

**BRABOURNE PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council**  
**Held at 7.00pm on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2013**  
**At Brabourne Village Hall**

**1. Present**

Cllr Hickmott (Chairman) (who arrived after agenda item 4), Cllrs Mrs Bewick and Mrs Tanner, Cllrs Joules, Mayland and Spokes, and Mrs Wood (Clerk). Cllr Howard (ward member), Mr Graham Kingston (Community Warden), PCSO Andrew Huckstepp and five members of the public attended.

**2. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs Young (prior commitment) and Cllr Miss Martin (ward member).

In the absence of the Chairman, nominations were invited for the position of Chairman for the meeting. One nomination was received: Cllr Spokes.

**Resolved:**

**That Cllr Spokes be elected as Chairman for the meeting.**

**3. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Joules, agenda item 8.1 (planning application Hope Farm, Bulltown Lane), (OSI). Noted that Cllr Joules is not on the Planning Committee and therefore had no involvement in the discussion of the applications.

**4. Minutes**

**Resolved:**

**That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2013 be approved and confirmed as a true record.**

Cllr Hickmott arrived after agenda item 4, and took the Chair.

**5. Matters Arising**

**5.1 Roads and Footways**

**5.1.1** The salt bags have been delivered.

**5.1.2** A tree in Pilgrims Way uprooted during the recent storm will be reported to KCC Highways.

**5.1.3** 'Slow' road markings near Brabourne and Smeeth Schools, and '30mph' road markings near Smeeth School need refreshing. These will be reported to KCC Highways.

**5.2 Registration of The Warren as a village green** A decision is still awaited from KCC, and is not expected for several months.

**5.3 Village handyman scheme** The Parish Council's interest has been registered. Funding has yet to be clarified. Cllr Howard stated that funding may be forthcoming from ABC and KCC for 1 year, set at the limit that the authorities would have spent on the devolved services. It is uncertain how the scheme would be funded beyond this period, given the possibility of capping Parish Council Precepts. Cllr Miss Martin is pursuing this, with the involvement of John Rivers (Wittersham PC Chairman and Chairman, KALC Ashford Area Committee) because the scheme is running successfully in his parish. Michelle Byrne (ABC) is costing out services for parishes which have registered an interest, but this is made more difficult as contracts are currently being renegotiated. Cllr Howard reported that Smeeth PC has registered an interest; Brook and Hastingleigh are actively considering it; Aldington has declined, a response is awaited from Mersham.

**5.4 Dog bin at the village hall** Cllr Joules had a meeting with the dog warden and agreed the location of the bin on the far side of the green outside the hall; local residents have also been consulted by Cllr Joules and welcomed the proposal.

**6. Reports from Community Warden and PCSO**

Mr Kingston and PCSO Huckstepp's reports are attached.

PCSO Huckstepp introduced himself and was welcomed to the meeting. He stated that he hopes to hold regular surgeries in Brabourne and Smeeth, given that the current police contact points are not in the parishes. In addition to the scams noted in his report, PCSO Huckstepp issued a warning about scam emails purporting to be from friends who have suffered an accident abroad and are in need of money.

## 7. Financial Report

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

**Resolved:**

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

#### Payments

Details	£
MAF (printing, CLP&EP workshop)	14.25
Michael Hinchliffe (refreshments, CLP&EP workshop)	14.00
GT Fencing Ltd (allotments)	9523.39
S Wood (net salary Oct)	284.25
S Wood (net salary Nov)	284.25
Harmer and Sons (grass cutting – The Warren)	390.00
Shepherd Neame – allotment rental	400.00
SE Water	10.80
Smeeth and Brabourne Football Club	300.00
St Mary PCC	250.00
Parish Online (subscription renewal)	24.00
D Ansley (salary) (2 weeks @ £6.19/hr, 6 weeks @ £6.31/hr)	163.29
M Hickmott (travel expenses)	29.25
SLCC (subscription renewal)	44.74

#### Receipts

Details	£
Lloyds Bank interest	1.36
Precept	6965.00
Concurrent Functions Grant	530.00
Council Tax Support Grant	320.00
VAT refund	1769.13
Allotment rental payments	22.50
*[Smeeth Parish Council (for CLP and EP steering group)]	100.00]

Balance £ 22637.89 (cheque and deposit account

£ 129.35 \*(No. 2 account – banker for CLP and EP Steering Group)

\*Note, these are distinct from and are not Parish Council funds

### 7.2 Draft Budget for 2014-2015

The Clerk presented the draft Budget. Discussion was deferred until the January meeting, given current uncertainties in funding for Parish Councils.

### 7.3 To consider a contribution towards the cost of Speedwatch advisory signs

It is felt that these are an effective deterrent. The signs are approx £3 each, but a discount would be given if 60 were purchased: Cllr Plowright of Smeeth PC has offered to purchase the signs, and those surplus to requirements in Brabourne and Smeeth would be sold to other interested parishes.

**Resolved:**

**That Brabourne Parish Council agrees a contribution towards the costs of the signs.**

## 8. Planning Committee report

### 8.1 Planning applications received

Cllr Hickmott (Chairman, Planning Committee) reported on 14 planning applications.

