

BRABOURNE PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council
Held at 7.00pm on Monday 22nd September 2014
At Brabourne Village Hall

1. Present

Cllr Hickmott (Chairman), Cllr Mrs Young, Cllr Mrs Tanner (who arrived during Item 12), Cllrs Joules and Mayland, and Mrs Wood (Clerk). Mr Graham Kingston (Community Warden) and five members of the public attended.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs Bewick and Cllr Spokes (prior commitments), Cllr Miss Martin and Cllr Howard (ward members), and PCSO Huckstepp.

3. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Joules (OSI) Item 8: planning application 14/01173/AS, PHR Farms.

4. Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 28th July be approved and confirmed as a true record.

5. Matters Arising

5.1 Roads and Footways

5.1.1 Smeeth crossroads. The Parish Council's recommendation that the speed limit be reduced has been passed to KCC Highways, with the support of Smeeth Parish Council. It was noted that some of the hedges at the junction have been cut, but not those on the Sellidge side. It was noted that the 40mph speed limit sign is misaligned, this will be reported to KCC Highways. The Chairman felt that the main problem is traffic emerging on to the A20. The recent fatal accident on the A20 at Mersham adds weight to the call for a lower speed limit, and it was suggested that a 50mph limit be introduced, starting at Quarrington Lane and extending beyond Smeeth crossroads. This will be passed to KCC Highways. The Chairman acknowledged that other suggested traffic calming methods, viz a roundabout or traffic lights, will not be introduced therefore other mitigating measures are needed.

5.1.2 Iden Corner. Cllr Mayland reported that the drainage channels have been cleared.

5.1.3 A temporary footpath diversion order has been made for the duration of the building works at Manse Field.

5.2 Village handyman scheme Ashford Borough Council is currently renegotiating contracts for services; this should be completed later in the year, after which information on funding for services that might be taken over under the handyman scheme will be made available. The Borough Council has asked for a list of services that the Brabourne, Smeeth, Mersham and Brook cluster wishes to take over. This will be discussed at a meeting being arranged for the week beginning 29th September.

5.3 Local Needs Housing (LNH) No progress to report. It is thought that landowners are awaiting the publication in December of the draft Local Plan, in which possible sites for development will be shortlisted. Any sites not included would not be given permission for market housing, and the landowners may therefore be more willing to consider making them available for LNH.

5.4 Community Led Plan and Emergency Plan Draft Plans have been circulated to the Steering Group, and will be discussed at a meeting on 23rd September.

5.5 Parish Council noticeboard This has been ordered and is due for delivery on 23rd September. The Chairman reported that Smeeth Parish Council has donated £600 towards the cost, plus a £250 grant it had received from from Cllr Howard – this was welcomed. Mr Young has kindly offered to put up the noticeboard on The Warren, near the junction with Lees Road. A notice will be placed on the old noticeboard on the shop wall drawing residents' attention to the new noticeboard.

5.6 Brabourne school governor Cllr Mayland advised that although he had stepped down as a governor, no vacancy had arisen because the number of governors had been reduced following restructuring.

6. Reports from Community Warden and PCSO

Mr Kingston reported that he is now back full time after a period of sick leave. The Street, East Brabourne has reopened on completion of the road repairs. Problems arising from overgrown hedges had been reported in Stone Hill and Lees Road. Mr Kingston contacted the occupier of the Lees Road property, after which the hedge was cut back.

The Clerk reported that KCC Highways have been asked to contact the Stone Hill resident, following an accident caused by a vehicle pulling out to avoid the overgrown hedge. A wing mirror was lost in the collision.

Mr Kingston noted that brambles are overhanging the highway from a property in Lees Road, but the resident is ill and therefore unable to address the situation; Mr Kingston is hoping to arrange help.

Mr Kingston reported that he and PCSO Huckstepp had been asked by Smeeth Parish Council to monitor agricultural vehicle movements and their driver behaviour, but with the end of harvest and silage cutting, movements had been significantly reduced.

A theft from a property in Pilgrims Way was reported.

Tesco, Crookfoot, has opened a Community Room, available free of charge to local groups and charities.

Mr Kingston was thanked for his report.

PCSO Huckstepp's report is attached.

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	£
S Wood (gross salary August)	489.49
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Harmer and Sons	678.00
D Ansley (salary) (27 hrs @ £6.31/hr)	170.37
PKF Littlejohn (audit fee)	120.00
S Wood (expenses) *	122.03
P Clayton (fete expenses [from ABC grant to the Fete Committee])	101.74

Receipts

Details	£
Lloyds Bank interest	1.20
Allotment rental	15.00
Smeeth Parish Council (donation to noticeboard)	850.00

Balance £ 20672.28 (cheque and deposit account)
£ 668.00 (No. 2 account for CLP and EP group)

The Clerk reported that the external auditors have approved the Annual Return.

