

SMEETH PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a meeting held on Wednesday 10th July 2013
at Brabourne Baptist Church

1. Present

Cllr Herrick (Chairman) (DH), Cllr Mrs Williams (MW), Cllr Hinchliffe (MH), Cllr Plowright (IP), Cllr Thorpe (GT), Cllr Turner (MT) and Mrs S Wood (Clerk) (SW). Cllr Howard (ward member) (WH), Mrs Carly Pettit (ABC) (CP), Mr Graham Kingston (Community Warden) (GK) and PCSO Gary Carr (GC) also attended. One member of the public was present.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Miss Martin (ward member).

3. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Plowright (Other Significant Interest): agenda item 11.3, Plain Road closures during works for the National Grid.

4. Presentation by Mrs Pettit on Plan-It

Mrs Pettit explained that the Local Plan (adopted in 2008) is under review, following the removal of targets for house-building imposed by the previous govt. The new Plan will run to 2030 and will be jobs- rather than housing-led. ABC is consulting PCs, local groups and residents on how their communities should develop using 'Plan-It': a series of workshops using 'model' families based on the borough's demographics.

Mrs Pettit suggested that a public meeting be held to gauge the community's wants and needs; one aim is to ascertain if parishes would like to be considered for growth. She noted that a call for sites for possible housing has gone out, but an expression of interest would not guarantee that a site would be agreed.

Plan-It will run until after the summer, and all information gathered will be used as 'evidence of need' when the revised Plan is examined for soundness by the Inspector. Cllr Hinchliffe felt that the aims of Plan-It complement the Community Led Plan (CLP); Cllr Mrs Williams and Cllr Turner felt that an additional public meeting is not required, given the good response to that on 2nd July. The next meeting is on July 18th at which the Steering Group will be set up.

Mrs Pettit said that the suggested Plan-It workshops are only being held in some parishes. Cllr Hinchliffe noted that the CLP is for the two parishes of Smeeth and Brabourne.

The Chairman noted that while the aims of the CLP and Local Plan are similar, the latter is more broadly based. Cllr Hinchliffe stated that the Steering Group may decide to involve Plan-It. Mrs Pettit noted that ABC Officers will issue a report on the outcomes of Plan-It workshops. Cllr Hinchliffe will advise the Steering Group that there has been an offer of help with the research stage of the CLP.

Mrs Pettit was thanked for her presentation.

5. Minutes of the meeting on Wednesday 15th May 2013

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting be approved and signed as a true record.

6. Matters Arising

6.1 Waste collection service Commenced on 8th July. Cllr Howard asked that he be notified of any problems. Cllr Thorpe asked what arrangements are in place for, eg churches. The Clerk advised that the current arrangements still apply. The Chairman stated that more garden waste bins are due to be delivered; Cllr Howard noted that there has been 3 times the expected take-up. There have been no recent problems re emptying dog bins.

6.2 Meeting with Ann Barnes, Police and Crime Commissioner To be attended by Cllr Hinchliffe. Any comments or questions should be passed to Cllr Hinchliffe.

6.3 Junction 10A Cllr Howard advised that there is no foundation to the suggestions that J10A is being brought forward.

6.4 Cllr Turner's trip to Sweden Cllr Turner reported on an enjoyable trip, with many

good ideas on green energy and recycling. A reciprocal visit will take place in October, after which a report will be issued.

6.5 Appointment of new PCSO PCSO Gary Carr was welcomed, PCSO Amy Edwards having joined the Police force. PCSO Carr stated that he is responsible for 13 parishes, but 7 or 8 new PCSOs are to be appointed; he will send a monthly report to Clerks and hopes to attend as many PC meetings as possible. The new Police Contact Points are being introduced, the nearest being Aldington, and the mobile station will visit on 17th and 31st July from 1530-1700. He noted that it is possible to find the nearest Contact Point by entering a postcode into the relevant search box on the Kent Police website. He reported 2 cases of vandalism and an incident in Sandy Place over parking.

The meeting was suspended to allow the member of the public present to raise matters of concern with PCSO Carr. A request for measures to reduce traffic speeds in Plain Road was made. Cllr Plowright replied that the PC has a SID (Speed Indicator Device) and there are 4 approved sites on Plain Road for Speedwatch. Data arising is sent to Kent Police but will, in addition, be sent to PCSO Carr. PCSO Carr stated that he hopes to attend when Speedwatch is carried out.

In answer to a question, Cllr Mrs Williams was advised that the interactive speed sign at Smeeth School was funded by Cllr Wickham from his Highways Fund; the 2013-14 fund has already been allocated. Cllr Hinchliffe suggested that Special Constables from the Road Policing Unit be involved. It was noted that traffic calming is controversial as it generates additional traffic noise.

The meeting was reconvened and PCSO Carr thanked for his report.

