

**BRABOURNE PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council**  
**Held at 7.00pm on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2012**  
**At Brabourne Village Hall**

**1. Present**

Cllr Ede (Chairman), Cllr Hickmott (Vice-Chairman), Cllrs Mrs Bewick, Mrs Beavers and Mrs Young, and Mrs S Wood (Clerk). Mr Kingston (Community Warden) and Miss Tessa O'Sullivan (Rural Housing Enabler, Action with Communities in Rural Kent [ACRK]) attended, and six members of the public were present.

**2. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mayland (illness) and Spokes (prior commitment).

**3. Declaration of Interest**

No Declarations of Interest were received.

**4. Minutes**

**Resolved:**

**That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2011 be approved and confirmed as a true record.**

**5. Matters Arising**

**5.1 Roads and Footways**

**5.1.1** Church Road footpath. No further progress.

**5.1.2** Potholes. Potholes in The Ridgeway and Stone Hill will be reported to KCC.

**5.1.3** Parked cars obstructing the highway. The Community Warden to follow up.

**5.1.4** Salt bin. The missing bin at the Manor Pound/Canterbury Road junction has been replaced.

**5.1.5** Highway Steward. The date of the parish visit has not yet been confirmed..

**5.1.6** Speedwatch in Brabourne. It is expected that this will begin shortly. The Clerk to follow up.

**5.1.7** Agricultural traffic. Complaints received re silage spilling from vehicles. To be raised at the next joint meeting with the farming community.

**5.1.8** Football pitch. Thought that the uneven state of the pitch is more of a problem than stones on the surface.

**5.2 Broadband coverage in the parish.** ABC is working on a project to improve rural broadband coverage. The completed survey forms have been submitted to show evidence of need in the two parishes, and the Parish Council asked to write a letter supporting the project – the Clerk to action. There are no details yet regarding grants from KCC.

**5.3 Emergency plan for Brabourne and Smeeth parishes.** Cllr Mrs Beavers is liaising with Cllr Hinchliffe (Smeeth). KALC is arranging information days for councillors – Cllr Hinchliffe hopes to attend.

**5.4 Community Led plan for Brabourne and Smeeth parishes.** Cllr Mayland met Cllr Plowright (Smeeth) and Mrs Bugden (ACRK). A public meeting, led by Mrs Bugden, will be held in March to gauge interest, following which it is hoped to set up a Steering Committee. There will be PC representation on the Committee but it will not be chaired by a councillor. Start up costs are approx £100, and the project may cost up to £3500 (shared by the two councils), but grants are available.

**5.5 Playing field.** The Playing Field Association (PFA) has reserves of ~ £8000, but is planning a number of projects, eg resurfacing the car park. The Smeeth and Brabourne Football Club wishes to put in 2 junior pitches and improve the changing facilities, this will generate revenue by bringing back teams currently playing elsewhere. The Association will fundraise and apply for grants to meet the costs, which may be up to £50,000. It was noted that the PC grant was originally proposed to meet running costs, but these are now less than the grant. The Chairman is to attend the PFA meeting and report back to the PC.

**5.6 Jubilee Beacons.** Two positive responses have been received from letters sent to local farmers seeking suitable sites. It was noted that the Football Club is also arranging an event.

## 6. Community Warden's report

Mr Kingston reported that generally the Christmas and New Year period appear to have passed quietly, however there have been a couple of minor thefts of property from residents' front gardens. There was a burglary at The Rectory and an attempted burglary at a property in Plain Road – residents are asked to be vigilant. There was also an incident of criminal damage to a house where it appears that an air gun was used to break a window and yoghurt and eggs were thrown at the premises, it appears to be an isolated incident and the owners are not aware of anyone who has a grudge against them.

There have been three post boxes damaged in the area, it appears that the doors have been blown off (possibly with a firework) the doors have been taken by the Royal Mail for examination and the boxes are not currently in use. Mr Kingston has contacted them to find out when the boxes will be repaired and am awaiting a reply.

Regarding the closure of Plain Road over the Easter period, Mr Kingston held a meeting with Stagecoach and the contractors and will place an item in the parish magazine requesting volunteers to assist with giving a lift to and from the bus stop to more isolated and vulnerable residents.

