

BRABOURNE PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council
Held at 7.00pm on Monday 20th November 2017
At Brabourne Village Hall

1. Present

Cllr Hickmott (Chairman), Cllr Mrs Bewick, Cllr Mrs Tanner, Cllr Mrs Young and Cllr Mayland, and Mrs Wood (Clerk). Cllr Howard (ward member) was present and nine members of the public attended.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Spokes (prior commitment).

3. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Mayland: Voluntary Declaration (item 9.2: footpath diversion AE300/footpath extinguishment AE303)

4. Minutes**Resolved:**

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 18th September 2017 be approved and confirmed as a true record.

5. Matters Arising**5.1 Roads and Footways**

5.1.1 Faulty lamppost in Prospect Way. An update is awaited from Cllr Spokes.

5.1.2 The 30mph speed limit sign on Plain Hill has been knocked down; this will be reported to Highways.

5.1.3 Pothole in Knatchbull Way. This has been repaired.

5.1.4 White lines. These have been refreshed as requested.

5.2 Local Needs Housing (LNH) The report from the Community Led Plan group (CLP) housing survey is being prepared and will be sent to the Parish Council and ABC. Early indications are that there is a need for 47 homes.

5.3 Village caretaker scheme The scheme continues to work well.

5.4 Community Led Plan (CLP)

5.4.1 Bulb planting: Michael Hinchliffe advised that the CLP wishes to plant bulbs on a number of sites in the parish; these are all public land maintained either by the village caretaker or local residents. Mr Hinchliffe asked for the Parish Council's permission to plant on the former; permission will be sought from residents who maintain the latter. The CLP's proposal was welcomed and agreed.

5.4.2 Basketball hoop: Mr Hinchliffe reported that funding of £5000 has been secured, including £500 from Cllr Howard. The hoop will be installed by volunteers in late winter 2017/early spring 2018.

5.4.3 Outdoor gym: Mr Hinchliffe reported that a grant of £2500 has been awarded by ABC, giving a total of £10,000. Mr Hinchliffe stated that it is a requirement of the KCC grant that it be spent in the current financial year. It was suggested that a site meeting be held with representatives of Brabourne and Smeeth Parish Councils and the CLP, to discuss its location on the green. This was agreed, Cllr Mrs Tanner and Cllr Mrs Young to attend for Brabourne Parish Council, and bring recommendations to the next meeting. The Chairman noted that the equipment will be on Parish Council land and, therefore, the Parish Council will be responsible for maintenance and insurance. Cllr Howard noted that there is an outdoor gym in Brook, and suggested that Brook Parish Council be asked for information as to likely additional costs.

5.5 Repairs to rabbit-proof fencing No progress to report; the Playing Field Association Committee meets on 22nd November. Damage caused when a car drove across the field is not thought to be long-term.

5.6 Finger post near The Five Bells This has deteriorated further and now needs to be replaced; the Clerk to ask that a heritage, wooden finger post be installed.

5.7 Broken drain in Pilgrims Way In hand, the drains need clearing.

- 5.8 Diseased beech tree on The Warren** This was inspected and the quote for its removal accepted (£240) because the work is needed on grounds of safety. The stump will be carved into a decorated bench; designs are awaited. Pictures will be uploaded to the website.

6. Reports from Community Warden and PCSO

Mr Kingston reported that Halloween and Bonfire Night went off well, trick-or-treaters were supervised. A burglary in Bridge Road and another in Church Road on the same night were likely carried out by the same offender. There have been a number of break-ins to trade vehicles, including one in Knatchbull Way; the Chairman noted that this was the fourth attempt on this vehicle. Mr Kingston reported that one of the larger fence posts on the playing field had been broken, possibly struck by a vehicle; this allowed the car reported in 5.5 to get on to the field. A large number of beer bottles were left on the children's play area, these were cleared by CLP volunteers. Wooden posts on the verge in Canterbury Road were hit by a vehicle. No report has been received from the PCSO.

