

Smeeth Parish Council
Minutes of a Meeting held on Wednesday 8th January 2020 at 7.00pm
Brabourne Baptist Church

<p>1. Present Cllr Herrick (Chairman) (DH), Cllr Thorpe (Vice-chairman) (GT), Cllr Mrs Alford (HA), Cllr Mrs Moo (YM), Cllr Mrs Morey (JM), Cllr Mrs Pereboom (VP), Cllr Kimpton (RK) and Mrs Wood (Clerk) (SW). Cllr Howard (ward member) attended and five members of the public were present.</p> <p>2. Apologies There were no apologies.</p> <p>3. Declarations of Interest Cllr Mrs Morey: Voluntary Declaration as a member of the church congregation (item 10.3) Cllr Herrick: Voluntary Declaration as a member of the church congregation (item 10.3) Cllr Thorpe: Voluntary Declaration as a member of the church congregation (item 10.3) Cllr Kimpton: OSI as an interested party who spoke at the Planning Committee meeting (item 10.4)</p> <p>4. Minutes Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 6th November 2019 be approved and confirmed as a true record.</p> <p>5. Borough councillor's report Cllr Howard reported that the planning application for Andrew's Garage [18/01454/AS] went to the Planning Committee for decision. A retrospective planning application for the balcony at Nuholm, Plain Road was submitted after discussion with planning officers. A number of events were held in the town centre over Christmas, these were well received. The Coachworks is to become a shared working space. Climate Change Committee: The borough aims to be carbon-neutral by 2030. As part of this initiative, Parish Councils will be offered ten saplings with the condition that they count the trees on Parish Council owned/managed land. The data will be used to calculate the number of trees in the borough, because of the role trees play in mitigating climate change. It is hoped to plant the equivalent of a forest in the borough, in conjunction with Folkestone and Hythe District Council. The Borough Council has announced its Big 8 projects, including: a cultural centre/theatre; the aim to be carbon-neutral by 2030 (and 80% by 2025); Newtown studio development; a transportation strategy – integrating bus services, with the emphasis on rural areas which will include a dial-a-ride service to take rural passengers to main bus routes. 5 year housing land supply [5YHLS]: There is to be a call for sites as the first stage in renewing the Local Plan to ensure that the 5YHLS is maintained. Gypsy and traveller sites: There will be a consultation on the Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan Options Report and a call for sites; the Borough Council has to demonstrate that it has a five-year supply of these sites. Cllr Mrs Pereboom asked if there is a conflict of interest between wanting sites for forestry and housing. Cllr Howard replied that there are two priorities and an acknowledged shortage of housing in Kent and the South East, but climate change must be addressed. Ashford is the largest borough by area in Kent and wants to devote as much as possible to forest. The Borough Council is also talking to KCC, which aims to plant a tree for each resident in the county. Cllr Howard noted the need to find a balance. It is not known how many trees constitute a forest, but the Borough Council would have to plant 126,000 new trees to offset carbon emissions if no other action were taken. The proposal will go to the Cabinet for approval in March.</p> <p>6. Open Session</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SW</p>
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The meeting was suspended to allow members of the public present to comment on items other than those on the agenda.

Plain Road: The surface beyond the pumping station is poor, with multiple potholes and degraded edges. It will be reported to Highways. Cllr Howard recommended that Stagecoach be asked for its support and to lobby for action.

Flytipping: Commercial waste has been flytipped near the pumping station. To be reported to Folkestone and Hythe District Council.

The meeting was reconvened.

7. Matters Arising

7.1 Local Needs Housing: The desk top survey for possible sites has not yet been undertaken. Two possible sites have been ruled out: Manor Pound Lane and the Sandpit site. Tessa O'Sullivan [Rural Housing Enabler, ACRK] is to approach the owners/agents of land behind Fortescue Place.

7.2 Plain Road gas main works: These have been completed.

7.3 Cross-over at Cherry Trees: No information has been forthcoming, notwithstanding requests from the Clerk.

7.4 S106 monies from the Church Road development: The Clerk has submitted details of projects to the Borough Council.

7.5 Hospital Field Village Green application: The Regulation Panel rejected the application.

7.6 Parish Councils' communications: Cllr Mrs Pereboom reported that the second edition of the e-newsletter has been circulated. Content of issues is being planned to avoid repetition and maintain interest. There are now 219 subscribers with a 54% open rate. A number of flyers are available which will be left at a number of sites in the parishes. It is hoped that the e-newsletter is being promoted by word-of-mouth. A number of organisations have asked that calls for volunteers are included; these will be restricted to one per issue.

