

**Smeeth Parish Council**  
**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting**  
**Held on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2015 at 7.00pm**  
**Brabourne Baptist Church**

1. Present	Action
<p>Cllr Herrick (Chairman) (DH), Cllr Thorpe (Vice-chairman) (GT), Cllr Mrs Morey (JM), Cllr Mrs Pereboom (VP), Cllr Hinchliffe (MH), Cllr MacPhee (CM) and Mrs Wood (Clerk) (SW). Cllr Howard (ward member) and Mr Graham Kingston (Community Warden) attended. Three members of the public were present.</p>	
<p><b>2. Apologies</b>  Apologies were received from Cllr Plowright (prior commitment), Cllr Miss Martin (ward member) and PCSO Huckstepp.</p>	
<p><b>3. Declarations of Interest</b>  There were no Declarations of Interest.</p>	
<p><b>4. Election</b>  <b>Resolved:</b>  <b>That election of the following be Minuted:</b>  <b>Chairman: Cllr Herrick</b>  <b>Vice-chairman: Cllr Thorpe</b>  <b>Planning Committee: Cllr Thorpe (Chairman), Cllrs Herrick, Hinchliffe and Plowright</b>  <b>Playing Field representative: Cllr Plowright, Cllr Herrick (member of the Steering Committee)</b>  <b>Village Hall representative: Cllr Thorpe</b>  <b>KALC: Cllrs Herrick and MacPhee</b>  <b>J10A Working Group: Cllr Mrs Pereboom</b>  <b>Community Led Plan: Cllr Herrick</b></p>	
<p><b>5. Declaration of Acceptance of Office</b>  The Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed by Cllr Mrs Morey, Cllr Mrs Pereboom, Cllrs Herrick, Hinchliffe, MacPhee and Thorpe and received by the Clerk, the Proper Officer of the Parish Council.  <b>Resolved:</b>  <b>That Cllr Plowright signs the Declaration of Acceptance of Office at the next meeting of the Parish Council.</b></p>	
<p><b>6. Adoption of the General Power of Competence</b>  <b>Resolved:</b>  <b>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 14<sup>th</sup> May 2014; 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.</b></p>	
<p><b>7. Appointment of Internal Auditor</b>  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.  The Clerk advised that Mr John Coupe is willing to act as the Internal Auditor for the Parish Council and that the scope of the internal audit must be defined.  It was proposed that the internal auditor review and report to the Parish Council whether its systems of financial and other internal controls over its activities and operating procedures are</p>	

effective.

**Resolved:**

**That Mr John Coupe 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 Annual Parish Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015 and the Parish Council Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015 be approved and confirmed as a true record.**

**9. Open Session**

The Chairman suspended the meeting to allow members of the public to raise concerns with the Council.

Mr Hatcher reported continuing problems re parking at Smeeth School, including parking on the pavement at Caroland Close. A petition had been raised asking that the problems be addressed – this had attracted 78 signatures. Mr Hatcher stated that he has also emailed Damian Collins MP, who had responded noting the powers available to local authorities. The Chairman stated that he held a meeting with the Headmistress, Community Warden and a member of Kent Police, the latter agreed to ticket those who do not move their cars. The Chairman noted that this was only a temporary solution because the behaviour reverts when the Police do not attend. Mr Hatcher stated that residents in Caroland Close shared his concerns and would welcome yellow lines; the Chairman noted that KCC had advised that yellow lines and bollards cannot be put in. The Parish Council is discussing with KCC what measures it would find acceptable, the Parish Council is willing to put in funding. Cllr Howard stated that enforcement was the reason yellow lines could not be put in but queried the refusal to put in bollards; Chairman stated that this was because of the width of the pavement. Cllr Hinchliffe offered to measure the pavement width at the school and by the pond, where bollards have recently been put in. The Chairman stated that Andrew Wickham (county councillor) will be approached for his support and a site meeting held with KCC Highways. Cllr Howard noted that parking is available at the playing field. Mr Hatcher noted that there are a number of parents who refuse to park elsewhere; the Chairman advised Mr Hatcher to talk to the Police again given that PCSOs cannot issue tickets. Mr Kingston recommended railings or bollards to keep cars off the pavement: yellow lines cannot be enforced and a physical barrier is needed. Cllr Howard suggested that the Borough Council Enforcement team be involved; Mr Kingston noted that the team cannot issue tickets. He stated that he was unaware of the 'near misses'; Mrs Hatcher replied that parents have been reporting these incidents. Cllr Howard advised that Mersham School has taught pupils that they should not get out of the car when it is parked on the zigzag lines outside the school. In answer to a question from Cllr Hinchliffe Mr Kingston stated that parents are not allowed to use the school car park. Cllr Hinchliffe stated that this had been listed as an issue in recent Police and Highways' surveys. The Clerk noted that no reply has yet been received re installation of railings, this will be followed-up. Funding may be available from Andrew Wickham's Highways budget. Mr Hatcher will contact Damian Collins MP again.

