

**SMEETH PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**  
**Wednesday 13th March 2013 at 7.00pm**  
**Brabourne Baptist Church**

**1. Present**

Cllr Herrick (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Mrs Williams, Cllrs Hinchliffe, Plowright, Thorpe, Turner and Mrs S Wood (Clerk).

Cllr Wickham (county councillor) was also present.

The meeting was chaired by Cllr Herrick.

**2. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr Howard.

**3. Minutes of the 2012 Meeting**

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2012 had been agreed and signed as a true record at the Parish Council meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2012.

**4. Vice-Chairman's report**

Firstly it is my sad duty to report the recent and unexpected death of the Chairman of Smeeth Parish Council, Stuart Austen. Stuart served on this Council for some 10 years, the last 5 of which were as Chairman. Always even handed, Stuart allowed everyone to have their say to enable informed decisions to be made on a diverse array of local issues. He was thoughtful and considerate and will be greatly missed. Secondly, it is also my sad duty to report the death of Peter Wood, the Leader of Ashford Borough Council, and a Ward Member representing Saxon Shore Ward, of which Smeeth is a part. Peter was always very supportive of this Parish Council and attended as many meetings as he was able. He too will be greatly missed.

Moving on, I should like to thank all the Councillors who have served on this Parish Council over the past 12 months. It has been a busy year with a variety of new initiatives being taken forward and a considerable number of ongoing issues requiring input and resolution. Special thanks must go to our Parish Clerk, Mrs Sue Wood, who works tirelessly in the background ensuring that Councillors are informed and up to date with current developments. Sue also manages the Parish Council website and responds to various day to day enquiries on our behalf.

Also having important local roles are Graham Kingston, our Community Warden, and PC Michael Baksh, our Neighbourhood Officer, together with William Howard, our Ashford Borough Council Ward Member, and Andrew Wickham, our Kent County Council Councillor, and we thank them all for their input.

So, what are the key issues that have received consideration during the past year? In no particular order they include the following –

The Community Led Plan

The Local Emergency Plan

Local Needs Housing

Localism

SpeedWatch

Parking problems

Highways and Footpath problems

Planning and Development proposals

The Parish Council does not operate in isolation and several of these initiatives necessitate working with Brabourne Parish Council and local residents from both Parishes and we thank them all for their input. Progress in some areas has been better than in others but I think it safe to say that we are further forward in all areas than we were this time last year.

Finally it needs to be emphasized that everything the Parish Council does is for the benefit of local residents. Their input is highly valued and sought for – please don't be afraid to come forward with complaints, comments, or suggestions.

## **5. Matters Arising**

- 5.1** Parking problems in Sandy Place. No response from ABC as yet. Cllr Plowright had obtained prices for supply of grasscrete (£1764 for 85m<sup>2</sup> and ~£1000 for the area required). With installation costs are likely to be ~£2500. ABC is to be asked if it is willing to contribute towards costs. Plastic reinforcing mesh was suggested as an alternative by Cllr Hinchliffe, costs are unknown. The Clerk and Cllr Howard are to continue to press for a site meeting. It was thought that there had been fewer vehicles parking in Sandy Place of late – the Community Warden is to be asked to monitor. Cllr Plowright again suggested that a covenant be put in place for new tenants restricting the number of parking spaces which may be occupied.
- 5.2** Local needs housing. A survey carried out by Action with Communities in Rural Kent with the support of the Parish Council identified a need for local needs housing. A potential site was identified and the landowner approached, but there has been no further progress. ACRK is to be asked to pursue this.
- 5.3** Land behind Fortescue Place. Kent Planning, on behalf of the site owners, acknowledged the Parish Council's feedback in January, but there has been no further response. This is to be pursued. Cllr Wickham advised that developments above a certain size have to provide a number of affordable homes, and further that it would need to be on an exception site. It should also be established whether the homes proposed by the developer would be local needs or affordable.
- 5.4** Jubilee celebrations. The Vice-chairman reported that these had been well attended and very enjoyable, despite the unseasonal weather.
- 5.5** Localism. A joint meeting was held with Brabourne Parish Council, this generated a list of possible functions. A representative from Aldington had been invited because this parish was involved in the pilot project, but did not attend – it is hoped to arrange another meeting. It is also unknown what funding will be forthcoming from ABC.

## **6. Financial Report**

The draft Statement of Accounts (attached) was circulated by the Clerk.

The Finance Manager at ABC asked all parishes to check their Precept figures after his presentation at the Parish Forum meeting in February. A number of Parish Councils, including Smeeth, found that the figures had been altered, reducing the Precept by the amount due from the Council Tax Support grant. This has been corrected after representations by the Clerk.

## **7. Any Other Business**

- 7.1** Damage to verges on Plain Hill near the Rising Fives Nursery. There have been no recent complaints.
- 7.2** Cllr Plowright advised that refurbishment of the overhead power lines between Canterbury and Sellindge is scheduled to begin in April and will necessitate the closure of Plain Road. Information will be published in Parish News.

The meeting closed at 7.35pm.

**SMEETH PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Draft Statement of Accounts 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013**

**Receipts**

<b>Receipts to date</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Precept	7590.00	
Concurrent Functions Grant	820.00	
Smeeth Field Rent	350.00	
VAT refund	129.98	
Interest	6.51	
Bedingfield Endowment and Fordred's Charity	183.00	
Street Cleansing Grant (2011-12)	607.73	
Street Cleansing Grant (2012-13)	619.71	
KCC Member Grant (for Jubilee celebrations)	500.00	
Sub-total	10806.93	
<b>Projected receipts 13<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013</b>		
Nil	0.00	
Balance b/f from 2011/12	13173.17	
Total receipts	23980.10	<b>23980.10</b>

**Payments**

<b>Payments to date</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Clerk's salary	3022.80	
Litter collector's salary	553.54	
Donation to Brabourne & Smeeth Allotment Society	100.00	
Donation to Brabourne & Smeeth Village Hall Assoc	700.00	
Donation to Smeeth & Brabourne Football Club	150.00	
Donation to Brabourne & Smeeth Footpaths' Assoc	10.00	
Donation to Brabourne & Smeeth Playing Field Assoc	600.00	
Donation to Victim Support	125.00	
Office expenses	392.16	
Jubilee celebrations	495.49	
Training	72.00	
Subscriptions	143.83	
Audit fee	162.00	
Insurance premium	330.25	
Hire of Baptist Church	99.00	
Dog waste bins	492.00	
Charity payments	168.00	
Sub-total	7616.07	
<b>Projected expenditure 13<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013</b>		
Litter Collector's salary	110.00	
KALC annual subscription	330.00	
Total expenditure	8056.07	<b>8056.07</b>
<b>Estimated balance c/f to 2013/2014</b>		<b>15924.03</b>