

Godstone Parish Council

(incorporating the Villages of Godstone, South Godstone and Blindley Heath)

Clerk to the Parish Council
S Endersby

**The Bounty
Godstone Green
Godstone, Surrey, RH9 8DY**

Telephone/Fax: 01883 744209

MINUTES

of the meeting of Godstone Parish Council held on
Monday 9 January 2023 at 7.30pm at St Stephens, South Godstone.

Members: Cllrs J Gardner, B Davis, C White, L Case, M McLoughlin, S Farr, J Farnaby and C Farr (Cllr C Farr also as Tandridge District and Surrey County Councillor)
Apologies: Cllrs D Stone
In Attendance: S Endersby (Clerk) and Tandridge District Council (TDC) Councillors C Swann and M Crane

1. Questions from Members of the Public - None

2. Apologies and reasons for absence

2.1 Apologies were noted from Cllrs D Stone due to health reasons.

RESOLVED – Council noted the apologies received and the meeting was deemed quorate.

3. Declarations of Interest - All councillors declared an interest in items 6.6.2 ii and iii in relation to the Precept for the year 1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024. Dispensation for each Member of the Council was given to enable them to vote on the setting of the authority's Council Tax precept for 2023-24 on the grounds that the transaction of business will be impeded given the number of Councillor's who would otherwise be prohibited from participating in this item of business.

4. County and District Councillors – Brief report on matters affecting the Parish.

4.1 Cllr C Farr – Surrey County Councillor – Noted roads and flooding at the forefront of peoples minds and encouraged residents to continue reporting of Highway matters such as the drain at the end of Church Lane on the junction with the Eastbourne Road. Changes to the bank near properties close to Enterdent raised during discussion.

5. Minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 5 December 2022

5.1 Councillors reviewed the minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2022.

RESOLVED - Councillors, by a majority approved the minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2022 as an accurate record of the meeting and agreed that they be signed by the Chairman.

Cllr S Farr abstained from voting as she had not attended the meeting held on 5 December 2022.

6 Reports

6.3 Clerks Report - Matters to bring to the Councils attention.

6.3.1 Circumstances of Clerk (PART TWO) – Discuss meetings, banking and potential working pattern and office.

RESOLVED - Council passed a resolution that pursuant to Section 1 part 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of item 6.3.1 on the grounds that it is likely if the public were to remain, there would be a disclosure of exempt information.

6.3.2 Renewal of godstonepc.org.uk at a cost of £12.12+VAT

RESOLVED – Noting the relevance of renewing the domain godstonepc.org.uk council approved the renewal.

6.4 Chairman's Report – (for noting) information only

6.4.1 The Chairman reported that a parishioner had contacted him requesting permission to use a metal detector at the Hilly Fields to try and find some lost gardening equipment.

i. Council noted that the request suggested that activities by the well-known local volunteer had been undertaken at the Hilly Fields without the Parish council being notified. The council acknowledged that the intentions were understood but reiterated the reason council should be notified and if applicable permission confirmed.

ii. Council considered the request to Metal Detect on Parish land the Hilly Fields, noting:

a. Hilly Fields has an ancient monument.

b. Caution due to the potential to set a precedent.

c. Potential for disturbance to land

d. Requirements such as Public Liability Insurance and regulations for metal detectors.

RESOLVED - On considering the request for a metal detector to be granted permission to metal detect on the Hilly Fields and the factors noted during consideration (6.4.1 ii a – d), the council unanimously agreed that no permission would be granted and the request be declined.

ACTION – 1/23 – 1 – Clerk to liaise with local volunteer.

6.4.2 Reported traffic wardens had been in Godstone recently.

6.5 Reports (for noting) from representatives on outside bodies etc

6.5.1 Redhill Aerodrome – Cllr C Farr attended – Meeting covered discussions of how to use the site in the future.

6.6 Reports from Committees

6.6.1 Neighbourhood Plan

- i. A Design Statement consultant has been approved and allocated to the Godstone Parish neighbourhood plan. The consultant is paid direct by the organisation who have granted funds for the work. Design statement will take about 6-8 weeks and is planned to be undertaken within the next month.
- ii. Grant funds applied for at this time are to be used by end of current financial year.
- iii. Clerk to inform A Rabbetts (NP Committee Chair) when funds are deposited.

