fund. Half of the income generated by the Mary Wood Charity is paid to the St Nicholas Parochial Church Council towards the upkeep of the family memorial. The accumulated income from the Thomas Coleman fund is held for the day when the north transept stained glass window of St Nicholas Church will need re-leading. The remaining income is used to meet cases of need brought to the attention of the trustees and Christmas hampers are distributed. If there are cases in the parish where it would be appropriate for the trustees to help, then please do contact either the Clerk to the Charities, Mr Tony Stickles, or the Chairman, Mrs Mary Smith.

The income for the year to 31st December 2013 was £818 and the expenditure was £709, giving a surplus of £109. The total accumulated funds are valued at £13,235.

The Resthaven Almshouses are four bungalows 11-17 Queen's Road, Ash. During the year the Trust carried out maintenance and completed the replacement of boilers for the properties. Future expenditure will be needed for the roof and there are funds in hand to meet this expense.

The income for the year to 31st December 2013 was £22,649 and the expenditure was £11,221, giving a surplus of £11,428. After funds were set aside for repairs and maintenance the net surplus was £7,268. Over-all reserves were valued at £109,676.

The Frank Kingsland Trust has a bungalow at 48 Chilton Field and one at 43 Chequer Lane. The income for the year to 31st December 2013 was £9,449 and the expenditure was £6,596 plus the NAA subscription, giving a surplus of £2,738. After funds were set aside for repairs and maintenance the net surplus was £658. Over-all reserves were valued at £63,216.

ii) Jack Foat Trust – Mrs Nina Vallack

The Trust had a fairly routine year, with maintenance and upkeep of the Trust's land and properties being the main focus. Last summer the pond on the Ten Acre field was cleared of parrots feather weed. However as there was certainly some left it will be an ongoing struggle to control it. One significant grant was made of £17,000 to the Ash Rugby Club towards the installation of the floodlights which as they point down on to the pitch will not contribute to light pollution.

The simple 'objects of the Trust' are 'such charitable purposes for the benefit of the Parish of Ash as the Trustees, in their absolute discretion, think fit.' Because of this wording the Trustees do not look for applications from individuals for example for sponsorship, as this would benefit the person and not the parish and that is why grants are made to organisations. Any applications from individuals are directed to the other village charities which can often help.

The Trust's financial year ends on 5th April, so the Accounts are always from the year prior to the meeting which at 5th April 2013 showed the value of the Trust at £1,348,804. A copy of the accounts is available for examination.

Q: Would it be possible to lock the gate going to the Pond to stop cars? A: It would be difficult to put a gate on Pudding Lane or directly to the Pond as there is a need to ensure that the farmer has access to the land.

iii) Ash Educational Charities (Cartwright, Godfrey & Kelsey) – Mr Chris Pratt

These combined charities have assets valued at £158,150. They are invested with the COIF Charities Investment Fund which are very safe although they give a low return. The main income is the rent from the old school and this provides the funds for the CG&K School's annual educational trip, other educational trips and for individual book grants. These donations were £4,600 during 2013. Applications can be made to the charity for these grants.

14.07 Ash and Westmarsh Village Halls' Reports & Questions

i) Ash Village Hall – Mr Tony Jones

At the end of 2013, the Chairman of the Management Committee, Mrs Debbie Sales, resigned due to pressure of work. I became the new Chairman of the Committee.

The accounts for 2013 show a net profit of £5,582, largely due to a lull in repairs and fixed contracts for both gas and electricity. A copy of the accounts is available for examination. This lull, is about to end as an exterior refurbishment programme of painting and repairs to the roof are due to start later in 2014.

