

<p><b>1. Present</b> Cllr Herrick (Chairman) (DH), Cllr Mrs Alford (HA), Cllr Mrs Morey (JM), Cllr Mrs Nyssens (AN), Cllr Mrs Pereboom (VP), Cllr MacPhee (CM) and Mrs Wood (Clerk) (SW). Cllr Howard (ward member) and Mr Graham Kingston (Community Warden) were present. Fourteen members of the public attended.</p> <p><b>2. Apologies</b> Apologies were received from Cllr Thorpe (prior commitment) and Cllr Miss Martin (ward member).</p> <p><b>3. Declarations of Interest</b> Cllr Mrs Alford: Voluntary Declaration re item 9, as an employee of KCC.</p> <p><b>4. Minutes</b> <b>Resolved:</b> <b>That the Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2017 be approved and confirmed as a true record.</b></p> <p><b>5. Election of Emergency Plan representative</b> No nominations were put forward.</p> <p><b>6. Emergency Plan and Community Led Plan</b> The meeting was suspended to allow Michael Hinchliffe to address the Parish Council.</p> <p>Community Led Plan: Mr Hinchliffe reported that work has been completed on Hoskins Pond, but a leak in the small pond needs attention. Quotes are being sought for installation of the basketball hoop – delays in completion of this project are due to the coordinator’s move to Australia and the resulting need to appoint a replacement. The next coordinators’ meeting will be held on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> July. The draft local needs’ housing survey was circulated and will be distributed to all households together with the leaflet explaining how potholes should be reported; completed surveys can be left at Orpins. Outdoor gym: 2 applications for sponsorship are pending but 2 have failed. All households surrounding the village green had been leafleted; all comments will be taken to the CLP meeting. Brabourne Parish Council responded positively to the proposal and the Playing Field Association will be asked if it could be sited at the playing field. Ian Ruck noted the considerable efforts that had gone into the Hoskins Pond project, including casting new posts and refurbishing the rails, and thanked Mr Hinchliffe and the team. This was endorsed by the Parish Council. Mr Hinchliffe stated that the project had been photographed by the Kentish Express. Mr Hinchliffe asked the Parish Council to consider a contribution of £100.80 towards the CLP group’s insurance premium; this will be discussed at the next meeting.</p> <p>The meeting was reconvened.</p> <p>Emergency Plan: No one has come forward to take over the role of coordinator, another appeal will be placed in Parish News and on the website.</p> <p><b>7. Open Session</b> The meeting was suspended to allow members of the public present to comment on items other than those on the agenda.</p>	<p>SW</p> <p>SW</p>
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A request was made that the pavement in Lees Road be levelled if any S106 money is forthcoming, noting that the camber causes difficulty to elderly users.

The meeting was reconvened.

## **8. Matters Arising**

**8.1** Calland: ABC has advised that delays are due to UK Power Networks but it is hoped that work will begin soon. No further information has been forthcoming re parking provision, ABC has not yet been able to obtain a copy of the UKPN map circulated to residents. A retrospective planning application for the hoardings was approved.

**8.2** There has been no noticeable impact on the village of the closure of Kennington Road for widening.

**8.3** War memorial: Mr Taylor updated the Parish Council. Quotes for works to refurbish the Memorial and clear the surrounding area have been sought, and range from £1500-£6000 depending on the specification. On advice from the War Memorial Trust there are no plans to move it. It is hoped to put in a handrail down the steps from the churchyard. A Legion coffee morning will be held on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> September to display the plans and start fundraising; Cllr Howard offered a ward member grant. The Parish Councils will be approached for a contribution, and up to 75% of the costs may be forthcoming from the War Memorial Trust.

**8.4** Cllr Mrs Nyssens advised that horse safety posters – ‘Dead or Dead Slow’ have been put up in the village and more are available on request.

## **9. Presentation on the CARE Foundation Trust**

The meeting was suspended to allow Mr Lee McRoberts (chair of governors, Smeeth School) to give a presentation on the Trust.

