

**BRABOURNE PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council**  
**Held at 7.00pm on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2011**  
**At Brabourne Village Hall**

**1. Present**

Cllr Ede (Chairman), Cllr Hickmott (Vice-Chairman), Cllrs Mrs Beavers, Mrs Bewick, Mayland and Mrs S Wood (Clerk). Miss Tessa O'Sullivan (Rural Housing Enabler, Action with Communities in Rural Kent (ACRK)) and two members of the public were present.

**2. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs Young and Cllr Spokes (prior commitments), Cllr Howard (borough councillor), PC Laker (Neighbourhood Officer) and Mr Kingston (Community Warden).

**3. Declaration of Interest**

No Declarations of Interest were received.

**Presentation on Affordable Housing Schemes**

Miss O'Sullivan noted that the Parish Council has expressed an interest in a survey of housing need in the parish. The survey will be carried out by ACRK, simultaneously with (although separate from) a survey in Smeeth, as Smeeth Parish Council also wishes to participate. Questionnaires will be sent to every household. Sample surveys and a draft covering letter were circulated. Results will be analysed by ACRK, and if no need is identified the process stops. If there is a need, a search for suitable sites is undertaken – these are likely to be 'exception sites', and may be outside the village envelope but within walking distance. The Parish Council will be asked to assist in the site search. The work is being funded by ABC. Under a Section 106 agreement the housing would be for local people, and to be financially viable a minimum of 6 homes would need to be built.

The Vice-chairman stated that the need for the previous survey had been queried, but over 30 people came forward when the plans for Fortescue Place were drawn up. Changing demographics should also be allowed for.

Miss O'Sullivan advised that the survey results will be updated after a suitable site has been found and a Register of Interest opened. The questionnaires will be posted out in September and 3 weeks allowed for return. Owners of any sites identified as suitable by Planning, would be contacted with a view to selling. English Rural Housing Association (EHRA) will conduct the negotiations.

In answer to questions, Miss O'Sullivan stated that the minimum uptake for shared equity is about 20%, and land would not be compulsorily purchased.

Miss O'Sullivan was thanked for her presentation.

**4. Minutes**

**Resolved:**

**That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2011 be approved and confirmed as a true record.**

**5. Matters Arising**

**Roads and Footways**

- a) **Church Road footpath.** KCC has recommended that the footpath be declared a Public Right of Way, based on evidence of use. Neither the tenant nor the landowner has objected. The recommendation

will be advertised and Notices posted, and following a consultation period the footpath will be added to the Definitive Map.

- b) **UK Power Networks.** A series of road closures will be put in place to enable a new underground cable to be installed, as part of an upgrade to the electricity supply in the Ashford area. Affected householders will be notified by a leaflet drop, 2 weeks before the expected closure. Access for residents will be maintained and diversions signposted.
- c) **Kent Highway Services (KHS).** The following repairs have been carried out: Lees Road pothole; blocked drains in East Brabourne; verges are being infilled with type 1 aggregate from Crows' Corner to Hampton Lane, although it is unclear if this is being done by KHS. Japanese knotweed on the verge in Lees Road has been reported.
- d) **KHS Parish Seminar.** Notes are attached.
- e) **Village sign.** The replacement sign has been erected.
- f) **Community Warden selection process.** The Clerk attended a training day with the new wardens. No response has yet been received about Council involvement in the selection process of future wardens, after the failure to consult despite earlier assurances.

**6. Report from Community Warden**

Mr Kingston's report is attached.

**7. Report from Neighbourhood Officer**

PC Laker's report is attached.

**8. Financial Report**

**Resolved:**

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

Payments

Details	£
AJ Fortescue & Son Ltd	1137.60
S Wood (Getmapping site plan fee)	49.20
Medash Signs (allotment 'No Entry' sign)	54.00
S Wood (salary June)	318.44
S Wood (salary July)	318.44
ICO – DPA renewal	35.00
Mrs B Rich (salary)	112.67
S Wood (stationery)	21.60

Receipts

Details	£
Lloyds TSB interest	1.06
VAT refund	405.91
KCC Member Community Grant (allotments)	500.00

**Balance: £15227.07**

**To consider a request for a donation from the Charing Playing Field Management Committee**

**Resolved:**

**That the request be refused.**

**Registration of Brabourne Parish Council with HMRC for PAYE**

Following discussions with HMRC, all tax due will be deducted from the Clerk's Westwell salary. The Brabourne salary will be paid gross.

**9. To receive the Report of the Planning Committee**

The Chairman of the Planning Committee reported on 13 planning applications and 3 cases of non-compliance. 6 applications were supported and no objection raised to 4 applications; comments were submitted on 2 and an objection raised to 1 application. The Borough Council approved 6 applications, refused 1 and decisions on 6 applications are still awaited. Chapelfield is to be auctioned.

