

**BRABOURNE PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council**  
**Held at 7.00pm on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2019**  
**at Brabourne Village Hall**

**1. Present**

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

**2. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs Bewick (prior commitment), Peter Clayton and George Taylor.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Spokes: planning application 19/00956/AS (Other Significant Interest as a relative of the applicant).

**4. Minutes**

**Resolved:**

**That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2019 be approved and confirmed as a true record.**

**5. Matters Arising**

**5.1 Roads and Footways**

**5.1.1** Reduction in speed limit in The Street, East Brabourne: Cllr Clair Bell has agreed to fund the traffic speed survey subject to reasons for the request.

**5.2 Village caretaker scheme** The scheme now has its own bank account. The caretaker will be asked to cut back vegetation obscuring the school sign in Canterbury Road and the 30mph sign on The Ridgeway, Smeeth.

**5.3 Community Led Plan Group (CLP)** The meeting was suspended and Michael Hinchliffe invited to give a report. Michael Hinchliffe advised that some of the outdoor gym equipment has been installed on the green; the supplier gave the wrong dimensions for the concrete pads – the fault is being rectified. On completion the site will be covered in Astroturf to maintain the rural appearance. After a full safety inspection has been carried out ownership of the gym will be passed to the Parish Council; maintenance will be carried out by the village caretaker, who will be given the maintenance manual. The next project is a footpath across the village green; this will be built to KCC standards, which will then adopt the footpath. The specification means that it will have to be installed by a professional, but a suitably qualified resident has offered to carry out the works at cost (~£20,000). The basketball hoop is now owned by the Playing Fields Association (PFA). Complaints of stray balls landing in gardens will be addressed by installation of angled netting by Jacksons Fencing, which will deflect balls back onto the court. Cllr Howard offered a ward member community grant towards the cost and recommended that the top be painted green to blend in with the hedge, noting the difficulty of rationalising the issues of adding netting but reducing visual intrusion of the poles and netting. Future projects include smartening –up the village lamp posts, which will no longer be painted by KCC, and provision of a community shelter. The meeting was reconvened.

**6. Borough councillor's report**

Cllr Howard reported that he is now the Deputy Cabinet member for the Environment. He noted that Council business has been delayed somewhat because of the large number of new councillors elected in May, necessitating training and the establishing of new relationships. A by-election will be held on July 18<sup>th</sup>, following the sudden and unexpected death of Stephen Dehnel, councillor for Downs North. The Conservative majority on the borough council was reduced after the May elections, but remains the ruling group. Roles have been allocated to Conservative councillors in this capacity, but because there are fewer Conservative councillors, each has to assume more roles.

Otterpool: Cllr Howard stated that he is working with Paul Bartlett (Mersham ward member) and is in regular contact with Shepway DC to ensure that the A20 corridor parishes' concerns are taken into account. A meeting has been arranged by Aldington Parish Council on 17<sup>th</sup> July in the Ecocentre at which representatives from Shepway will be present. It was noted that neither Brabourne nor Smeeth Parish Councils have been invited to the meeting; the Clerk to follow-up and circulate the information.

The 'Big Eight' projects will shortly be announced.

Andrews Garage: Cllr Howard reported that he has discussed the application with the case officer. The decision is awaited; it is thought some of the concerns have been addressed but some issues are still under discussion, eg design and height.

Cllr Howard advised that he is chairing a committee on climate change, a 'green' strategy is in preparation. KCC aims to be carbon neutral by 2050.

The Chairman noted that The Plough Inn has been removed from the List of Assets of Community Value, but the Parish Council had not been notified that an appeal had been submitted nor invited either to attend the appeal hearing or submit further comments/submissions. The PC is aggrieved by these actions. Cllr Howard will ascertain if due process has been followed. Cllr Harbottle voiced concerns that only one party had been given the opportunity to give evidence at the appeal; Cllr Howard agreed and asked if the new evidence had been verified.

## 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.**

Details	£
S Wood	536.90
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R Harvey Drainage Ltd (allotments)	36.00
Westwell Parish Council (training)	12.00
Information Commissioner (GDPR subscription)	40.00
D Ansley (24 hours @ £8.21/hour)	197.04

### Receipts

Details	£
Lloyds Bank interest	0.36

Balance £ 28035.96 (cheque and deposit accounts)

- 7.2 To agree payment of the radio licence** The Chairman advised that this had previously been met by Peter Clayton, who had asked that responsibility for the licence be taken over by the Parish Councils given that they owned the equipment. It was proposed that the £75 fee for the radio licence be met by the Parish Councils, Smeeth Parish Council being asked to contribute 50% of the cost.