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**10. Matters Arising**

**10.1** The defibrillator cabinet has been replaced; Cllr Hinchliffe reported that the instructions regarding means of access were wrong, he has added a correction. Users are asked to notify Mr Ashman (the First Responder) and Cllr Hinchliffe when it has been used so the pads can be replaced.

**10.2** The salt bin has been installed in Prospect Way. Signs showing Parish Council sponsorship have been affixed to the Smeeth salt bins.

**10.3** Plain Road water leak: Affinity Water has agreed to dig a trial hole but has not yet acknowledged that it may be mains water.

**10.4** The Clerk will discuss installation of new dog bins at Calland and the entrance to Hatch Park on The Ridgeway with the Dog Warden.

**10.5** 'No Parking' signs were requested for the entrance to the footpath on The Ridgeway and at the school. Cllr Howard will request that yellow lines are put down outside the school, following which civil enforcement will be possible. However such a request must go

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through the Joint Transportation Board which takes into account issues such as access by emergency vehicles and bin lorries.

**10.5** Footpath at Manse Field: Giles Holloway (Development and Regeneration Manager Ashford Borough Council) is working with residents on a solution.

### **11. Report from Community Warden and PCSO**

Mr Kingston stated that he was not aware of any crimes but he had received reports of antisocial behaviour on the green and littering; he is hoping to meet those responsible but has thus far been unsuccessful. Antisocial behaviour to the rear of the Estate Agents has been reported, the PCSO has been made aware. He noted that part of the Community Led Plan (CLP) is provision of facilities for young people and therefore residents should not be upset if the young people want a shelter. Mr Kingston advised that the area he covers may be extended to cover Sellindge. A Warden Support Scheme is being introduced and a pilot is being carried out.

PCSO Huckstepp's report is attached.

### **12. Financial Report**

#### **12.1 To approve the Statement of Accounts for the year**

The Clerk presented the draft Statement of Accounts for the year.

**Resolved:**

**That the Statement of Accounts be approved.**

#### **12.2 To approve the Annual Return**

**Resolved:**

**That the Annual Return be approved.**

#### **12.3 To agree payments in accordance with the Budget**

**Resolved:**

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

#### **Payments**

<b>Details</b>	<b>£</b>
Reece Safety Products (salt bin)	153.00
S Wood (gross salary April)	300.17
S Wood (gross salary May)	300.17
S Wood (stationery)	13.49
B Podd (salary)	156.00
KALC (subscription)	316.66
KALC (training – Cllr induction)	25.00
Zurich Municipal (insurance premium)	314.95
M Hinchliffe (grit bin signage)	43.20

#### **Receipts**

<b>Details</b>	<b>£</b>
NatWest interest	3.07
Street Cleansing Grant	619.17
Precept	5545.00
Concurrent Functions Grant	245.00
Council Tax Support Grant	205.00
Smeeth Field Rent	175.00

Balance £ 28874.83 as at 20<sup>th</sup> May 2015

### **13. Footpaths and Highways**

**13.1** Inadequate repairs at Washington and Coopers Lane were reported, the surface is degrading.

**13.2** KCC has issued a warning letter to the owner of a property on Stone Hill regarding an overgrown hedge. Cllr Plowright has reported a number of others to KCC.