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 (salary)	510.33
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S Wood (Fordred's Charity)	175.00
D Ansley	210.00
Shepherd Neame (allotment rental)	500.00
C&A Consulting (hospital field appeal)	484.80
Getmapping Plc (subscription)	33.60
South East Water (allotments)	255.83
Harmer & Sons (mowing The Warren)	288.00
St Mary PCC	250.00
Smeeth & Brabourne Football Club	300.00

Receipts

Details	£
Allotment rentals	15.00
Lloyds Bank interest	0.91
Precept	17000.00
Council Tax Support Grant	205.00
Concurrent Functions Grant	265.00

Balance £ 26074.67 (cheque and deposit accounts)

£ 334.00 (No. 2 account for CLP and EP group)

7.2 Draft budget for 2018-19

The draft budget was tabled. The precept will be set at the January meeting, when the figures for the Council Tax Support Grant, Concurrent Functions Grant and NALC recommendation for the Clerk's salary increase will be known.

7.3 Transfer of funds held on behalf of the Emergency Plan to the Community Led Plan group

The Parish Council holds £334 in its No.2 account, on behalf of the Emergency Plan, but this is now dormant. It was proposed that £334 be transferred to the CLP group.

Resolved:

That £334 held by the Parish Council on behalf of the Emergency Plan be transferred to the Community Led Plan group.

8. War Memorial refurbishment project

George Taylor was invited to give a report. He advised that the Memorial has been Grade II listed. An application for funding has been invited by the War Memorials Trust, the previous application being

treated as an expression of interest. A working group has been set which has its own bank account and is getting estimates for refurbishment and landscaping; likely project costs are £10,000 and fundraising will begin in early 2018.

9. Planning Committee report

16/00303/AS 'Hospital Field' The appeal will begin on 9th January 2018 at Civic Centre and is scheduled to last for eight days. The Chairman noted the need to organise publicity for the appeal and encourage residents to attend; information will be published in Parish News, social media, posters and Roundabout. Counsel will be asked when lay witnesses are likely to appear. Cllr Howard advised that the Local Plan will have been submitted before the appeal begins and therefore will be a material consideration, it will be dated 2017 and will predate forthcoming changes to the planning laws. The Clerk noted that the village green application will also still be 'live'.

Approved by ABC:

17/00360/AS & 17/00361/AS Little Foord, Bulltown Lane

17/01125/AS & 17/01140/AS The Hall, Weekes Lane

17/01173/AS Chaucer Court, Hampton Lane

The Planning Committee objected to the following application and a decision from ABC is awaited:

17/01470/AS Agricultural building east of Oaktree Cottage, Manor Pound Lane

The Planning Committee had no objection to the following applications and a decision from ABC is awaited:

17/01587/AS Waterside Farm, West Brabourne

17/01158/AS Knapwick Farm, Pilgrims Way

Prior approval not required:

17/01419/AS Foreland Wood, Hampton Lane

Lawful Development Certificate granted:

17/01509/AS Stowting Paddock

Withdrawn:

17/00480/AS & 17/00481/AS Church Farmhouse, The Street

Knapwick Farm: The occupier reported that sensitive commercial and personal data had been submitted as requested in support of the application but it was then uploaded to the ABC website; it was taken down after he complained, and redacted, but not all of the documents were then uploaded. He noted that the site has been used in its current form for more than 10 years. Cllr Howard to follow-up with the case officer.

Stowting Paddock: The Chairman reported that the case officer had decided that the existing use is lawful. Cllr Howard advised that the planning laws relate to development, but in this case there had been no development, hence the decision.

The meeting was suspended and the Chairman invited William Harbottle to speak.

Mr Harbottle agreed with Cllr Howard's comments, noting that the Planning department has to act with regard to planning laws – these relate to development; if there has been no development it follows that there has been no planning breach. However, there is no permission for a formalised access. Mr Harbottle asked why the decision had taken ten months. Cllr Howard replied that he will raise this with the case officer, and recommend a timeline review.

Mr Harbottle said that the hedgerow is covered by the Hedgerow Regulations, these had been breached by removal of part of the hedgerow but this is not included in the application for the Lawful Development Certificate. Cllr Howard replied that he will ask the case officer if there is to be any enforcement action regarding the hedge removal. This was welcomed by Mr Harbottle who noted that inaction may result in more of the hedgerow being removed to improve sightlines. Mr Harbottle asked for enforcement that the hedge be replanted. Cllr Howard noted that this should have been passed to the enforcement officer, and this will be followed-up.

