

BRABOURNE PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council
Held at 7.00pm on Monday 19th January 2015
At Brabourne Village Hall

1. Present

Cllr Hickmott (Chairman), Cllr Mrs Young, Cllr Mrs Tanner, Cllrs Joules and Spokes, and Mrs Wood (Clerk). Cllr Howard (ward member) and six members of the public attended.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs Bewick and Cllr Mayland (prior commitments), Cllr Miss Martin (ward member), Mr Graham Kingston (Community Warden) and PCSO Huckstepp.

3. Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were received.

4. Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 24th November be approved and confirmed as a true record.

5. Matters Arising

5.1 Roads and Footways

5.1.1 Smeeth crossroads. Parking by HGVs in the layby was reported which is a safety hazard because sightlines are obscured. KCC Highways have refused a request from Smeeth Parish Council to close this layby. Cllr Howard suggested that Cllr Wickham be asked to include it in the review of lorry parking in the borough. Safety measures implemented by Highways were thought to be inadequate and will be monitored, but action is based on accident statistics, being reactive not proactive. It was noted that the Parish Councils have been asking for action for many years. Lorry parking was acknowledged to be a county-wide problem, the Borough and County Councils are aware and it has been raised in the House of Commons by Sir Hugh Robertson (MP for Faversham). A series of lorry parks will be put in to be followed by enforcement. It was suggested that parking in this and the layby at the Ridgeway could be construed as obstruction, but HGV parking could be prevented by, eg the placing of dragon's teeth. Signs prohibiting overnight parking by HGVs are in place in laybys at Sellindge and Hothfield, the latter funded by the ward member for Downs West. These are not enforceable but have a deterrent effect; Cllr Howard will pursue. Increased parking by HGVs at the airport café was noted, but the new activity does not have planning permission. Cllr Howard stated that if a planning application is submitted to Shepway District Council he will submit supporting comments. It was suggested that additional vehicles attracted to the café park in the parish laybys when the café car park is full.

5.1.2 Potholes near Calland were reported but found to be on private land. The following potholes will be reported to KCC Highways: in Lees Road (near Victory Cottage), Plain Road (near the junction with Granary Court Road), Granary Court Road and Bircholt Lane.

5.2 Village caretaker scheme The Borough Council is renegotiating contracts; Saxon Shore is to be the 'guinea pig' for the next phase of the scheme which will be discussed at the Parish Forum on 28th January. Meetings have been held with the Borough Council and representatives from the cluster.

5.3 Local Needs Housing (LNH) The outcome of the Local Plan review is awaited. Cllr Howard had been asked if Parish Councils would be asked to confirm the local connection of applicants for LNH or affordable housing, as with the procedure for homes provided by the English Rural Housing Association. He stated that applicants to the Borough Council have to prove their connection, often seeking the help of the Parish Council to do so, but this will be raised with Giles Holloway (Ashford Borough Council).

6. Presentation of the Community Led Plan to the Parish Council

Cllr Michael Hinchliffe (Smeeth Parish Council and secretary of the Steering Group of the Community Led Plan) briefed the Parish Council on the production and aims of the Plan. This will be considered for adoption at the next meeting of the Parish Council. The draft Plan has been circulated; any comments on

the Plan should be sent to the Clerk who will forward them to the Steering Group, and a meeting arranged to discuss the Plan if required before the next Parish Council meeting.

When the Plan has been accepted by the Parish Council it will be presented to residents at a meeting in Scout HQ on 21st April. If accepted the Parish Council will move to deliver the objectives in the Plan. A good response was reported from the business community, this was welcomed.

The Steering Group was congratulated on the Plan.

7. Reports from Community Warden and PCSO

Mr Kingston report is attached.

There was no report in the PCSO's absence.

8. Financial Report

8.1 To agree payments in accordance with the Budget

The Chairman reported that new salary scales have been introduced by NALC effective from 1st January 2015, with a one-off non-consolidated payment of £100 (pro rata).

Resolved:

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

Payments

Details	£
D Ansley (salary) (22.5 hrs @ £6.50hr)	146.25
SLCC (annual subscription)	51.94
S Wood (expense [stationery + refuse sacks])	57.68
S Wood (gross salary December)	489.49
S Wood (gross salary January) (new salary scale)	500.28
S Wood (non-consolidated one-off payment)	27.78

Receipts

Details	£
Lloyds Bank interest	1.21
Allotment rentals	1120.00
VAT refund	374.60

Balance £ 23682.87 (cheque and deposit account)

£ 668.00 (No. 2 account for CLP and EP group)

8.2 To consider a request for a donation to Ashford Counselling Service

Cllr Spokes noted that the Parish Council had a policy of supporting services that were of benefit to the parish. It was agreed that the request be refused, but that it be publicised in the parish magazine and on the website.