Mr McRoberts stated that a consultation has been carried out on formalising relationships with schools in Aldington, Brabourne, Brook, Challock, Chilham, Lady Joannna Thornhill (Wye), Goat Lees, Mersham and Phoenix, as a Foundation Trust. Parents were kept fully informed with an Open Forum and meetings at the school. While still in receipt of local authority funding, this would give the school more control over its finances. If the school joins the Trust, staff would work for the governing body, not the local authority, but all pay and pension rights would be unchanged; it is supported by the teaching unions. The school's ethos would remain unchanged, but the Trust would enable the school to form stronger relationships with other schools in the Trust and share expertise, equipment, play areas etc. Mr McRoberts noted that teaching expertise would only be made available to other schools if it would not be detrimental to Smeeth School and with the consent of the staff. Money would be set aside from the school's budget to cover costs arising from legal services, but the Trust would give the school a greater purchasing power because of buying in bulk. If any school in the Trust was struggling, it would be assisted to remain open.

The meeting was reconvened.

The Parish Council expressed its support for the proposal.

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

Mr Kingston reported a burglary from a property on Woolpack Hill and an abandoned vehicle on the playing field. Community Wardens were involved in a 2-week event for Year 6 pupils – ‘Safety in Action’ – which included internet safety and road safety. Allotment Society property has been marked and warning signs provided. Reports of a bird-of-prey on the loose have been received.

Mr Kingston advised that PCSO Hobbs has been redeployed in Ashford town centre for 6 months. PCSO Julia Ghost is his replacement, the Chairman stated that she will be invited to attend Parish Council meetings or to submit reports.

SW

## **11. Financial Report**

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

**Resolved:**

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

**Payments**

Details	£
FuelGenie (March)	198.31
FuelGenie (April)	149.02
P Rodway (salary)	1156.64
HMRC (P Rodway)	255.01
KCC re Kent Pension Fund (P Rodway)	412.62
T Denne & Sons (storage)	108.00
Lister Wilder	12.08
FuelGenie (May)	232.85
P Rodway (salary)	1156.64
P Rodway (expenses)	48.04
HMRC (P Rodway)	255.01
KCC re Kent Pension Fund (P Rodway)	372.19
Fuel Genie (June)	100.19
S Wood (salary)	306.20
S Wood (salary)	306.20
S Wood (expenses)	18.28
B Podd (salary)	135.00
Information Commissioner (DPA registration)	35.00
T Denne & Sons (caretaker storage)	108.00
Lister Wilder	38.40
PMC Polythene Ltd (dog bags)	39.60
John Childs (Garages) Ltd (wiper blades and MOT)	75.25

  

Details	£
NatWest interest	0.61
VAT refund	418.94
Brook Parish Council (caretaker scheme)	1066.45
Mersham and Sevington Parish Council (caretaker scheme)	3345.39

Balance £ 39113.78 (as at 12<sup>th</sup> July 2017)

**12. Planning Committee report**  
The Chairman reported on 2 applications:  
Retrospective application for hoardings at Calland. This was approved by ABC.  
Extension at 3, Knatchbull Row Cottages, Plain Road. An objection was made to the application because of loss of light at the 2 adjacent properties. A decision is awaited from ABC.

**13. Local Plan to 2030**  
**13.1 Parish Council's response** The Chairman reported that at the Cabinet meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> June a number of residents spoke on the revised draft, which is now out for consultation from 7<sup>th</sup> July-31<sup>st</sup> August. A number of exhibitions will be held by ABC during the consultation period, but not in Brabourne or Smeeth, notwithstanding representations made by the ward members. An exhibition will be held in Aldington Village Hall on 3<sup>rd</sup> August from 4.00-7.00pm, and in the Farriers Arms, Mersham on 15<sup>th</sup> August from 4.30-7.00pm. ABC officers will be present to answer questions and forms will be available for residents to submit comments.  
The Chairman noted points of interest to Smeeth:

- The playing field proposals are not included
- The Church Road site remains in the Plan; although the density has decreased (from 30 units/hectare to 25), the area to be developed has increased and the number of houses has risen from 30 to 35
- Caldecott: 50 houses at a density of 16/hectare
- There are no sites in Brabourne
- The Village Protection Policy (VPP) has been included but in a 'watered-down' version

- The policy with regard to small rural developments (fewer than 10 houses) has changed; these would be more likely to be given planning permission. The cumulative effect of such developments may be a problem.

The Chairman advised that Cllr Miss Martin has produced (via the Development Infrastructure Group [DIG]) a questionnaire and leaflet for distribution to all households in Saxon Shore ward. This gives information on where the Plan can be viewed, how to comment, a questionnaire and encouraging participation in the consultation; Cllr Howard is also encouraging residents to comment.

[Post-meeting note, the public consultation can be viewed at:

<https://haveyoursay.ashford.gov.uk/consult.ti/LPChanges/consultationHome> ]

It was noted that the school at Caldecott will not be affected by the proposals, because it is not part of the site in the Plan. It was noted that the school is for children with special educational needs and would not, therefore, be for children from the homes on the site – they would go to a mainstream school (eg Smeeth School). The Paddocks will be retained but no details are given in the Plan.

The Chairman asked if residents still propose to circulate a leaflet, given Cllr Miss Martin's initiative. A draft leaflet was passed to the Parish Council and will be forwarded to counsel for comment.

Cllr Miss Martin is proposing that Peter Brett Associates be commissioned to represent Saxon Shore ward at the public inquiry on the Local Plan, with particular reference to include the VPP as a formal policy in the Plan. Cllr Howard recommended that the Parish Councils ask that the VPP be included in the Plan when they comment on it, he stressed the VPP's importance because it would require planners to take account of the cumulative effect of development.

The Chairman noted that residents will have information on where to find the Plan and how to comment; the proposals for Smeeth will impact on Brabourne, and the Otterpool proposals will affect both parishes.

The Chairman stated that the Parish Council had objected to the Church Road site, but should the objection remain in light of the new Plan? He noted residents' opposition to the site, including their concerns at the access which would be on to Church Road almost opposite the entrance to the playing field. The Chairman advised that KCC Highways will comment on any planning application for the site; he noted that Southern Water had commented on lack of sewerage capacity.

Cllr Howard said that KCC originally objected to the Gladman planning application on Hospital Field, but later withdrew the objection; he felt that KCC would be unlikely to object to the Church Road site. He further noted that any objections on highways' grounds would likely be insufficient. It was suggested that if planning permission were granted for the site, constructors and (later) residents would park their vehicles on Church Road, causing additional congestion.

Cllr Mrs Alford asked what would be the consequences for the village if the Parish Council objected to the proposals; Cllr Howard replied that if the Parish Council were to oppose the sites, this would assist Gladman's arguments. He noted that new, smaller sites had been included in the Plan for speed of delivery, due to ABC's lack of a 5-year housing land supply.

The Chairman advised that objections or expressions of concern could be made, but residents should be aware that if objection is raised to all of the proposals, something worse may be imposed.

The democratic right to complain was acknowledged, but it was felt that the reality is that the Plan will happen and residents should seek to mitigate the proposals.

It was noted that at the first public exhibition residents were told by officers that there had been very little development in the village, but if several small developments were permitted the village character would be retained and the rural environment protected.

The Chairman noted that the rules have changed, and the government's priority with regard to housing is to permit more.

Cllr Howard asked if residents objected outright to the Church Road site or would there be a number of dwellings that would be acceptable to residents. It was suggested that a small number (4-6) be built but set well back so that they do not impose on existing properties; Cllr Howard cautioned against this approach because it may open up a larger area to the rear for development.

