

BRABOURNE PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council
Held at 7.00pm on Monday, 15th May 2017
At Brabourne Village Hall

1. Present

Cllr Hickmott (Chairman), Cllr Mrs Tanner, Cllr Mrs Young and Cllr Joules, and Mrs Wood (Clerk).
 Eleven members of the public were present, including Mr Andrew Stapley (Headteacher, Brabourne School) and Mrs Hester Fenwick (Chair of Governors, Brabourne School).

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs Bewick (indisposed), Cllrs Mayland and Spokes (business commitments), and Cllr Howard (ward member).

3. Declaration of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

4. Election

Resolved:

That the following be elected.

Chairman Cllr Hickmott

Planning Committee Cllrs Hickmott (Chairman), Cllr Mrs Young, Cllrs Mayland and Spokes

Playing Field Association representative Cllr Mrs Tanner

Village Hall representative Cllr Mrs Young

Village Caretaker Management Committee Cllr Joules

KALC representative Cllr Joules

5. Declaration of Acceptance of Office

The Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed by the Chairman and received by the Proper Officer of the Council.

6. General Power of Competence

Resolved:

That Brabourne Parish Council satisfies itself that it continues to meet the eligibility criteria for the Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) 2012 adopted at its meeting held on 18th May 2015; such Power ceasing to have effect if the criteria cease to be met and unless a further Resolution is passed at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

7. Appointment of Internal Auditor

The Clerk advised that the internal audit function must be sufficiently independent from the management of financial controls and procedures of the Parish Council. The person carrying out internal audit must be competent to carry out the role in a way that meets the business needs of the Parish Council.

The internal auditor must not have any involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the Parish Council, or with the Council's financial controls and procedures.

The Clerk advised that Mr John Coupe is willing to act as the Internal Auditor for the Parish Council and that the scope of the internal audit must be defined.

It was proposed that the internal auditor review and report to the Parish Council whether its systems of financial and other internal controls over its activities and operating procedures are effective

Resolved:

That Mr John Coupe be appointed as Internal Auditor and will review and report to the Parish Council whether its systems of financial and other internal controls over its activities and operating procedures are effective.

8. Consultation: CARE Group Foundation Trust/Brabourne School

(Brought forward with the Chairman's permission.)

The meeting was suspended to allow Mrs Fenwick and Mr Stapley to address the Parish Council.

Mrs Fenwick and Mr Stapley stated that they are working in collaboration with other rural schools, with the aim of joining the Foundation Trust. However, Brabourne School's status as a Church of England School means that it must remain under local authority control and cannot, therefore, join the Trust as a full member, but it can join as a partner. The school has been working with other participating schools and thus there is already trust between them, eg Brook, Smeeth. Benefits of membership of the Trust include: greater negotiating power, economies of scale and support for each other, eg peer support, careers advice. Mrs Fenwick stated that stakeholders, such as the Parish Councils and MP, must be consulted on the proposals, and a presentation had been given at Smeeth School on 11th May; the consultation closes on 26th May. A decision on the proposals will be made by the School Governors in July; the school is in favour because it would give strength in numbers but would retain its autonomy and ethos. It was noted that the PTA has not objected thus far.

The meeting was reconvened.

The Chairman stated that the Parish Council is supportive of the school, wanting it to continue and do well. It was proposed that the Parish Council supports the school's aim to join the CARE Group Foundation Trust.

Resolved:

That the Parish Council supports the school's aim to join the CARE Group Foundation Trust.

9. Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of Brabourne Parish Council held on 20th March 2017 be approved and confirmed as a true record.

10. Matters Arising

10.1 Roads and footways

10.1.1 Smeeth crossroads: This will be included in evidence given to the appeal on Hospital Field.

10.1.2 Faulty lamppost in Prospect Way: Reported by the Clerk.

10.1.3 War Memorial: The War Memorials Trust has counselled against moving the memorial, the project will likely therefore be refurbishment of the memorial and improvements to the surrounding area. Mr George Taylor is seeking quotes, following which a public meeting will be held.