The hall remains fairly busy with hiring every day and most evenings, although the Committee would welcome more use of the Library Room and of the whole complex at weekends. To this end the pricing structure for 2014 was reviewed and some charges either held or slightly lowered. The main hall remains a popular venue for children's week-end parties. The KCC Library, thankfully, is still with us and we hope will remain with the existing set up and not having to be run by volunteers. Last September, we lost both the line dancing and Zumba classes; recently Zumba Gold and three times a week Fitsteps exercise class both started up; to be followed by Singing for Pleasure after Easter. This year, after Christmas, we welcomed large numbers, over 450 people over the three days, to the annual village panto. The five performances of 'Sleeping Beauty' put on by the New Ash Players was greatly enjoyed by all ages. The Committee will continue to try and make improvements to the sound and stage facilities and look forward to a Variety Show in the summer.

Finally, on behalf of the Management Committee, I thank the Parish Council for its continuing financial support of the Hall.

ii) Westmarsh Village Hall – Mr Chester Barnes

The Westmarsh Hall is going well. During this year our Treasurer, Mrs Denise Rye, passed away and she is very sadly missed. She had done an excellent job bringing all the accounts up to date and in good order. The Committee has been fortunate in having a new volunteer to take on this work although there have been problems in changing the signatories due to the restrictions in place to stop laundering of money. The accounts will be sent to the Parish Council when they are available.

The Hall is a lovely venue and the Committee would like to encourage more people to hire the facility. The Hall which was built in 1995 now does need cladding at the front and this may have to be done in plastic. The Committee all give their time for nothing and do as much as possible on a voluntary basis which has kept running costs very low at around £1,000.

Q: Where is the Hall? A: It is at Ware, north from Ash go along Cop Street and at the cross roads turn left and keep going to Ware and you will come to the Hall.

14.08 Cartwright & Kelsey School Report – Mr Mathew Crick, Headteacher

Firstly, thank you to the Parish Council for giving me the opportunity to take part in this evening's meeting.

The school has continued to provide a range of opportunities and services for the families of children from babies to 12 year olds. While a good education for children aged 5 to 11 represents the majority of what we offer, the school also provides excellent nursery and childcare provision for children aged 2-4. Our successful breakfast and afterschool childcare offers places to children aged 2 – 12. This has been taken up by parents who wish to be able to work more hours, while knowing their children will be in a safe, stimulating and caring environment. Working in partnership with Aylesham Community Project we offer weekly sessions for children aged 0- 2 and their parents. The health visitor now holds two sessions a week at the school.

Our nursery continues to provide excellent provision. Governors reviewed how places are allocated for the nursery in consultation with the parents. Our session times have been extended to 3 hours making it easier for parents to take full advantage of the 15 hours per week to which their children are entitled. Families are also able to keep the same slots through the year making it easier for parents to take account of other commitments. At a time when a drop in the number of children in the Sandwich area has seen admission numbers in some schools fall well below their planned admission numbers, we will probably only have two spaces in our reception class in September. We created a new class in September giving us one year group per class. The performance tables show improvements in results for the phonics test taken by children aged 6 and the SATs taken by 7 year olds compared with last years. For 11 year olds the number of children achieving the level expected in reading, writing and maths was above the floor targets set by the Department of Education.

But there are more to a school than tests and inspections. I am pleased to say that the school is frequently in the press for the right reasons. These items give the public an insight into some of the things happening in school that enrich the learning experience enjoyed by the children. I am grateful to Jenny Taylor for the time she puts into making sure the school's profile remains high in this regard.

Last year we held a successful godly play day in St Nicholas Church. We will be holding a similar event in the summer and once again this will be open to all members of the community to share with us. The children have made visits to Canterbury, Deal, Dover and Margate as part of their work on science, history, geography, religious education, citizenship and music.

Schools continue to face profound changes due to government policy. This year the government published a new primary curriculum. With the other local schools, Ash Cartwright & Kelsey will continue to work closely to maintain the independent characteristics that have served children in the Sandwich area so well. I am convinced that a school must play a pivotal part in the life of the community it serves. By working even more closely, the primary schools in the area have demonstrated how the needs of the children with whom we are privileged to work can be best met to the benefit of all.