9. Planning Committee report

Planning applications received

No applications have been received since the last Parish Council meeting; Cllr Hickmott (Chairman, Planning Committee) reported on six older planning applications:

6 Bircholt Forstal Two storey side and rear extension. The Parish Council objected to the application which was referred to the Borough Council Planning Committee for determination. The Committee permitted the application.

21 Knatchbull Way Single storey side/rear extension. The Parish Council had no objections to the application which was permitted by the Borough Council.

Church Farmhouse, The Street Rebuild conservatory, side and rear extensions, insertion of new windows to front elevation. The Parish Council had no objections to the application, and a decision is awaited from the Borough Council.

PHR Farms, Bircholt Lane Extension to agricultural building. The Parish Council had no objections to the application which was permitted by the Borough Council.

The Alders, Weekes Lane This has been raised with the Ashford Borough Council Cabinet Member for Planning, who had said that money from the New Homes Bonus would be used for enforcement.

Little Foord, Bulltown Lane Demolition of outbuilding and porch and erection of single storey rear extension. The appeal against the refusal was dismissed.

Pemsey Farm, Lees Road Raise low branches over access drive on boundary between Pemsey Farm and The Plough Inn The Parish Council supported the application and consent was granted by the Borough Council.

10. Report from KALC representative

The Committee met on 19th November at which a presentation was given by Chief Inspector Fox, Station Commander Ashford Police. The next meeting is on 21st January and the apparent disregard of Parish Council comments by the Planning Department on Ashford Borough Council is on the agenda.

11. Allotments project

Renewal payments have been received from most plot holders. Works to trees overhanging power lines on the access to the allotments are to be carried out by the owners of Pemsey Farm; members of the Allotment Society have stated that they should not be asked to bear the cost of any additional tree surgery.

12. Proposal to put a footpath on the village green

The Chairman reported that this had been put forward by Mr Ruck, and the meeting was suspended to allow Mr Ruck to describe the proposal.

Mr Ruck stated that a footpath is needed on the grounds of improved safety, better access to the bus stop, and included a dropped kerb and hardstanding at the bus stop. Pedestrians walk along Bridge Road, which has no pavement, is unlit and with a number of parked cars, forcing pedestrians out into the road or walking with their back to oncoming traffic. The area could be further improved by putting benches on the path. The existing footpath opposite Orpins Stores should be extended to link with the proposed footpath on the village green.

The Chairman welcomed the proposal but costs would be prohibitive: the path would have to be dug out, leveled, type 1 planings put in, edging and tarmaced. This had been estimated at £30,000 and does not include lighting. Mr Ruck suggested that grants be sought and residents may be willing to contribute; other surfaces should be considered to reduce costs. He asked if funding would be available from Highways, but Cllr Howard while supporting the proposal thought this unlikely.

The meeting was reconvened. Councillors supported the proposal and the Clerk will check any insurance liability arising, possible costs and funding. An item will be placed in Parish News seeking residents' views. Cllr Howard suggested that any application for grants include the beautification of the green and increased use by the installation of benches.

The meeting was suspended to allow discussion of the poor state of repair on Bridge Road. This had been reported to Highways, and it was felt that surface water run off from the road was having an adverse effect on the green. Cllr Spokes stated that this was less of a problem than diverting the water elsewhere with possible consequences for householders. Mr Clayton stated that The Plough Inn had suffered three incidents of flooding, and Highways had only put in drainage after the brewery intervened; he felt that this indicated that high-level involvement was needed to bring about any such remediation.

The meeting was reconvened.

13. Consultation on proposed housing at Calland, Smeeth

The Chairman reported that the proposed development was a Borough Council initiative and therefore not included in the site submissions. Cllr Howard advised that funding from the Homes and Communities Agency for the Housing Dept to build LNH and affordable housing had been more than expected; this was being used to fund the Calland development. It was noted that the survey had been carried out during working hours, and therefore many residents had been unable to take part; Cllr Howard stated that the information leaflet delivered to homes in the area had given contact details and encouraged those who had missed the survey to participate. This will be further discussed at the next Parish Council meeting.