Mr Kingston had a meeting with the Chairmen of Brabourne and Smeeth Parish Councils and Tom Pelham ('Hang 10' street pastors' youth project) about the possibility of them working in the area. Mr Pelham has been given contact details of existing youth groups so he can canvass any need for his services.

A warning was given about bogus callers in the area, trying to gain access to properties by alleging problems with the sewerage systems.

Mr Kingston was thanked for his report.

## 7. Rural Housing Needs Survey report

Brought forward from item 12 with the Chairman's permission.

Miss O'Sullivan presented the results of the survey (attached). A need has been identified for 1,2, 3 and 4 bedroom properties. The results are to be presented to Smeeth PC at its next meeting; if both PCs are in agreement there will be a search for suitable sites. Any identified by a desk top survey will be forwarded to the Planning Dept, ABC; the landowner of any sites regarded as suitable will then be approached. Any such sites will be 'exception' sites, and a S106 agreement will be put in place so that the houses will be for local people in perpetuity.

Miss O'Sullivan was thanked for her report.

## 8. Registration of The Warren as a village green

Brought forward from item 11 with the Chairman's permission.

The Chairman advised that a suggestion was put forward in late 2011 to build 2 affordable houses on part of The Warren; these would match existing housing stock. The remaining green would be leased to the Parish Council at a peppercorn rent, which would realize the PC's aim of protecting The Warren (currently part of ABC's land housing bank) – it is thought unlikely that an application to register the land as a village green would succeed. It was noted that any proposal would have to go through the full planning process, and it was suggested that conditions be attached to provide off-road parking for the bungalows to the rear.

## 9. Allotments' Project

Brought forward from item 10 with the Chairman's permission.

### 9.1 To consider quotes for the communal shed

**Resolved:**

**That the quote from Walton Premier Groundsman Wooden Workshops for a shed 20' x 10' be accepted.**

### 9.2 To consider quotes for the communal shed base:

Discussion deferred pending receipt of additional quotes.

**9.3** The green lavatory will be delivered in late January, and a working party is being organized by the Allotment Society to install it.

**9.4** The Brownies and Guides have been awarded plants, seeds and equipment to the value of £600 by Dobbies Garden Centre. A Tenancy agreement will be sent to Mrs Jean Hodgkin (Brown Owl), and there will be a requirement that they are fully supervised at all times when on site.

**Resolved:**

**That the allotment rental be waived for the Brownies and Guides.**

9.5 Renewal payments for 2 plots have not yet been paid; 2 new plots have been taken and 4 more plots can be cut out – as these will be smaller than other plots the rent will be reduced pro rata.

## 10. Financial Report

### 10.1 To agree payments in accordance with the Budget

**Resolved:**

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

#### Payments

Details	£
S Wood (salary Dec)	318.44
S Wood (salary Jan)	318.44
K Young (salary)	29.44
Eloo Ltd (compost lavatory – allotments)	4774.76
SLCC (annual subscription)	44.55
S Wood (black sacks)	25.08
Citizenship Award	100.00

#### Receipts

Details	£
Lloyds TSB interest	0.41
Allotment rental payments	806.66
VAT refund	1421.73

Balance: £ 5515.89

The first instalment of the Leader grant for the allotments project is due for payment shortly: £ 6411.16

### 10.2 To consider an increase in the litter picking schedule

Following the request that the footpath between Lees Road and Bridge Road be added to the schedule, the area has been monitored. No significant littering was found, but it will continue to be reviewed.

### 10.3 To consider the draft Budget for 2012-2013

The Clerk presented the draft Budget.

**Resolved:**

**That the Precept remains at £11,311 and the draft Budget as amended, be approved.**

### 10.3 To discuss expenditure of the Prize from the Village of the Year competition, Economy Section

It was suggested that the £100 prize be used as start-up costs for the Community Led plan. This is to be discussed with ACRK, which must approve the expenditure.

## 11. To receive the Report of the Planning Committee

The Chairman of the Planning Committee reported on four planning applications. Of these, two applications were supported but comments submitted; no objections raised to one; and refusal recommended on one. The Planning Dept of ABC permitted two applications; one was withdrawn by the applicant; a decision is awaited on the remaining application. Two cases of non-compliance remain outstanding. An appeal to the Planning Inspectorate has been made for one application, following refusal by ABC.

## 12. Report from KALC Representative

The Minutes of the meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> November have been circulated. The next meeting is on 8<sup>th</sup> February and will include a presentation by Mr David Brazier (KCC).