14.09 There were **no resolutions for which written notice had been given**, however it was agreed to read out the information distributed to the meeting by Caroline Clarke about Traffic Induced Vibration in Buildings in Guilton causing concern to the residents. Due to the particular type of soil at Guilton transmitting traffic vibrations by a factor of 20 – 100 times compared to other types, there was a vital need for immediate traffic calming measures to be put in place such as 'Slow Down' signage or chicanes.

14.10 Kent County Councillor, Mr Leyland Ridings – report and question time

Kent is a two tier authority with 12 second tier district, borough or city councils and a large number of town and parish councils. Kent County Council provides its 1.3 million constituents with some 300 services, including recycling, incineration, burial of rubbish, education provision, care for the disabled and elderly, protection from harm for children, a library service, roads maintained and kept open in bad weather, register births, marriages and deaths and over 3,500 new citizens from abroad annually, coroners' courts, the fostering of children, and many more services. One of my personal roles is to preside at citizenship ceremonies, where about 75 people a week become UK citizens, 52 weeks a year. This includes many Gurkhas, who have served this country for many years, a tradition going back to 1807.

This year the County Council tax will rise by 1.99%, equal to £18.56 a year or 36p per week for a band D property, the first increase for three years, while the three years before that reflected the lowest increases in Kent County Council's history. All this in spite of the need to make £269 million of savings in the three years up to 31 March 2014. £81 million of further savings will be required for 2014 / 2015 and we expect to make further cuts of £150 million over the following 2-3 years. Some 2,000 job positions have done to date, including the role of Chief Executive and two top tier officers, with a 1,000 further job positions to go.

Most of the savings have come from changing the way services are delivered, particularly in Adult Social Services, with a similar service transformation due for Children's Services. We are also testing services against those available through outside suppliers. Work that can be done at the same level at lower prices will be contracted out. Work the County Council can do particularly well, such as the award winning legal services, will continue to be done in-house and sold to other public bodies. The Council continues to make efficiency savings and to make use of technology to save costs with more services on-line and so available 24/7. KCC surveyed some 5,000 residents and staff to see if they felt it was on the right track.

Education – the pass rate for GCSE 5A* - C grades including English and Maths has increased to 63% which is 4% better than the National Average Result. Over-all Kent came 2nd of four statistical neighbours with an average of 61%.

It has been indicated by Mr Pickles, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, he would like to reduce the number of elected members by about 10%. This would reduce the number of KCC members from 84 to 75 and increase the number of constituents from 14,000 to 15,500 per member.

Flood Prevention – the £20 million of works in Sandwich is progressing although due to the incessant rain and high winds it was roughly 6-8 weeks behind schedule. It is has subsequently had further delays and is now expected to be completed towards the end of July.

The Discovery Park is progressing well and there are now some 1,300 people working on site.

I continue to chair the KCC Education Cabinet Committee, the Standards Committee and the Youth Advisory Group for Dover and sit on the Policy and Resources Committee, the Flood Prevention Committee and the Scrutiny Committee. I am the Armed Forces Champion for Kent and the KCC representative on the South East Reserve Forces Cadet Association and chaired the Kent Civilian Military Partnership with the Brigadier who commanded the 2 (South East) Brigade which has just been closed. It will become part of the 11 Infantry Brigade based at Aldershot. This is part of the over-all reduction of service personnel by 20,000, to be replaced by 30,000 reserves. This will cause some real difficulties with the integration of this number of service personnel and their families

back into the civil population. I am also County President of the Royal British Legion and a School Governor at five schools and the university representative trustee on the Canterbury Christ Church University's Student Union.

Q: Does KCC have any authority over Manston. A: None, it has been sold to Mrs. Gloag, one of the founders of Stagecoach.

Q: Could it be an economic 'driver' for the area. A: It could be a multiplier of up to 8 times if the airport was working. The closure is unfortunate as it could have helped with the growth of the Discovery Park.