10.2 Local Needs Housing On hold pending the outcome of the review of the Local Plan.

10.3 Village caretaker scheme The Clerk advised that the scheme has been running for 1 year, and the caretaker's appraisal was held in March. Weekly timesheets are submitted to the Caretaker Management Committee. Requests for the caretaker's services should be sent to the Clerk.

11. Report from Community Warden/PCSO

No reports in the absence of the Community Warden and PCSO.

12. Financial Report

12.1 To approve the Annual Governance Statement

Resolved:

That the Annual Governance Statement be approved.

12.2 To approve the Statement of Accounts for the year.

Resolved:

That the Statement of Accounts for the year 2015-2016 be approved.

12.3 To agree payments in accordance with the Budget.

Resolved:

That the following payments be agreed in accordance with the Budget.

Payments	£
S Wood (salary April)	510.33
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S Wood (expenses)	90.17
Kent Association of Local Councils (subscription)	507.00
Ian Bull (Professional fees)	1189.50
Brabourne Baptist Church (hall hire)	14.60
Zurich Municipal (insurance renewal)	417.06
Harmer & Sons (grounds maintenance)	480.00
South East Water (allotments)	49.95
D Ansley	217.50

Receipts	£
Lloyds Bank interest	1.03
Precept	17000.00
Concurrent Functions Grant	265.00
Council Tax Support Grant	205.00

Balance: £ 26951.60 (cheque and deposit account) at 15th May 2017

£ 334.00 (No 2 account for EP group)

13. Planning Committee report

The Chairman of the Planning Committee reported on the following planning applications:

Appeals:

16/00303/AS Land between Lees Road and Canterbury Road. The appeal begins on 27th June and will be heard in Civic Centre.

The appeal will be publicised to inform those wishing to attend, and there may be a need to organise transport to Civic Centre.

Approved by ABC:

16/01374/AS & 16/01375/AS The Hall, Weekes Lane

17/00306/AS Bankside, Scots Lane

Withdrawn by the applicant:

16/00633/AS & 16/00634/AS Church Farmhouse, The Street

16/01871/AS & 16/01872/AS Little Foord, Bulltown Lane

17/00360/AS & 17/00361/AS Little Foord, Bulltown Lane

Further revision to glazed link dimensions, previously approved.

Resolved:

The Parish Council had no objections to the application.

17/00480/AS & 17/00481/AS Church Farmhouse, The Street

Demolition of side extension and conservatory, replacement with 2-storey rear extension, new front canopy, reinstate 1st floor windows, replace ground floor WC window and minor internal changes

Resolved:

The Parish Council had no objections to the application.

17/00435/AS Stowting Paddock, Scots Lane

New vehicular access on to the site, including new fence and gate

The meeting was suspended to allow members of the public to address the Council. The Chairman noted that the Parish Council had been sent a copy of the comments from the Stowting Parish Meeting.

Mr Harbottle stated that this was the third application for the site: the first two had been for a building, and claimed incorrectly that a vehicular access already existed and had for 30 years. These applications had subsequently been withdrawn and the current application submitted. He expressed the following concerns:

- Visibility – there is an obstruction to the left, visibility would be 25m and not 135m as stated. Pedestrians on the footpath would not be visible, being obscured by the proposed new hedge and fence. There was surprise that KCC Highways and the PROW office had not commented on this aspect.
- Footpath – the path is 5 feet wide and hard up against the hedge. The application would be counter to the PROW ‘general informatives’, and would not comply with the gradient requirements without major excavation works. It would therefore need to be graded beyond the proposed timber gate.
- Hedge – is a parish boundary by reference to a Tithe map of 1844. The hedge is more than 30-years old and therefore covered by the Hedgerow Regulations 1997; any proposal to remove it would have to be notified to ABC and be shown to be in the local interest.
- Vehicular access directly from the highway – the need for this was questioned given that access could be via the adjacent paddocks. Any such access would detract from the area, and the size of the land is too small to graze even 1 horse.
- Other issues -
 - Other road users would be inconvenienced when opening the gate, the lane is single track and would be blocked when a vehicle stopped to open the gate.
 - Obstruction would impede emergency vehicles, access to the pub and letter box.
 - A water course is opposite the site, contrary to the assertion in the application.
 - No mention is made of the site’s location in an AONB or hedge removal.

