

SMEETH PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council
Held at 7.00pm on Wednesday, 19th January 2011
At Brabourne Baptist Church

1. Present

Cllr Austen (Chairman), Cllrs Herrick, Lilley, Plowright, Thorpe, Turner and Mrs S Wood (Clerk).
The Neighbourhood Officer (who arrived during item 14, after another meeting) and two members of the public were in attendance.

2. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Honey (borough councillor) and the Community Warden.

3. Declaration of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest..

4. Election of the Vice-chairman of the Parish Council and Chairman of the Planning Committee

Resolved:

That Cllr Herrick be elected as Vice-chairman of the Parish Council.

Resolved:

That Cllr Thorpe be elected as Chairman of the Planning Committee.

5. Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 10th November 2010 be approved and confirmed as a true record.

6. Matters Arising

• **Footpaths and Highways**

- a) Repairs are being carried out on the A20 footpath at Hatch End. Work on the path in Smeeth is due to begin in March, having been postponed from September. The necessity for the work has been queried by a resident who felt that the cost is not justified by the usage.
- b) KCC has begun processing the application to designate the Church Road footpath as a Public Right of Way. A number of residents will be contacted for anecdotal evidence of use.
- c) Potholes on the A20, Church Road and The Ridgeway are to be reported to Highways. It was noted that many of these are failed repairs, and that the problem is also extant on motorways.
- d) The Parish Council continues to monitor parking problems in Sandy Place. Current financial restraints mean it is unlikely that additional spaces will be made available in the near future; residents should recognize that parking is for Sandy Place residents only.

• **Speeding in Smeeth**

Speed checks are being carried out, on different days and at different times. Warnings have been given to offenders but, as yet, no prosecutions have been brought. Cllrs Lilley and Plowright reported that the checks are reducing traffic speed.

• **Recycling facilities**

The blue box scheme is being extended to urban Smeeth and Plain Road, although precise details are unclear, and will collect cans and bottles. The Scouts and Guides will continue to collect newspapers, but it is not known if the boxes will carry stickers reminding residents of the paper collection. The Chairman

and the Vice-chairman emphasised the necessity for publicising recycling and the Scouts and Guides' paper collection. The Chairman said that the need for a recycling facility should be re-evaluated after the blue box scheme has started, although Cllr Turner felt that a recycling facility would still be needed. Cllr Lilley noted the reservations of the Playing Fields' Association, and said that although the playing field car park is an area where children congregate, there is also adult supervision. It was further stated that the land had been leased to the community by Brabourne Estates, so should be used by the community for a community project such as recycling. Cllr Plowright said that adverse publicity at Aldington re broken glass has raised concerns with the PFA; the Chairman stated that bottles would be collected by the blue box. Cllr Plowright replied that there is, therefore, no need for a bottle skip. The Clerk is to submit an application for a grant from ABC for hardstanding for the skips. Cllr Thorpe suggested an alternative site near The Plough – this is to be raised with Shepherd Neame.

- **Litter collection on the playing field**

Cllr Lilley stated that this has been less of a problem of late. The Clerk advised that the Probation Service can offer only an occasional service.

- **Traffic Management Forum**

Cllr Plowright advised that the next meeting is on 16th February.

The KALC motion re a reduction in the speed limit from 60mph to 50mph on C and unclassified rural roads has been approved and gone forward to NALC for consideration.

7. **Report from the Community Warden**

The Clerk gave the Warden's report in his absence.

The Christmas period was quiet, and the problem of dog fouling is being monitored: bags are being given to dog walkers and an article on the penalties for dog fouling is to be put in the Parish News.

Funding has been secured for the Community Warden scheme for the next 2 years.

8. **Report from the Neighbourhood Officer**

PC Laker's report was circulated to all councillors.

The Chairman stated the Council's appreciation of the feedback and information.

Cllrs Lilley and Plowright attended the Police Forum on 12th January and stated that other Councils had also thanked the Police for this information, which is gratifying. The Chairman said that a visible Police presence is important.

