Smeeth Parish Council Minutes of the Annual General Meeting Held on Wednesday 22nd May at 7.00pm at Brabourne Baptist Church

1. Present

Action

Cllr Herrick (Chairman) (DH), Cllr Thorpe (Vice-chairman) (GT), Cllr Mrs Alford (HA), Cllr Mrs Morey (JM), Cllr Mrs Moo (YM), Cllr Mrs Pereboom (VP), Cllr Kimpton (RK) and Mrs Wood (Clerk) (SW). Nine members of the public were present.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Howard (ward member). Cllr Howard was congratulated on his re-election as ward member.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

4. Election to Parish Council roles

Resolved:

That the following be elected: Chairman: Cllr Herrick Vice-chairman: Cllr Thorpe

Planning Committee: Cllr Mrs Pereboom (Chairman), Cllr Thorpe, Cllr Herrick but applications

thought to be contentious will be referred to the whole Parish Council

Playing Field representative: Cllr Herrick Village Hall representative: Cllr Thorpe

Village Caretaker Management Committee: Cllr Mrs Morey

KALC: Cllr Mrs Morey

Community Led Plan representative: Cllr Herrick

5. Declaration of Acceptance of Office

The Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed by Cllr Mrs Alford, Cllr Mrs Morey, Cllr Mrs Moo, Cllr Mrs Pereboom, Cllrs Herrick, Thorpe and Kimpton, and received by the Clerk, the Proper Officer of the Parish Council.

6. Adoption of the General Power of Competence

Resolved:

That Smeeth Parish Council satisfies itself that it continues to meet the eligibility criteria for the Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) 2012 adopted at its meeting held on 22nd May 2019; 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.

7. Appointment of Internal Auditor

The Clerk advised that the internal audit function must be sufficiently independent from the management of financial controls and procedures of the Parish Council. The person carrying out internal audit must be competent to carry out the role in a way that meets the business needs of the Parish Council.

The internal auditor must not have any involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the Parish Council, or with the Council's financial controls and procedures.

It was proposed that Mr Paul Fenwick be appointed as Internal Auditor.

Resolved:

That Mr Paul Fenwick be appointed as Internal Auditor and will review and report to the Parish Council whether its systems of financial and other internal controls over its activities and operating procedures are effective.

8. Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Parish Council Meetings held on 6th March and 24th April 2019 be approved and confirmed as true records.

SW

9. Borough Councillor's report

No report in Cllr Howard's absence.

10. Open Session

The meeting was suspended to allow members of the public present to raise matters of concern with the Parish Council.

Clarification was sought on the role of Clair Bell, who attended the Annual Parish Meeting. The Chairman replied that Mrs Bell is the county councillor for Smeeth, but is also a borough councillor. In her position as county councillor she can help with problems regarding, eg highways and education, which are the responsibility of KCC, either directly or passing these on. The Chairman advised that ClIr Howard is a borough councillor.

The meeting was reconvened.

11. Matters Arising

11.1 6th March 2019

- **11.1.1** War memorial: The railings are now in place. Earlier concerns re the primrose bank at the rear have been addressed. George Taylor was presented with a KALC Community Award at the Annual Parish Meeting for his work on the memorial restoration.
- **11.1.2** Woodturners: The complaint re light pollution was followed up by the Vice-chairman, who had been told that it was due to a faulty time clock. This should now have been resolved.
- **11.1.3** Village confines: These have been adopted by ABC with the amendments proposed by the Parish Council, together with an additional amendment to the confines in Canterbury Road, Brabourne.
- **11.1.4** Application to register Hospital Field as a village green: The Inspector's report is awaited. Brabourne Parish Council will be sent a copy for comment. The decision on the application will then be made by KCC as the registration authority for village greens.

11.2 24th April 2019

- **11.2.1** Andrews Garage: The Parish Council's comments were submitted following the joint meeting with Brabourne Parish Council. These were later clarified to ensure that the planning officer was aware that the Parish Council still objected to the proposals, given that the original comments may have been misinterpreted. The officer has confirmed that the objection comment has been recorded.
- **11.2.2** Otterpool: The Parish Council's comments have been submitted, which stressed concerns re the traffic impact on the A20, education and flooding. Cllr Mrs Pereboom advised that she attended a public consultation on the proposals but noted that it was disappointing, being more akin to a sales pitch than informative.

Cllr Mrs Pereboom advised that a natural burial ground is in the proposals, but provision for places of worship is unclear, the Clerk to follow-up.

SW

12. PCSO report

The PCSO has offered to hold quarterly meetings with Parish Council representatives, this was welcomed. The Chairman noted that the Police issues bulletins, particularly on rural matters. The Clerk will ask if these can be disseminated further, eg on the Parish Council website and social media.

SW

Cllr Kimpton asked that, given the rise in the use of social media, would Cllr Howard be running a social media account for Bircholt ward, eg on Facebook, similar to that run by Jane Martin when ward member for Saxon Shore. To be followed-up by the Clerk.