6.6.2 Finance Committee

- i. Report of the meeting on 16 December 2022 and 6 January 2023 – Council noted that the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 16 December 2022 had been circulated to provide a report of discussion. The minutes include details of financial breakdowns prepared and considered during the committee's work and deliberations on the setting of the precept.
- ii. Consider Finance Committee Recommendation in relation the 2023-2024 Precept - Recommendation: Council set the precept at Seventy-Three thousand, two hundred and seventeen pounds (£73,217).

Council discussed the work undertaken by the Finance committee for the process of setting the precept and the due care and attention taken.

Some specific factors covered by the Finance committees work were noted, such as the potential variation between renting or purchasing the Bounty (parish office), the level of council reserves, items that would use the reserves during the current financial year (i.e. tree survey) and the use of reserves for FY2023-2024 (as detailed in the Finance Committee minutes in detail).

It was noted that the reserves sheet is regularly circulated to council.

Precept increase data provided below:

Current Year		Next Year 23-24	Increase
£67,634	Precept	£73,217	8.26%
2,516.5	Tax Base	2,516.5	0.00%
£26.88	Band D	£29.09	8.26%
Band D increase per £1k precept rise		£0.40	

Current Year		Next Year	Weekly Increase
£17.92	Band A	£19.40	£0.03
£20.90	Band B	£22.63	£0.03
£23.89	Band C	£25.86	£0.04
£26.88	Band D	£29.09	£0.04
£32.85	Band E	£35.56	£0.05
£38.82	Band F	£42.03	£0.06
£44.79	Band G	£48.49	£0.07
£53.75	Band H	£58.19	£0.09

Band D cost per week	
£0.52	£0.56

iii. Confirm the 2023-2024 Precept

MOTION – Godstone Parish Council accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee and that the precept be set at Seventy-Three thousand, two hundred and seventeen pounds (£73,217).

(Proposer: Cllr C White; Seconder: Cllr S Farr)

RESOLVED – Members unanimously accepted the recommendation of the Finance Committee and resolve to agree that the precept be set at Seventy-Three thousand, two hundred and seventeen pounds (£73,217).

ACTION – 1/23 – 2 – Clerk to submit the required paperwork to Tandridge District Council to confirm Godstone Parish Councils precept amount.

6.7 Reports on Actions and matters from the previous meeting in regard to:

6.7.1 Accounts system – Council considered the recommendation of the working group (the Clerk and Cllr S Farr) in relation to the purchase of an accounting system

- Systems investigated were Alpha (Rialtas), Omega (Rialtas) and Scribe with initial and follow up online demonstrations undertaken.
- Discussion with internal auditor in relation to accounting systems and benefits reported.
- Noted Omega (Rialtas) system would require a change to Income and Expenditure from current Receipt and Payment method.

Recommendation: Proceed with the purchase and installation of the Rialtas Omega Financial Software for Local Council and an initial 3-year minimum contract term for Annual Support and Maintenance. Recommend minimum of 3 training days are included in this proposal. Cost up to £4025.

MOTION – Godstone Parish Council accept the recommendation to purchase and install the Rialtas Omega Financial Software for Local Councils for a cost of up to £4025.

(Proposer: Cllr S Farr; Seconder: Cllr C Farr)

RESOLVED – Members unanimously accepted the recommendation and resolve to purchase and install the Rialtas Omega Financial Software for Local Councils with funds allocated up to £4025. The following is approved with immediate effect:

Cash Book/Management Accounts/Annual Budgets	
Sales Ledger with invoicing	
Remote Install/Setup and Chart Of Accounts	
Total Cost for Purchase of Software	£1,475.00
1st Year Annual Support and Maintenance Single User Licence	£675
Online Training x 3 days @£500 per day	£1,500.00
TOTAL COST	£3,650.00 + VAT

The following module is noted as an addition that can be added to the software at a later date but is not included in the initial instruction: Purchase Ledger with cheque writing/BACS filing.

The module Making Tax Digital for VAT and Annual Support and Maintenance is noted as being available but not required as the Council is not VAT registered.

It is accepted that there will be an ongoing Annual Support and Maintenance cost for the Single User Licence currently £ 675 per annum.

ACTION – 1/23 – 3 – Clerk to confirm purchase of the Omega Software with Rialtas, liaise to make the necessary arrangements to aim for the system to be in place ready to be used at the start of FY2023-2024 and confirm a schedule of dates for set up and proposed training.

