

SMEETH PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a meeting held on Wednesday 9th July 2014
at Brabourne Baptist Church

1. Present

Cllr Herrick (Chairman) (DH), Cllr Mrs Pereboom (VP), Cllr Hinchliffe (MH), Cllr Turner (MT) and Mrs S Wood (Clerk) (SW).

Mr Colin MacPhee (CM) and Cllr Howard (WH) (ward member) attended. Three members of the public were present.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Thorpe (Vice-chairman) and Cllr Plowright (prior commitments), Cllr Miss Martin (ward member), Mr Kingston (Community Warden) and PCSO Huckstepp.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

4. Co-option of councillor to fill casual vacancy

The Chairman proposed that Mr Colin MacPhee be co-opted to fill the vacancy which arose after Cllr Mrs Williams stepped down from the Parish Council.

Resolved:

That Mr Colin MacPhee be co-opted to fill the casual vacancy.

5. Declaration of Acceptance of Office

The Declaration of Acceptance of Office and Undertaking to Observe the Code of Conduct, was signed by Cllr MacPhee and received by the Clerk as the Proper Officer.

Cllr MacPhee was welcomed to the Parish Council by the Chairman.

6. Minutes of the meeting on Wednesday 14th May 2014

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting of 14th May be approved and signed as a true record.

7. Open Session

The Chairman suspended the meeting to allow members of the public to raise matters of concern with their Council.

No matters were raised.

The meeting was reconvened.

8. Matters Arising

8.1 Provision of external cabinet for the village defibrillator Cllr Hinchliffe reported that the company with which he had been in contact no longer makes the style of cabinet needed. It could, however, provide an alternative but this would cost more than £600 (cf the budgeted figure of £250). Mr Richard Graham contacted Composite Resin Developments – the company is able to provide a bespoke waterproof cover to go over the existing box. Costs are awaited but there are indications that Composite Resin Developments will provide the box free of charge. Cllr Hinchliffe is to notify the parish First Responder (Mr Ray Ashman) of the provision of the cabinet.

MH

8.2 Insurance of the village defibrillator The Clerk advised that the equipment has been added to Brabourne Parish Council's policy.

9. Community Warden and PCSO's reports

The Community Warden is currently on sick leave.

PCSO Huckstepp's report is attached.

Cllr Hinchliffe reported littering and apparent vandalism to trees on The Warren; it is now thought that the latter was accidental. The lack of response from Kent Police when the vandalism was first reported was regretted.

Cllr Howard suggested that the PC asks for ABC involvement with youth activities; it was noted that visits by the Youth bus ceased because of a lack of interest. Cllr Hinchliffe stated that a lack of facilities for young people had been recorded in the Community Led Plan questionnaire returns. Cllr MacPhee noted that the young people's questionnaires

had identified what facilities they would like in the parish, this included a Youth Shelter. The Chairman suggested that this engagement be encouraged, possibly by co-opting young people on to the Community Led Plan Committee.

10. Financial Report

10.1 Payments in accordance with the Budget.

Resolved:

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

Payments

Details	£
S Wood (gross salary June)	272.95
S Wood (gross salary July)	272.95
S Wood (expenses)	14.52
M Hinchliffe (signs)	21.48
ICO (DPA registration)	35.00
Barbara Podd (salary)	132.51

Receipts

Nil

Balance

£23629.64 as at 9th July 2014

10.2 Contribution to Brabourne Parish Council for the parish noticeboard on The Warren

The Clerk presented quotes for a lockable, glazed noticeboard. It was noted that this would prevent other notices being displayed; a combined noticeboard with lockable and public access bays was preferred. It was suggested that any board be two-sided, thus doubling the display area, and that a custom-made board might be obtained from a local craftsman at a lesser cost.

An offer from Mrs Samm Orgar to have a collecting box for donations towards the cost was welcomed.

These comments will be taken to the next meeting of Brabourne Parish Council.

A decision on a contribution from the PC was deferred until the next meeting.

SW

10.3 Donation to Kent Air Ambulance

Cllr MacPhee asked what is the PC's policy on requests for donations; the Chairman replied that there is no policy in place, requests being considered on a case by case basis. This will be discussed at the next meeting. It was noted that the PC has made donations to other charities, eg £125 was given to Victim Support. Cllr Turner proposed that £125 be give to Kent Air Ambulance.

SW

Resolved:

That Smeeth Parish Council donates £125 to Kent Air Ambulance.

11. Planning Committee report

The report was presented by the Chairman, in the absence of Cllr Thorpe (Committee chairman). Three planning applications are out for consultation, including one at Evegate – it is thought that there is no further opportunity for infilling within the curtilage.

