

Smeeth Parish Council
Minutes of a Meeting held on Wednesday 9th November 2016 at 7.00pm
Brabourne Baptist Church

1. Present	Action
<p>Cllr Herrick (Chairman), Cllr Mrs Morey (JM), Cllr Mrs Alford (HA), Cllr Mrs Nyssens (AN), Cllr MacPhee (CM) and Mrs Wood (Clerk) (SW). Cllr Howard (ward member) and the Community Warden were present and thirty-one members of the public attended.</p>	
<p>2. Apologies Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs Pereboom (indisposed), Cllr Thorpe (prior commitment) and PCSO Hobbs.</p>	
<p>3. Declarations of Interest There were no Declarations of Interest.</p>	
<p>4. Minutes Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 14th September 2016 be approved and confirmed as a true record.</p>	
<p>5. Open Session The meeting was suspended to allow members of the public present to raise matters of concern with the Parish Council.</p> <p>The Parish Council was asked if there are any plans in place to address traffic issues on the A20 when the M20 is closed during construction of the lorry park at Stanford North. The Chairman replied that the Parish Council has not yet received any information. Cllr Howard advised that the Parish Council is unlikely to be notified because the lorry park is in Shepway, but undertook to raise this with the Leader with a request that the Parish Council be kept informed.</p> <p>Safety concerns at Smeeth crossroads were raised, which it was thought are exacerbated by the failure to clean the 'keep left' signs and that they are now unlit.</p> <p>Residents from The Ridgeway and Church Road expressed extreme dissatisfaction at the Parish Council's support for the playing field proposals, and that these had been discussed at a meeting closed to the public. They disagreed with the assertion that residents were supportive of the proposals, noting that they had not been kept informed as the Parish Council had previously been advised. The residents felt that the Parish Council's position was inconsistent with its objection to the Gladman application on Hospital Field. In answer to a question from the floor, the Chairman replied that the Parish Council may reconsider its objection if the Gladman proposals were changed and fewer houses proposed: 125 homes would be too high for the village, but 25 may be acceptable.</p> <p>In light of the playing field proposals, expenditure of £80,000 to improve the football field was queried; it was thought that it would not be used by those living elsewhere, and the area could not support the additional traffic that would be generated.</p> <p>It was noted that submissions into the new Local Plan closed in June, but the late submission of the playing field proposals denied residents the opportunity to comment. The Chairman advised that as part of the consultation process landowners had put forward additional sites or asked that rejected sites be reconsidered. He noted the possibility that the Church Road site may be dropped from the revised Local Plan and the playing field not included. Publication of the new draft is expected in Spring 2017.</p> <p>The Parish Council was asked to justify its support for the proposals; the Chairman replied that it was felt that it would give better sports facilities for the village and local needs housing – of the 25 homes proposed 40% would be 'affordable' (a statutory requirement). The landowner will be asked to dedicate these to local needs.</p> <p>The Chairman stated that the Parish Council had not given blanket support to the proposals and</p>	

had highlighted traffic and other problems. The final decision will be taken by the planners, who will take all of these into account and consult outside experts, eg Kent Highways.

Residents expressed concerns that the Parish Council had not been properly informed of the proposals.

Cllr Howard outlined the Local Plan review process: the call for sites in 2013 was followed by consultation, including the workshop held in the Scout hut at which officers from Ashford Borough Council were present. He noted that although the landowner had sought pre-application advice, this was standard practice and did not infer support for the proposals, the Borough Council would remain neutral while assessing the sites. The draft Local Plan was published; some of those whose proposals were rejected asked that they be reassessed, and other sites were put forward. The latter included the Gladman proposals for Hospital Field. Borough Council officers are now assessing the viability of these sites taking into account such issues as drainage, traffic, suitability of the site. If rejected the site will not go into the revised draft. If any additional sites are included the changed Plan will go out for a 6-week consultation process, affording residents the opportunity to comment. Cllr Howard noted that the Parish Council could submit additional comments in light of the new information arising from the Open Session. He stated that the revised draft will be out in early Spring 2017, and adopted in 2018 after examination by the Planning Inspectorate.

