

SMEETH PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council
Held at 7.00pm on Wednesday, 12th September 2012
At Brabourne Baptist Church

1. Present

Cllr Austen (Chairman) (SA), Cllr Herrick (Vice-chairman) (DH), Cllr Mrs Williams (MW), Cllrs Hinchliffe (MH), Plowright (IP), Turner (MT) and Mrs S Wood (Clerk) (SW).

The meeting was attended by Cllr Howard (ward member) (WH).

No members of the public were present.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Thorpe (prior commitment) and the Community Warden (GK).

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

4. Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 11th July, 2012 be agreed and signed as a true record.

5. Matters Arising

5.1 Footpaths and Highways

5.1.1 Church Road claimed footpath. The Planning Inspectorate is consulting, a decision is due in October.

5.1.2 Footway improvements along Hythe Rd have been put forward to Cllr Wickham for inclusion in his Member Highways' Budget. No response as yet.

SW

5.1.3 Church Road is to be resurfaced using money from Cllr Wickham's Highway Fund

5.1.4 The request for a 30mph speed limit on The Ridgeway has been refused.

5.1.5 KCC is updating the Definitive Map of Footpaths and has asked to be notified of any inaccuracies – Footpaths' Association to be contacted.

SW

5.2 Speeding in Smeeth

5.2.1 One new volunteer has come forward, and one exercise carried out. The need for more volunteers is being readvertised in Parish News.

SW

5.2.2 There has been no response to the request for a 50mph speed limit on the A20. Cllr Howard noted that bus companies would object because of the impact on timetables. Cllr Hinchliffe stated that there is a proposal to allow Parish Councils to vary speed limits; the Chairman advised that this would not apply to the A20 as it is a trunk road. Cllr Plowright noted it may be part of the CLP.

5.3 Parking in Sandy Place Cllr Howard is referring this to the Portfolio holder for Housing, due to the lack of response from officers.

5.4 Community Led Plan (CLP) Cllr Plowright reported that the group now has a Constitution. A meeting was held on 5th September; the group will divide into 2 working parties and will progress the plans. More volunteers are needed.

5.5 Emergency Plan Cllr Hinchliffe advised that Cllr Mrs Beavers has had to withdraw because of work commitments, it is hoped that her replacement will be from Brabourne so that the parish is represented. Pastor Tim Simpson is chairing the Working Group and work will begin in late October. Cllr Hinchliffe is preparing a 15min interactive presentation for local groups, eg WI, Allotment Society. He has contacted the Kent Resilience Forum and ABC's Emergency planners, the latter are willing to help.

5.6 Housing Needs Survey English Rural is liaising with the owner of the site identified as suitable. The Parish Council has received a letter offering a meeting to discuss whether there is any interest in making additional land available for local housing for local people. Cllr Howard advised that any such land would be an 'exception site' as there are no designated development sites in Smeeth in the Tenterden and Rural Sites Development Plan Document. Housing on exception sites must be affordable. The letter is to be passed to ACRK's Rural Housing Enabler after which a reply will be discussed.

5.7 Damage to verges in the parish It was noted that cars are still parking on the verge by the Nursery – these may be staff cars. It is unclear if parents are using the driveway, the

6. Community Warden's report

Mr Kingston's report is attached.

7. Financial Report**7.1 To agree payments in accordance with the Budget.**

Resolved:

That the following payments be made in accordance with the Budget

Payments

Details	£
I Plowright (Jubilee celebrations expenses)	494.49
Audit Commission (audit fee)	162.00
Mrs B Podd (salary)	94.24
S Wood (net salary August)	212.15
S Wood (net salary September)	212.15
S Wood (expenses)	142.69

Receipts

Details	£
NatWest interest	2.01
KCC member community grant (Jubilee celebrations)	500.00

Balance £ 15664.24

The Annual Return has been approved.

7.2 To consider a donation to the Brabourne and Smeeth Allotment Society

The Society has asked for a donation to help with costs of a mower and bush cutter. Further information is to be sought and brought to the next meeting.

7.3 To consider a request for dog waste bins in Plain Road and Woolpack Hill

The Dog Warden's advice as to suitable locations in these areas is to be sought and brought to the next meeting.

7.4 To consider subscribing to Parish Online

Cllrs Plowright and Hinchliffe reported that the site is easy to use and would be of help for the Emergency Plan. The annual subscription for the parish would be £20, with a one-off joining fee of £20. The Chairman stated that one person should be responsible for uploading information; this will be discussed at a later date.

Resolved:

That Smeeth Parish Council subscribes to Parish Online.

8. Planning Committee report

In Cllr Thorpe's absence (Chairman of the Planning Committee), the Vice-Chairman gave the report.

The following applications had been received:

Conversion of ancillary building and annex for use by a family member. No objections.

Change of use of skip depot in Aldington to waste depot. Concerns expressed re vehicle usage in Church Road were the application to be permitted.

Rebuilding of a barn. Comments submitted re size, and the possibility of conversion to living accommodation rather than storage.

Construction of carport and garden store, installation of window and internal alterations to main dwelling. No objections.

A letter expressing objections to an application at Evegate for installation of a PV array had been sent to Cllr Thorpe, who 'phoned the correspondent to discuss the concerns.

Cllrs are asked to inform the Clerk if they plan to be away, so that circulation of planning applications is not delayed.

9. KALC report

The Vice-chairman reported that the Minutes of the meeting 18th July had been circulated.

SW

SW

The Localism Bill and Code of Conduct were among items discussed. The next meeting is on 3rd Oct. The KALC website has been updated and a new password issued; the Clerk to circulate to Cllrs.