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<p><b>13.3</b> Cllr Plowright reported via email a recent accident at the Plain Road/Canterbury Road junction; residents are pressing KCC for safety measures. Cllr Plowright has made a Freedom of Information request for copies of the KCC Risk Assessments carried out at the junction since installation of the bollards.</p>	
<p><b>13.4</b> Brabourne Parish Council has asked that 'No Overnight Parking' signs be erected at Smeeth crossroads.</p>	SW
<p><b>13.5</b> Damage to roadside verges in Pound Lane caused by agricultural vehicles were reported by Cllr Plowright.</p>	
<p><b>13.6</b> The cow slurry pumping facility at Bircholt Farm malfunctioned resulting in slurry being sprayed over Canterbury Road.</p>	
<p><b>13.7</b> A milestone on the A20 was removed when the footway was repaired by KCC but has not yet been reinstated, Cllr Wickham is to be asked for his help.</p>	SW
<p><b>13.8</b> Reduction of speed limit on the A20: in hand with the CLP.</p>	
<p><b>13.9</b> Sandy Place parking: there has been no response to the Clerk's requests for a pre-planning meeting. Cllr Howard to follow-up.</p>	
<p><b>13.10</b> The Vice-chairman reported that cows are being grazed in fields crossed by footpaths, resulting in cowpats on the path. Where paths have been roped off to prevent the cows straying, it should be possible to unclip and then reclip. In answer to a question from Cllr Hinchliffe the Clerk advised that it is not illegal to run cows in fields crossed by footpaths, but some breeds of bull must not be in these fields.</p>	
<p><b>13.11</b> Cllr Plowright reported concerns that a caravan in The Ridgeway is being used as ancillary accommodation. Cllr Howard stated that under the Caravans Act 1960 it is legal to have a caravan on a residential property.</p>	
<p><b>13.12</b> The Clerk is to contact Mrs Sylvia Tanner regarding reports of a family living in the compound next to Tanners Yard.</p>	SW
<p><b>14. Planning Committee report</b></p>	
<p>The Vice-chairman reported on 2 planning applications:</p>	
<p>5 Ramstone Close---Alteration to roof line of extension--No comments or objections.</p>	
<p>Church Green Cottage, Church Road----Replacement Garage--No comments or objections.</p>	
<p><b>15. KALC representative report</b></p>	
<p>The Chairman reported that the last KALC meeting was held on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2015 when the main topics discussed were Parish Councils as Consultees in Planning Applications, together with Assistant Community Wardens. Minutes have been circulated. The next meeting will be held on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2015 when the main Agenda Items will be Training, Community Wardens (Proposals for a Pilot Local Warden Support Officer Scheme), together with Ashford Borough Council's Community Governance Review (as it relates to Parish Boundaries and the number of Parish Councillors).</p>	
<p><b>16. Update on J10A Working Group</b></p>	
<p>Cllr Mrs Pereboom reported that there is nothing new to report as all went quiet during purdah.</p>	
<p>The SoCC (Statement of Community Consultation) will be published directly after the end of purdah, which is the 15<sup>th</sup> June. An eight week consultation period will start two weeks after the</p>	
<p>SoCC is published, 29<sup>th</sup> June to 21<sup>st</sup> August. The next stakeholders meeting will take place on the</p>	
<p>17<sup>th</sup> June.</p>	
<p><b>17. Community Led Plan and Emergency Plan</b></p>	
<p>Cllr Hinchliffe reported that the launch event of the CLP on 21<sup>st</sup> April was well attended, and a</p>	
<p>meeting held in May for all volunteers who came forward. Ten categories identified in the CLP</p>	
<p>have been reduced to 9 by amalgamating the 2 speeding categories; each category will be led by</p>	
<p>a 'Champion'. Approx 40 volunteers are involved and 2 of the groups have already begun work:</p>	
<p>Better Sporting Facilities and Parish Merger. A new Steering Group will be set up comprising the</p>	
<p>9 Champions, a representative from both Parish Councils, secretary and treasurer. It will not be</p>	
<p>chaired by a parish councillor and draft Terms of Reference have been circulated. The main</p>	
<p>function of the Group will be communication between the categories, coordinating eg surveys</p>	
<p>and grant applications. Cllr Howard asked to be kept informed. The Group next meets in June to</p>	
<p>formalise protocols.</p>	
<p>Contact details of all those listed in the Emergency Plan are being verified. The Borough Council is</p>	

helping in drawing-up the list of volunteers. Cllr MacPhee welcomed this input because the list should be updated 3-monthly. The list is also being reduced from the original 400 so it is more manageable.

The Chairman reported that KALC had invited nominations from Parish Councils for councillors who had made a significant contribution to their community. He continued that for his hard work in the production of an Emergency Plan and a Community Led Plan for Smeeth and Brabourne, Michael Hinchliffe had been nominated for the Award by Smeeth Parish Council. The Chairman said that it gave him great pleasure to present Cllr Hinchliffe with the Award, a framed certificate signed by the High Sheriff of Kent. This was greeted with applause. Cllr Hinchliffe warmly thanked the Council for the Award.

