

Smeeth Parish Council
Minutes of a Meeting held on Wednesday 15th November 2017 at 7.00pm
Brabourne Baptist Church

<p>1. Present Cllr Herrick (Chairman) (DH), Cllr Mrs Alford (HA), Cllr Mrs Morey (JM), Cllr Mrs Pereboom (VP), Cllr Mrs Nyssens (AN) and Cllr MacPhee (CM, and Mrs Wood (Clerk) (SW). Cllr Howard (WH) (ward member) and Mr Kingston (Community Warden) were present. Nineteen members of the public attended.</p> <p>2. Apologies Apologies were received from Cllr Thorpe (Vice-chairman) (GT) (prior commitment).</p> <p>3. Declarations of Interest Cllr Mrs Pereboom: Planning application 17/01506/AS (Voluntary declaration).</p> <p>4. Minutes Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 6th September 2017 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 comment on items other than those on the agenda.</p> <p>An update on the Andrews Garage site was sought; the Chairman replied that this would be reported under Matters Arising.</p> <p>The meeting was reconvened.</p> <p>6. Matters Arising</p> <p>6.1 Andrews Garage: The Chairman stated that the landowner (Colin Kicks) had informed him that he will be submitting a planning application for 11 dwellings – terraced and semi-detached 2- and 3-bedroom properties. This is separate from the Granary Court site which is for 7 dwellings, although both are owned by Mr Kicks.</p> <p>6.2 Cherry Hill bungalow: The planning application has not yet been determined.</p> <p>6.3 War Memorial: The Parish Council was advised that a decision on the funding application to the War Memorials Trust is still awaited. The Memorial has been Grade II listed, this may help with grant applications, eg to the Historic Lotteries Fund (which cannot be submitted until the outcome of the application to the War Memorials Trust is known). It is still hoped that the works can be completed by November 2018.</p> <p>6.4 Grain dryer at Joe Farm: Cllr Howard reported that he contacted Environmental Services (ES), who advised that they had been invited to a meeting with residents but did not attend, wishing to remain a neutral party; they had, however, informed the tenant that the matter had been raised by residents. Cllr Howard noted that ES have the power to impose sanctions, but their first aim is to work with the tenant and residents to achieve a satisfactory outcome. It was noted that the noise had interfered with residents' quality of life, particularly at night, when the dryer was running continuously throughout July and August. The agents (Strutt and Parker) had stated that a timer had been installed, this was disputed. At the request of ES a resident has been compiling a log of the noise and nuisance, because evidence is needed before ES can take action.</p> <p>6.5 Calland: No start date has yet been given.</p> <p>6.6 Horse and rider safety initiative: Cllr Mrs Nyssens reported that she has met KCC re safe off-road riding given that there is none in the villages. KCC has agreed that some footpaths can be redesignated as bridleways (subject to the landowners' permission). Cllr Mrs Nyssens reported that she has set up a Facebook page (Brabourne Riders), which is seeking comments on safer riding and contains a survey. She will be contacting landowners and intends to convert footpaths</p>	<p>SW</p> <p>AN</p>
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on her farm to bridleways. A ride in Spring 2018 will be organised to emphasise that, at present, only on-road riding is available.

6.7 Remembrance Sunday service: The Chairman laid the wreath on behalf of the Parish Councils.

7. Report from Community Warden and PCSO

Community Warden: Mr Kingston reported that Halloween had gone well, with many young people taking part but all had been supervised. The Fireworks evening was a great success and no concerns reported. Two burglaries were reported: a bike was stolen from a garage in Bridge Road, and cash and jewellery from a property in Church Road. Both incidents were on the same evening, it is therefore likely that they were carried out by the same person. Residents are urged to ensure that their security is up to date. A break-in to a van in Knatchbull Way was reported, possibly linked to other break-ins of trade vans in the Ashford area. Mr Kingston stated that he has been dealing with parking issues in Calland. The vandalism to the rabbit-proof fencing on the playing field was reported to the Police, but 4 posts have now been broken; Mr Kingston was asked to report the latter to Paul Dawson (Playing Field Association chairman). The Chairman informed Mr Kingston of an incident at Halloween of damage when a pumpkin was thrown at a parked car.

PCSO: No report in the PCSO's absence.

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	£
P Rodway	1156.64
KCC re Kent Pension Fund	372.19
HMRC	255.01
Lister Wilder (caretaker)	16.58
T Denne & Sons (caretaker)	216.00
Fuel Genie	157.40
P Rodway	1156.64
KCC re Kent Pension Fund	372.19
HMRC	255.01
Getmapping Plc (Parish online)	33.60
PMC Polythene Ltd (dog foul bags)	198.00
Fuel Genie	171.27
S Wood (salary)	306.20
S Wood (salary)	306.20
S Wood (Fordred)	175.00
B Podd	225.00
Lister Wilder (caretaker)	46.12
Smeeth & Brabourne Football Club (donation)	150.00
Ashford Volunteer Centre (caretaker DBS check)	54.00

Receipts

Details	£
NatWest interest	0.40
Precept	11188.00
Concurrent Functions Grant	185.00
Council Tax Support Grant	260.00
Smeeth Field Rent	175.00
VAT refund	326.31
KCC (caretaker)	8000.00

Balance £ 57303.96 (as at 15th November 2017)

8.2 To consider the draft Budget for 2018-19

The draft Budget was tabled. A decision on the Precept for 2018-19 will be made at the January meeting, by which time the Concurrent Functions Grant and Council Tax Support Grant to be paid will be known.