SW

10. Crime and Disorder Act

Cllr Hinchliffe advised that under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 councils have a statutory duty to consider the impact on crime of its policies, and this should be Minuted. Guidance is to be sought from KALC. Cllr Howard advised looking at the Tenterden model.

SW

11. Community Safety Accreditation Scheme

Cllr Hinchliffe tabled information on the Scheme, which allows the Police to authorise other personnel to be accredited for certain powers, eg Dog Wardens are empowered to issue fines. KCC has decided against accreditation of Community Wardens; it was further noted that those accredited must be employed and not volunteers. Cllr Plowright noted that the scheme is for urban areas where businesses could run the scheme, and pay training costs. Cllr Plowright further stated that the Community Warden's report showed little need, therefore not adopting the scheme would not be at variance with the Crime and Disorder Act.

12. Report on the Code of Conduct 2012

Brought forward from item 13 with the Chairman's permission.

Cllr Plowright reported that he had reviewed both the Kent Code and the NALC Code, the former includes the Seven Principles of Public Life. Furthermore, the NALC Code is less legalistic in jargon but may, therefore, be more open to misinterpretation. Cllr Hinchliffe felt that the NALC Code is clearer. Cllr Howard advised that ABC has adopted the Kent Code, but it is to be further modified.

Cllr Plowright recommended adoption of the NALC Code, but with an appendix added giving the Seven Principles of Public Life.

13. Adoption of the Code of Conduct 2012

Resolved:

That the Code of Conduct 2012 as amended be adopted.

14. Amendments to Standing Orders.

The Clerk advised that Standing Orders refer to the 2007 Code and must, therefore, be amended; guidance had been issued by the Monitoring Officer. In paragraph 2 of the guidance 'The Member will withdraw from the meeting room immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence'. This should be deleted, as it would disadvantage a Councillor and remove the rights granted under section 12.2 of the 2007 Code of Conduct. Standing Order 3b should be amended, giving the Proper Officer the right to grant Dispensations on receipt of a written request, all such Dispensations to be recorded in the Minutes.

Resolved:

That Standing Orders for Smeeth Parish Council as amended be adopted.

It is a requirement of the Act that Councillors' Interests must be published on the Parish Council website. Guidance has not yet been issued by the Monitoring Officer, publication may, however, be in a form of the Council's choosing.

Resolved:

That the information be published in table form on the Parish Council's website.

15. Localism and its implications for Smeeth parish

Cllr Hinchliffe advised that if the Parish Council wishes to participate in the Handyman Scheme an expression of interest should be lodged with ABC. Smeeth may choose to join with other parishes or act independently, but information as to funding for possible tasks from ABC is needed. Such tasks may include mowing, cleaning signs, helping vulnerable residents.

Cllr Howard recommended that the parish liaise with Aldington, and will facilitate contact. An expression of interest would not be a commitment. Cllr Howard stated that Brabourne should also be involved.

WH

16. Any Other Business

16.1 The Chairman advised that letters re the broadband survey have been distributed.

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| <p>16.2 Cllr Hinchliffe's offer to renovate the Parish Council noticeboard was accepted, with thanks. The Community Warden will be notified and a notice put up when the board is taken down, to allay concerns.</p> <p>16.3 Cllrs were reminded that Fordred's charity will be on the agenda at the November meeting</p> <p>16.4 Cllr Hinchliffe will represent the Council at the Remembrance Day service.</p> <p>16.5 A letter has been received from the Smeeth and Brabourne Football Club. Having been awarded Charter status there are funding streams open to the Club; it aims to bring the Club back to the parish but needs to identify a suitable site. Hospital fields was suggested but it was thought that developing and extending the playing field would be more suitable. The Club was congratulated and the Parish Council's support offered. The Club was advised to contact Brabourne Estates, the Scouts and Guides and the Playing Field Association.</p> <p>16.6 The Cobbs Wood tip is to close on 1st October for 6 months. Temporary arrangements will be put in place.</p> | MH |
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17. Borough Councillor's report

Cllr Howard is to use his Member Grant to help with costs of the transfer of The Warren to Brabourne Parish Council, and is minded to make a small grant towards the new noticeboard. An appeal has been lodged with the Planning Inspectorate against the Borough Council's refusal to grant permission for the Silver Birches caravan site/lodge. K College has been delayed because of funding constraints. John Lewis at Home has been delayed but still plans to open the store in Ashford. Planning permission has been given for the Charter House development and funds are in place. Parking provision complies with ABC's standards (which exceed national specifications). Homebase at Sevington Business Park closed because renewal of its lease was refused by the landlord; it is unclear how the site will be used/developed. Elections for the post of Police Commissioner are to be held in November.

18. Date and time of next meeting

Wednesday, 14th November, 7.00pm at Brabourne Baptist Church

The meeting closed at 10.00pm

Community Warden's Report

My apologies for not attending the meeting but I have been asked to meet with Andrew Wickham KCC today and will therefore not be about this evening. I have little to report at present I am not aware of any crimes reported in Smeeth although there have been a few theft in neighbouring areas

I have reported a couple of matters to KCC Highways particularly a hedge bordering Pound Lane and restricting the carriageway, also the grass on the island at the junction of Church Road and The Ridgeway which is obstructing the view. I have also liaised with the ABC Dog Warden over a dog which got out on to Pound Lane and barked at children cycling passed.

I have also attended the community led plan steering group and will be assisting with publicity.

Graham Kingston