## 13. Code of Conduct for agricultural traffic and information leaflet

The draft Code of Conduct and information leaflet were circulated. It is hoped to arrange a second joint meeting to agree the contents with the farming community, after the Code and leaflet have been discussed by Smeeth Parish Council.

#### **14. Gypsy and traveller sites**

The Chairman advised that there are no plans to put sites in the parish, and it was noted that there is no recent history of traveller activity in the area.

#### **15. Open Session**

No items were brought to the Parish Council's attention by members of the public present.

#### **16. Any other business**

**16.1** Cllr Mrs Bewick reported a problem with overhanging trees, but was advised that as these are on private land it is not a matter for the Parish Council.

**16.2** The invitation to the Annual Civic Service was declined.

**16.3** Consultations have been received on the following: Taxi Licensing Policy (ABC); Sustainable Design and Construction DPD (ABC); KCC is consulting the public on Household Waste Recycling Centre Service.

#### **17. Resolution to exclude the public**

It was proposed that, under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, because of the confidential nature of the business to be dealt with, the Public and Press leave the meeting during discussion of item 18, namely discussion of the Citizenship Award.

**Resolved:**

**Under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, because of the confidential nature of the business to be dealt with, the Public and Press leave the meeting during discussion of item 18, namely discussion of the Citizenship Award.**

#### **18. Citizenship Award**

**Resolved:**

**That the award be presented at the Annual Parish Meeting.**

#### **19. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> March 2012 in Brabourne Village Hall, immediately following the Annual Parish Meeting, which begins at 7.00pm.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.

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### **FINDINGS OF THE BRABOURNE AND SMEETH HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY**

1. Approx 973 surveys distributed – 303 returned = 31% response rate.
2. Survey shows that 257 respondents (87%) are owner occupiers.
3. 222 respondents (86%) have lived in the parish for over 10 years
4. 88 respondents said that members of their household have left the parish in the last 5 years; they were mostly children of the household. Lack of affordable housing was the most frequently given reason for doing so. 37 respondents said that those people would return if affordable accommodation could be provided.
5. 229 people, 83% of respondents who answered the question/75% of all respondents said they would support a small development of affordable housing.
6. In total 50 respondents (17%) indicated that they had a housing need either now or in the next 3 years.

#### **HOUSING NEED SECTION**

Looked at local housing costs –

At the time of writing the report – the cheapest 2 bed property found for sale was £180,000 – a 15% deposit of £27,000 required and income of over £43,000. Looked again – cheapest 2 bed (small terrace) = £160,000 – 15% deposit = £24,000 and income of £38,857.

At time of writing report only 4 properties available to rent in the area and there were no 1 or 2 beds. The cheapest was a 3 bed terraced house for £750pcm = income of £36,000. Today there is a '2 or 3' bed for £850pcm.

Mouseprice states the average property in the TN25 area costs £291,300 with the average salary being £28,564 – this means that the average property costs over 10 times more than the average salary.

## **SECTION 2**

- 50 respondents said they had a housing need either now or in the next 3 years. 10 of those respondents were excluded for reasons including – incomplete forms, owner occupiers not eligible, only tenure sought was private renting.
- 40 households in housing need; 22 need housing now and 18 in next 3 years. Total of 20 single people, 10 couples and 10 families.
- 31 respondents currently live in the parishes; 19 in Brabourne, 12 in Smeeth. 9 currently live outside the parishes
- 26 live with relatives. 2 renting from HA. 1 owner occupier. 5 private renting. 2 shared ownership. 2 rent from council. 1 in mobile home. (The owner occupier says they cannot afford their existing mortgage following divorce/separation).
- Total of 54 adults and 17 children in housing need. 3 adults are aged over 60 and need accommodation more suitable for their needs. Majority of adults in age group 25-44.
- 18 respondents indicated an interest in shared ownership; 14 of these may be able to afford a 40% or 70% share of the size of property they require.
- A need for 1, 2, 3 and a 4 bed property can be identified from the findings. 13 out of the 30 single people/couples said they want 2 beds but in terms of rented accom. may not be possible due to council's allocation policy
- 6 respondents currently live in housing rented from the council or HA. 4 of those properties are within the parishes of Brabourne and Smeeth. Therefore if those people were re-housed, 4 local affordable homes could become vacant.