<p>The Chairman asked if the Parish Council should object to the Church Road site but with comments as to an acceptable number; and if there would be no objection to the Caldecott site provided The Paddocks is retained. Cllr Mrs Pereboom noted the need for sound mitigation if the trees were taken down, given the proximity of the M20. The Clerk replied that the policy states that trees on the boundary will be retained. Cllr MacPhee felt that if the number of houses on the Church Road site were reduced, it may result in houses with an increased footprint being built, rendering them too expensive for local families.</p> <p>Cllr Howard noted that both sites will deliver affordable housing, and expressed surprise at the omission of the Old Builders' Yard. He suggested that it could be used to reduce the number on the Church Road site. The Chairman stated that the Andrews Garage site may also come forward. The Parish Council was asked for its individual views on the sites; the Chairman replied that councillors are in a difficult position, because they need to take account of local needs housing and residents' views.</p> <p>The Chairman will draft the Parish Council's initial comments on the Plan, including the need to include the Village Protection Policy in its entirety.</p> <p>The Chairman advised that after the close of the consultation period, the Plan will be revised and submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination; if found sound the Plan will be adopted in 2018.</p>	DH
<p><b>13.2 Email updates to residents</b> The Chairman stated that the Parish Council has been asked to keep residents informed via email. It was noted that information is currently disseminated by the noticeboards, Facebook, community websites, Parish News and the Kentish Express. The low take-up of Parish News was acknowledged, but Cllr Mrs Alford and Cllr Mrs Pereboom felt that current means are sufficient and regular emails would be too time-consuming for the Clerk. Cllr MacPhee agreed. The Chairman suggested that information be sent to the Village Directory for a trial period, which is delivered free of charge to all households.</p> <p><b>13.3 To agree a contribution to the costs of a leaflet and questionnaire for delivery to all households</b> Likely cost is £200; it was proposed that Smeeth Parish Council meets the costs. <b>Resolved:</b> <b>That Smeeth Parish Council pays for printing costs of the leaflet and questionnaire.</b></p> <p><b>13.4 To agree a contribution towards the costs of representation by Peter Brett Associates at the examination of the Local Plan</b> The Chairman advised that likely costs would be £300-£500 per parish and proposed that the Parish Council contributes up to £500. <b>Resolved:</b> <b>That Smeeth Parish Council contributes up to £500 towards the costs of representation by Peter Brett Associates at the examination of the Local Plan.</b></p>	SW
<p><b>14. KALC representative report</b></p> <p>The Minutes of the meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> May have been circulated, the next meeting is on 19<sup>th</sup> July. Cllr Mrs Pereboom attended the May meeting, at which a presentation on the 5-year housing land supply was given, noting the pressure on ABC to deliver houses.</p> <p>Kent Fire &amp; Rescue Service (KFRS) fire hydrant initiative: Parish Councils have been asked to visually inspect hydrants and notify KFRS of any problems, this is in addition to the routine inspections carried out by KFRS. The village caretaker will be asked to carry out the inspections.</p>	SW
<p><b>15. Update on J10A Working Group</b></p> <p>Cllr Mrs Pereboom reported that technical reports are being prepared, and improvements at the Barrey Road junction have been proposed.</p>	
<p><b>16. Footpaths and Highways</b></p> <p><b>16.1 Sandy Place parking</b> No progress to report.</p> <p><b>16.2 Provision of additional parking places in Lees Close</b> Provision of disabled bays was turned down because these are only for blue badge holders; a request for additional parking spaces has been made to Giles Holloway (ABC), the Clerk to follow-up.</p> <p><b>16.3 Potholes</b> The pothole at Washington Farm has been repaired but to a poor standard, the Clerk to follow-up.</p>	SW