The Chairman expressed concerns at the replacement of an ancient hedge with a wire fence. Cllr Joules asked if the applicant had been in contact with residents or at the Stowting Parish Meeting. Mr Harbottle replied that there had not been, the applicant was perceived as not wishing to engage with or address residents’ concerns. It was noted that the applicant is not the landowner, and lives in Tankerton.

The Chairman thanked Mr Harbottle for his comments, and acknowledged concerns at the long-term objectives for the site. The application proposed moving the entrance to the narrowest part of the lane, which is subject to the national speed limit.

The meeting was reconvened.

The Chairman proposed that the Parish Council objects to the application and that the ward member be asked to refer it to the Planning Committee for determination because of the strength of local feeling.

Resolved:

That the Parish Council objects to the application and that the ward member be asked to refer it to the Planning Committee for determination.

17/00642/AS Green Lane Cottage, Green Lane

Demolition of existing stables and construction of replacement stable block

The proposed stable block would be higher and wider than the existing, and although it was suggested that it would be overly prominent, it would be screened from the road. The proposed block was thought to be in keeping with the existing house. It was proposed that the application be supported.

Resolved:

That the application be supported.

Proposed diversion of part of public footpath AE308/AE309 and extinguishment of public footpaths AE308 (part) and HE 159 at Brabourne and Monks Horton

The Chairman advised that the Parish Council objected to the proposal but had been asked for its reasons. No justification had been given and there were concerns given the planning history of Stowting Paddock which was crossed by AE308. It was noted that Stowting Paddock could not support horses because the size does not comply with the British Horse Society guidance. The Clerk to draft a substantive reply.

Local Plan to 2030

The Chairman advised that timetable had been published: the revised draft would be out for consultation in summer 2017 with likely adoption in summer 2018.

Cllr Miss Martin's Development Infrastructure Group (DIG) has proposed that there should be no substantial development north of the M20, including at Caldecott and the playing fields (both in Smeth parish).

14. Report from KALC Representative

Two presentations were given at the March meeting: Unauthorised gypsy and traveller encampments, and the boundary review of Ashford borough. The next meeting would be on May 24th and Simon Cole would give an update on the Local Plan and 5-year housing land supply.

15. Allotments project

The Chairman noted that an inspection of the site by the Parish Council should be carried out; Cllr Joules advised that all had appeared well when he had last passed the site.

16. Community Led Plan (CLP)

The meeting was suspended to allow Mr Michael Hinchliffe (Chairman, CLP group) to address the Council.

Mr Hinchliffe reported that a number of projects had been identified in the survey carried out by the CLP group:

- Mend the roads: Advice sheets explaining how to report problems on the roads, eg potholes, damage to verges, damaged signs, are being prepared.
- Lack of pavements: This group is small and is therefore working on 1 project at a time. A pavement on Woolpack Hill is undeliverable because it is not supported by crash data. The footpath on the village green will cost £12,000-£16,000; on completion it will be adopted by KCC if so wished by the Parish Council.
- Better public transport: Ian Plowright is liaising with Stagecoach re more and later services.
- Speeding: A radar gun is being used to gather data on speed; the data are not fed back to the Speedwatch team because the method of gathering and therefore the results are different (the Speedwatch team must be visible, this affects driver behaviour). The Chairman suggested that the radar gun data could be used to identify where the Speedwatch team could be better deployed.