The Chairman advised that KCC Highways has indicated that it will take legal action, because there is no cross-over permit and therefore the access is illegal.

Planning applications received

17/01610/AS Plough Inn, Lees Road, Brabourne

Erection of 4 detached bungalows (3 bed); new vehicular access / junction works; hard and soft landscaping and associated works

The proposed bungalows would preserve the visual amenity of the existing properties in Lees Road.

The meeting was suspended to allow residents to comment on the application.

The need for housing was acknowledged and the properties would be similar in scale to those in Bramley Close, however the unauthorised dumping to the rear of the Plough in 2013 had raised the level of the garden. There has been some settlement but the level is ~1.8m higher than previously. The debris remains in situ; there is a need to ascertain the nature of the debris and it should be a condition that it is removed for the safety of the bungalows' occupants. The Clerk noted that the Parish Council had asked Shepherd Neame for confirmation that the debris was not harmful, but this was not forthcoming. The Chairman agreed that any contamination would have to be investigated.

Traffic congestion and on-street parking in Lees Road was noted; the proposed reduction in road width to accommodate the footpath would increase the existing hazards. Given the poor sightlines, exacerbated by on-street parking, it was suggested that access and egress from the site be via the pub forecourt. The Chairman replied that it would be argued that this area is for parking; it was suggested that the car park could be reconfigured.

The pub and its users should have consideration for residents when playing music or leaving – the current licence is until 1.00am.

Cllr Howard recommended that the Parish Council should include in its comments a request for a site survey and removal of the contaminated material. He agreed with concerns expressed regarding egress from the site, but felt that use of the car park was not an option given that it was not an adopted road – this would prevent refuse vehicles from accessing the site. It was suggested that this could be resolved by the granting of an easement.

Cllr Mayland noted that the proposed access merges with the top of the allotment access track.

The Chairman noted that Highways would comment on the access; Cllr Howard stated that Highways may welcome the reduction in road width because it may prevent on-street parking, thereby improving sightlines.

Cllr Mayland noted that views for existing properties would be improved if the spoil were removed, this should be included in the Parish Council's comments.

It was thought that the height of that part of the site on which the bungalows would be built would be unaffected by removal of the waste.

The meeting was reconvened.

It was proposed that the application be supported, with comments as Minuted.

Resolved:

That the application be supported, with comments as Minuted.

17/01621/AS The Hall, Weekes Lane, West Brabourne

Proposed demolition of existing judges folly and replacement pool house

It was proposed that no objection be made to the application.

Resolved:

That no objection be made to the application.

Diversion of Public Footpath AE308 (part) and AE309 (part) (Scots Lane, Brabourne)

Extinguishment of public footpath AE308 (part) (Whiteways, Scots Lane, Brabourne)

The Parish Council sought an extension to the consultation period, but this could not be given because the period is set by statute. On advice, the Parish Council submitted an objection, with reasons to follow.

It was noted that there is no explanation as to why the proposals are needed. Horses have never been grazed on the site and there are no problems elsewhere of interaction between horses and walkers. The need for fencing was queried. The statutory test is not met, no evidence being

provided that the footpath is not used. The proposals are contrary to policy AEU2 of the Kent Downs Management Plan.

It was proposed that the comments as Minuted be submitted in support of the Parish Council's objection.

Resolved:

That the comments as Minuted be submitted in support of the Parish Council's objection.

Diversion of Public Footpath AE300 and Extinguishment of Public Footpath AE303 (The Street, Brabourne)

It was proposed that the Parish Council has no objections to the Order.

Resolved:

That no objection be made to the Order.

10. KALC report

The next meeting is on 22nd November.

11. Allotments project

The Chairman reported that a site meeting and inspection of the allotments was held with Colin MacPhee, Allotment Society chairman, during which a number of projects were identified (attached to the Minutes). These will be funded from excess income over expenditure from the allotments.

A quote for item 5 is to be sought from Fortescues, who installed the water supply to the allotments.

A quote is awaited from the Allotment Society for item 2.

A quote will be invited from Bernard Farrant for item 6.