6.7.2 Grass cutting contract – Consider and approve working group final recommendation.

Recommendation: Proceed to extend the grass cutting contract with current contractor Neat Gardens, as detailed below:

- i. Extend the contract by 3 years to 31 January 2026 with the option to review prices annually
- ii. Approve a non-specific and general payment to assist with the unforeseen increase to the general operating costs in carrying out the contract by way of a one off top up payment of £500 in light of extenuating circumstances. Noting that the payment would not set any precedent for ad hoc expenses; the purchase of equipment and not be as a direct result of mechanical damage.
- iii. Proposed pricing and number of cuts.

Schedule and pricing

	Current				Proposed		
Area G1 – Godstone Green (Cut [Mulch] & strim including Bunds)	x	8	532.67	4261.36	x	6	£4,110.00
Area G1a – Godstone Green (Cut and collect & strim)	x	1	532.67	532.67	x	1	£775.00
Area G2 – St Nicholas Churchyard (Cut and collect & strim)	x	7	722.67	5058.69	x	6	£5,550.00
Area G3 – South Godstone (Cut & strim)	x	7	75	525	x	4	£540.00
Area G4 – Blindley Heath Option B		8	532.67	4261.36	B	6	£4,170.00
Area G1b – The Bounty Garden Maintenance	x	7	55	385	x	2	£164.00
Area G5 – The Memorial	x	1	75	75	x	1	£95.00
			£15,099.08				£15,404.00

Additional services

Area G1 – Godstone Green (Leaf Litter)	x	2	575	1150	x	2	£1,290.00
Area G2 – St Nicholas (Leaf Litter)	x	2	575	1150	x	2	£900.00
Area G2 – St (perennial flower collection)	x	1	311.34	311.34	x	1	£421.00
£2,611.34							£2,611.00
Agreed pricing for 2023							£18,015.00
One off payment in 2023 only - extenuating circumstances							£500
£17,710.42							£18,515.00

MOTION – Godstone Parish Council accept the recommendation as detailed in 6.7.2 i-iii for the grass cutting contract and proceed to extend the contract for 3 years with the option to review prices annually.

(Proposer: Cllr M McLoughlin; Seconder: Cllr J Farnaby)

RESOLVED – Members unanimously resolved that the grass cutting contract be extended for 3 years (with option to review prices), as per the pricing detailed and the one off payment.

RESOLVED – Members unanimously resolved that the one off £500 payment be made from current reserves.

ACTION – 1/23 – 4 – Clerk to liaise with Grass contactor.

7 Finance Matters - Accounts for Payment - to approve **DECEMBER** accounts for payment

7.1 Noting the payment list that had been circulated, the British Gas Credit notes/Bills for the account were acknowledged. The invoice being approved for payment was included on the payment summary:

G1346	British Gas - Credit	4435487	20 Dec 2022	Electricity	-£94.66	-£4.74	-£99.40
G1347	British Gas - Bill	3851620	5 Jan 2023	Electricity	£61.25	£4.74	£65.99

7.2 Council considered all invoices detailed on the payments list:

GPC Ref.	Business	Invoice	Invoice Date	Payment For	Net amount	VAT	Invoice Total	
Salary Payments								
G1333-34	Salaries			DEC Salary	2,462.73		2,462.73	
G1335	HMRC			DEC NI & Income Tax**				
G1336	NEST			DEC Pension**				
Direct Debits								
G1344	BT	M121 OI	12/17/2022	Telephone and Internet	42.14	8.42	£50.56	
G1345	British Gas - Bill	3947776	12/13/2022	Electricity	£29.81	£3.16	£32.97	
Invoices for Payment								
G1326	Neat Gardens	28467	Dec-22	Leaf litter 2	600		600	
G1327	Neat Gardens	28465	Dec-22	Waste disposal and carriage	147.68		147.68	
G1330	Exalls	1053	12/13/2022	Playground Works	7695	1539	9234	
G1331	Fairalls	726195	12/12/2022	Rock Salt supplies	32.22	6.44	38.56	
G1332	Fairalls	726026	12-Dec	Rock Salt supplies	42.96	8.59	51.55	
G1337	CPRE	375886	22-Dec	Membership	60	0	60	
G1338	Madgwicks		12/30/2022	Tree by School	225	45	270	
G1339	S Endersby			Stamps	5.44		5.44	
G1340	HPS	6124	5-Jan	IT - Service charge for support – February, March and April 2022	226.05	45.21	271.26	
G1341	HPS	6125	5-Jan	IT – Managed anti-virus service with remote monitoring	47.9	9.58	57.48	
G1342	HPS	6126	1/5/2023	IT – Renewal of 2 Microsoft 365 Business Licences for Outlook, OneDrive and office suite programs	225.6	45.12	270.72	
G1343	St Stephens Church			Donation for hall - January meeting	20		20	
*Salaries paid in accordance with 7. Payment of Salaries of the Parish Council Financial Regulations. **Employee/Employers total payment paid by GPC.					TOTAL	£11,862.53	£1,710.52	£13,572.95

7.2.2 It was noted that there is still have £15.72 credit on the Fairalls account, so this will be taken off the payment amount made to Fairalls.