- Smarten up the village: Work is continuing on Hoskins Pond; there is a leak in the gully between the 2 ponds, with the result that when the large pond drains, it does not feed the small pond. The project includes repainting the lamp posts because this is no longer carried out by the authorities; a quote of £6,500 for the work has been obtained. It is hoped to plant up the grass verges, eg with bedding plants and bulbs (Wickes has donated 1,000 bulbs). The Gardening Society was approached for help but little interest shown. However, Smeeth WI is seeking permission to plant daffodils on the green triangle at The Ridgeway, to celebrate its 100th anniversary.
- Local Needs Housing: A village-wide survey to assess current need will be carried out, subject to the permission of both Parish Councils. The survey will be delivered at the same time as the advice leaflet (see Mend the roads). The survey is being printed pro bono.
- Improving sports facilities and facilities for the young: The planning application for the basketball hoop has been submitted, funding was secured from ABC, KCC and the Fete Committee.

Mr Hinchliffe stated that the next project is an outdoor gym for use by adults and children, the schools are supportive but advised that equipment suitable for children should be provided. The project will cost £12,000 of which £7,500 has been secured; other funding is being sourced. The budget is for 10 pieces of equipment and landscaping. Mr Hinchliffe asked the Parish Council to consider allowing the gym to be put on the village green. The proposal was welcomed, but the Chairman commented on the sloping nature of the green – Mr Hinchliffe replied that the suppliers would be consulted and further noted that no special surfacing is needed because all of the equipment is below the minimum fall height. Cllr Joules asked if provision would be made for a walkway to protect the green from heavy traffic, if the gym were well-used. Mr Hinchliffe welcomed the suggestion and felt it could be an offshoot of the footpath.

Mr Hinchliffe advised that the CLP group is also looking at provision of a youth shelter; the Chairman noted that this had been raised on a number of occasions in the past.

The meeting was reconvened.

It was proposed that permission be given to the CLP group to site the outdoor gym on the village green.

Resolved:

That Brabourne Parish Council allows the Community Led Plan group to site the outdoor gym on the village green.

The Chairman recommended that Smeeth Parish Council is also involved in the project.

17. Code of Practice for vehicles when passing horses

The Chairman reported comments on social media about vehicles and horses. The Clerk advised that Mrs Allison Nyssens (Pemsey Farm and Smeeth Parish Council) had asked that concerns of driver behaviour when driving passed horses be raised with both Parish Councils. The British Horse Society is running a campaign 'Dead or Dead Slow' and Mrs Nyssens is awaiting posters and other campaign material, to raise awareness. Cllr Mrs Tanner suggested that it is also put in Parish News and on the websites.

18. Correspondence

All correspondence has been circulated.

19. Open Session

19.1 Mr Peter Clayton asked if the Internal Auditor was paid for his work, the Clerk replied that John Coupe carries out the audit pro bono. Mr Coupe was thanked for his services.

19.2 Mr Clayton asked for details of donations paid by the Parish Council in the last financial year.
[Post-meeting note: The following donations were made: £300 to Smeeth & Brabourne

Football Club; £250 to St Mary PCC; £1750 to each of the Village Hall and Playing Field Associations.]

- 19.3** Mr Clayton noted that there may be some opposition to siting the youth shelter and gym on the green because of concerns re noise. He asked what resistance was encountered in Aldington when the proposal was made and how long it took to die down.
- 19.4** Mr Willis asked for information on removal of both bollards on Prospect Way. It is unknown who removed them and for what reason.

20. Any Other Business

- 20.1** A leak was reported in Canterbury Road, near Plovers.
- 20.2** The caretaker was thanked for his efforts cutting the grass verges.
- 20.3** A hive is in place on the allotments site, there are no restrictions re bees in the lease.

21. Dates for meetings in 2018

Monday 15th January, 19th March, 21st May, 16th July, 17th September and 19th November.

22. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday 17th July at 7.00pm in Brabourne Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.