The Alders, Weekes Lane: garden room/extension (retrospective). An application in 2011 for a single storey extension was permitted, but a 2 storey extension was erected. A retrospective application was then submitted. The PC objected to this application and a decision from ABC is awaited: Cllr Howard advised that the application is to be refused. The applicant is now discussing with Planning Officers as to what part of the extension can be retained under permitted development rights; this is likely to be single storey only.

Chapel Farm, Canterbury Road: replacement dwelling and conversion of barn to farm store. Supported by the PC, but changes to the application had rendered it invalid – a new application was submitted and a decision awaited from ABC.

35 Prospect Way: single storey extension. No objections from the PC and permitted by ABC.

Brewers Meadow, Weekes Lane: erection of agricultural building for storage of hay and lambing. The PC commented but as this was an agricultural notification planning permission was not required.

6 Knatchbull Way: two storey extension and garage. No objections from the PC and permitted by ABC.

Providence, Canterbury Road: single storey extension and integral garage. No objections from the PC and permitted by ABC.

Victory Cottage, Lees Road: garden room (application for Lawful Development Certificate). No objections from the PC but planning permission is required, not an LDC.

Measday House, Bulltown Lane: conversion of garage to living accommodation. No comments from the PC and permitted by ABC.

Raffles, Canterbury Road: first floor extension and alterations. No objections from the PC and permitted by ABC.

20 Mountbatten Way: front porch extension. No objections from the PC, a decision is awaited from ABC.

Hope Farm, Bulltown Lane: internal alterations and new front porch. Supported by the PC, a decision is awaited from ABC.

53 Prospect Way: office/store in rear garden. Query raised with ABC – replied that planning permission is not required.

Tree Tops, Lees Road: rear first floor balcony. Under consideration by the Planning Committee of the PC.

The meeting was suspended to allow representations from members of the public on the application for Tree Tops. Objections regarding overlooking and blocking of the view were raised. Cllr Howard stated that objections should be made in writing to ABC – a resident stated that this had been done and requested site visits from an ABC Planning Officer and a member of the PC's Planning Committee. Cllr Mrs Tanner agreed to visit the site on a fact-finding mission and report back to the PC Planning Committee. Cllr Howard stated that applications could be refused by Planning Officers on planning matters only, eg overlooking and possible over-development of the site, therefore objections should be made on these grounds. He suggested that residents refer to the ABC website for guidance. Cllr Howard further noted that it could be requested that the application be determined by the ABC Planning Committee, if the Planning Officer were minded to Permit – the Committee can overrule a recommendation by the Officer. A representative for the applicant, an objector, and a representative of the Parish Council each have the right to speak at meetings of the Planning Committee (subject to a 3 minute time limit each).

The meeting was reconvened.

## **8.2 Solar park at Park Farm**

The Clerk reported that an environmental impact assessment is not required. Cllr Howard stated that the ABC Cabinet has approved guidance on solar park planning, based on guidelines issued in Cornwall, although it is recognised that this does not carry as much weight as a DPD. The developers have offered a meeting to discuss their proposals; this will be taken up and a joint meeting held with Smeeth PC.

## **9 Report from KALC representative**

Finance for PCs was discussed at the meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> October.

The Clerk reported that a working party comprising 4 parish councillors (chosen at the KALC Ashford Area Committee meeting), 4 borough councillors and ABC Finance officers is holding a series of meetings to discuss parish funding. In addition to cuts in govt funding already announced, it is expected that the Autumn Statement will announce additional, larger cuts. To offset the impact on ABC's finances, it is likely that the Concurrent Functions Grant will be cut next year by 50%, as against the expected reduction of 7%. However, it will continue to be paid for an additional 2 years (subject to agreement by the ABC Cabinet). It is likely that Council Tax Support Grant will be paid next year. It is possible that the street cleansing grant will be withdrawn, but allowance is made for this in the draft Budget. Capping of PC Precepts remains a possibility.

The October Parish Forum meeting was cancelled; the next Forum is on 11<sup>th</sup> December and will be a one item agenda on Finance.

## **10 Allotments project**

The Chairman stated that money for the sheds owed by the Society is likely to have been repaid by the end of 2014; allotment rent will therefore not increase next year. After the debt has been cleared rents will be reviewed; the project must be self-funding and if there is a surplus this will be ploughed back into the project. There is still space on site for more plots.

He noted that the Society rents out the small sheds and retains the receipts - this is acceptable to the PC. The rental payable by the PC to Shepherd Neame will rise from £400 to £500 a year in 2 years' time.

The PC has received assurances from Shepherd Neame that no hazardous materials were deposited during the unauthorised dumping in the garden of The Plough; the PC will continue to monitor the situation.

## **11 Local Needs Housing**

Two possible sites are being considered; a joint meeting was held with representatives from Brabourne and Smeeth PCs and Kent Planning, agent for the landowner of 1 of the sites. Discussions involved the possibility of a mixture of local needs and private housing on the site. There has been no response from the owner of the second site to an approach by the Rural Housing Enabler (Tessa O'Sullivan of ACRK).

