

SMEETH PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council
Held at 7.00pm on Wednesday, 14th November 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) and Graham Kingston (Community Warden) (GK).

No members of the public were present.

2. Apologies

There were no apologies.

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 12th September, 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's Decision is due to be determined during the week beginning 12th November. There were complaints that the path had been closed, but this was only temporary.

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 Complaints re a number of footpaths have been received:
Footpath in Brabourne been obstructed by electric fencing - no insulation is in place to allow pedestrian access. Farmers are to be asked to ensure that access is maintained.

SW

Footpaths through and around fields have been ploughed up. The latter are due to the closure of the Stour Valley Stewardship Scheme, which funded extra-wide strips for ecological reasons; these have now reverted to agriculture but the required 1m boundary has been left. Paths across fields were not reinstated within the required time and this was taken up with the PROW office. Sub-letting has caused additional difficulties.

5.2 Speeding in Smeeth Speedwatch was carried out in Church Road and Plain Road during October. Kent Police is planning a countywide Speedwatch day in late November. Two new volunteers have come forward.

5.3 Parking in Sandy Place The Chairman advised that the PC's proposals have been discussed with Paul Hills (Housing Services) Mr Hills is taking these to Helen Wilson and Phil Cook (both of ABC) following which a site meeting will be arranged.

5.4 Community Led Plan Cllr Plowright noted that more volunteers are needed. A presentation is being prepared, to be given to interested parties in 2014, possibly jointly with the Emergency Plan.

IP

5.5 Emergency Plan Cllr Hinchliffe advised that he is drafting a talk using the KCC template and guidance, which will be available as a Powerpoint presentation; Richard Graham and Tim Simpson will finalise the presentation, Cllr Hinchliffe will prepare the accompanying notes. Target groups have been identified and Mr Kingston is coordinating the diary for both groups' talks. Volunteers able to assist in an Emergency need to be identified. Cllr Hinchliffe advised that no costs have yet been incurred, but funds will be needed, eg for printing leaflets.

MH

GK

The Chairman thanked Cllrs Plowright and Hinchliffe for their efforts.

5.6 Housing Needs Survey Nothing to report.

5.7 Dog bins Smeeth PC has been allocated 2, to be sited in Church Road (near the claimed footpath) and at the north end of the footpath which runs past the Baptist Church.