Residents stated that the Parish Council had expressed concerns about the Church Road site but approved the playing field site. The Chairman replied that this was incorrect, the Parish Council had been asked for its views in principle of the 2 proposals for the playing field and had given its preference for 1 of the options. He noted that anyone could have put forward what are being called 'Omission sites', and reminded residents that they will be able to comment if these sites are included in the revised draft. Closing the meeting to the public was a matter of regret.

Concerns were expressed that although the Playing Field Association (PFA) comprises representatives from local groups, not all had been kept informed of the proposals and therefore these could not be the view of the wider Association. It was also felt that the Parish Council had not acted in the interests of residents and without transparency. It was suggested that a village green application be submitted for the playing field.

Residents stated that residents had not been leafleted, contrary to the statement in the Minutes of 14th September. They noted that the playing field is held under Deed of Gift; that if it is proposed to discontinue use of the land, a meeting must be held of Brabourne and Smeeth residents and the meeting advertised in the newspaper. The Chairman concurred, but noted that this would happen at a later date, the playing field development currently being only a proposal.

The PFA Chairman stated that informal approaches had been made to the landowner about 4 years ago, to see if there was support for an extension to the playing field to put in another pitch. These did not succeed but he had later been asked if he would be interested in a plan involving development and improvements to the playing field. No meeting of the PFA had been held because the proposals are only an idea. Residents were concerned that the Parish Council's support may add weight to the proposal.

Residents were concerned that negotiations with the landowner may have been taking place concurrently with the recent refurbishment.

Cllr Howard advised that he will feedback comments made during the Open Session to the Borough Council.

The Parish Council's objection to Hospital Field was welcomed, but it was felt that the Parish Council had lost the confidence of residents by not objecting to the Church Road and playing field proposals. The Chairman replied that the Church Road site is the only site in the draft Local Plan, its inclusion having been decided by Borough Council planners. The Parish Council had been invited to comment on the site, which it duly did. The Borough Council will take a number of factors into account and if the playing field proposals are in the revised draft comments will be invited. The Parish Council will comment, as can residents but the final decision will be made by the planners. It is unknown how much weight the Parish Council's comments carry, but it has commented that 2 sites together are not sustainable.

The Parish Council was informed that the Community Led Plan group had not been consulted on the proposals, notwithstanding the fact that one of its aims is to improve facilities on the field.

Residents welcomed the opportunity to participate at the meeting, and sought the Parish Council's assurances that residents would, in future, be kept informed.

The Chairman replied that it had been a joint decision to hold the meeting but the Parish Council will reconsider its view, with hindsight the proposal would have been handled differently. Cllr

Howard stated that he will ensure that the Borough Council gives equal weight to any later comments. He noted how hard the PFA Chairman and Secretary work on its behalf and that of other local organisations, and felt that residents' anger should rather be directed at Brabourne Estates and not the PFA. Cllr Howard's comments were endorsed.

The PFA Secretary acknowledged that communication with residents should have been better. Difficulties were reported in finding information on the Local Plan on the Borough Council website, and it was suggested that the Borough Council mails all residents inviting comments on the Local Plan. The need for some additional housing was acknowledged to support the school and local businesses, else they would be lost and the village would become a retirement village. It was noted that affordable housing would be an element of the playing field development, but there is a need for Local Needs Housing (LNH) for young people to enable them to remain/return to the village. The Parish Councils have been actively engaged in looking for sites for LNH, such sites would be an exception to the Local Plan.

In answer to a question from the floor if there is a need to expand the playing field, the Chairman stated that this is a matter for the PFA.

It is unknown if Brabourne Estates had to submit a highways' assessment with the proposal, but Cllr Howard advised that little information had been made available to ward members

The Parish Council was asked if it would recommend that the PFA reopens negotiations with Brabourne Estates to communicate the depth of feeling. There is, however, sympathy for some development in the village.