ABC is reviewing the Local Plan and contacted developers and landowners to submit possible sites for consideration for development. Another site identified by the PCs as a possibility for Local Needs Housing has been put forward by the owner for inclusion in this process. Cllr Howard stated that if the site were not included in the revised Local Plan, it would be available for further consideration as a site for Local Needs Housing as an 'exception site'.

An additional 2 sites have been submitted (in Smeeth), Cllr Howard recommended that Brabourne PC comments on the three sites.

## **12 Open Session**

**12.1** Mr Clayton asked what %age of homes on the 1<sup>st</sup> site would be for Local Needs, given the identified need. Cllr Howard stated that there is a requirement for >35%, but other sites under consideration by the PCs would be solely for Local Needs. He noted that an alternative is that the profits from the build and sale of private housing to be given to the local authority to fund Local Needs; he agreed that it is unlikely that a developer would be this altruistic, such an initiative would more likely be from a PC, Charity or community group. Mr Clayton was advised that the joint meeting arose after an approach to the PCs from the agent, offering a mixture of Local Needs and private housing: the PCs would press for a higher %age of Local Needs. Cllr Howard noted that planning permission would not be given for private housing on 'exception sites' – these would be for Local Needs only. The Chairman stressed that the PCs are still looking for sites for Local Needs, given that the Rural Housing Needs Survey identified a need for 40.

**12.2** Mr Willis asked if posts could be erected on The Warren to prevent large vehicles driving across it when negotiating the corners.

**12.3** Fallen trees were reported in Manse Field and on the cricket pitch at Mersham le Hatch – these will be passed to KCC Highways.

## **13 Any Other Business**

**13.1** Cllr Joules reported an abandoned, untaxed vehicle on Woolpack Hill. PCSO Huckstepp will be notified.

**13.2** Cllr Spokes thanked the PC for the donation to the Smeeth and Brabourne Football Club; the Club appreciates the recognition of its efforts and is still hoping to relocate to the village. 165 children are members.

**13.3** Cllr Mayland noted that The Five Bells has been named Kent Pub of the Year; the PC will send its congratulations.

**13.4** The Chairman and Cllr Mrs Tanner attended the Remembrance Day Parade and Service. It was well attended, with 92 Scouts and Guides present. The Royal British Legion raised over £4000, significantly higher than previously.

**13.5** The PC has been asked if it would consider changing the dates of its meetings, given the increase in number of hall bookings. This was refused, as PC meetings are booked up to 18 months in advance and given councillors' other commitments.

## **14 Motion to exclude the public**

**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 15, namely Distribution of Fordred's Charity payments.**

**15 Fordred's Charity Payments**

**Resolved:**

**That Cllr Mrs Bewick distributes the payments as agreed.**

**16 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> January 2014 at 7.00pm, in Brabourne Village Hall,

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.

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**Community Warden's Report**

Since my last report the village continues to be quiet and crime free so far as I 'am aware and even Halloween and Guy Fawkes night seem to have passed off without incident. The only complaints I have received were regarding young children riding their bikes around the bungalows in Calland and some teenagers being a bit noisy in the area behind the estate agents shop, both which occurred during half term holidays and I have not been informed of any continuance of this sort.

We appear to have been comparatively fortunate in the amount of damage sustained during the storm and no major disruption was caused to transport or power links.

Graham Kingston

**PCSO's Report**

There has been no reported antisocial behaviour in the village during October. There has been one reported crime in the village for the month of October. This was in relation to a burglary at the Orpins store on Lees Road. It appears that the offenders have forced the door using a crowbar and have entered the shop and taken cigarettes from behind the counter. Kent Police are currently investigating the crime and have some lines of enquiry to follow at this stage.

I would just like to make you aware that it is getting close to Christmas and at this time of the year we often see a rise in burglaries. This is because people are buying Christmas presents and thieves see this as an opportunity to steal high value items, so please be aware over the festive period and make sure that your homes are secure when you are not at home. Please be aware that it is also the time of the year where we see a rise in fuel thefts in rural locations so please be vigilant.

I would also like to make you aware that in the county as a whole we have seen an increase in phone scams. The Offenders are ringing elderly and vulnerable people claiming to be their bank or the police and asking for card details and pin numbers. I would just like to say that the Kent Police and your banks would not ring you asking for your details or your pin number so please do be aware and don't pass your details to anyone. If anyone has any queries or problems please feel free to contact me, my Email address is [andrew.huckstep@Kent.pnn.police.uk](mailto:andrew.huckstep@Kent.pnn.police.uk)

Police Contact Points for November

Aldington Village Hall on Wednesday 20th Nov from 2pm to 3pm

Co-op layby, Wye High Street on Friday 6th December from 2pm to 3pm.

I will also be holding a surgery at Brabourne Village at 6pm for an hour on the 18<sup>th</sup> of November before the Brabourne Parish Council meeting so please come and see me there if you have any queries.

PCSO Andrew Huckstepp 58551

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