SW

5.8 Parish Online Now operational, the username and password are to be circulated.

SW

<p>It was agreed that the Clerk be responsible for uploading information but to be notified if additional information is added.</p>	All																												
<p>5.9 Localism Cllr Hinchliffe's notes on the Handyman scheme were circulated; a meeting is to be arranged with Aldington in due course. Smeeth and Brabourne PCs have both registered an interest in the scheme and it is hoped to run it jointly with Brabourne. Cllr Plowright suggested that a joint list of required activities be drawn up. Cllr Howard advised that this may lead to difficulties when allocating funds, and recommended that 1 parish takes the lead, being responsible for funding for both. Cllrs Hinchliffe and Plowright asked that a joint meeting be held with Brabourne PC in January.</p>	WH																												
<p>5.10 Parish Council noticeboard repairs In hand.</p>	SW MH																												
<p>6. Community Warden's report Mr Kingston's report is attached. Further to Mr Kingston's report, the Chairman and Cllr Hinchliffe noted that The Rising Fives Nursery is complying with its planning permission. Parking outside Smeeth School: it is felt that parking close to the junction with Caroland Close gives rise to more problems than parking on the zigzag markings. The Chairman noted that there have been more accidents at Smeeth crossroads, statistics are to be requested from Highways. Sight lines are obscured by A boards, a hedge and a telegraph pole.</p>	SW																												
<p>7. Financial Report</p>																													
<p>7.1 To agree payments in accordance with the Budget. Resolved: That the following payments be made in accordance with the Budget.</p>																													
<p>Payments</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Details</th><th>£</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>HMRC PAYE Q2</td><td>159.00</td></tr> <tr> <td>Parish online subscription</td><td>36.00</td></tr> <tr> <td>S Wood (net salary October)</td><td>212.15</td></tr> <tr> <td>S Wood (net salary November)</td><td>212.15</td></tr> <tr> <td>Smeeth and Brabourne Football Club (donation)</td><td>150.00</td></tr> <tr> <td>CPRE (Drought conference)</td><td>75.00</td></tr> <tr> <td>Mrs B Podd (salary)</td><td>129.00</td></tr> <tr> <td>S Wood (paper and ink)</td><td>12.10</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Receipts</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Details</th><th>£</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>NatWest interest</td><td>2.07</td></tr> <tr> <td>Bedingfield Educational Endowment</td><td>15.00</td></tr> <tr> <td>Precept</td><td>3795.00</td></tr> <tr> <td>Concurrent Functions Grant</td><td>410.00</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Balance £ 18901.41</p>		Details	£	HMRC PAYE Q2	159.00	Parish online subscription	36.00	S Wood (net salary October)	212.15	S Wood (net salary November)	212.15	Smeeth and Brabourne Football Club (donation)	150.00	CPRE (Drought conference)	75.00	Mrs B Podd (salary)	129.00	S Wood (paper and ink)	12.10	Details	£	NatWest interest	2.07	Bedingfield Educational Endowment	15.00	Precept	3795.00	Concurrent Functions Grant	410.00
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<p>7.2 Draft Budget for 2013-2104 The Clerk advised that contradictory advice had been received from SLCC, NALC and ABC's Monitoring Officer regarding the declaration of DPIs for Precept setting. The Chairman noted that all councillors had sought Dispensations to enable them to participate in discussion and vote on the Budget, as per SLCC and NALC advice. The Monitoring Officer later stated that Precept setting is an Authority Function and that, therefore, Dispensations are not required. The Clerk presented the draft Budget. Discussion ensued as to the level of Reserves necessary to fund projects in the parish, and the likely financial implications arising from the reduction and eventual withdrawal of the Concurrent Functions Grant. An increase in the Precept to £7740 was proposed, to offset the lower Grant. Resolved: That Smeeth Parish Council is minded to raise the Precept for 2013-2014 to £7740.</p>																													

Further information has been received from the Allotment Society regarding its request for a donation to help with costs of capital equipment.

Resolved:

That Smeeth Parish Council purchases equipment up to a value of £125 for the Allotment Society.

7.3 To consider a request from the Kent Tree and Pond Warden Schemes for a donation

Resolved:

That the request be refused.

7.4 To consider a request from Victim Support for a donation

Cllr Mrs Williams asked how many Smeeth residents have been helped under the Scheme.

The Chairman advised that this is unknown, as the information is confidential

After debate:

Resolved:

That a donation of £125 be made to Victim Support.

8. Planning Committee report

8.1 Planning applications Cllr Thorpe (Chairman, Planning Committee) reported on 2 applications:

Provision of a car park at Evegate Business Park. No objections, but the Committee commented that a pedestrian walkway should be marked out, and because the scheme is for more than 20 cars measures should be put in place to counter oil spillages.

Cllr Thorpe queried the need for the scheme as there is an underused car park on the site.

Side extension at Katoomba, Woolpack Hill. Complaints had been received re the building of a summerhouse in the garden, however this is within permitted development rights. No objections, the Committee noting that it is a well thought out scheme.

8.2 Land behind Fortescue Place The Chairman reported that an approach had been made to the Parish Council by representatives of Kent Planning, agents for the landowner. An informal meeting was held on 8th November, attended by the Chairman and Clerk – Jon Ede (Brabourne PC Chairman) had hoped to attend but was called away on a family emergency.

The agents stated that while there are, at present, no plans for the land, given the success of the Fortescue Place development they had been instructed to ask the PC if there would be interest in a similar scheme. Landscaping and design quality were among issues raised; there is the possibility of mixed development to help defray costs, development could be piecemeal. In answer to a question from Cllr Mrs Williams, the Chairman advised that there are several options for access, eg from Ramstone Close.

Drawings are to be submitted by Kent Planning for discussion at the January meeting. The Chairman stated that any such development is not in the Borough Plan, and public meetings and residents' agreement would be needed.