Councillor Mayland attended a Planning Training meeting at Civic Centre on 6<sup>th</sup> July, and is to circulate information from the meeting.

**10. Report from KALC Representative**

The AGM was held on 1<sup>st</sup> June. Cllr Rivers (Wittersham) was elected as Chairman and Cllr Reed (Charing) as Vice-chairman. The Minutes have been circulated and the next meeting is on 27<sup>th</sup> July.

**11. Provision of allotments on land behind The Plough Inn**

The Vice-chairman advised that the 'No Entry' sign and padlock are in place. A working party has cleared more of the site; planning permission has been granted for the ground reinforcing blocks on the access and hardstanding for cars on site. A grant of £500 has been made by Cllr Wickham from his KCC Member Community Fund, and a £2000 Small Capital Grant by the Borough Council. An application has been made for further funding from the Kent Downs and Marshes Leader Scheme. If an area for bees is set aside, hives should be set up such that the bees fly up, thus minimizing the risk to those on the allotments.

**Maintenance of grassed areas and boundary hedges on site**

The Allotments' Society will mow the grass paths, but not the grass on the perimeter or cut back the hedges. The Society is to advise as to the number of cuts required per year, following which a quote will be sought from KCC (Landscape Services).

**Resolved:**

**That the said quote from Landscape Services be accepted if it is less than £80 per visit for the grass and hedges.**

**12. Proposed purchase of land at the Warren**

There has been no further progress. Cllr Howard is to pursue this with the Borough Council.

**13. Traffic problems in Brabourne Parish**

**Speed limits in East Brabourne**

Previous requests for a reduction in the speed limit in East Brabourne have been refused by KHS. The request is to be made again. Cllr Mayland stated that the area met the criteria for a reduction, and is to pass the information to the Clerk. The Chairman noted that enforcement would be a problem.

Smeeth Parish Council is conducting Speedwatch in Smeeth parish. If carried out in Brabourne, it can only be done in areas where the speed limit is 40mph or less, but this would cover Brabourne Lees and parts of Lees Road and Canterbury Road.

**Resolved:**

**Volunteers are to be sought for Speedwatch in Brabourne parish.**

The Clerk is to liaise with Smeeth Parish Council.

**Agricultural traffic**

Several items of correspondence have been received regarding farm vehicles in the parish. During discussion it was thought that the perception of speed of large vehicles may be misleading, but it was

acknowledged that some may be driven without due care and attention. Changes in farming methods have led to the use of contractors working within a time limit.

No accidents involving injury have occurred, although on occasion there has been damage to verges.

The Parish Council has been working with other agencies such as Environmental Services, Kent Police and the Community Wardens to try to resolve the situation.

Similar problems have been reported in Smeeth parish, and at its meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> July Smeeth Parish Council agreed to arrange an informal meeting with farmers to discuss these.

**Resolved:**

**That Smeeth Parish Council be asked that this be a joint meeting with Brabourne Parish Council**

**14. Open Session**

The Chairman stated that every meeting of the Parish Council would now include an Agenda item, under which residents could raise matters of concern with their council.

**15. Any other business**

- Cllr Mrs Beavers reported traffic problems in Bridge Road and Lees Road, caused by inconsiderate parking. These are to be passed to PC Laker.
- The Chairman is to present the John Moreton Memorial Prize at the Leavers' Concert and Prizegiving at Brabourne School, on 19<sup>th</sup> July.
- Cllr Mrs Bewick offered to clear vegetation overhanging a footpath, as these works are no longer carried out by KHS.
- An application is to be made for 25 free tree whips in the KCC Free Trees Scheme. A similar scheme from the Woodland Trust, for Community Groups, was passed to Cllr Mrs Beavers.
- Brabourne is to enter the ACRK Village of the Year competition.
- Information on KCC Community Grants from Cllr Wickham is to be passed to the Scouts and Guides, Village Hall Committee and Playing Field Association.
- Disappointment has been expressed at the lack of representation of Brabourne Parish Council at a meeting in May to promote rural retailers. Cllr Mrs Young had been present, but in her capacity as a rural retailer. The Chairman said that it was regretted that other councillors had been unable to attend, but that the Parish Council wished to express the strongest support for Orpins Stores, which is a vital community asset.
- The Village Hall Committee has decided against installing a Hearing Loop system.
- A new chairman for the village fete is needed for 2012, as Mr Sanders has stood down due to other commitments.
- The memorial plaque on The Warren has not yet been moved to its new position. This is to be taken up with the Borough Council.