SW

13. Financial Report

13.1 To approve the Annual Governance Statement

Resolved:

That the Annual Governance Statement be approved.

13.2 To approve the Statement of Accounts for the year Resolved:

That the Statement of Accounts for the year be approved.

13.3 To agree payments in accordance with the Budget Resolved:

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

Payments

Details	£
ACRK (subscription)	52.00
P Rodway (salary)	1185.12
HMRC (P Rodway)	283.86
KCC re Pension scheme (P Rodway pension)	413.77
P Rodway (Q4 mobile)	25.00
Lister Wilder	3.83
P Rodway (salary)	1359.95
HMRC (P Rodway)	354.88
KCC re Pension scheme (P Rodway pension)	428.75
Lister Wilder	321.00
KALC (training)	72.00
Fuel Genie	124.77
Fuel Genie	174.22
S Wood	322.14
S Wood	322.14
B Podd	197.04
KALC (training)	60.00
KALC (subscription)	349.01
Zurich Municipal	623.48
T Denne & Sons (caretaker storage)	108.00
Brabourne Baptist Church (hall hire)	134.88
Ashford Borough Council (Sandy Place works)	3404.02
Village caretaker account	2000.00
S Wood (expenses)	29.74
P Rodway (expenses)	92.97
P Rodway (salary)	1427.82
KCC re Pension scheme (P Rodway pension)	478.81
HMRC (P Rodway)	409.71
Village caretaker account	21325.23

Receipts

Details	£
Brabourne Parish Council (caretaker reimbursement)	91.55
NatWest interest	32.23
Smeeth Field Rent	175.00
Precept	11869.00
Council Tax Support Grant	282.00
Concurrent Functions Grant	185.00
VAT refund	117.22
ABC (village caretaker)	5000.00
KCC (Village caretaker	8589.05
Village caretaker account (reimbursement for payments	5167.68
to date)	

Current and savings account £ 58440.41 Village caretaker account £20657.55

13.4 To agree the addition of Councillor Mrs Moo and Councillor Kimpton as signatories to the Parish Council's bank accounts

Resolved:

That Councillor Mrs Moo and Councillor Kimpton be added as signatories to the Parish Council's bank accounts.

YM/RK

14. Planning Committee report

The Vice-chairman reported that four applications had been received:

19/00504/AS Hazel Hatch Cottage, 6 Lily Vale Cottages Conversion of garage to ancillary accommodation. The Planning Committee objected, because of safety concerns re lift-access only to the first floor.

19/00511/AS 2 Ridgeway Cottages, The Ridgeway Rear dormer installation and rebuild rear porch. The Planning Committee had no objection.

19/00300/AS The Pound House, Granary Court Road Internal works. The Planning Committee had no objection.

19/00614/AS Gwending, Plain Road Proposed extensions. The Planning Committee objected because the description is inaccurate: this is, in effect, a demolition and rebuild.

15. Local Plan to 2030

The Chairman reported that the Local Plan has been adopted and is now a working document, but will be subject to regular reviews.

16. KALC representative report

Cllr Mrs Morey's report is attached to the Minutes. The next meeting on 29th May will be attended by Cllr Mrs Pereboom and Cllr Mrs Moo.

SW

17. Footpaths and Highways

17.1 J10A: Works are progressing and no overnight closures planned in the immediate future. Operation Brock (2-way working on the M20 northbound to Maidstone) will remain in place until October.

SW

- **17.2** Church Road: Potholes near the Kent Wool Growers Site will be reported. Problems re the footway near the Oak Room were reported to Highways; on inspection Highways advised that the footway is in such a state of disrepair that patching is not possible, it must be taken up and relaid this has been passed to the appropriate team.
- **17.3** Gasworks repairs on Plain Road: Problems re phasing of the traffic lights was reported an insufficient delay is allowed for traffic to pass when the lights turn to green. This will be reported to Clancy Docwra.

18. Community Led Plan and Emergency Plan

Community Led Plan (CLP): Installation of the outdoor gym on the green at The Warren is in hand. The CLP group was given an Environmental Achievement Award by ABC in a ceremony at Civic Centre, in recognition of its hard work and dedication to environmental projects; these included clearance of Hoskins Pond and the bulb planting. A copy of the Award will be posted in Orpins Stores.

Emergency Plan: A reply is awaited from Colin MacPhee re the possible handover to Steve Reeves. [Post-meeting note: A meeting is to be arranged (by Colin McPhee) with Steve Reeves and a number of Parish Councillors to progress the establishment of the Emergency Plan for the Parish.]

19. Village caretaker scheme

Cllr Mrs Morey's report is attached to the Minutes. The Clerk and caretaker had a meeting with Michelle Byrne (ABC Funding and Partnerships Officer) on 15th May at which the scheme was reviewed. Michelle Byrne confirmed that a new 5-year contract will be drawn up when the current contract expires in 2021, and she will put forward the Caretaker's Committee request that the ABC contribution to the scheme be increased in line with inflation.