**Resolved:**

**That the £75 fee for the radio licence be met by the Parish Councils, Smeeth Parish Council being asked to contribute 50% of the cost.**

## 8. Election of an additional representative to the Planning Committee

The Chairman noted that there are three councillors on the Planning Committee which would, therefore, be inquorate if a councillor declared an interest in a planning application. It was proposed that Cllr Harbottle be elected to the Planning Committee.

**Resolved:**

**That Cllr Harbottle be elected to the Planning Committee.**

## 9. Planning report

**9.1 Application to register Hospital Field as a village green** KCC informed the Clerk that the inspector hoped to submit her report by the end of June, but it has not yet been received.

### 9.2 Planning Committee report

Approved by ABC:

18/01404/AS Applegarth, The Street, East Brabourne

19/00546/AS Land to the rear of The Plough Inn

19/00607/AS 2 Hill View Cottage, The Street, East Brabourne (Listed Building Consent)

19/00666/AS Fords Water Farm, West Brabourne

Lawful Development Certificate granted:

19/00699/AS East Brabourne House, The Street, East Brabourne

Decisions awaited:

18/01454/AS Andrews Garage, Plain Road The Parish Council objected to the application

19/00547/AS Land NW of Hampton Farm The Parish Council supported the application

Y19/0257/FH Otterpool Park The Parish Council objected to the application

### **9.3 19/00956/AS 3 Mountbatten Way, Brabourne Lees**

Rear single storey extension with garage roof amendments

It was stated that the design is of high quality and it was proposed that the application be supported.

A vote was taken; having declared an interest Cllr Spokes abstained.

**Resolved:**

**That the planning application be supported.**

**9.4 Neighbourhood Plan (NP)** The Chairman advised that this had also been raised at the meeting of Smeeth Parish Council. Wye and Pluckley Parish Councils have completed their NPs; seven parishes are in the process of preparing an NP – Egerton, Bethersden, Boughton Aluph and Eastwell, Charing, Hothfield, Tenterden, Rolvenden. The Chairman suggested that an NP for Brabourne should be joint with Smeeth; the borough council has advised that this is feasible and there are precedents elsewhere. A meeting will be held with the Chairmen of Brabourne and Smeeth Parish Councils, the Clerk and Samuel Terry (ABC) to discuss the process. Cllr Howard noted that an NP has to be in compliance with the Local Plan, and Wye developed its NP arising from concerns from the development plans put forward by Imperial College. He advised that, on completion, the NP will have to be put to a local referendum and a given percentage vote in favour to demonstrate community support. The process will likely take two years or more, and Cllr Howard suggested that consideration should be given at an early stage to inviting Mersham Parish Council to participate with Brabourne and Smeeth Parish Councils. Cllr Spokes disagreed because this may complicate the process and the aims of the parishes may be different, citing concerns re J10A on the M20. Cllr Howard replied that if Mersham were involved it would better protect the parishes to the west from expansion from Ashford, and the NP will protect the parishes from expansion to the east from Otterpool.

## **10. Local Needs Housing (LNH)**

The Rural Housing Enabler (Tessa O’Sullivan, Action with Communities in Rural Kent), will assist when possible sites have been identified. The Clerk will circulate notes on the previous site survey. Cllr Howard suggested that what he called the ‘Fortescue extension’, which is assumed to be adjoining Fortescue Place, be added, after which the road beyond could be closed to prevent further development. The Clerk advised that LNH was discussed at Smeeth Parish Council, which is willing to participate in a joint desk-top survey to identify possible sites. Cllr Howard noted that the Sandpit Preservation Society has proposed building 3 or 4 houses on part of the site; it was noted that this is outside the village confines and not on a bus route, but is within walking distance of a bus stop. Cllr Joules asked if a site could be resubmitted if it had previously been put forward but refused; Cllr Howard replied that it could but may be refused for the same reasons.

## **11. KALC report**

The Station Commander, Ashford Police, now attends meetings and has asked to be notified of any concerns. The committee meets on 24<sup>th</sup> July and the agenda includes ‘Pre-application planning discussions with Parish Councils’ and ‘Broadband provision in rural areas’. Poor broadband provision was reported in many parts of the parish, eg Fiddling Lane. Cllr Harbottle advised that Stowting is looking into a community fibre partnership scheme. Cllr Howard noted that this was discussed at Hastingleigh, because the line delivering fibre to Elmstead goes through Hastingleigh but does not benefit Hastingleigh. Cllr Harbottle stated that the funding for the community fibre partnership scheme has been increased, but inclusion is subject to criteria.