7.7 Parish Council website: This must be migrated from the KCC host because of the new accessibility regulations, the KCC website not being compliant. A website development company has offered its services to Parish Councils to provide a fully compliant website, at a fee of £595pa for a minimum three-year term. To be forwarded to Cllr Mrs Pereboom.

The Clerk advised that there are free templates available, but without the support for development and uploading of content. Cllr Mrs Pereboom suggested that the websites for Smeeth and Brabourne be combined, which would reduce costs.

7.8 Tapas Bar: The advertisement has been removed from the verge on Hythe Road. The Vice-chairman advised that the Tapas Bar has ceased trading.

7.9 Wembdon Farm: The bus-related activity has permission.

7.10 Fordreds Charity: The Vice-chairman distributed the payments and a number of letters of thanks have been received.

8. Report from PCSO

The PCSO's report has been circulated.

9. Financial Report

9.1 To agree payments in accordance with the Budget

Resolved:

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

Parish Council account

Payments

Details	£
PMC Polythene (dog foul bags)	198.00
S Wood (salary)	322.14
S Wood (salary)	322.14
B Podd (salary) (27 hrs @ £8.21/hr)	221.67
Society for Local Council Clerks (subscription)	33.67

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Receipts

Details	£
NatWest interest	22.73

Balance £ 66718.95

Caretaker account**Payments**

Details	£
P Rodway (salary November)	1249.95
P Rodway (expenses)	52.14
HMRC	279.06
KCC re Kent Pension Fund	402.53
Lister Wilder	15.68
Kent Plant Services	84.00
Fuelgenie	103.58
P Rodway (salary December)	1249.95
P Rodway (Q3 mobile)	25.00
HMRC	279.06
KCC re Kent Pension Fund	402.53
Fuelgenie	50.04
Lister Wilder	20.00
T Denne & Sons	108.00
S Wood (Green Flag renewal premium)	115.00
S Wood (vehicle licence renewal)	260.00
T Denne & Sons	108.00

Receipts

Details	£
Mersham Church (mowing)	160.00
Brook PC (reimbursement – materials for Brook playground)	216.83

Balance: £ 15828.46

9.2 Annual contribution to the Scouts and Guides

The Chairman noted that there was discussion at the November meeting regarding drawing down Reserves. He proposed that an annual contribution be given to the Scouts and Guides, in light of the forthcoming loss of money raised from their newspaper collection – the costs of providing transport for the collection are greater than the money recouped, and the value of newspaper has decreased. It was noted that the money from the newspaper collection is very important to the Scouts and Guides and is used to subsidise running costs, subscriptions and attendance at events. A contribution will be invited from Brabourne Parish Council.

The Chairman proposed that provision be made in the Budget to give £500 to the Scouts and Guides. Cllr Howard suggested that a higher amount be given in the first year to offset the impact of the loss of the newspaper collection money, and reduced in following years. The Vice-chairman acknowledged Cllr Howard's proposal but noted that previous information regarding cessation of the collection had been premature. Consideration of any such proposal should be deferred until the newspaper collection's status is finalised.

The Chairman stressed the importance of keeping the organisation running, and that the contribution would be made annually.

Resolved:

That the Parish Council makes an annual contribution of £500 to the Scouts and Guides.

SW

The Chairman advised that the amount will be reviewed when more information regarding the

newspaper collection is available.

9.3 Request from Brabourne Baptist Church for a contribution towards works relating to disabled access and general user safety

The Vice-chairman reported that the lavatories at the church had been updated and a disability-compliant lavatory had been installed, at a total cost of £21,000. The church had funds of £12,500, grants were forthcoming from KCC and the Borough Council because the church is a community facility hosting a number of events, and the shortfall in funding made up by church members. Additional works are needed to remove the lip outside the main door into the church, which makes wheelchair access difficult, at a cost of £1650. The vice-chairman asked Smeeth Parish Council to consider making a donation towards this and the installation of lighting in the church car park. Brabourne Parish Council will also be asked for a contribution. The Vice-chairman noted that the church is entirely self-funding, meeting all of the running costs plus the Pastor's salary and pension contributions; no money is forthcoming from a central fund. Cllr Mrs Moo proposed an initial donation of £500, and Cllr Kimpton suggested that a further donation be considered when final costs are known, given that the church is a community asset. Cllr Howard suggested that the MP be billed for use of the church for his monthly surgeries.

A vote was taken, the Vice-chairman abstained.