Q: In the local rural area, the recent flooding was made worse by the lack of maintenance to gullies not being cleared out with many in the local area completely silted up and even if pressure washed, it still needs the silt to be removed. Also locally, we have been waiting for the re-building of sections of roads which have collapsed. Also now that the local rural roads are being used by 40 ton lorries, the roads need to be rebuilt to carry them and not to the previous specification which were designed for lighter loads and use. A: The problem is well known by Kent Highway Services and the damage from 40 ton lorries can be the equivalent to 100,000 car journeys. Recently there has been a move to try and move lorries away from Preston to reduce the volume and to introduce a maximum weight of 7.5 tons although this is often ignored. Only the police can enforce the road regulations and it can be difficult to always be present when the infringements take place.

It is known that road surfacing jobs have been ineffective due to the flooding and work will restart in April. KCC expect to receive central government funding to improve the road of upto £4 million and this should improve the general condition of county roads. The problem with the gullies not being cleared needs to be referred again to Kent Highway Services and if details are sent, this can be followed up.

Q: A general estimate is that only very few of the drains in the village are cleared and the contractors, not being local, do not even know where many of the drains are. If drains and gullies are not kept cleared then there are not only problems with flooding but also the undermining of many foundations on the older buildings. A: This will be passed to Kent Highway Services.

14.11 Dover District Councillors, Mr Trevor Bartlett, Mrs Sue Chandler and Mr Mike Conolly – report and question time

Mr Mike Conolly gave the report on behalf of the three councillors which was also distributed to the meeting.

2013/14 had been a year in which the regeneration agenda had achieved real progress. The Dover Town Investment Zone has seen the issuing of compulsory purchase orders on the County Hotel and Burlington House. Although objections have been raised, the Council is confident of a positive result. The scheme involves a hotel, six-screen cinema, an M&S store, a variety of retail and catering outlets and a small amount of housing.

On the Western Heights outline planning permission has been given for a hotel and conference centre, with a renewal of the Napoleonic fortifications, including the Drop Redoubt. There will also be housing on the site, as well as at Farthingloe. Plans are in preparation for a Commonwealth War Memorial on the Heights. Agreement has been reached with the Land Trust and the Homes and Community Agency for the Trust to take over the historic Fort Burgoyne and make it accessible to visitors. The agreement will also allow the development of the Connaught Barracks for housing.

A major success has been the decision by Hadlow College to create a new campus on the Betteshanger Colliery site. This is a highly prestigious development which will bring many students and jobs into our area and will be of great benefit to all of East Kent. The Discovery Park goes from strength to strength, with over 1,500 jobs now on site and more in the pipeline. As well as its Hi-Tech core companies, the plan for the Park includes light engineering, green energy companies, a supermarket and housing. After many delays work has started on the new hospital on the Buckland site. A major employer, Viking at Whitfield, which specialises in marine recruitment and training, has recently expanded its operations which will create more demand for hotel beds in Dover. A new arrival, Multipanel at Tilmanstone which has relocated to the UK from China has just gone into production with more highly skilled jobs available.

Moving on from regeneration, a new tenancy strategy and policy for social housing has been introduced. This will see introductory tenancies and fixed term tenancies for new tenants. A start has been made building three new council houses at Elvington and other small sites will follow. Several successful projects used the 'no use empty' funding to bring empty properties back into use.

Grants for community projects have continued under the Neighbourhood Forum banner. Parishes in our ward can continue to apply to the Coalfields Regeneration small grant scheme which has an increased pot of money for the coming year.

Action on littering and dog fouling is a high priority for residents and DDC has appointed three enforcement officers to work on this. The support they receive from parishes in identifying 'hotspots' in location and timing, so that on the spot fines can be levied, is very valuable. Events process has been improved and is now online with improved advice to encourage community organisations to hold more events. DDC has formed a district Civilian Military Partnership to support ex-service by helping organisations to access the grants available. Percentage recycling rates remain in the mid/high 40s. We are very grateful to residents who take the trouble to sort their refuse for collection.