It was noted that Brabourne Estates currently own a number of undeveloped plots, and the question was asked why they are not being used. The Chairman replied that this was a matter for Brabourne Estates – the proposal for the playing field was to improve facilities but housing is needed to offset the costs. The field is agricultural, not greenbelt, and building is permitted on agricultural land. There is as, yet, no detail as to layout, type of houses etc.

The Chairman stressed the Parish Council's support for highway improvements on The Ridgeway; Cllr Howard advised that the planners could reduce the number of houses in the proposal or reject it on highways' safety grounds.

The Chairman was thanked for chairing the meeting and affording residents the opportunity to comment.

The Chairman proposed that an open, joint meeting be held with Brabourne Parish Council. It was confirmed that the PFA will make all residents aware of the proposals, including via social media.

The meeting was reconvened.

6. Matters Arising

There were no Matters Arising.

7. Report from Community Warden and PCSO

The Community Warden reported that CCTV had been installed by the occupier of a Council-owned property in Sandy Place, this has been taken up with the Borough Council. Trick-or-treaters at Halloween were well behaved and supervised. The PCSO's area has been extended.

The Woolpack has closed but the landlord is still living on the premises. Gas cylinders of nitrous oxide were found in the playing field car park. A vehicle has been abandoned in Lees Road.

PCSO Hobbs' report is attached to the Minutes.

8. Financial Report

8.1 To agree payments in accordance with the Budget

Resolved:

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

Payments

Details	£
S Wood (additional hours worked)	810.37
P Rodway (September salary)	1202.59
HMRC (PAYE and NI)	293.29

T Denne & Sons (storage)	108.00	
Lister Wilder	55.00	
P Rodway (October salary)	1202.59	
P Rodway (expenses)	44.47	
HMRC (PAYE and NI)	316.59	
Lister Wilder	73.81	
RBI Brabourne and Smeeth Branch	20.00	
S Wood (salary)	303.17	
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B Podd (18 hrs @ £7.20/hr)	129.60	
Lister Wilder	14.52	
T Denne & Sons	108.00	
PMC (dog waste bags)	237.60	
Donation - Smeeth and Brabourne Football Club	150.00	

Receipts	
Details	£
NatWest interest	1.50
Precept	7763.00
Concurrent Functions Grant	185.00
Council Tax Support Grant	280.00
Brook Parish Council (contribution to replacement van)	112.84
Mersham & Sevington Parish Council (contribution to replacement van)	353.76

Balance £ 38536.24 (as at 9th November 2016)

The contribution of £8000 from KCC towards the caretaker scheme has not yet been paid.

Dog waste bin in Pound Lane: this was raised with the dog warden who advised that a borough-wide review of provision is being carried out. It was agreed to wait for the outcome of the review.

8.2 To consider breakdown cover for the caretaker's van
The Caretaker Management Committee recommended that cover be placed with Green Flag. This was agreed.

8.3 To agree enrolment in the Local Government Pension Scheme at a contribution rate of 18% of payroll
The Clerk advised that the actuarial report had determined the rates payable by the employer and the caretaker, which are 18% and 5.8% respectively. Membership will be backdated to 1st April 2016. The employer's costs will be paid by the cluster pro rata. It was proposed that Smeeth Parish Council enrolls as an employer in the LGPS at a contribution rate of 18%.

Resolved:
That Smeeth Parish Council enrolls as an employer in the Local Government Pension Scheme at a contribution rate of 18%, backdated to 1st April 2016.

8.4 To consider the draft Budget for 2017-18
The draft Budget was circulated. It will be further discussed at the January meeting and a decision made regarding any increase in the Precept. A decision on a pay increase for the caretaker will be made on the anniversary of his appointment (March). It was noted that the caretaker's contract of employment is with Smeeth Parish Council, which has service contracts with KCC and the Borough Council.