#### **18. Speedwatch**

Five new volunteers have come forward to join the Speedwatch team as a result of the CLP launch. In the last two weeks of April there were about 8 sessions which recorded 99 observations and which resulted in 13 letters being generated, 4 of which were for excessive speed, (greater than 45mph in a 30 limit). Cllr Plowright now has a date for Guy Rollinson to come to the village and complete risk assessments for Plain Road at Manor Leaze, Woolpack Hill and Church Road at the farm entrance i.e. in the 40mph limit. There are also two Roadside Observations training course times for 3<sup>rd</sup> June to get our new volunteers ready to go out and a rota of sessions being planned at the moment.

#### **19. Playing fields**

The Chairman reported that the rabbit-proof fencing has been installed and the fete will be held on the playing field. Grant applications are ongoing, with some degree of success, as are negotiations with the landowner.

#### **20. Village caretaker scheme**

Cllr Hinchliffe reported that the Borough Council had toured the parishes in the cluster to look at what services are being delivered and by whom. A meeting will be held on 29<sup>th</sup> May with KCC, Cllr Hinchliffe and Cllr Fletcher (Mersham with Sevington Parish Council) to look at possible funding; if KCC were to devolve assets to the parish funding will follow. However if the scheme is terminated whoever owns the assets at that time would remain responsible.

Cllr Hinchliffe reported that he has been researching the history of Hoskins Pond using old Minute Books. The pond is not being maintained, ownership is unclear but it is believed that part is owned by KCC; Cllr Hinchliffe asked if that part of the pond owned by KCC should be taken over by the Parish Council. The Vice-chairman suggested that Cllr Hinchliffe contacts Mr Eric Jeans, who has more information. Cllr Hinchliffe noted that restoring the pond would complement one of the aims in the CLP, 'Smartening up the Village'. Cllr Mrs Pereboom asked if ownership would mean taking responsibility for the culvert. Cllr Hinchliffe noted that the culvert needs clearing as evidenced by differing water levels; Cllr MacPhee stated that the job should not have been signed off by KCC when it had not been completed and that there is a need to know the maintenance history. Cllr Howard recommended taking ownership, notwithstanding the risk, possible higher initial maintenance costs being offset by later, lower costs. Cllr Mrs Pereboom suggested that it be taken over by the Borough Council. Cllr Howard advised that Parish Council ownership may attract a ward member grant. The Vice-chairman reported that the drain from the pond runs under the fields opposite and emerges on the A20 and would remain the responsibility of Highways.

#### **21. Local Needs Housing**

The Chairman reported that there has been no progress. Cllr Hinchliffe noted that concerns have been expressed regarding the allocation of the new homes at Manse Field. Cllr Howard acknowledged these and stated that the Borough Council have identified flaws in the process; it will now notify Parish Councils when such homes become available. Cllr Howard confirmed that they will remain local needs. He stated that Calland is a potential site but the need for local needs housing must be checked. Cllr Howard suggested that money arising from the sandpit project could be given to a housing association rather than the Borough Council, possibly for the land at Calland.

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## **22. Prescription delivery service**

Cllr Hinchliffe reported that he has met Cllr Mrs Tanner (Brabourne Parish Council) who will be a volunteer driver. Costs involved include: CRB check (£26 each), cool box for carrying temperature-controlled drugs and mileage (45p per mile ref HMRC) for other volunteers. He noted that neither Cllr Mrs Tanner or he would claim mileage costs. Cllr Hinchliffe also stated that it may be necessary to provide a secure box for carrying opiates. Carriage of these was queried by the Clerk; having previously worked as a Section Head in charge of testing sterile drugs (including opiates) at a pharmaceutical company she advised that these are covered by the Controlled Drugs Act and there are strict criteria as to their handling. Cllr Hinchliffe stated that they are carried by volunteers at Wye Surgery but are not currently prescribed by Sellindge Surgery. Business insurance cover would also be needed by the drivers. The Clerk noted that Brabourne Parish Council has asked for the number of users of the service, Cllr Hinchliffe replied that the surgery had advised that there would be approx 6 users, who would be notified of the service by the Surgery. Cllr MacPhee cautioned that if the service starts users will come to depend on it so there will be ongoing costs. In answer to a question from Cllr Hinchliffe regarding Brabourne Parish Council the Clerk and Cllr Howard replied that it recognises that not all residents use Sellindge Surgery and therefore questioned this use of public money. Cllr Mrs Pereboom suggested that Smeeth Parish Council should start the service then go back to Brabourne Parish Council if Brabourne residents are identified. Cllr Mrs Morey asked if the Surgery would be willing to fund the scheme, Cllr Hinchliffe replied that it has refused. It was noted that some residents already deliver prescriptions as a favour to neighbours. Cllr Howard proposed that Smeeth Parish Council commits to a pilot scheme for 1 year, he would underwrite the costs.

