

BRABOURNE PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council
Held at 7.30pm on Monday 16th March 2020
at Brabourne Village Hall

1. Present

Cllr Hickmott (Chairman), Cllr Mrs Tanner, Cllr Mrs Young (who arrived during item 8.7), Cllrs Harbottle, Joules and Spokes, and Mrs Wood (Clerk). Six members of the public were present.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Howard.

3. Co-option to fill casual vacancy and Declaration of Acceptance of Office**Resolved:**

That David Atkins be co-opted to fill the casual vacancy.

Cllr Atkins signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and Undertaking to Observe the Code of Conduct, which was received by the Proper Officer of the Parish Council.

4. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

5. Minutes**Resolved:**

That the Minutes of the Meetings of the Parish Council held on 20th January 2020 be approved and confirmed as a true record.

6. Matters Arising**6.1 Roads and Footways**

6.1.1 Lees Road: Part of the road has been resurfaced and there are no plans at present to carry out any more works.

6.1.2 Manor Pound Lane: The sunken stretch of road near Meadowsweet has been repaired and the resurfacing works at the junction with Canterbury Road have been carried out.

6.1.3 Fingerpost sign at Weekes Lane: This has been reported to Highways.

6.1.4 Village sign near St Mary Brabourne: This has been repaired.

6.1.5 Damaged direction sign at Lees Road/Manor Pound Lane junction: To be reported to Highways.

6.1.6 Potholes: Numerous potholes have been reported. Residents are urged to report them to Highways via the KCC website.

6.2 Village caretaker scheme The Borough Council sought information on the number of trees on Parish Council-owned land, in return for which free saplings were offered to Parish Councils. The caretaker reported the number of trees and collected 41 saplings; as it does not own any land Smeeth Parish Council donated its saplings to Brabourne, which was given additional trees. Some of the saplings will be planted on the south west side of the allotments as a wind screen, and others on The Warren, taking into account comments made at an earlier Parish Council meeting. The annual survey of trees on Parish Council-owned land has been carried out by the Parish Council's arboriculturist.

6.3 Community Led Plan Group (CLP) Michael Hinchliffe, CLP Secretary, has been unwell but is recovering and hopes to return in the Spring. Bulb planting continues. Ian Ruck has passed the folder on the proposed footpath across The Warren to the Chairman; this is a CLP project because the group can access funds not open to Parish Councils.

6.4 75th anniversary of VE Day and VJ Day George Taylor advised that the celebrations of the VE Day 75th anniversary and RBL 90th anniversary will not take place because of the coronavirus situation. It is hoped to celebrate VJ Day in August: The Bishop of Dover (Rose Hudson-Wilkin) will lead a short service at the War Memorial, after which there will be a service in St Mary's Church, Smeeth at which the Bishop will give an address. This will be followed by afternoon tea at The Woolpack. George Taylor reported that a street party is being planned by The Woolpack for VE Day, but he had no further details.

6.5 Website migration Cllr Mrs Pereboom and Cllr Herrick (Smeeth Parish Council), with the Chairman and Clerk have been working to identify suitable website providers which will be compliant with the

new accessibility regulations. Cllr Mrs Pereboom has identified four possible providers and the Chairman proposed that her recommendation be accepted by the Parish Council.

Resolved:

That Brabourne Parish Council accepts Cllr Mrs Pereboom's recommendation of website provider.

The Chairman advised that the Parish Council will have a web designer and host in the same package, and although costs will be incurred the Parish Council will have a bespoke website.

The e-newsletters and three e-newsflashes have been circulated. The e-newsletter has 239 subscribers and an open rate of 60%; the open rate for the e-newsflashes is 70-90%. Items of interest should be sent to the Chairman, Clerk or Cllr Mrs Pereboom.

7. Borough councillor's report

No report in Cllr Howard's absence.