9. **Financial Report**

Resolved:

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

Payments

Details	£
Mrs B Podd (salary)	71.55
SLCC – annual subscription	30.68
S Wood (refuse sacks)	24.06

Receipts

Details	£
NatWest interest	1.73
Fordred's Charity	168.00

Balance £ 13572.63

10. To receive the report of the Planning Committee

Three applications have been received since the last meeting, two of which were retrospective. Comments were not submitted on the third. The application for change of use from a care home (C2) to residential has been received; although the property is in Brabourne this was sent as a courtesy.

11. Report from KALC representative

The December meeting was cancelled because of an emergency Parish Forum meeting. The next meeting is on 2nd February and the Chief Constable (Mr Ian Learmonth) will be present. Questions were invited for submission: Smeeth Parish Council had been assured that police presence in the parish would be increased after the move of the Custody Suite from Ashford to Folkestone, but this has not been evident. Comments would be welcomed from Mr Learmonth.

12. To receive and adopt the 2010 Standing Orders

The following corrections were made:

Section 1m: standing order 6 to 5

Section 3xii: standing orders 10(a) and (b) to 9(a) and (b)

Section 5b: standing order 6(c) to 5(c)

Section 6b: standing order 7(a) to 6(a)

Section 6c: standing order 7(b) to 6(b)

Section 6b: standing order 7(a) to 6(a)

Section 9b: standing order 10(a) to 9(a)

Section 15b: standing order 17(a) to 15(a)

Section 16b: standing order 17(a) to 16(a)

Section 16c: standing order 17(b) to 16(b)

Resolved:

That, subject to these corrections, the 2010 Standing Orders for Local Councils be adopted by Smeeth Parish Council.

13. Casual vacancy on Smeeth Parish Council

The vacancy will remain unfilled until the elections on May 5th, due to statutory requirements regarding the timing of bye-elections or co-option of councillors.

14. Organisation of the 2011 Summer Fete

A joint meeting with Brabourne Parish Council is to be held on Saturday, 29th January at 10.30am at Brabourne Baptist Church. Cllr Thorpe advised that the Fete Committee is willing to continue but a new Chairman is needed. It was noted that Mrs Julie Beavers (former Fete Committee Chairman) cannot attend but is willing to help on the day of the fete and advise the new Chairman.

The Parish Council expressed its gratitude to Mrs Beavers for her hard work over many years organizing the Fete.

The Chairman thanked PC Laker for his written report (see item 8) and invited him to address the Council. PC Laker stated that, during the speed checks, other offences are also being recorded, such as not wearing seat belts. A spate of heating oil thefts has been reported in Aldington and Mersham, and residents are asked to be vigilant.

In answer to a question from Cllr Lilley, PC Laker said that he does not know the name of the current Neighbourhood Watch coordinator, but will make enquiries. He also stated that contacts for 'Ringmaster' would be welcomed, which is a way of disseminating information by email.

PC Laker was thanked by the Chairman for his efforts on behalf of the Parish.

15. Any Other Business

- The Parish Council has been asked to publicise the 90th anniversary of the Royal British Legion. 'Poppy Parties' are encouraged over the weekend of 10th – 12th June and anyone holding such an event is asked to notify the Royal British Legion.
- Brabourne Parish Council is looking at the possibility of purchasing The Warren from the borough council. Smeeth Parish Council has been asked to consider making a contribution to costs. This will be discussed at a later meeting when more information is available.

The Chairman invited the members of the public present to raise any matters of concern. The Parish Council was asked if a 20mph speed limit is to be introduced in the village; it was noted that although these limits are in force in other areas, there is no such plan for Smeeth. Cllr Lilley stated that the Chairman of Brabourne Parish Council had carried out a review of speed limits in Brabourne but no action had been proposed.

16. Date and time of next meeting

9th March 2011 in Brabourne Baptist Church immediately after the Annual Parish Meeting, which begins at 7.00pm.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.