It was proposed that expenditure on items 3 and 4 be agreed.

Resolved:

That the Parish Council funds the purchase of the mower and compost bins.

It was agreed that annual rent per plot will be held at £30, inclusive of water charges.

12. WWI centenary beacon

Cllr Mayland reported that the beacon will mark the centenary of the end of WWI. He has approached George Jessel who welcomed and agreed to the request to have a beacon on his land, possibly at the trig point. Cllr Mayland advised that Mr Jessel is looking into providing a beacon at no cost to the Parish Council.

13. Adoption of the Parish Council's Safeguarding Policy

The draft policy was tabled. It was proposed that the draft policy be adopted.

Resolved:

That the safeguarding policy be adopted.

14. Ashford Borough Council's Discretionary Business Rates Review

The Chairman's draft comments had been circulated. It was proposed that they be submitted, and that the importance of supporting rural businesses be stressed.

Resolved:

That the Chairman's draft comments be submitted, and that the importance of supporting rural businesses be stressed.

15. Request to place a memorial bench on the village green

Maureen Darvell's family has sought permission to place a timber bench on the Warren in her memory. For ease of maintenance a bench made from recycled plastic that looks like timber was suggested. Cllr Howard suggested that it be placed beside the proposed footpath across the green; the Clerk to ask for an update on this CLP-led project from Ian Ruck.

It was proposed that the request be granted, but a decision as to its final location will be made by the Parish Council.

Resolved:

That the request be granted, but a decision as to its final location will be made by the Parish Council.

16. Correspondence

All correspondence has been circulated.

17. Open Session

The meeting was suspended to allow residents to raise matters of concern with the Council.

Peter Clayton noted that 12 2-way radios had been purchased by the Parish Councils for use at the summer fete and in an emergency. They are stored in Scout HQ but are not secured and not charged up. It was agreed that Scout HQ is the most suitable location; the Clerk to ask Jon Rose that they are kept on charge (copy to Smeeth Parish Council).

The meeting was reconvened.

18. Any other business

18.1 Complaints re dog fouling have been received by the Parish Council and by Smeeth Parish Council. A warning about the fines that can be levied and a reminder about the availability of free dog bags will be published in Parish News.

18.2 The organisers of the Fireworks display were thanked, which raised over £2,000 for the Playing Field Association. Good feedback was received and the event will be repeated on 2nd November 2018.

18.3 Christmas activities in the parish were outlined, these include a community advent calendar, carol-singing and a visit from Father Christmas.

19. Date and time of next meeting: Monday 15th January 2018 in Brabourne Village Hall, at 7.00pm.

20. Resolution 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 2i, namely Distribution of Fordred's Charity payments.

21. Fordred's Charity

Resolved:

That Cllr Mrs Bewick and Cllr Mrs Tanner distribute the payments as agreed.

The meeting closed at 9.45pm.

Brabourne and Smeeth allotment society meeting with Brabourne Parish Council 27.10.17

1. Car park. The issue of Vehicles sinking in the soft soil makes the car par of limited use. Members are reluctant to park there and take their vehicles onto the site. BPC to discuss solutions with Shepherd Neame.
2. Big Shed. Allotment Society to provide costing for permanent solution to felt being stripped off the roof in high winds. Costs not yet available. Possible solution is adhesive felt tiling which must be applied at a higher ambient temperature than we have at the moment to ensure adhesion. Second option is metal sheeting nailed over existing felt.
3. Mower. Current mower is showing increasing wear and tear. Costs around £200 annually in repairs and servicing. Over the last three years the front wheels have come off, the clutch cable has snapped, sump cracked, handle broke and the blade has been replaced. A robust replacement is required which is better equipped to cope with the rough ground and heavy growth on the allotment site. Propose John Deere R54S at a cost of £999.00.
4. Compost Bins. Allotment Society plan to start a communal composting project to utilise the green waste generated on site. Waste must be shredded for best results. Wooden bins selected at a cost of £300.00.
5. Additional water point. Proposed to have an additional tap installed beside Plot 37 or thereabouts. BPC to investigate.
6. Vacant Plots. BPC to consider rotavating plots and Allotment Society to cover with weedproof fabric to help reduce spread of weeds.