7.2 To consider Keith Tait's report of work needed for trees on The Warren

The Chairman stated that trees on The Warren should be inspected every three years, and presented Mr Tait's report. This recommended that a diseased copper beech be felled, and a replacement planted. Minor remedial works were recommended for other trees on site.

The Clerk is to seek Mr Tait's advice as to when the copper beech should be felled, and suggestions as to a replacement.

It was proposed that Mr Tait's report be accepted.

Resolved:

That the Parish Council accepts Mr Tait's report of works needed for trees on The Warren.

7.3 To consider quotes for grass cutting at the village hall

The Chairman reported that the hall is sited on land leased from Brabourne Estates, and is bounded by Ashford Borough Council land. The Borough Council has been mowing all the grass around the hall but has now ascertained that some of this is not Borough Council-owned land and will, therefore, cease mowing the grass on the hall land and cutting the boundary hedge. The Hall Committee has indicated that it is unable to meet these costs. The Clerk presented quotes from Landscape Services and Harmer & Sons for mowing and hedge cutting. Landscape Services quoted mowing £140 (12 cuts), hedge cutting £320. Harmer & Sons quoted mowing £240 (12 cuts), hedge cutting £80. The Chairman stated that the costs would have to be met either by the Parish Council or the Hall Committee, if the latter hire charges may need to be increased. Cllr Mayland suggested that the costs be split between the hall and Parish Council. It was noted that hire charges have recently been increased, and paying for grass cutting would lead to reduced maintenance elsewhere in the hall. It was proposed that the quote from Landscape Services be accepted for mowing, and that they be invited to match the Harmer quote for hedge cutting. It was further proposed that Smeeth Parish Council be asked to contribute towards the costs, given that it is the Brabourne and Smeeth Village hall.

Resolved:

That the quote from Landscape Services be accepted for mowing and that they be invited to match the Harmer & Sons quote of £80 for hedge cutting.

Resolved:

That the quote from Harmer & Sons for hedge cutting be accepted if Landscape Services cannot reduce their quote to match that from Harmer & Sons.

Resolved:

That Smeeth Parish Council be asked to contribute to the costs of mowing and hedge cutting at the hall.

The Clerk will notify the Hall Committee chairman.

7.4 To agree payment of the Parish Council's contribution for the handheld radios and licence

The Chairman reported that the radios are for use by the Emergency Plan Committee and at the fete. The Parish Councils had each pledged a contribution of £200. Paid invoices for the licence (£75) and radios (£222) were presented. It was proposed that the Parish Council meet the whole cost of both and the contribution agreed by Smeeth Parish Council be paid to Brabourne Parish Council.

Resolved:

That Brabourne Parish Council pays the full cost of £75 to Mr Peter Clayton for the radio licence and £222 to Kent PA Hire for the handheld radios.

7.5 No parking signs for The Warren

It was reported that some of the contractors working at Manse Field had been parking on The Warren, but had moved their vehicles when asked to do so. It was noted that the signs would not be enforceable but the situation may improve on completion of the building works. The Chairman asked for information on the rate of occurrence, given that public funds would be involved. Cllr Mayland recommended that the situation be monitored after completion, and the request for the signs then reviewed. Mr Kingston offered to speak to the contractors re parking, this was welcomed.

8. Planning Committee report

8.1 Planning applications received

Cllr Hickmott (Chairman, Planning Committee) reported on one planning application, with the following recommendation.

Riverside, Pound Lane: Erection of single storey side and rear extensions and roof extension with dormer windows (revised scheme). Object on the grounds of massing and the proposed roof height would be visually intrusive.

Resolved:

That the Parish Council accepts the recommendation of the Planning Committee.

Two planning applications were brought to the meeting for discussion.

Byways, Hampton Lane: Revision of previously approved erection of 3 bay car barn.

Resolved:

That the Parish Council has no objections to the application.

PHR Farms, Bircholt Lane: Extension to agricultural building.

Resolved:

That the Parish Council has no objections to the application.

Of older applications, the following applications were permitted:

Raffles, Canterbury Road; St Cyriac, The Street; Forge Stables, Canterbury Road.

An application for a Lawful Development Certificate for Hillside, Weekes Lane was refused but resubmitted after reducing the size of the stable block. It is unclear what changes have been made because the same drawings accompanied the application.