Cllr Howard reported that a Licensing application for music at Evegate has been submitted; this was originally for the whole site, but is now limited to the Courtyard. A microbrewery is also proposed as an amenity for the 140 employees.

The Chairman stated that work has now begun on redeveloping the Old Rake Shed in Church Road following the granting of planning permission.

12. KALC

The Chairman reported that the last meeting was on 1st May and the next meeting will be on 16th July. The Minutes have been circulated; the main items for discussion were Finance and J10A.

The Chairman stated that J10A will be a full junction, and not partial as originally proposed, because funding is being made available by central government. Cllr Howard noted that KCC and ABC will be consultees, and local knowledge will be needed to address problems such as rat-running, eg in Mersham. The Clerk will circulate a map of the junction when it becomes available. Cllr Howard stated that more information will be

SW

given at a meeting on 10th July at Ebbsfleet, which will be attended by Lord Heseltine, John Bunnett (ABC CEO) and Cllr Clarkson (ABC Leader). He further reported that any development around J10A, eg warehousing, would require planning permission and is a separate issue from provision of J10A. Funding for the junction will be from a number of sources, including S106 agreements and the CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy). Other improvements being proposed include the dualling of the A28 between the 'tank roundabout' and Matalan roundabout in Ashford.

13. Footpaths and Highways

13.1 Smeeth crossroads The Chairman stated that improvements are being planned; Cllr Howard confirmed that funding is available. The PC will be consulted on the proposals.

13.2 The Ridgeway Resurfacing has been carried out.

13.3 Sandy Place Ownership of the grass verge has yet to be determined. Cllr Howard suggested that pre-application advice be sought from Planning.

SW/IP

13.4 Stiles and fences Complaints have been received about stiles and fences at Joe Farm. Cllr Thorpe is to be asked to walk the paths in question, following which advice will be sought from the PROW office. Cllr Howard proposed that the Chairman and Clerk be mandated to write to the tenant and landowner subject to the reply from the PROW office.

SW/GT

Resolved:

That the Chairman and Clerk write to the tenant and landowner of Joe Farm regarding the stiles and fences after taking advice from the PROW office.

DH/SW

13.5 Drainage Cllr Plowright has ascertained that the schedule for clearance has not been followed. The Clerk to contact Highways.

SW

13.6 Water leak in Plain Road To be reported to South East Water.

SW

13.7 Dislodged kerbstone on the footpath by the Baptist Church To be reported to Highways.

SW

13.8 Salt bags The Clerk is to ask for the removal of the salt bag in Bridge Road, and ask that a salt bin be provided. A similar request for Prospect Way will be passed to Brabourne Parish Council.

SW

14. Community Led Plan and Emergency Plan

14.1 Cllr Hinchliffe reported that 2 working groups have been set up, and that for the Emergency Plan met to discuss the format of the Plan. It was decided to use the Ashford template, the draft template will be completed by the end of July. Cllr Plowright is carrying out a risk analysis and Tim Simpson is creating a database of volunteers. The Community Led Plan group will meet later in July.

14.2 Alive and Well? A conference in Smarden on 27th September on dealing with the elderly and vulnerable. Booking costs are £10/delegate. Cllr Hinchliffe and Mr Graham wish to attend.

Resolved:

That Smeeth Parish Council pays for Cllr Hinchliffe to attend.

Brabourne Parish Council will be asked to meet Mr Graham's costs.

SW

15. Speedwatch

Cllr Plowright had reported some very successful Speedwatch sessions and only one was too wet. Five letters have been sent out for speeds above 35mph and for speed in excess of 45 in the past 2 months. A running challenge was set up at the village fete and Brabourne School summer fayre. Both events encouraged people to talk to the team about the speed of tractors in the village and in country lanes, sometimes with the driver on a mobile phone. PCSO Huckstepp is to be asked to organise checks in Canterbury Road between Brabourne School and the Five Bells. Cllr Plowright recommended that weight checks be carried out to ensure that tractor/trailer combinations with a full load of corn are being driven by someone in the proper age range.

SW

Cllr Turner reported that agricultural vehicles are working after midnight; it was noted that late working is seasonal.

16. Localism and village handyman

Notes of the joint meeting have been circulated. Cllr Hinchliffe reported on the very informative presentation by John Rivers (Wittersham PC chairman) on the operation of the village caretaker scheme in Wittersham. Cllr Rivers recommended that 1 PC in the cluster takes the lead, and that the caretaker's hours are not organised on a pro rata basis, but rather on what needs to be done. It was noted that ABC will make funding available, based upon the costs saved because of devolution of the services to the parishes. It was

agreed that a lead for the caretaker scheme is needed and Cllr Hinchliffe offered to fill the role pro tem. Cllr Hinchliffe will take the list of tasks in Smeeth and Brabourne to ABC. This and feedback arising will be taken to Brabourne, Brook and Mersham Parish Councils.