Resolved:

That Smeeth Parish Council gives £500 to Brabourne Baptist Church for works relating to disabled access.

GT

9.4 Draft Budget for 2020-2021

The draft Budget as amended was tabled.

The Chairman proposed that the Precept remain unchanged at £23738, and that the Council Tax Support Grant and Concurrent Functions Grant be claimed in addition.

Resolved:

That the Precept remain unchanged at £23738, and that the Council Tax Support Grant and Concurrent Functions Grant be claimed in addition.

SW

9.5 Payment to Brabourne Parish Council towards newsletter flyer printing costs

The Chairman proposed that the Parish Council contributes £30.63 to Brabourne Parish Council, this being 50% of the costs of the newsletter flyer printing.

Resolved:

That Smeeth Parish Council contributes £30.63 to Brabourne Parish Council towards the costs of the newsletter flyer printing

SW

9.6 Potential projects for 2020-2021

Cllr Kimpton proposed the following:

Weather shelters for bus stops, which would be oak-framed to be in keeping with the area.

Traffic control measures, including village gates

Disabled access to the Sandpit quarry

The Chairman welcomed the proposals and asked for costings so that they could be followed-up.

Cllr Mrs Alford noted that traffic through the village has increased and measures are needed to slow traffic in Church Road, eg village gates or priority signs.

Cllr Mrs Morey advised that she attended the KCC Highways seminar at which gateway treatments were discussed – likely costs are £900 each. It was noted that these would be placed on Highways land and therefore permission would be needed, and they would also be subject to minimum width requirements.

The Chairman suggested that KCC be asked to carry out a viability study at the entrance points to the village.

The Vice-chairman proposed a community shelter on the green at The Warren. The Chairman advised that this is to be funded from the Church Road S106 monies.

Cllr Howard recommended that the Parish Council liaises with Brabourne Parish Council re a masterplan for management of the village green, eg the footpath.

RK

DH

10. Planning

10.1 Andrews Garage 18/01454/AS

Cllr Kimpton reported that he attended the Planning Committee meeting and the application (for housing) was approved, by 11 votes to 3. It was noted that the houses to the rear would be outside the village confines and concerns were expressed that this would set a precedent. Cllr Mrs Alford stated that applications would be considered on a case-by-case basis. Cllr Kimpton stated that the planning officer cited only part of the Parish Council's definition of the village confines in his report which may have influenced consideration of the application by Planning Committee member. Cllr Howard advised that the process could be challenged – was it followed correctly – but not the decision unless the process were deemed unsound. If this were the case it would go back to the Planning Committee. Cllr Mrs Alford noted that this meant there would be a conduit to seek redress should this be thought necessary.

10.2 Planning Committee report

Cllr Mrs Pereboom reported that the following applications have been approved by the Borough Council:

19/01103/AS Evegate Business Park Extension of existing business park consisting of two new buildings for B1(a)/D2 use with associated car parking and landscaping (resubmission of 18/00867/AS)

19/01193/AS The Byre, Station Road Proposed stables, riding arena, muck store and associated yard for private equestrian use and keeping of horses

19/01425/AS Netherfield, Plain Road Replacement of conservatory with single storey rear and infill side extension

19/00023/OLE Evegate Station Road Overhead lines

A decision is awaited on the following application:

19/01598/AS Nuholm, Plain Road Retrospective application for a balcony to the rear elevation with a 1.8m high vision panel

19/01775/AS Sunhill Cottage, Granary Court Road

Demolition of the existing dwellinghouse and associated outbuildings, and the erection of replacement 2-bedroom dwelling and associated garage.

It was noted that the existing house is of wooden construction, in a poor state of repair and deteriorating. It was proposed that the application be supported.

Resolved:

That the application be supported.

SW

10.3 Joint Neighbourhood Plan [NP] with Brabourne Parish Council

The Chairman reported that the Wye NP is in force but the Wye College redevelopment proposals run counter to the NP. A formal letter of complaint has been sent to the Borough Council by Wye Parish Council and the outcome is awaited. In light of this and after consultation with the Chairman of Brabourne Parish Council, the Chairman proposed that action on the joint Brabourne and Smeeth NP be deferred until the Wye situation is resolved. Cllr Kimpton felt that preparation of the map delineating the area should be pursued, given that it would not incur any costs, rather than waiting for a decision on the Wye development proposals. Cllr Howard agreed and counselled against waiting, noting that the situation in Wye is unique.