9. Planning Committee report
9.1 Planning applications
The Chairman reported on 1 application:
Mead House, Church Road Relocation of existing timber outbuilding and the construction of a brick/timber garage with workshop in roof. Objection on the grounds that this was thought to

SW

SW

<p>be an over-development of the site. The following planning applications were permitted: Crail, Plain Road Two-storey side extension Calland Erection of 4 semi-detached houses The Chairman advised that the homes at Calland will be designated Local Needs in perpetuity. They will be offered in the first instance to residents in Smeeth and Brabourne, and only then to residents in Aldington, Mersham, Brook and beyond. The Chairman noted the need to applicants to have first registered on the Borough Council housing register to be considered; this will be put in Parish News.</p>	SW
<p>10. Local Plan to 2030 See the Open Session.</p>	
<p>11. Village Protection Policy Cllr Howard advised that the core elements of the Policy will be incorporated into the Local Plan for the borough; parts specific to Smeeth and Brabourne will be in an appendix. Future consideration will be given to the formulation of a Neighbourhood Plan as per Wye and other parishes once further information is received.</p>	
<p>12. KALC representative report Cllr Mrs Morey reported that the Minutes of the meeting on 21st September have been circulated, at which Simon Cole gave a presentation on Neighbourhood Plans. The meeting included feedback on the Parish Forum and a presentation on Aspire - a grounds maintenance service offered by the Borough Council. Other issues raised included the cost of daytime business parking in Ashford which was thought to be a disincentive; the Planning Working group will be wound up; Truck Stop will expand. The next meeting is on 16th November.</p>	
<p>13. Update on J10A Working Group The need for improvements at the Barrey Road/Bad Munstereifel Road junction was stressed.</p>	SW
<p>14. Footpaths and Highways 14.1 Sandy Place parking Comments from the Tree Officer on the proposed scheme have still not been received, despite repeated requests. The Clerk to follow-up. 14.2 Footpath diversion KCC has confirmed the diversion of footpaths AE441 from Lilyvale, and HE307 from the parish boundary. 14.3 Bridleways Cllr Mrs Nyssens reported that there are no bridleways in the area and this has been raised with the PROW office; of the 4 byways offered 3 were unsuitable for horses. Cllr Mrs Nyssens advised that she has identified a number of footpaths that may be suitable for redesignation as bridleways. 14.4 Caroland Close KCC has refused the Parish Council's request for parking restrictions. 14.5 Smeeth crossroads See the Open Session. KCC Highways will be contacted about the lighting of the 'Keep left' signs, copy to Cllr Wickham.</p>	SW
<p>15. Parking at Smeeth School The Chairman advised that the Head Teacher is trying to alleviate the parking problems, and had placed an item in Parish News. Results from Speedwatch showed that some of those exceeding the speed limit had been parents with schoolchildren in the car – the Head Teacher has been made aware. The Chairman reported that the Parish Council wrote to the Chair of the governors, who replied stating that the Governors are supporting the Head Teacher's efforts and asked that the Parish Council presses KCC. The Chairman advised that the Parish Council's efforts had thus far been unsuccessful but would try again.</p>	SW
<p>16. Community Led Plan and Emergency Plan Community Led Plan: Michael Hinchliffe's update has been circulated. The planning application for the basketball hoop will be submitted. The Parish Council has been asked if it could provide warning signs for use when working on the pond – these could also be used by the village caretaker. Cllr MacPhee noted that costs would therefore be shared by the cluster, this will be taken to the next caretaker management committee meeting. Michael Hinchliffe will be asked for costings.</p>	SW/JM SW