7.2.3 Council noted the review undertaken by the Playground committee for invoices in relation to

playground works to confirm the amounts presented.

- 7.2.4 The Clerk reported that an invoice for Christmas lights had been received from Merlin Lighting, but that as the test certificates had not been received from the contractor as requested by the Clerk as part of the works, the invoice was not currently being presented for payment.

Council stated its disappointment with the Christmas lights during December 2022; the gaps in the trees being lit during the evening and the disappointment with the service received.

ACTION 1/23 – 4b – Council wish to consider improved Christmas lighting options for December 2024. Cllr L Case will investigate potential options for Christmas lights and the possibility of working more collaboratively with local businesses at other Christmas light options.

RESOLVED - Councillors unanimously approved the payments listed for payment totalling £13,572.95.

ACTION 1/23 – 5 – Clerk to arrange payments of invoices.

- 7.2.5 Council noted the invoices approved at the meeting of the finance committee:

Meeting of Godstone Parish Council FINANCE COMMITTEE due to be held on Friday 13 December 2022

4. Finance - Accounts for payment - to approve further DECEMBER accounts for payment

GPC Ref.	Business	Invoice	Invoice Date	Payment For	Net amount	VAT	Invoice Total
Invoices for Payment							
G1325	Groundworks UJK		As per email	Return of Neighbourhood plan grant	833.20		833.20
G1328	Safeplay			Installation and works as per agreed contract on Playground	52,167.00	10,433.40	62,600.40
G1329	Gardenwise			Maintenance - Playground and Burial Ground	137.50		137.50
TOTAL					£53,137.70	£10,433.40	£63,571.10

8 Greens, Commons and Land, to include:

9.1 Inspection Reports

9.2 Godstone

9.2.1 Playground Refurbishment

- i. Council noted the achievement of the work undertaken on the playground.
- ii. Artificial Grass installation has been confirmed to proceed and installation date to be confirmed and the following matters confirmed as requested by council:

- a. How is the artificial grass fixed to the slope? Fixed using a combination of 300mm long stainless-steel U-pins, with industrial artificial grass adhesive spray.
- b. Is there any maintenance on this surface? There will be no maintenance required on this surface.
- c. Is this material totally safe for children and has no carcinogenic risk? No carcinogenic risk, it is play-grade artificial grass designed for use in play areas.

ACTION 1/23 – 6 – Council to arrange an opportunity to celebrate the playground renovation work on completion of the artificial grass on the embankment slide.

- iii. Council noted the remaining aspiration to create a new path to the playground from the current tarmac path to improve accessibility. It was noted that the installation of a new path had been included in the planning of the new budget/future use of reserves. It was further noted that dependent on the surface/type of path proposed, there could be a process to apply for permission that should be factored in. There was some discussion about the potential options for different types of path surface.

ACTION 1/23 – 7 – Council to revisit the paperwork prepared historically in relation to seeking permission for a new path