Cllrs Thorpe and Hinchliffe advised that part of the land is boggy, the Chairman replied that drains are in situ.

8.3 Land rear of Bob Fisher's Garage (11/01278/AS) It was noted that this application remains undetermined, 12 months after validation. It was supported by the PC, and will be determined by the Planning Committee, at the request of Cllrs Howard and Wood.

9. KALC report

The Vice-chairman reported that the Minutes of the meeting 3rd October had been circulated. The Localism Bill, new Code of Conduct and KALC working parties were among items discussed. It is hoped that the latter will be proactive rather than reactive. The AGM is on 17th November; the Annual Report is held by the Vice-chairman and will be made available on request. The next meeting is on 12th December, 7.30pm in the Civic Centre. Information on the Crime and Disorder Act is available on the KALC website.

10. General Power of Competence

Resolved:

That having satisfied itself that it meets the eligibility criteria, Smeeth Parish Council adopts the Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) 2012; such Power ceasing to have effect if the criteria cease to be met and unless a further Resolution is passed at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

11. Amendments to Standing Orders

Resolved:

That having adopted the General Power of Competence, Standing Orders be amended as follows:

- i) Before exercising the General Power of Competence, a meeting of the full Council shall have passed a Resolution that it has satisfied the prescribed statutory criteria required to qualify as an eligible parish council.
- ii) The Council's period of eligibility begins on the date the resolution under Standing Order i) above was made and expires on the day before the annual meeting of the Council that takes place in a year of ordinary elections.
- iii) After the expiry of its preceding period of eligibility, the Council continues to be an eligible council solely for the purpose of completing any activity undertaken in the exercise of the power which was not completed before the expiry of the Council's preceding period of eligibility referred to in Standing Order i) above.

12. Dates for future meetings

16th January 2013, 13th March (and Annual Parish Meeting), 15th May (Annual Meeting of the Parish Council), 10th July, 11th September and 13th November.

13. Any Other Business

13.1 Cllr Thorpe noted that the Smeeth and Brabourne Football Club is hoping to relocate to the village from Sellindge and is looking for a site. Although the playing field is suitable the changing facilities are inadequate for its purposes; the Playing Field Association is hoping to raise funds for new changing rooms. Consideration is being given to the installation of a portacabin as a temporary measure. The Chairman noted that the PC had offered its support at the September meeting.

13.2 Cllr Howard advised that his Member Community Grant fund is still open. Any application would need to benefit the community and have the PC's approval.

Elections for the post of Police and Crime Commissioner are to be held on 15th November.

14. Motion to exclude the public

It is proposed that, 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 15, namely distribution of Fordred's Charity payments.

Resolved:

That the press and public leave during discussion on item 15, namely distribution of Fordred's Charity payments.

Following the passing of the Resolution, the Chairman suspended the public part of the meeting and Cllr Howard and Mr Kingston left the meeting.

15. Distribution of Fordred's Charity payments

Resolved:

Cllrs Thorpe and Hinchliffe will distribute the payments, as agreed.

17. Date and time of next meeting

Wednesday, 16th January 2013, 7.00pm at Brabourne Baptist Church

The meeting closed at 9.40pm

Community Warden's Report

Since the last meeting I have been made aware of several crimes which have occurred in the village and close area. There was a domestic burglary in Canterbury Road where a laptop was stolen and several other electrical items damaged. Following a road crash in Bridge Road a vehicle had property stolen from it and was set on fire, there were also two offences of criminal damage on Halloween where it appears that stones may have been catapulted through windows. There has also been a report of theft of bantams in the last week.

Following the last meeting I was asked to monitor the parking in the Plain Road / Plain Hill area particularly in respect of the nursery, and I can report that I did not witness any illegal, dangerous parking or obstruction of the highway. Parents and staff park there on a daily basis but I cannot see an alternative which is anymore acceptable to residents. I have spoken to the couple who expressed their concerns and told them my views.

I recently attended a meeting regarding road safety and found that Smeeth primary school is one of a few schools in the area that will have the parking restrictions legally enforced. This will be accompanied with education and will be advertised at the appropriate time.

Graham Kingston