6.6 Co-option to fill vacancy The Clerk advised that Matthew Austen cannot be co-opted because the criteria requiring residence or employment in the parish are not met. Other possible candidates are to be approached.

7. Community Warden's report

Mr Kingston's report is attached.

8. Financial Report

8.1 Payments in accordance with the Budget.

Resolved:

That the following payments be made in accordance with the Budget.

Payments

Details	£
Zurich Municipal (Insurance premium tax)	19.24
S Wood (net salary June)	218.55
S Wood (net salary July)	218.55
Barbara Podd (salary)	129.99
ICO (DPA registration renewal)	35.00
I Plowright (Member Community Grant for purchase of Speedwatch SID)	300.00
S Wood (stationery)	19.41

Receipts

Details	£
Bedingfield Educational Endowment	15.00

Balance: £ 18749.95

8.2 Purchase of training CD on the new Code of Conduct and Localism Act 2011

Resolved:

That Smeeth Parish Council purchases the training CD.

8.3 Contribution towards the purchase of SID for Speedwatch

The Clerk reported that the equipment will cost approx £2000; a grant of £300 has been

made from Cllr Howard's Member Community Grant, Brabourne PC has pledged £500, Cllr Wickham will give a Member Community Grant for the balance.

Resolved:

That Smeeth Parish Council gives £500 towards purchase of SID for Speedwatch.

8.4 Parish defibrillator

The Chairman advised that a defibrillator has been acquired for use by residents. It will be located outside Orpins Stores, Mrs Orgar was thanked for her help in the matter. A keysafe will be required for security purposes, costing approx £25.

Resolved:

That Smeeth Parish Council gives a contribution of 50% of the costs of the keysafe.

9. Planning Committee report

Cllr Thorpe (Planning Committee Chairman) reported on 1 application:

Evegate Bungalow: There were no objections to the proposed internal alterations but no details were given as to disposal of waste from the veterinary clinic. An objection was made to the poor visibility splay.

Cllr Plowright reported problems with the contractors working at Katoomba: obstruction caused by parked vehicles and use of bad language; these are to be taken up with the agent.

10. KALC

Cllr Herrick reported that meetings were held on 22nd May and 3rd July, the Minutes have been circulated. The next meeting is on 2nd October, and the Rural Conference will be held on 24th September at the Rare Breeds Centre. Cllr Hinchliffe advised that he will attend the Parish Forum meeting on 24th July.

11. Footpaths and Highways

11.1 A20 footpath A response is awaited from the Director of Kent Highways.

11.2 Church Road The white lines have been refreshed.

11.3 Plain Road closure Will be closed from 20th July; the shuttle bus will be in operation.

11.4 Buses Cllrs Plowright and Thorpe noted that verges are being worn away because of the width of buses; overhanging vegetation also causes problems, forcing traffic into the middle of the road – KCC Highways to be contacted.

KCC Highways has refused the request for safety measures at the Canterbury Road/ Plain Road junction – this is to be taken up with Stagecoach.

11.5 Footpaths Cllr Hinchliffe has not yet walked all the footpaths. The footpath by John Childs garage is overgrown - this is to be passed to the PROW office.

11.6 Flooding The remedial works at Mersham le Hatch have not yet been carried out. A blocked drain in The Ridgeway will be reported.

11.7 Prospect Way The green is to be fenced off to prevent cars accessing front gardens.

11.8 Sandy Place This has been taken up with the ABC Projects' team; the PC's proposals have the support of the Head of Housing (Tracey Kerly). A site meeting is to be arranged by Sarah Paul – the Clerk is to provide a site plan (from Parish Online).

12. Emergency Plan and Community Led Plan presentations

Cllr Hinchliffe reported that about 40 people attended the meeting on 2nd July, and approx 25 volunteers have come forward (including Cllrs Hinchliffe and Plowright, Tim Simpson and Richard Graham). A meeting to set up the Steering Group will be held on 18th July, following which the PC will act only in a supporting role. It was noted that the Group will not be chaired by a councillor. The lack of involvement by young people was regretted.

13. Speedwatch

Cllr Plowright reported that the equipment on loan from Kent Police is to be returned and that the PC now has its own Speed Indicator Device. 3 new volunteers have come forward and are awaiting training. A rota is being drawn up.

14. Localism

The Chairman stated that a meeting is being arranged with neighbouring parishes by Cllr Martin. The Clerk is to ask for an update.

Cllr Howard noted that Aldington is keen to resurrect the scheme but as part of a

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larger scheme in Saxon Shore. ABC will fund up to 50% of the cost, the remainder being borne by the parishes.

15. Local Needs Housing

A meeting will be held on 23rd July with the agents for the owner of 1 of the possible sites (land behind Fortescue Place) to see their proposals. [Post-meeting note: the meeting has been cancelled and will be rescheduled.]