8. Financial report

8.1 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
S Wood	536.90
S Wood (expenses)	178.38
D Ansley (31 hours @ £8.21/hour) (litter picking)	254.51
M Hickmott (expenses)	107.29
Brabourne and Smeeth Playing Field Association (donation)	2100.00
Brabourne and Smeeth Village Hall Association (donation)	1750.00
P DeLacey (refund for allotment rental overpayment)	30.00
Miss Katherine Barnes (VGA application)	300.00
Lushland Ltd (annual tree survey)	520.00
Citizenship Award	100.00

Receipts

Details	£
Lloyds Bank interest	0.41
Allotment rentals	330.00
UKPN Wayleave agreement	41.76

Balance £ 12999.32 (cheque and deposit accounts)

8.2 Request for a contribution to Brabourne and Smeeth Scouts and Guides for repairs to Scout HQ

The Chairman advised that the Parish Council has budgeted for an annual donation of £500. The ward member has suggested that the Scouts and Guides apply for a ward member or community grant, and seek funding from the county councillor. It was felt that more details are needed and a meeting will be arranged with the Chairmen of Brabourne and Smeeth Parish Councils and the Scouts and Guides to discuss long-term rather than piecemeal funding. To be discussed at the next meeting of the Parish Council.

It was noted that the Scouts and Guides are an asset to the village and the cessation of the monthly newspaper collection will reduce the group's income. Cllr Mrs Tanner advised that the collection has stopped because the mills has been charging to accept the paper; Wyecycle has absorbed the cost for the last three bins unbeknown to the Scouts and Guides. This is unsustainable so it has been decided that the paper collection is no longer viable. KCC is to be asked if recycling credits can be reinstated.

8.3 Consideration of an increase in the contribution to Brabourne and Smeeth Scouts and Guides in the Parish Council budget

A possible increase was proposed to compensate for the loss of funds from the newspaper collection. Cllr Spokes asked for a copy of the Group's accounts to inform the Parish Council's decision, the Clerk to contact Jon Rose for the latest set of accounts. It was noted that the Group has an income stream from hire of Scout HQ and subscriptions.

8.4 Request for a contribution to the 75th anniversary celebrations of VE Day and VJ Day

George Taylor advised that an application has been submitted for a ward member grant of £500. If this is successful additional contributions are not likely to be needed, but the Parish Council will be approached if there is a funding shortfall.

8.5 Adoption of the 2019 Financial Regulations

Resolved:

That the 2019 Financial Regulations, as amended, be adopted.

8.6 Changes to the Authorised Signatories on the current bank mandate

Resolved:

That the Authorised Signatories to the current bank mandate be changed, by removal of two signatories.

8.7 Purchase of a laptop for use by the Clerk for Parish Council business

The Chairman reported that a new Clerk has been appointed after interview. She has not yet obtained the CiLCA qualification and, therefore, the Parish Council will lose the General Power of Competence until this is achieved and a resolution regarding eligibility passed at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council [this will not be before 2021]. The new Clerk has a laptop for each of her Parish Councils and it was proposed that she be provided with a laptop for use on Brabourne and Smeeth Parish Council business. The Chairman advised that he has been looking at suitable laptops, costing up to £400, with Cllr Mrs Pereboom; the cost will be split between the two Parish Councils, 60% being paid by Brabourne Parish Council and 40% by Smeeth Parish Council. It was further proposed that Microsoft Office 365 be purchased for upload, unless the new Clerk has access to this via her other Parish Councils [in which event the Parish Council would contribute towards the cost].

Resolved:

That the Clerk be provided with a laptop for use on Brabourne and Smeeth Parish Council business.

The Chairman advised that there will be a phased handover to the new Clerk from 1st April. A communications meeting will be held on 6th April with the Chairmen of the Parish Councils, Cllr Mrs Pereboom, the current and new Clerk.

8.8 Request from Kent Surrey Sussex Air Ambulance for a donation

It was agreed that the request be refused, given that the Parish Council has limited resources and supports a number of local organisations.

9. Planning report**9.1 Planning Committee report****9.1.1 Planning applications**

Approved by ABC:

19/01483/AS Shabani Oast, East Brabourne The Parish Council supported the application

19/01535/AS 5 The Malthouses, Canterbury Road, East Brabourne The Parish Council supported the application

19/01540/AS Land to the rear of Minnis Moor Stables, East Brabourne The Parish Council objected to the application

19/01553/AS The Plough Inn The Parish Council supported the application

19/01779/AS 3 Mountbatten Way, Brabourne Lees The Parish Council supported the application

20/00031/AS Crusoe Cottage, Lees Road, Brabourne The Parish Council had no objection to the application

20/00111/AS 5 The Malthouses, Canterbury Road, East Brabourne The Parish Council had no objection to the application

20/00030/TC Parsonage Farm, The Street, East Brabourne The Parish Council did not comment on the application