MH
SW

17. Playing fields

The Chairman advised that the remedial works have not yet begun because the required funding has not been forthcoming as yet. Negotiations are continuing with a number of funding bodies, and the works may have to be postponed until 2015.

18. Local needs housing

The Clerk reported that discussions are taking place with ACRK on 1 of the sites identified, and there has been a hopeful response by the owner of the additional site suggested by Cllr Plowright. The Chairman stated that sites near the playing fields have been ruled out.

19. Commemoration of the outbreak of the First World War

The Drumhead Service was held on 15th June, attended by the Deputy Lord Lieutenant. The Scouts and Guides paraded. Mr Graham was congratulated on the event. Cllr Hinchliffe's suggestion of a memorial garden will be taken to Brabourne Parish Council. The Chairman suggested a commemorative bench, but was advised that a previous bench had been vandalised.

SW

The Clerk reported that ABC is organising a number of events on 3rd and 4th August, and will participate in the national '4th August - Lights Out' initiative. Information is on the parish website.

20. Promotion of the parish

Cllr Hinchliffe suggested that a village directory be drawn up of all businesses, societies and amenities in the parish – this would be helpful to those moving into the parish. It was thought that this would complement the Community Led Plan. Cllr Howard stated that the information could also be published in a new Business section on the parish website. Care would have to be taken to ensure that the Parish News is not compromised by the possible duplication of material, given that local businesses pay to advertise in the magazine. Cllr Mrs Pereboom welcomed the suggestion, stating that it would show a vibrant community, but stressed the importance of regular updates.

21. Correspondence

All correspondence has been circulated.

21.1 New Model Standing Orders and Financial Regulations: published by NALC. The Clerk is to adapt them for the Parish Council and bring to the next meeting.

SW

21.2 Milestone Society newsletter: asking for information on milestones in the parish. To be passed to Cllr Thorpe.

SW

21.3 Streetlife: invitation to residents to sign up to a free service, similar to Facebook. To be sent to Parish News.

SW

22. Any Other Business

The Chairman suspended the meeting to allow Miss Orgar to address the Council.

Miss Orgar stated that elderly residents and those with no transport find it difficult to collect prescriptions from the Sellindge pharmacy. Her offer to act as a collection point was declined by Sellindge surgery. Cllr Turner suggested that this be raised at the Patient Support Group. [Post meeting note: this service is offered in Aldington.] Miss Orgar will pass information to the Parish Council.

The meeting was reconvened.

22.1 Cllr Howard invited applications from local clubs and societies for a Member Community Grant, with the criterion that the applications are supported by the Parish Council.

23. Date and time of next meeting

Wednesday 10th September 2014, at 7.00pm in Brabourne Baptist Church.

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.

PCSO's report

There have been two recorded crimes in the village since the last meeting.

The first was in relation to criminal damage to a vehicle in Sandy Place. The vehicle had been parked in Sandy Place overnight and it appears that someone has been along during the night and slashed the tyres on the vehicle. No other vehicles in the Close had been targeted.

The second was in relation to a criminal damage in The Ridgeway. The victim had a large ash tree growing in her front garden. The tree had been dying and the victim thought that this was because of natural causes however when she had a tree surgeon come to look at it to have it removed he notified the victim that the tree had holes drilled in the roots and it appears that someone has poured some form of weed killer into it killing the tree.

I have visited both victims as part of my daily routines and spoke to them about the incidents. I also gave them crime prevention advice to prevent any further incidents.

I have also been made aware that some of the local youths have been gaining access to the school grounds at the weekends. I have met with the Headmistress and spoke to her about the problem. It would appear that the previous hHad was happy for the local children to use the school grounds at the weekends, however there has been some damage caused to the perimeter fences and the new Head is not happy for the people to be there when the school is closed. I have been making regular patrols in the area during weekends and have moved on some youths who were happy to move on. I will keep an eye on the situation but hopefully they will stop using the school out of hours.

I will be holding my surgery at the store again this month and it will be on the 15th July at 4 o'clock so please visit me if you have any queries. I can offer some crime prevention advice or if you have something you wish to report I will be happy to help.

If you need to contact me please feel free to email me and I will get back to you as soon as I can. My email address is 58551@kent.pnn.police.uk

PCSO Andrew Huckstepp 58551.