## **12. Allotments project**

All plots are taken and there is now a waiting list. The annual inspection is due to be carried out by the Chairman and Clerk. The Chairman advised that the Allotment Society now has its own Facebook page. The additional water tap and dip tanks have been provided.

## **13. Registration of land at the village hall as a village green**

The Borough Council has been asked if it would be willing to give the land it owns at the village hall to the Parish Council. A reply is awaited, but Cllr Howard noted that this is in the remit of the Environment Committee [of which he is the Deputy Cabinet member], which is carrying out a review of the borough council's ownership of small parcels of land.

#### **14. Communication: proposed joint working group with Smeeth Parish Council**

The Chairman noted that communication of Parish Council and parish matters has been raised previously and was discussed at the Smeeth Parish Council meeting, in light of the poor attendance at the joint meeting of the Annual Parish Meeting. It was proposed that a small working group from both Parish Councils be set up to look at ways of disseminating information, eg the newsletter distributed by Wye Parish Council. Cllr Mrs Tanner stated that the Playing Field Association AGM was also poorly attended, but noted that while many made full use of social media, not everyone has access and some are against its use. Cllr Spokes noted that even when activities and opportunities are widely promoted, people will choose not to attend; he suggested an online live Q&A session at regular intervals with a councillor. Cllr Mrs Tanner said that there is an expectation that all households in the village should be leafleted before events. Cllr Howard stressed the need to update social media regularly. Apathy was regretted. The Chairman advised that current means of communication are the parish website, Parish News, Roundabout and the village Facebook pages; the Parish Council can be contacted via the website, but few messages are received. Cllr Mrs Tanner commented on the large number of village Facebook pages, noting that they are not linked. The Chairman felt that communication should be using a single channel, likely Facebook because it has the largest number of followers, and offered to be the Brabourne representative on the working group. Cllr Howard also suggested that 'NextDoor' could be used.

#### **15. Correspondence**

All correspondence has been circulated.

Letter from Darren McBride (Ashford Borough Council) re the listing of The Plough Inn as an Asset of Community Value – see item 6.

#### **16. Open Session**

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

The Plough: An update was sought and referred to Cllr Howard's report; Cllr Howard further advised that a decision has yet to be made and thought that concerns remain re design. The planning application for Piper Homes has been approved.

Granary Court Road, Smeeth closure: This closure notices posted refer to this as an emergency closure for gas repairs, but this was queried given that there is no gas supply along Granary Court Road. Concerns were expressed that the closure is from 29<sup>th</sup> July and coincides with harvest, the diversion is unsuitable for the agricultural vehicles involved given that it is through the villages and via Smeeth crossroads. It was thought that Highways has not taken all factors into account; Cllr Spokes opined that the closure had been planned for the school holidays. The Clerk will take this up with Highways and ask the Highways steward to escalate it as a matter of urgency.

The meeting was reconvened.

#### **17. Any other business**

**17.1** The fireworks event will be held on Friday November 1<sup>st</sup>.

**17.2** Potholes in Prospect Way will be reported.

**17.3** 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE and VJ Days: The RBL is planning a number of events, including Afternoon Tea at The Black Horse on VE Day and a ceremony for VJ Day at the refurbished War Memorial. Cllr Howard advised that a number of events are being planned in Civic Park. James Mayland will be asked to approach George Jessel for permission to light the beacon; it was noted that there is no planned nationwide beacon lighting for the anniversary.

**17.4** Playing Field Association: The Association Chairman and Treasurer will be stepping down in 2020. Cllr Spokes advised that the committee is comprised of representatives from all village organisations; a committee is a requirement of the Deed of Gift, and manages the funds, fundraises, and maintains the equipment and playing field. The Clerk advised that in the absence of a committee, management of the playing field does not devolve to the Parish Councils. It was suggested that the CLP or schools may wish to be involved, given that the latter do not have playing fields. It was further proposed that

a year-6 pupil be on the committee to represent young people. Legal advice has been sought which indicates that the land could not be taken back by Brabourne Estates. Cllr Spokes noted that the playing fields act as a natural barrier against expansion, but the football pitches cannot be used by older teams because of the lack of changing rooms.

**17.5** Phone box at The Warren: The Chairman advised that this will be removed, not having been used for at least one year.

**18. Suggested dates for meetings in 2020**

20<sup>th</sup> January, 16<sup>th</sup> March, 18<sup>th</sup> May, 20<sup>th</sup> July, 21<sup>st</sup> September, 16<sup>th</sup> November

**19. Date and time of next meeting**

Monday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at 7.00pm in Brabourne Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.