**16. Dates for future meetings**

16<sup>th</sup> January 2012, 19<sup>th</sup> March, 21<sup>st</sup> May, 16<sup>th</sup> July, 17<sup>th</sup> September and 19<sup>th</sup> November.

**17. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> September at 7.00pm in Brabourne Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.

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## Community Warden's Report, July 2011

Unfortunately I am not allowed to work in the evenings yet.

I'm on leave from 18/7/11 for two weeks and I hope to be out and about afterwards.

Richard did mention the dog fouling posters to me and I will chase him up to see how far he got and with whom.

I also met the editor of the parish magazine, and will endeavour to get a map with the dog bin locations marked on it.

Otherwise things are reasonably quiet, a couple of people have mentioned the tractors going through the village sometimes until late at night and there was an incident of a couple of stones from a dry stone wall being knocked out. I have spoken to Mr and Mrs Joules who arranged to have the damage repaired the same day. They were appreciative of the concerns of those in the village whilst having to run a business. Mrs Joules was going to write a letter to the parish council.

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### KENT POLICE NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING TEAM

The following report relates to the period of the 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2011 to 13<sup>th</sup> July 2011 and covers all crime and relevant incidents in your area.

#### **CRIME**

##### **BRABOURNE**

There was the attempted accosting of the young female near to Orpins Store which occurred prior to my injury. From what I have read enquires are still on going and this is being dealt with by Major crime due to the similar incidents that have occurred in the Kent area. Schools and local youth groups have been informed and have done talks to advise youngster of the dangers.

There was a theft from motor vehicle in Lee's road where some aluminium panels have been stolen from a van. The offender have unscrewed the panels and left the location by unknown means, possibly a vehicle.

All enquires have been completed with negative result.

A theft of fork lift pallet tines have been taken from a farm in Canterbury Road. The items were not secure but were on the land and a vehicle and male has been seen in the area around the time the items were taken.

The male has been interviewed in relation to his vehicle being at the location but he denied the offence and the male could not be positively identified as being involved.

There has been no reported crime through May to July.

##### **SMEETH**

There are no crimes of note to report.

PC 11307 Darren Laker

Neighbourhood Rural Policing Officer

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**PARISH SEMINAR, ASHFORD KHS DEPOT**  
**11<sup>th</sup> July 2011**

Introduction – John Burr (Director KHS)

- Has been in post for 14 months (longer than predecessors)
- 30% budget cut this year, and further cut next year. 1/3 of staff gone
- KHS being reorganised to ensure accountability
- Reorganisation into 3 main areas:
  - Operations (potholes, gully emptying etc)
  - Programmed works (grass cutting, machinery servicing, planned works etc)
  - Transportation (Freedom Pass, fare schemes, road safety, driver training)
- Budget of £150,000,000
- New contract awarded to Enterprise (schedule of rates contract, replacing cost plus) – rewards productivity
- KHS name to go, being renamed KCC on 01/09/11
- Proactive surfacing being carried out this year, but budget only allows for 5% of roads to be resurfaced, and less next year
- Speed limits – reduction only implemented where proven accident record, no budget for areas where no accidents reported
- Drainage – reactive programme of gully clearing, with regular clearance under new contract (frequency depending on need).

Working with our parishes – Toby Howe (Highways Manager for East Kent)

- Community liaison officers being replaced by Highway Stewards
- Inspectors will inspect roads regularly and pass safety critical faults directly to contractor
- 36 Highway Stewards in Kent, each assigned to specific area. Will discuss priorities with community
- 12 District Managers to oversee all operations – no more designated teams, eg lighting, drainage
- Functions to be centralised at operations centre in Aylesford.

Parish Portal – Phil Murphy (ICT KHS)

- Used for fault reporting and generating Parish Reports
- Teething problems identified by users when Portal first introduced, these rectified
- Site improvements to go online on 18/07/11:
  - New updated maps
  - Ability to upload photos
  - Improved Parish Reports
  - Need to reregister – new user names and passwords to be issued
  - 1 rep per parish recommended to input information on to Portal.

Planning – Bob White

- KHS is statutory consultee
- Discussions held with developers re materials to be used on highways and footways – need to be hardwearing but minimising maintenance costs
- Community should be involved in design of new developments
- Need to build on existing transport schemes, particularly in rural areas.