### **Resolved:**

**That Smeeth Parish Council runs a trial prescription delivery service for a period of one year, after which the service will be reviewed.**

## **23. Parking at Smeeth School**

See the Open Session.

## **24. Community Governance Review of parish boundaries and number of councilors**

Cllr Howard reported that following a boundary review at Shepway District Council the number of councilors was reduced from 40 to 30; the Boundary Commission is to undertake a similar review in Ashford. The Borough Council therefore brought forward its own review, the results of which will be taken into account by the Commission. Cllr Howard noted that it should not just be a 'number' exercise, rather it should also take into account historic villages. Cllr Hinchliffe advised that the CLP survey had a question that the parishes should merge, 68% of respondents replied that it would be a good idea. Cllr Howard stated that the review is open to public consultation, Cllr Hinchliffe replied that the view of the CLP will be submitted to the Borough Council. He noted that no action would be taken until 2 years after the end of the review and if none is taken a petition could be raised asking that this be reconsidered. The petition would have to come from 1 of the parishes and have at least 187 signatures. Cllr Howard offered help to the CLP such as access to officers or advice, but not with regard to the aim of the parish merger because he must remain neutral on this point.

The Chairman asked if the Parish Council wished to submit comments at this stage. Cllr Hinchliffe stated that the parish merger Champion will submit the views of the CLP but will write as an individual. Cllr MacPhee questioned the need for the Parish Council to submit comments. It was agreed that no comments would be sent from the Parish Council.

Cllr Hinchliffe will draft an item for Parish News.

## **25. Electronic distribution of the summons**

The Clerk advised that on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2015 it became lawful to send the meeting's summons electronically, rather than by hand or post. However, councillors must agree to this method and may withdraw their consent at any time.

### **Resolved:**

**That Cllr Mrs Morey and Cllr Thorpe consent to receive the summons and meeting papers electronically.**

Hard copy will be brought to the meeting.

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<p><b>26. Brabourne village green: discussion item</b>  Cllr Hinchliffe recognized that the green is owned by Brabourne Parish Council but it is a community asset also used by Smeeth residents. He suggested that a joint management committee be set up with the possible offer of financial assistance, eg for the footpath. This will be an agenda item for the next meeting of both Parish Councils. Cllr Howard noted that Brabourne Parish Council wishes to link with the CLP on its plans for the green. Cllr MacPhee stated that the CLP covers both parishes and there is a need to ensure that the CLP delivers, this will lead to greater engagement. The Chairman suggested that the actions could be endorsed by the 2 Parish Councils.</p> <p><b>27. Correspondence</b>  All correspondence has been circulated.</p> <p><b>28. Any Other Business</b>  No other business was raised.</p> <p><b>29. Date and time of next meeting</b>  Wednesday July 1<sup>st</sup>, 7.00pm in Brabourne Baptist Church.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 10.10pm.</p>	<p>SW</p>
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#### **PCSO's report May 2015**

This is the Police report for Brabourne Parish Council's May meeting.

There have been two recorded crimes in the village in the last two months.

The first was in relation to an attempted burglary to a property in the lees road area. The owners of the property heard there dogs barking in the early hours of the morning and upon investigation they did not see anything. In the morning they discovered that the rear door to the cloakroom was open however nothing had been taken and it appears that no entry had been gained to the main house. It is believed that the dogs may have deterred the offenders. However at this time the victims also discovered that some heating oil had been stolen from the outside tank and it is believed that this may be linked.

The second report was in relation to a theft from a motor vehicle. This happened on a building site in the village and it appears that the offenders have stolen some diesel from the vehicles that were left on the site overnight. In relation to this I have also had some reports in nearby villages of thefts from motor vehicles where items such as electrical items and tools have been stolen. With this in mind please do not leave any valuables in your car when it is unattended. This is seen as an invitation to thieves so please make sure that nothing is left on show of any value.

I know there have also been some more reports of youths causing problems behind the estate agents. I have been visiting the area regularly to deter any further incidents and have been patrolling around the village on foot in recent weeks and engaging with the youths from Brabourne and Smeeth.

If anyone would like to speak to me or have any concerns they may wish to raise they can e-mail me and I will get back to you as soon as I can. My e-mail address is 58551@kent.pnn.police.uk

PCSO Andrew Huckstepp 58551

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