Health care changes had seen the GP practices in our ward elect to be part of the Canterbury and Coastal Clinical Commissioning Group. Health and Wellbeing Boards have been set up to look at the health priorities for the area and to improve integration of services. Cllr Chandler is the DDC representative on the Canterbury and Coastal Health and Wellbeing Board.

Turning to Finances, DDC continues to face pressure by the decline in the Government's Revenue Support Grant. We have managed, through tight financial control and seeking to 'work smarter' to come in under budget for 2013/14 and to have a balanced budget for 2014/15. Council tax is frozen for 2014/15 as are parking charges at council-owned car parks. We have been assisted in this by better than expected non-domestic rate income resulting from a change in government policy and by the performance of the Discovery Park in attracting new businesses. In the autumn, we transferred £12.5 million from the Housing Revenue Account to the General Fund. It is intended that these funds should be used to support our regeneration agenda.

In conclusion, I would like to pay tribute to our council staff. Many work long hours to protect the front line services that have been maintained throughout this period of austerity. Their willingness to go the extra mile was never better shown than during the tidal surge crisis at Sandwich in November when many volunteered to fill and stack sandbags, as well as manning rest centre, with the result that the damage was far less serious than it might have been. Finally on behalf of the three of us we would like to thank, Christine Haggart, the Clerk for her help and wish her well for the future.

Q: What is the reason for removing the bottle bank that was well used, from the car park to the rear of the Ash Village Hall? A: Bottles are now collected for recycling from households and it was felt that paying for a second collection was not cost effective.

Q: What is the DDC policy for new social housing? A: (Cllr Chandler who has the portfolio for Community and Housing answered). There are plans to increase housing using gaps from small sites, using ex-garage sites, and sites suitable for social housing of up to five units. The money that was transferred from the Housing Revenue Account to the General Fund will be used to support social landlords, housing associations and such to develop small sites. There are larger developments where there is a requirement to provide social housing where it is viable.

Q: The refuse collections main objective appears to be how speedy it can be done so replacing the empty bins on or near properties is not done and sometimes they are left on the roadside. A: The contract with Veolia does specify that bins are replaced properly. If there are problems that DDC Officer, Mandy Pile, should be contacted.

Q: Has any of the St Nicholas site been set aside for affordable housing? A: The scheme is too small to come into the social housing criteria. However, under a recent policy change it would have to make a financial contribution to DDC.

Q: What are the number of affordable houses built in the district? A: There have been the three houses built in Elvington. The numbers for completed affordable housing would have to be collated and could be given to a later meeting.

14.12 Any other business concerned with parish affairs.

i) Mrs Nina Vallack explained that for the last 20 years she had looked after the herb border on Street Field. It had been a very pleasant and sociable task. However the years had started to catch up and after this summer she hoped to be able to pass it on to a new volunteer. A request would be also be going into the village magazine. It was not thought practical to ask the local schools to take it on as a project as it is on the public highway.

ii) The Council was asked to comment on the recent planning application that had been granted for Knell Lane. The Parish Council Chairman explained that the Parish Council had not objected as it had thought that if there had been material considerations raised they would have been dealt with by the Dover District Council Planning Department.

iii) It was asked if the village would be commemorating the centenary of the start of World War I. A representative of the Heritage Group explained that they would be arranging an event / exhibition in November. It was reported that there would be an event in Folkestone on the 4 August organised by 'Step Short' which would be attended by a senior member of the Royal Family. There is also a book to be published by David Ross who is looking to contact relatives of those who are named on the Ash and Westmarsh War Memorials.

iv) The Chairman explained that the Parish Council noticeboards were for the display of parish council notices, minutes and information and if there is space, for local, non-profit, notices for activities being held in the parish of Ash. The Chairman went on to thank the three regular writers of the Onlooker column in the magazine and to thank Andrew Wilkinson and Christine Haggart with whom the Council had had an excellent working relationship during her time as Clerk.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.05pm.