10.4 Ratification of the Parish Council's comments on planning application 18/01454/AS

The following comment was submitted to the Planning Committee: Smeeth Parish Council supports the revised application for the housing, which addresses concerns previously expressed by the Parish Council. It was proposed that the comment be ratified.

A vote was taken. Cllr Kimpton abstained, having declared an interest.

There were six votes in favour and none against.

Resolved:

That the Parish Council's comments on planning application 18/01454/AS be ratified.

10.5 Planning applications: uploads to the village Facebook page

The Chairman noted that details of planning applications had been posted on the village Facebook page for a trial period until the year end. The Clerk reported that commenting is turned off and no negative feedback has been received. It was agreed that applications will continue to be uploaded to the Facebook page, and published in the newsletter.

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VP

<p>11. KALC representative report Cllr Mrs Morey reported that she attended the AGM on 30th November 2019. Presentations were given by Imago [a not-for-profit agency offering counselling to adult carers in Ashford] and SECamb. The KCC Highways seminar covered Highways planning for new developments and Highway Improvement Plans (HIPs). A presentation on HIPs will be given at the March KALC meeting. The next meeting is on January 15th.</p> <p>12. Footpaths and Highways 12.1 Junction 10A: Is fully operational but there has been some confusion for drivers due to a lack of road markings. 12.2 Hythe Road: Will be closed by Tesco's for 10 days while services are put in for the new housing development. 12.3 Village caretaker: Was thanked for his efforts to clear drains of fallen leaves. New drain covers near Hoskins pond are locked and cannot be opened for rodding by volunteers. 12.4 The Ridgeway: There were complaints of overgrown hedges, which are a safety hazard for pedestrians. To be reported to KCC Highways. 12.5 Operation Brock: To be stood down following a meeting between local MPs and the Minister for Transport. 12.6 Part of Lees Road has been resurfaced but it is unclear if any works are planned for the remainder. 12.7 Stakes on verges: a piece asking for their removal was placed in the January Parish News. 12.8 Cllr Mrs Pereboom reported two broken stiles to the PROW office but they have not yet been repaired. To be reported again.</p> <p>13. Emergency Plan (EP) and Community Led Plan (CLP) CLP: The Chairman reported that bulb planting continues and offered his thanks to Lucie Edmed. EP: The Chairman reported that he is hoping to progress the plan after making contact with the potential new coordinator. It was noted that the village caretaker has been clearing drains of fallen leaves and helping in flood remediation. It was suggested that the caretaker may be able to help with the EP because he has much of the equipment needed, and could be provided with what is lacking. The need to keep the list of available equipment updated, eg 4-wheeled drive vehicles, was stressed.</p> <p>14. Village caretaker scheme Cllr Mrs Morey reported that the Village Caretaker scheme continues well and the comments in item 12.3 were welcomed. Cllr Mrs Morey suggested that the caretaker may be able to help Brabourne Parish Council in the tree count for the Borough Council (see item 5). The caretaker was Father Christmas at the Nursery. Information re works needed should be sent to the Clerk.</p> <p>15. Speedwatch The Chairman reported that no Speedwatch sessions had been scheduled due to illness, but sessions are being planned. Posters have been put up calling for volunteers.</p> <p>16. Playing fields New committee members are being sought and to fill roles on the Management Committee.</p> <p>17. 75th Anniversary celebration of VE Day and VJ Day George Taylor will send details of planned events to the Parish Council.</p> <p>18. Correspondence All correspondence has been circulated.</p> <p>19. Any other business 19.1 Joint Annual Parish Meeting: The Chairman advised that the 2019 meeting was held on 20th March and noted that possible dates for the 2020 meeting are 18th or 25th March. These dates will be taken to Brabourne Parish Council's next meeting. The Chairman noted the need for more publicity; the meeting will be advertised in Parish News, the e-newsletter, Facebook,</p>	<p>SW</p> <p>VP</p> <p>SW</p>
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community website and posters throughout the parishes. Village organisations will be invited to give a report and send a representative.	
19.2 Dog bin: A request was made for a dog bin near the bus stop on The Warren, opposite John Childs Garage.	SW
<p>20. Resolution to exclude the public</p> <p>It was 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 21, namely discussion of the KALC Community Award.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>That the press and public leave the meeting during discussion of the KALC Community Award.</p>	
<p>21. KALC Community Award</p> <p>The Parish Council's nomination will be submitted.</p> <p>22. Date and time of next meeting</p> <p>Wednesday 4th March 2020 at 7.00pm in Brabourne Baptist Church.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 9.25 pm.</p>	SW