Lawful Development Certificate granted:

20/00013/AS The Gables, East Brabourne The Parish Council did not comment on the application

Decisions awaited:

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

19/01408/AS The Knoll, Lees Road The Parish Council commented on the application

Appeal to the Planning Inspectorate:

19/00819/AS Missingham Farm, East Brabourne The Parish Council did not comment on the application

9.1.2 Planning applications received

20/00138/AS 53 Prospect Way, Brabourne Part two storey/part single storey rear extension; first floor window to side elevation

It was noted that previous alterations include: two extensions, loft conversion, garage conversion to living accommodation (which did not require planning permission) and a large brick-built shed in the garden.

The house is on an elevated location in a prominent position on the development.

Concerns were expressed re the effect of the development on sewerage, noting that the extension would be built over the existing sewer. A previous application had to be revised because it went over the sewer.

It was thought that the application would be out of keeping with existing properties and does not comply with Policy HOU8 of the Local Plan. This states that:

Proposals for extensions to dwellings will be permitted if each of the following criteria are met:

- a) The existing dwelling enjoys a lawful residential use;
- b) The proposed extension would not materially harm any neighbouring uses including the living conditions of adjoining residents;
- c) The proposed extension is suitable in size, scale and materials to the existing dwelling to which it should be physically linked, also taking into account the existing standard of accommodation for extensions to smaller rural properties; and,
- d) The proposed extension is designed to ensure it does not result in significant harm to the overall character and appearance of the area taking into account the surrounding built form and /or street scene.

Where an extension is proposed in a Conservation Area or a visually prominent position in the landscape, or within or in the setting of an AONB, proposals will be required to address the specific sensitivities that are prevalent in these areas. Particular consideration will be given to the scale and wider impact in these locations.

The Chairman noted that the application is in a prominent position and significantly larger than neighbouring properties. Cllr Atkins asked for a definition of 'significant harm'; Cllr Harbottle advised that this is subjective. The Chairman stated that the application will result in a dwelling significantly different from other properties in Prospect Way. The dwelling will increase in size from the original 68m² to 178m².

Cllr Harbottle felt that the impact on neighbours and the scale is of concern.

It was proposed that the Parish Council objects to the application, objection comments to be drafted by the Chairman.

Resolved:

That the Parish Council objects to the application.

Resolved:

If the case officer is minded to Permit, the Parish Council will ask the ward member to refer the application to the Planning Committee for decision.

20/00237/AS Agricultural building east of Oaktree Cottage, Manor Pound Lane, Brabourne Proposed erection of single dwelling, change of use of land and associated works

It was thought that the dwelling will be too close to the side and rear boundaries, but will be on the existing footprint. It is not consistent with the build line of neighbouring properties and oriented in a different direction. The Parish Council objected to the previous application. It was proposed that the Parish Council submits comments on the application: that consideration be given to relocating the dwelling away from the rear and side boundaries and in line with other properties.

Resolved:

That the Parish Council comments on the application: consideration should be given to relocating the dwelling closer to the highway, away from the rear boundary and in line with other properties.

20/00257/AS Rehoboth, Canterbury Road, Brabourne Two storey rear extension and extension to roof

Neighbouring properties all differ in style, but would the proposed extension fit with the existing rooflines.

Resolved:

That the Parish Council asks if the proposed roofline fits with existing rooflines of neighbouring properties.

9.2 Neighbourhood Plan (NP)

The Map defining the area to be included in the NP has been submitted. It was noted that Wye Parish Council is in conflict with the Borough Council over an apparent disregard of Wye's NP by the latter. The Chairman advised that production of the NP will require significant input from parishioners and volunteers will be needed.

10. Local Needs Housing (LNH)

Tessa O'Sullivan [Rural Housing Enabler, ACRK] is to approach the owners/agents of land behind Fortescue Place, a response is awaited.

11. KALC representative report

The March meeting included a presentation on the upgrade of street lights to LEDs, and an explanation of the Kent Police use of OSARA – a toolkit for reducing antisocial behaviour. The presentation on Highway Improvement Plans was postponed.

12. Allotments project

One renewal payment is outstanding, notwithstanding reminders, the Allotment Society chairman to be asked for help. [Post-meeting note: This was paid on the day of the meeting.]