<p><b>16.4 Repeater sign, Plain Road</b> Obscured by vegetation, Cllr Mrs Nyssens to follow-up.</p> <p><b>16.5 HGV parking on the A20</b> No reply has been received from Shepway District Council to the Parish Council's letter regarding likely displacement of vehicles following refusal of the Airport Cafe's planning application.</p> <p><b>16.6 Traffic islands on the A20</b> Illumination of the traffic islands will continue to be monitored.</p>	AN
<p><b>17. Parking at Smeeth School</b></p> <p>The Chairman reported a recent incident, in which a car mounted the pavement to park but nearly struck 2 children; the Police had been informed. The Parish Council had written to KCC in March asking that it explain to the Head Teacher what could or could not be done to alleviate the situation; a site visit has been offered.</p>	
<p><b>18. Village caretaker scheme</b></p> <p>Cllr Mrs Morey advised that weekly timesheets are circulated. The hedge surrounding the village green in Brabourne has been cut; a footpath between Canterbury Road and Prospect Way needs strimming, this will be passed to the caretaker. Residents are asked to notify the Clerk of any items that need the caretaker's attention.</p>	SW
<p><b>19. Speedwatch</b></p> <p>The Chairman stated that Speedwatch sessions continue, and dates for late July are being organised. More volunteers are always welcome; the Police have indicated that they would like to attend.</p>	
<p><b>20. Local Needs Housing</b></p> <p>This is on hold pending the outcome of the review of the Local Plan. The Community Led Plan group is proposing to carry out a housing needs survey, after consultation with Tessa O'Sullivan (Rural Housing Needs Enabler, Action with Communities in Rural Kent).</p>	
<p><b>21. Playing fields</b></p> <p>A committee meeting will be held on 26<sup>th</sup> July, and will discuss payment of the peppercorn rent (further to a letter from the Parish Council) and a recent incident involving a para-glider.</p>	
<p><b>22. Request for permission to plant daffodil bulbs on the green triangle at The Ridgeway</b></p> <p>It was agreed that the Parish Council had no objection to the proposal from Smeeth WI. Planting would be at the WI's own risk, a miniature variety should be planted so as not to compromise road safety, the WI should liaise with the Community Led Plan group.</p>	SW
<p><b>23. Adoption of the Parish Council's safeguarding policy</b></p> <p>A draft policy was circulated; the Clerk advised that Ashford Borough Council now requires any organisation applying for a grant to have a safeguarding policy in place. It was proposed that the policy be adopted.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b></p> <p><b>That Smeeth Parish Council adopts the safeguarding policy.</b></p>	
<p><b>24. Request from Shadoxhurst Parish Council for support re lobbying for changes to the National Planning Policy Framework</b></p> <p>The Chairman stated that Shadoxhurst Parish Council is proposing to write to the Minister of Housing re areas of concern with regard to the National Planning Policy Framework, and is seeking support from other Parish Councils. It was proposed that counsel's opinion be sought, and that Cllr Mrs Morey be mandated to sign the letter, subject to counsel's response.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b></p> <p><b>That Cllr Mrs Morey be mandated to sign the letter, subject to counsel's opinion.</b></p>	
<p><b>25. Correspondence</b></p> <p><b>25.1</b> Cllr Brendon Chilton: Ashford Borough Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</p>	
<p><b>26. Any other business</b></p> <p><b>26.1</b> Felling of trees near Smeeth School: this was thought to be on ABC-owned land and has</p>	

been passed to the Tree Officer, ABC.

**26.2** Ashford Heritage Strategy: this is out for consultation until 31<sup>st</sup> August.

**26.3** The news of the passing of Lady Brabourne was received with considerable regret by all present.

**26.4** Operation Dogfish: Kent Police has launched an initiative in rural areas for safeguarding of sheds, barns and stables, recommending that additional security measures such as CCTV be put in.

**26.5** Sandpit Preservation Group: In answer to a question from Cllr Howard, Cllr Mrs Pereboom confirmed that the group is still active.

**25. Date and time of next meeting**

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2017 at 7.00pm in Brabourne Baptist Church.

The meeting closed at 10.15pm.

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