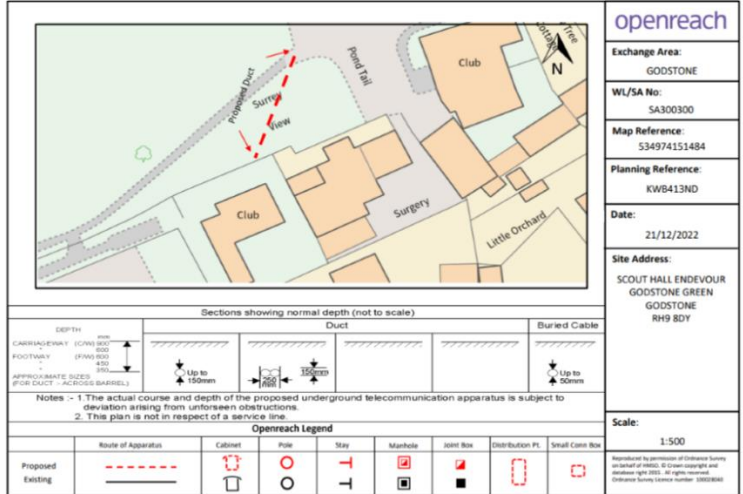
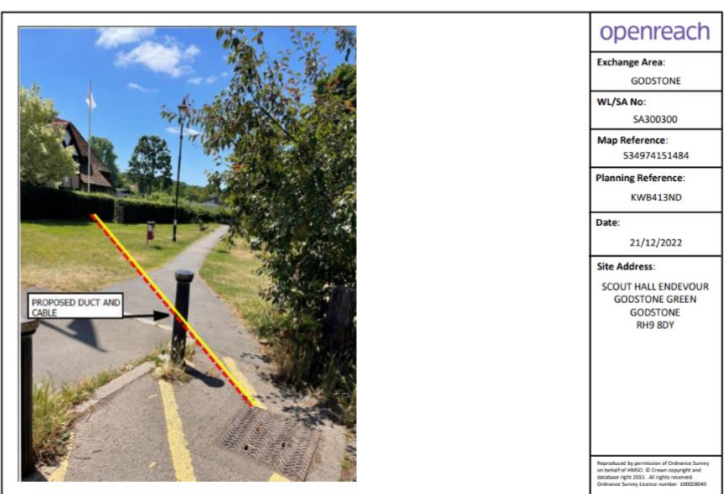
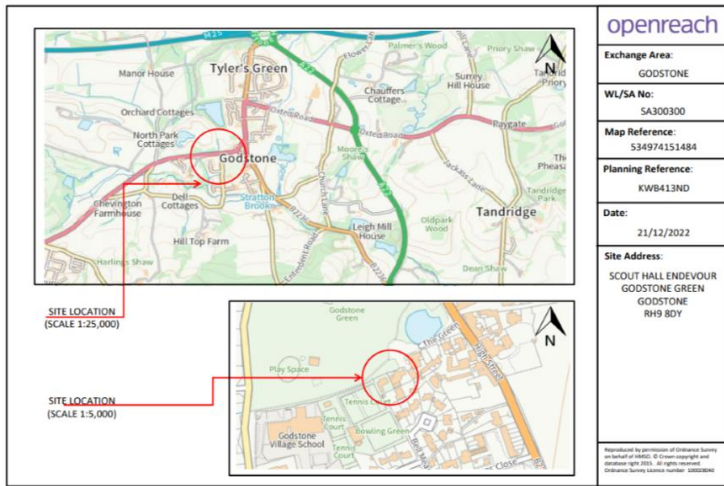
ACTION 1/23 – 8 – Clerk to include an agenda item for the next meeting for the council to consider what type of path it may wish to install.

9.2.2 Benches – Repair project

ACTION 1/23 – 9 – Cllr J Gardner to provide the hardwood schedule in order that materials can be ordered and work proceed.

9.2.3 Wayleave Request - In relation to utility services to the Endeavour - Wayleave Agreement documents for Consent No: SA300300 – information provided:

- i. A1000 – Wayleave Agreement **SA300300**
- ii. SL1 Information on why Openreach have requested permission
- iii. SL9 Further guidance notes and Frequently Asked Questions
- iv. BACS form
- v. Plan of proposed route



The Clerk reported correspondence in relation to professional fees (as the agreement proposed for a wayleave is 3rd Party request); application to close the footpath for the works; damage caused to the Green in the area of proposed work. Information from BT

- Policy is to pay reasonable professional fees when negotiating a wayleave agreement for new apparatus. Standard Terms and Conditions meet requirements of existing legislation and there should be little or no need to amend them. BT will not pay for amendments to the terms and conditions or use of a nonstandard agreement. Reasonable legal fees will be paid for the explanation of the agreement and the Grantor's rights under legislation.
- For this wayleave BT will contribute up to £250 + VAT towards surveyor/professional fees.
- Application to close the footpath for the works will be made by the contractor in charge of the installation.
- Confirmed no representative has attended site to carry out works. The works will be planned and scheduled only after receiving the signed consent.