The Alders, Weekes Lane: Cllr Howard advised pre-meeting that the paperwork has been completed and the Borough Council is moving to enforcement.

Five Bells: It is unclear if planning permission has been given for the permanent structures erected in the garden. The Planning Dept has been asked to investigate.

9 Report from KALC representative

The next meeting is on 24th September at which Damian Green MP will give a short talk on Localism.

10 Allotments project

The Chairman has effected further repairs to the gate. Neither Pemsey Farm nor Shepherd Neame has offered a contribution towards the cost of the tree works along the access. The Chairman stated that the cost would, therefore, have to be borne by allotment holders through plot rents; this reduces the likelihood of an early reduction in rents.

11 Correspondence

11.1 Playing Field Association. The Parish Council has been asked to write in support of the improvements' project. This was agreed.

11.2 Village Hall Committee. The Parish Council has been asked to write in support of the project to refurbish the kitchen, and to consider making a financial contribution towards the costs. The former was agreed and the latter will be discussed at the next meeting.

12 Open Session

12.1 Mr Clayton reported that the Canterbury Road street nameplate has fallen off. KCC will be asked to replace it.

12.2 Mr Willis reported that bins are not being emptied at Manse Field, citing anecdotal evidence that the drivers had been instructed not to drive down Manse Field. This will be taken up with the Borough Council.

12.3 Mr Willis felt that cars are parking too close to the junction in Prospect Way and The Warren.

12.4 Overhanging branches to the rear of Prospect Way were reported by Mr Willis at the July meeting. PCSO Huckstepp visited the site and did not think any action was necessary at present.

12.5 Mr Marsh asked if permission had been given for the dropped kerb recently installed near Orpins Stores, and was advised that it had been. It is unknown if the new red brick paving (replacing old paving) has or requires permission. This will be taken up with KCC Highways.

12.6 Mr Marsh stated that when work was carried out to clear the drains at Iden Corner there was no notification of the road closure, and the diversion was unsuitable for agricultural vehicles. The Clerk reported that the Parish Council had not been informed of the closure.

12.7 Church Road, Smeeth was closed for several days while drains were cleared, but there had been no apparent action. The road has reopened.

12.8 Mr Marsh queried the siting of 2 telephone cabinets at the junction of Stone Hill and Granary Court Road, as they impede sightlines. He asked who had given permission for the location and why there had been no consultation.

13 Any Other Business

13.1 Cllr Herrick (Chairman, Smeeth Parish Council) will lay the wreath on behalf of the Parish Councils at the Remembrance Day Service.

13.2 Distribution of Fordred's Charity payments will be discussed at the next meeting; Councillors were asked to bring names to the meeting.

13.3 Smeeth Parish Council has asked for a salt bin opposite John Childs Garage and the Clerk had been asked to obtain costings. It was noted that this is in Brabourne and the Parish Council will apply for a bin from KCC Highways in the next round.

13.4 Cllr Mrs Young reported a missed recycling collection from properties at The Warren.

13.5 Cllr Mayland reported that not all of the stones on the verge in The Street near Church Farmhouse have been removed.

14 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday, 24th November 2014 at 7.00pm, in Brabourne Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm.

PCSO's Report

This is the police report for Brabourne Parish Council's September meeting.

There have been two recorded crimes in the village in the last two months.

The first was in relation to a theft from a motor vehicle parked in Bridge Road. The vehicle was left in a layby on Bridge Road overnight and also had some items belonging to the owner inside. When the owner returned their vehicle was no longer there. The vehicle was later found burnt out.

The second was in relation to Criminal Damage. It would appear that a 4x4 type vehicle was driving along a byway in the village when the landowner arrived. The landowner spotted that there were two men in the vehicle and one of them had a rifle and appeared to be aiming it. In the process of making off they have also damaged a fence post.

We have also seen a rise recently in break-ins to small businesses in rural areas and in particular pubs. As a result we have conducted an operation throughout the rural villages. In Brabourne we visited the coffee morning at the Baptist Church and handed out some crime prevention advice to some of the local residents and also handed out some personal intruder alarms at the coffee morning with our colleagues from the Council. The aim was to make residents aware that as we are getting close to winter we often see a rise in heating oil thefts so we also gave out some advice on how to increase their security around their oil tanks.

All in all it has been a very good couple of months with very few incidents to report.

I will again be holding a surgery at the Orpins Store in the village. So if there are any questions or concerns that anyone wishes to discuss with me they are more than welcome to come and see me and I will endeavour to help.

I will be there next on 16th October between 4 and 4.30pm

Alternatively you can email me on 58551@kent.pnn.police.uk

PCSO Andrew Huckstepp 58551