16 Emergency Plan and Community Led Plan (CLP)

(Brought forward with the permission of the Chairman)

Mr Hinchliffe reported on the Community Led Plan's current projects:

- 1) Basketball hoop: This will be installed by volunteers in Spring 2018.
- 2) Outdoor gym: A grant of £2500 has been awarded by ABC, total funds raised are £10,000. A committee of 3 from the CLP group will lead on the project and look at prices and equipment needed, the committee will report back to the CLP in January. It is hoped that the gym will have been installed by April 2018.
- 3) Bulb planting: Smeeth WI planted bulbs on the triangle at The Ridgeway to commemorate the WI's centenary in 2018. Subject to the landowners' permission, it is hoped to plant along the verges in Church Road, Lees Road, Plain Road, the Woolpack, The Chestnuts, Hoskins Pond, the Oak Room and St Mary's Smeeth. The bulbs have been donated by local businesses. Mr Hinchliffe sought permission from the Parish Council to plant on areas for which it is responsible, this was agreed. The caretaker will be advised of the planting locations, but the mowing season will not begin until after the bulbs have flowered.
- 4) Funds: £334 is held by Brabourne Parish Council on behalf of the Emergency Plan (EP), but this could be better used by the CLP, given that the EP is dormant. This was agreed.
- 5) Housing needs survey: The results will be published shortly.

9. Planning Committee report

9.1 17/01506/AS Granary Court Buildings, Granary Court Road, Smeeth

Demolition of existing buildings; change of use of mixed use site to erect 4 no. 3 bedroom dwellings and 3 no. 2 bedroom dwellings with associated parking barn

The meeting was suspended to allow members of the public present to comment on the planning application.

The need for smaller dwellings in the community was acknowledged but the application should be refused because of the site's proximity to the scrap yard, it would be a poor environment for children.

Cllr Howard stated that he has spoken to the case officer and submitted comments as ward member. He noted that the scrap yard is currently only operating at 50% of its permitted capacity and expressed concerns that complaints re noise may be forthcoming when activity increases. Cllr Howard stated that the site is currently commercial/light industrial but the applicant has failed to demonstrate that he has advertised it as a commercial site, a requirement under planning law. He felt that the site layout and design are poor. The application is unsustainable, it would generate more traffic because of the distance from public transport and the site is outside the village confines. Cllr Howard stated that he has asked that it be determined by the Planning Committee if the officer is minded to permit. He further advised that the officer has a number of concerns which are being raised with the applicant, but if the officer is minded to refuse it will not be referred to the Planning Committee.

It was thought that development on the site would set a precedent for development on the site to the rear.

Concerns were expressed re flooding and water run-off: that there is no mains drainage but the proposed eco-friendly sewage treatment plant will give rise to more water run-off. Cllr Howard replied that the case officer is aware of the flooding issues.

It was thought that the photo of the exit to the site is misleading, given the topography and road layout.

Additional traffic would add to the difficulties turning into Plain Road either from Pound Lane or

Canterbury Road.

It was stated that Tanners are good employers, and there were concerns that the development may jeopardise their operation.

The meeting was reconvened.

Cllr Mrs Nyssens noted that any increase in traffic would make riding along Granary Court Road more hazardous and felt that the site is unsuitable for development.

Cllr Mrs Pereboom asked if the Parish Council objected to the application, would it be perceived as being against all development, which may make a successful appeal on Hospital Field more likely. Cllr Mrs Alford replied that the Parish Council does not often object, but with other sites coming forward in the Local Plan, Old Builders Yard, Andrews Garage and at The Plough Inn, is this site needed? It was suggested that the Caldecott site has been withdrawn from the Local Plan. [Post-meeting note: the site has been withdrawn, the current occupiers having indicated that they will not be moving from the site.] Cllr Howard replied that the site is too small to affect the Hospital Field decision; there are other, larger sites not in the Plan that will be put forward later as windfall sites. Parish Council support for sites in the parish that are in the Local Plan demonstrates that it does not object to all development. Cllr Howard further noted that it could be asked why the site had not been put forward for inclusion in the Plan; sites already in the Plan should be developed before this one.

Cllr Howard noted that there was no evidence of marketing either the Andrews Garage or Granary Court sites as going concerns, a requirement under planning law. The Parish Council was informed that staff from Andrews Garage who had been made redundant had approached the site owner with the intention of opening a car repair business at Granary Court, but had been refused. Cllr Howard recommended that this information be passed to the case officer as evidence that the site had not been marketed, and urged residents to continue submitting comments.