<p>Emergency Plan: Councillor MacPhee reported the plan is sound as far as it goes but a coordinator is required to move it forward. Cllr Mrs Alford suggested that an appeal is put in Parish News and it will also be taken to Brabourne Parish Council.</p>	SW
<p>17. Village caretaker scheme Cllr Mrs Morey reported that Health and Safety was discussed at the most recent caretaker management committee meeting. A pro forma is to be completed by the caretaker and Clerk, the former will report weekly. A miscalculation with regard to British Summer Time meant that the caretaker had worked an extra 51 hours during the period; this was referred to the management committee who agreed that it should be taken as holiday. Good feedback is being received from residents. Van signage is in hand with Medash signs and there have been no reported problems with the new van.</p> <p>17.1 To sign the contract with KCC The Clerk advised that the caretaker agreement with KCC relating to maintenance of the highway in the cluster has been received. After it is returned to KCC the promised contribution of £8000 will be forthcoming. It was proposed that the contract be signed.</p> <p>Resolved: That the caretaker agreement with KCC relating to maintenance of the highway in the cluster be signed by three councillors.</p> <p>18. Speedwatch Four sessions were carried out in October, and 61 vehicles logged, but more volunteers are needed – training will be offered. CLP members also used a radar gun and reported that 16% of vehicles were exceeding the speed limit. Mr Snazelle has asked that the current Speed Indicator Device (SID) be replaced at a cost of £2000 + VAT because it is now outdated; the criteria for a grant of 50% of the cost are not, however, met. Cllr Howard suggested either selling the existing SID to another parish that is setting-up a Speedwatch scheme or sharing the new equipment (and costs) with other parishes in the caretaker cluster; it was recognised that the other parishes would need their own volunteers. Cllr Mrs Nyssens asked if it could be hired out, the Chairman replied that it has previously been lent as a goodwill gesture and proposed that the Parish Council meets the cost of a new SID.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Parish Council meets the cost of a new SID.</p>	SW
<p>Brabourne Parish Council will be asked for a contribution.</p>	SW
<p>19. Rural speed limits Nothing to report in Cllr Miss Martin's absence.</p>	
<p>20. Local Needs Housing This is on hold pending the outcome of the review of the Local Plan. Cllr Howard advised that works have begun to build the social housing at Calland.</p>	
<p>21. Playing fields See the Open Session.</p>	
<p>22. Correspondence All correspondence has been circulated.</p>	
<p>23. Any other business 23.1 Cllr MacPhee stated that he attended meeting on Otterpool Park and will circulate a report. Shepway DC has purchased the farm and is in a joint venture with the owners of Folkestone racecourse. No planning application has yet been submitted and work is unlikely to begin for 5 years, with a 30-year timeframe for completion. The development will have an impact on the A20, which is already under pressure from development in the villages. It is proposed that Otterpool will have 3 Primary Schools, 2 Secondary Schools and health centres. Cllr Howard advised that the development will be twice the size of Chilmington Green, and that there is a need for cooperation between Shepway and Ashford because of the effect on the A20.</p>	CM

<p>23.2 The Chairman advised that a new supply of dog waste bags has been delivered, bags are available from the shop.</p> <p>23.3 Cllr Mrs Morey reported that the KALC AGM will be held on 19th November; any councillor wishing to attend is asked to notify the Clerk.</p> <p>23.4 The Chairman indicated that the Parish Council will submit comments to the Borough Council on the disadvantages of the playing field proposal.</p> <p>23.5 Cllr Howard reported that the Ashford recycling app can be downloaded, it can also be used to report flytipping.</p> <p>24. Resolution to exclude the public 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 22, namely distribution of Fordred's Charity payments. Resolved: That the press and public leave the meeting during discussion of Fordred's Charity payments</p> <p>25. Fordred's Charity distribution The payments will be distributed as agreed.</p> <p>26. Date and time of next meeting Wednesday 11th January 2017 at 7.00pm in Brabourne Baptist Church.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 9.45pm.</p>	<p>All</p>
<hr/> <p>PCSO's report</p> <p>The search on the website will give crime details for the whole ward not just Smeeth, on the plus side it will give you an idea of the crimes in the surrounding villages. When I do a report I won't give a figure but will mention anything urgent to Smeeth.</p> <p>No reported ASB in the area</p> <p>Abandoned Vehicle on Lees Rd (just outside Smeeth), council contacted to collect.</p> <p>Please ask residents to secure their properties and take valuables out of their vehicles due to Burglaries in surrounding areas.</p> <p>Patrols continue to be carried out in the area, but please report any concerns to the police by dialling 101 regarding any suspicious persons or vehicles seen in the area.</p>	<p>GT</p>