The left-hand post of the gates has moved; Richard Piper has been asked to carry out repairs when the access track is upgraded. Richard Piper has asked permission to store hardcore for the track on the allotments' site, and has offered to meet the costs of the allotments most recent water bill. A plan for the location of the storage area will be requested by the Clerk

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

In hand with Cllr Howard and the Village Hall Management Committee. To be further discussed at the next meeting.

14. Retirement of the current Parish Clerk and new appointment to the post

The Chairman advised that the post was advertised in the Kentish Express, on Facebook and the KALC website; the Clerk also approached two serving Clerks. Three candidates applied for the post and interviews were held on 10th March. The new Clerk is Clerk to Hastingeigh, Brook, Mershan & Sevington, and Elmstead Parish Council; she will be appointed with effect from 1st April to allow for a phased handover. The caretaker scheme will now be under the auspices of one Clerk.

15. Correspondence

A letter of thanks for the Parish Council's donation to Brabourne Baptist Church has been received.

16. Open Session

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

Aural histories project: A volunteer on the Romney Marsh with Kent Wildlife Trust proposed a similar project for the Kent Downs. The Wye Historical Society and the Marshes Historical Society have expressed an interest. The proposed area would be from Wye to Stanford and Hastingeigh to Aldington. The focus in the Marsh histories is on tourism, farming and the sea; comments on the focus for Kent Downs would be welcome and suggestions as to who should be interviewed for the project. The Parish Council's support was sought. The Chairman welcomed the project and the Parish Council was supportive.

War memorial: The project is now complete, a handrail down the mediaeval steps having been installed. It was thought that the 'There but not there' figures on the bench are very moving.

Coronavirus: Offers of help to the self-isolated are being posted on Facebook; it was suggested that the Emergency Plan be resurrected to coordinate assistance. It was acknowledged that many of those in need of help will not be online. Cllr Mrs Tanner agreed, noting that elsewhere phone numbers of those willing to help are available. Leaflets are being distributed throughout Sellindge with offers of help. It was noted that Brabourne Baptist Church is offering help, this will be publicised in a Newsflash. It was suggested that a flyer offering help be included in the Newsflash, asking recipients to print them off and distribute to neighbours.

The meeting was reconvened.

17. Any other business

17.1 Flytipping: Illegal dumping of waste in Manor Pound Lane, Canterbury Road and Pound Lane was reported by Cllr Mrs Young. Photographs of the waste were requested which will be reported to the Borough Council

17.2 Overgrown hedge along the footpath to the Warren: Aspire will be asked to cut it back.

17.3 Broken branch overhanging the footpath to Hospital Field: The owner is aware and has booked a tree surgeon.

17.4 Parish Council meeting dates: The new Clerk has meetings on the third Monday of each month. The village hall is available for meetings on the first and fourth Mondays; the new Clerk will be asked which would be the preferred date, to be implemented after the May meeting.

18. Citizenship Award

The Chairman advised that the Citizenship Award is presented by Brabourne Parish Council in memory of Chris Goodall, a former parish councillor who was also involved in many other village organisations and events. Chris was a model citizen for the village and the Parish Council is proud to honour his memory with this annual prize.

The recipient of the award is chosen by the Parish Council from nominations made by parishioners. The Parish Councils' new Newsletter has seen a significant increase in nominations this year. This year's recipient is a person who a lot of people know and have seen about the village over the years.

A university lecturer, her research for over 30 years focused largely on livelihoods and rural development in parts of East Africa and India. It was a short step to apply this technique locally and away from work she is closely involved with St Mary's church, Brabourne. The Chairman stated that when they first met she was researching a book to be produced in aid of church funds: Archives & Anecdotes – Reflections on English Village life from Brabourne in Kent – a wonderful volume based on the memories of some 170 people in the area.

Her nomination read: "She is a tower of strength and reliability and is always so kind and thoughtful in all her dealings. She has the energy and enthusiasm to encourage others and is a real example of someone who values and encourages community life."

The Chairman presented this year's Citizenship Award, Certificate and a cheque for £100 to Kathy Embleton-Smith.

Mrs Embleton-Smith accepted the award with thanks, and donated the cheque to the Scouts and Guides, to help fund trips for those who may otherwise not be able to go.

19. Provisional date and time of next meeting

Monday May 18th at **7.30pm** in Brabourne Village Hall. (tbc)

The meeting closed 9.30pm.