A misunderstanding had arisen over site 4 – the owners do wish it to be put forward as a potential site. An additional site has also been proposed (site 11).

Cllr Plowright suggested that the 3 sites be viewed in parallel to reduce the waiting time for a scheme to be implemented. The Chairman replied that this would be the case, but not all of the landowners have yet responded. There is an identified need for more than 30 houses, so the sites will be explored together rather than sequentially.

16. Playing fields

The Chairman reported that the Playing Field Steering Group is being encouraged to apply for grants for redevelopment. Of the various options available the most likely is to develop the existing site.

17. Standing Orders

Consequent on the Resolution at the meeting on 15th May:

Resolved:

That the following amendment be made to Standing Orders:

Ordinary Council meetings 2(i).

A councillor elected as Chairman may serve for not more than four consecutive terms, if re-elected at the Annual Meeting of the Council. A councillor having served as Chairman for four consecutive years becomes re-eligible for election to the Chair one year after ceasing to hold the Chair. There is no limit to the number of four year terms during which a councillor holds the Chair.

18. Correspondence

A letter has been received from John Jamieson announcing his retirement as editor of Parish News. The Clerk is to write to Mr Jamieson thanking him for his dedication and long service. SW

19. Dates for meetings in 2014

The following dates were agreed: 8th January, 12th March (including the Annual Parish Meeting), 14th May (the AGM of the Council), 9th July, 10th September, 12th November.

20. Any Other Business

20.1 Cllr Plowright proposed that Smeeth and Brabourne Parish Councils consider merging, given the close links between the 2 parishes. Cllr Mrs Williams and Cllr Hinchliffe agreed. Cllr Thorpe stated that the 2 PCs arose from the 2 PCCs, as there are 2 Anglican churches. He noted that unless the change was proposed by the Boundary Commission a local referendum would have to be held. If more than 2/3 of those on the electoral roll (not turn out) vote in favour, the merger would go ahead. The Chairman stated that this would incur costs, and Brabourne PC must be consulted. Cllr Hinchliffe will raise this at a meeting of the CLP Steering Group.

20.2 Cllr Howard reported that the Member Community Grant has been increased to £4000 and invited applications. Cllr Howard also noted that if it was the wish of the PC, he would ask for any planning application about which the PC felt particular concern and which Planning Officers were minded to approve, to be submitted to the Planning Committee for consideration.

20.3 The Chairman noted that KCC is consulting on the proposed closure of several Children's Centres, including 2 in Ashford.

20.4 The Chairman advised that KALC has set up a Police Liaison Working Party, which has drawn up a questionnaire on Special Constables; this is to be circulated.

20.5 KALC is holding a Councillors' Conference on 13th July, and Kent Downs AONB is having an Open Day at All Saints Church, Boughton Aluph on 23rd July. SW

21. Date and time of next meeting

11th September at 7.00pm in Brabourne Baptist Church.

The meeting closed at 9.45pm.

Community Warden's report

My apologies for my absence from Parish Council meeting of late this has been due to a combination of minor illness, annual leave and training. However this does not mean I have been entirely absent for the villages. I was please to have the opportunity to address the 3 o'clock club at the Oak Room on the role of the warden service I also carried out cycle marking with the Guides and Brownies, gave a talk on safety to the Beavers and took part in the district 'Safety in action' fortnight which was attended by both primary school.

I was also pleased to be invited again to be involved with the Parishes display the Summer Fete which created a lot of interest and on a similar theme assist with the recent public meeting regarding the community lead plan and emergency plan.

There have been a few issues brought to my attention first, an off road motor cycle which drives through the village and surrounding area, with assistance I have spoken the carer of the young man and with PCSO Carr will be advising him regarding his actions.

There has also been damage caused to a sapling on the village green. I was told that it was caused by young children climbing it and it has not reoccurred however the branch is still hanging.

A complaint was received about two dogs running free causing a nuisance, these were found to belong to the landlord of the Plough who has since left so any reoccurrence is unlikely. On a similar theme two other dogs were reported to the ABC dog warden having bitten a resident and were later cornered in a chicken run in Lees Road and removed by the Dog Warden and I.

I have been e-mailed by your clerk of an incident in Sandy Place about the ongoing problem of parking and would happy to assist in anyway possible.

I understand that reports have been received by Police of an assault at the Plough PH and a burglary in Lees Close where money was stolen.

I 'am also aware that it is being said by some residents that there is a sex offender living in the village. As you can appreciate this is a very sensitive issue and one which cannot be confirmed or denied by the Police due to Data protection but I have forwarded to them all the information I was told so if they were unaware, they are not now.

Finally there has been a particularly vindictive case of criminal damage at the Warren where a resident has had their vehicle tyres punctured and there garden destroyed with presumably weedkiller, hopefully this will be an end to the matter but I 'am supporting the family and has spoken to them about putting an item in the parish magazine.

Graham Kingston