The councils discussed its concern that any works undertaken could cause damage and that the council would wish to ensure that the green is returned to the good condition it started in and that any conditions applicable to the land are abided by. On considering the request of agreeing the granting of permission for the installation of telecommunications equipment and Wayleave SA300300, council noted the following:

Godstone Green is Common Land within a conservation area, with a Right of Way in the area of the proposed works. The plans for the installation work falls within the following areas:

- Greenbelt and Rights of Way (Footpath 126)
- Heritage – Areas of High Archaeological Potential (AHAP)
- Countryside Common Land

RESOLVED - Council concluded that before proceeding with signing the Wayleave Agreement SA300300 and agreeing permission for the proposed route it seeks written confirmation of the following:

1. Any restrictions or regulations, pertaining to the care of the land Godstone Green in relation to the considerations detailed in 1.1 a - c of this letter, and that apply to the area where the proposed work is to be carried out is given the appropriate consideration by Openreach and that any permissions, conditions or regulations should be adhered in relation to the works.
2. Any works carried out by Openreach Limited on Godstone Green in relation to Wayleave SA300300 and Plan of Proposed Route, will be undertaken with the appropriate and necessary care to limit damage caused to the area whilst carrying out the works and that the area of works will be returned to an acceptable and appropriate condition and to the satisfaction of Godstone Parish Council.

- 3. Openreach Limited will ensure that any necessary application for permission to carry out works effecting the footpath works will be completed by the contractor in charge of the installation prior to works.
 - 4. Appropriate precautions are taken to protect the land and the area open to the public during any work.
- On written confirmation from Openreach Limited of an undertaking to comply with the conditions the council will then consider the Wayleave Agreement SA300300 for approval and signature.

ACTION 1/23 – 10 – Clerk to prepare letter and liaise with Openreach and Council to consider signing of agreement at next meeting.

9.2.4 Toilets on Godstone Green – Clarification on the situation sought. Land toilets is on is SCC land, parish own land around the toilet block. Cllr C Swann confirmed that TDC completion of its Toilet review is pending. Cllr C Swann confirmed that she would provide any specific updates to the Parish on the Godstone toilets when applicable. The consensus of the meeting is that the village having public toilets is positive for the village.

9.2.5 Ashill Development – No planning application has yet been received and the application is awaiting validation by TDC.

9.3 Hilly Fields – Noted item reported by Chair, no further discussion.

9.4 Salisbury Road Allotments – Next allotment association meeting due in next two weeks.

ACTION 1/23 – 11 – Cllr J Gardner to contact owner of the garage site to request an update.

9.5 Tilburstow Hill/The Enterdent – Noted report of tree across path.

ACTION 1/23 – 12 – Cllr M McLoughlin to confirm exact location of tree for removal to be arranged.

9.6 South Godstone – No matters raised.

9.7 Blindley Heath

9.7.1 Benches – It was reported and noted that benches at Blindley Heath were in need of renovation. Benches outside of cricket boundary are maintenance responsibility of council. No action proposed or agreed by council.

9.7.2 Over height barrier – Noted that details of what is required (to enable a specification to be prepared) is required.

ACTION 1/23 – 13 – Cllr C Farr to provide information on suggestion of the proposed over height barrier in order that the Clerk can draft a specification for works.

9.7.3 Car Tyres in Car Park – It was noted that there seems to have been a reduction in the use of the car park to change car tyres.

9. Burial Grounds and Memorials

9.1 Exclusive Rights of Burial Applications and Memorial Applications – Details of recent applications to be reported at February meeting. No applications outside of regulations or delegated authority have been received since the last meeting.

9.2 Weeds around tree stump – follow up on action and cost to remove them.

ACTION 1/23 – 14 – Clerk to follow up on clearance of weeds around the tree stump at the burial ground.

9.3 Footpath sign remains left on the ground.

ACTION 1/23 – 15 – Clerk to arrange for the damaged sign to be removed. Requirement for a replacement historically reported to SCC.

10 Correspondence – Council noted the following correspondence circulated by email since the last meeting:

10.1 Tandridge District Council - Boundary Review - Parish Briefing

10.2 Provisional local government finance settlement 2023 to 24 (amount of money from government to TDC)

10.3 TLAG update

10.4 Confirmation of Artificial Grass order for Playground Embankment Slide.

11 Matters for reporting or inclusion on future agendas

11.1 The next meeting of the Parish Council is scheduled to be held on Monday 6 February 2023 at 7.30pm St Stephens Church Hall, South Godstone.

Part 2 – Item 6.3.1 discussed.

----- Meeting ended -----

Chairman

Dated