14. Flooding at Manse Field and adequacy of the pumping station at Bog Farm

Southern Water has surveyed the main sewer and cleaned it; this is being monitored, particularly given the recent heavy rain, and the Parish Council will be kept updated. Mr Vink has confirmed that Southern

Water is a consultee where there will be a heavy discharge into the sewer from any development. Southern Water had also erroneously stated that it was unlikely that both pumps would fail simultaneously. Cllr Martin is actively pursuing remedial action, following her achievements in Bromley Street Green.

15. Correspondence

15.1 Invitation to the Lord Lieutenant's Annual Civic Service.

16. Open Session

The meeting was suspended to allow members of the public present to raise matters of concern with the Council.

16.1 In answer to a question from Mr Willis, the Chairman confirmed that damage to the village green will be made good after completion of the construction works at Manse Field. Mr Willis' request that the road be widened was refused because it would encroach on the green. The Chairman has photographs to document the damage.

The meeting was reconvened.

17. Any Other Business

17.1 Information from the Society for Local Council Clerks: electronic distribution of the summons to the meeting will become lawful from 30th January, subject to the consent of councillors, who may withdraw their consent at any time. This will be discussed at the next meeting of the Parish Council.

17.2 Cllr Spokes reported that an application by the Playing Field Association to the Borough Council for a grant had been successful, and £10,000 awarded. This and grants from the ward member and Parish Councils had enabled installation of rabbit-proof fencing. An application is to be submitted to another funder for the rest of the funding, approx £80,000. Cllr Spokes noted that if successful the works would be carried out during the summer months, which would impact on the fete. It was suggested that it be moved to the village green, although it was acknowledged that more helpers would be needed and parking may be an issue. There was general agreement that the green is a suitable site for the fete given its central location; this may lead to greater participation, would encourage use of the pubs and publicise local businesses. Logistical problems such as lack of a power supply could be overcome by use of generators, and stall holders could be asked to provide their own equipment. Cllr Howard suggested that if the fete is held on the green add-on events could be organised, such as a garden safari. Mr Clayton and Cllr Mrs Young were asked to update Mrs Godfrey (Fete Committee chairman) regarding the playing field and possible use of the green. The Parish Council would welcome a request from the Fete Committee to use the green.

17.3 Cllr Howard invited applications for member grants because funding is still available. The application by the Hall Committee for £500 towards kitchen improvements has been approved.

18. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday, 16th March 2015 immediately after the Annual Parish Meeting, which begins at 7.00pm, in Brabourne Village Hall.

19. 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 20, namely discussion of the Citizenship Award.

20. Citizenship Award

Resolved:

That the Award be presented at the Annual Parish Meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm.

Community Warden's report

Firstly I would like to wish everyone a happy and prosperous New Year.

I have been made aware by the Police of a burglary at a house in Lees Road, Brabourne Lees and have been and offered support and crime prevention advice. I was also informed of a number of thefts at Orpins about which I have liaised with the Police.

There has also been some damage caused at the Scout Hall site, some historic to the Hall which appears to be caused by air gun pellets, but some recently to the paper recycling skip which is parked in the car park on a weekly basis.

I was asked to look at a tractor parked in Canterbury Road, Brabourne as to the possible dangerous parking issue, however since the request the tractor causing concern has not parked there and the small tractor which is there is off the road and parked in the proper direction.

KCC Highways have been quite busy around the area working on the A20 footpath and clearing Smeeth Pond and culvert in Church Road, Smeeth with a view to preventing last year's road flooding problems. They have also put in some wooden post to stop large vehicles mounting the pavement. I would like to gather people's opinions on what can be done to clear rubbish and improve the look of the area.

I like others have notice that HGVs are parking regularly on what was the bus stop A20 Smeeth Crossing overnight which can only make the safety worse.

Just before Christmas I reported to ABC Street Sense a dumped settee on Station Road Smeeth which was swiftly removed.

I have been to visit some residents at Sandy Place, Smeeth regarding ongoing parking and anti-social behaviour issues, these all appear to be previously reported issues except some concerns over anti-social behaviour and I have advised residents to report these issues to the police as and when they occur.

I have also had meetings with the Heads of both Brabourne and Smeeth Primary Schools and have arranged a meeting with a representative of the Caldecott foundation regarding the Community Led Plan and Emergency Plan in order to keep them abreast of the current situation and to find out if we could assist them with any resilience planning.

Graham Kingston