SW

Cllr Turley (Mersham PC and Village Caretaker Committee member) undertook a financial review of the scheme, this has been circulated.

Astroturf in Mersham: This must be sprayed-out; the caretaker would have to undertake training for this task. Aspire has offered to quote for this task, the Clerk to follow-up.

20. Speedwatch

DH/MH

The Chairman advised that no sessions have been carried out recently, but more will be organised.

21. Local Needs Housing

The Chairman advised that a desk-top survey will be carried out to look for suitable sites for Local Needs Housing (LNH) in conjunction with Brabourne Parish Council, cf the development in Fortescue Place. It should be noted that LNH is not the same as affordable housing.

[LNH schemes are developed in partnership with Parish Councils, the Borough Council and a Housing Association. The small housing developments are kept for local people in perpetuity and can never be sold on the open market; they are offered for shared ownership with the Housing Association. A legal document is drawn up under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 between the Borough Council and the Housing Association to ensure the houses are kept in perpetuity for local people and will state clearly who is eligible for housing in the new development. The Parish Council is asked to confirm the local connection of applicants for LNH.] [Affordable housing: this must be provided at a level at which the mortgage payments on the property should be more than would be paid in rent on council housing, but below market levels. Developments above a certain size must include a given %age of affordable housing. These can be sold on the open market after first occupation.]

SW

22. Playing fields

A number of complaints have been received re balls landing in gardens in The Ridgeway, following installation of the basketball hoop. It was thought that some of these incidents may be deliberate, rather than missed throws during basketball games. Cllr Howard has offered a grant to the Playing Field Association for mitigating measures. The Clerk will write to the PFA Chairman advising him of Cllr Howard's offer. It was noted that all parties are anxious for a resolution.

23. Correspondence

SLCC training course on the new website accessibility regulations, 26th June at Ashford International Hotel. The Clerk to attend.

24. Any Other Business

- 24.1 The Chairman attended the St George's Day parade on behalf of Smeeth Parish Council.
- 24.2 Annual Parish Meeting: the Chairman noted that attendance was disappointing. The need for more publicity, particularly posters throughout the village, was acknowledged
- 24.3 VE Day 75th Anniversary Commemorations: www.veday75.org Friday 8th May 2020 (which may be a Bank Holiday). Smeeth will take part, likely with Brabourne. George Taylor will be asked for information on what is being planned by the Royal British Legion. It was noted that the Legion is arranging a number of events for the 75th Anniversary of D-Day, including Pork & Pimms.
- 24.4 A crossover and dropped kerb have been installed at Cherry Trees; it is unclear whether these have the necessary permission and have been reported to KCC Highways.

25. Date and time of next meeting

Wednesday July 3rd, 7.00pm in Brabourne Baptist Church.

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.

Agenda item 16: KALC representative report

I attended the last KALC meeting on 27th March. Discussion took place about the next steps to be taken on Local Plan 2030 and the Joint Parishes Planning Committee is being reinstated to consider the threats and opportunities posed by the Local Plan2030 - with emphasis on Policies HOU5 and SP7 . I was unable to attend the first meeting of Joint Parishes Committee in April and no doubt the minutes will be circulated in due course. A number of subjects were also discussed including lack of planning enforcement, problems that arise when roads within new developments are not adopted and maintenance of projects that are funded under s106 agreements.

The Joint Parishes Transport Committee is also being set up to plan liaison with KCC Highways for the year ahead.

CI Somerville gave a report on Ashford Community Safety Unit-he's now retired and his successors are CI Frittenden and Supt Brooks

The next KALC meeting is on 29th May when Simon Jones (KCC Highways) is due to attend but unfortunately I'm unable to attend and I would be grateful if another Councillor is able to attend in my place.

Agenda item 19: Village caretaker Report

The Caretaker scheme continues to be successful. Paul is now working his longer "Summertime" hours and, weather permitting, is able to work for longer hours during the day. His staff appraisal took place on April. It was agreed that his duties could now include mowing the grass at Smeeth School.

Sue Wood had a meeting with Michelle Byrne from ABC on 15th May. The contract with ABC runs for another 2 years after which another 5 year contract will be issued. Sue Wood has made formal request to ABC for ABC's contribution to be increased in line with inflation- the outcome is awaited!

A financial review of the scheme was conducted on behalf of the Cluster by Pete Turley of Mersham PC . As at the 31st March 2019 there is a small surplus of funds of £7736.18 which reflects the agreed objective to build a fund to finance future replacement of essential equipment, such as a second mower . Enquiries as to cost of courses in spraying and chain sawing are being made on behalf of the Cluster by Sue Wood.

A dedicated Account has now been opened to separate the village caretaker finances from general finances of Smeeth PC which will simplify the tracking of the Caretaker finances.