KHS Campaigns – Toby Howe

- Winter campaigns:
  - Mixture of salt/sand to reduce salt used. Salt resources monitored by govt (National Salt Cell)

- District Councils (DCs) consulted as to roads to prioritise
- Misinformation (eg pavement clearing) corrected
- Collaboration with DCs to clear areas such as town centres using DC staff (eg litter pickers – free to help as can't work when snow lying)
- Problems clearing sand after thaw
- Self-help – provision of sand bags to parishes. To be repeated winter 2011/12
- Location of salt bins will be shown on Parish Portal
- >2000 salt bins in Kent. 60 new bins in 2011. 50 salt bins purchased using Member Highway Fund. KCC will consider allowing PCs to purchase and manage salt bins, but needs to be liaison with KCC as to location. PCs to be notified of procedure
- Snow clearance contracts with farmers renewed for 3 years
- Campaign 2011/12 to be discussed at ABC/KCC meeting on 01/09/11
- New contractor will undertake same programme as Ringway.
- Find and Fix:
  - Govt funding to help with weather-related damage (£6,500,000): £2,500,000 allocated to pothole repairs on minor roads. Remainder on surface dressing
  - Temporary repairs undertaken where safety critical. All other repairs – permanent
  - Schedules on KCC website: Find and Fix/Drainage/Resurfacing  
[http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads\\_and\\_transport/highway\\_maintenance/roadworks.aspx](http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads_and_transport/highway_maintenance/roadworks.aspx)

#### Member Highway Fund – Kirsty Williams

- For highway projects of local importance
- Each member has £25,000 – can be pooled or rolled over if an underspend
- PCs can put forward schemes – if member minded to fund, application then goes to KHS, proposals drawn up, after member approves the design it goes to Cabinet member for approval
- Examples of schemes: speed investigations, pedestrian counts, pedestrian crossings, traffic calming, fencing, street lighting, drainage, dropped crossings, clearance of vegetation, purchase of speed guns.

#### Rail Action Plan – Stephen Gasche

- Southeastern has franchise from 2006 – 2014
- Will be no significant changes to schedule or new rolling stock until new franchise awarded
- Rail Action Plan submitted to 3<sup>rd</sup> Rail Summit and then Minister of State (Theresa Villiers)
- Plan put forward:
  - Suspension of rail fare escalator increases (rises of up to 13%), to be brought into line with rest of England (3%). This was refused
  - 15 recommendations for new franchise put forward, including:
    - High speed service to Deal and Sandwich all day
    - Reduction in journey times to Victoria and Cannon Street by removing some stops
    - New city service to Blackfriars from Maidstone East
    - Objection to proposal to withdraw Cannon Street services on Sevenoaks, Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge line
    - New direct service to Gatwick: Ashford/Tonbridge/Redhill/Gatwick.

#### KALC – Terry Martin (County Secretary)

Benefits of membership outlined.

#### Question and Answer session

- Guidance sought on spreading salt.  
KHS to issue notes, and also lobbying for change in the law

- Suggested that signs be affixed to salt bins to prevent theft of salt
  - Recommended that salt bags be covered, eg with tarpaulin
  - Criticism that litter on highway not mentioned – no clearance programmes, plus proliferation of street signs and guard rails.  
Litter the responsibility of DCs/Highways Agency. Input from KHS restricted to traffic management programme to facilitate litter pick. Trying to reduce street sign clutter, but need to balance less clutter with safety
  - Support sought for extending 20mph speed limit.  
Need not backed up by accident statistics, especially outside schools. More a problem of perception – people don't feel safe. 20mph speed limit outside schools not supported by Police. Will trial 20mph/flashing signs in some areas, although expensive because of traffic regs
  - Asked that provision of salt bags be extended.  
KHS to liaise with DCs
  - Suggested that vehicles be used to spread salt, as in the past  
To be negotiated with new contractor
  - Proposed closure of A2 at Newington raised, with concomitant impact on residents
  - Suggested that policy of road calming be reviewed, and funds be reallocated to road repairs
  - Cutting of verges has been passed back to KCC by DCs – who is funding these cuts?  
KCC to fund 8 cuts /year. Soft landscaping to be reviewed.
  - Can Clerks speak to District Managers, or is contact only to be with Highway Stewards.  
Best way to contact is via Parish Portal, but Clerks can ask to speak to management.
  - Chilham Sawmill development – criticism that public meeting held on a weekday afternoon, attendance therefore reduced.  
Assurances given that all highways' issues will be looked at. Given the number of public meetings held, not all can be held in the evening.
  - An update on Operation Stack was requested.  
Meeting held on 08/07/11 with local MPs. Low priority in govt terms, so no funding. If funding were to be forthcoming, problem remains of where to site lorry park.
  - Why can't farmers be used to cut verges?  
Too difficult to manage the numerous contracts (would be on a farmer by farmer basis). Negotiations ongoing with the NFU.  
KALC also looking into the problem.
  - New contract (schedule of rates) welcomed. However, workforce to be taken over by new contractor – this includes those responsible for substandard work.  
Retraining will be undertaken. Incentives as to quality of work are part of the new contract.
  - Noted that interactive speed signs are being trialled. Will these cascade down to the villages?  
Yes, through the Member Highway Fund.
-