Cllr Mrs Morey said clarification is needed on 3 points: i) adequacy of the proposed eco-sewage system and its suitability for the site; ii) drainage to cope with surface water run-off; iii) possible contamination of the site, a risk assessment is needed but has not been provided.

Cllr MacPhee agreed with Cllr Mrs Morey's comments but acknowledged the need for smaller homes for young families, however, he thought the proposal inadequate and defective. He noted that a number of assertions in the application were inaccurate and there were too many things wrong with the site.

Cllr Howard advised that the Parish Council must judge the current proposals; if an amended were to be submitted the Parish Council will assess the new application on its merits, but some issues would be unchanged, eg road width, proximity of the scrapyard.

The Chairman noted that proposals for the Andrews Garage site were for terraced and semi-detached properties, plus possibly 1 detached; however no planning application had yet been submitted, the discussions were on the Granary Court site. Cllr Howard felt that the same argument would apply because the garage had not been marketed as a business.

The Chairman proposed that the Parish Council objects to the application, giving its reasons as Minuted.

Resolved:

That the Parish Council objects to the application, giving its reasons as Minuted.

10. Local Plan to 2030

Cllr Howard reported that sites are still being submitted, as they are entitled to do, until the examination before the Planning Inspector. No more changes will, however, be made to the Local Plan, which will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate before Christmas; it will then be a material consideration for, eg Hospital Field and the Gladman appeal.

Cllr Howard advised that ABC is in discussions with Shepway DC on the impact on the borough of the Otterpool development, but noted this had no bearing on the Local Plan.

In reply to a question, Cllr Howard stated that no application had yet been submitted for the Church Road site, because it is not in the current planning framework.

11. KALC representative report

Cllr Mrs Morey advised that she will be attending the AGM on 18th November, and will support

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Wingham Parish Council's motion that the speed limit through rural villages should be reduced to 20mph.

12. Renewal of Smeeth field rental agreement and rent review

The Chairman reported the death of Brian Wimble, the tenant, and noted that the annual rent had been held at £350pa for 21 years. Should a new agreement be drawn up and the rent reassessed? Hobbs Parker will be asked to revalue the field and a rent review clause will be added to the agreement.

SW/AN

13. Update on J10A Working Group

Cllr Mrs Pereboom reported that there are concerns re rat-running through Mersham; Cllr Howard replied that these will be addressed by the closure to through traffic of Kingsford Street. Highways England has reassessed the Barrey Road junction; traffic lights will be installed as part of the J10A project.

14. Footpaths and Highways

14.1 Sandy Place parking Nothing forthcoming from the planning officer, but no problems reported as of late.

14.2 Provision of additional parking places in Lees Close Cllr Howard reported that he had followed this up with the officer, who noted that the request had been for disabled parking bays but the applicants were ineligible because they did not have blue badges. If disabled parking bays were put in this would further restrict available parking spaces. The Chairman suggested that new spaces be created on the grass verge, but acknowledged that funding would be needed.

14.3 Potholes at Washington Farm The resurfacing request was refused, but surface dressing will be carried out.

14.4 HGV parking on the A20 The overnight parking ban is being enforced between Charing and Drivers roundabout on the A20, and there has been a reduction in the number of HGVs parking overnight. Cllr Howard noted that lorries are only clamped if spaces are available in the lorry parks. Waterbrook would like to expand but this cannot be achieved until J10A has been completed because the increased traffic would have an adverse impact on the already congested J10.

14.5 Traffic islands on the A20 The islands have been reinstated after the recent movement of the generator from Dover to the Converter station, and all are working.

14.6 Church Road Potholes on the highway and pavement have been reported to KCC Highways.

15. Parking at Smeeth School

No problems have been reported of late, but this is of continuing concern.

16. Emergency Plan and Community Led Plan (contd)

Emergency Plan: The Chairman advised that at a recent meeting a volunteer had come forward indicating a willingness to take over as coordinator, but had later decided against. The Emergency Plan could not be progressed until a coordinator was found. Cllr MacPhee advised that the Emergency Plan is in place, and data collected identifying those with 4-wheel drives, chainsaws, nursing skills etc, but the data needs to be updated. Cllr MacPhee felt that the Emergency Plan should be relaunched, and an analysis of any new data undertaken. The coordinator's role is to maintain emergency equipment, update the date 6-monthly and run annual exercises to test the Plan. Cllr Howard counselled that the data held may fall within the Data Protection Act, which would be further strengthened under the General Data Protection Regulations (in force from May 2018). Given the suggestion to relaunch the Plan and gather new data, Cllr MacPhee was asked to send all current data to the Clerk (registered with the Information Commissioner as a Data Controller) for secure disposal.

CM/SW

17. Village caretaker scheme

Cllr Mrs Morey reported that the caretaker is now on the winter schedule; the Clerk should be notified of any work that needs doing. A significant litter problem was recorded on the caretaker's timesheet, which had to be cleared before mowing could be carried out; this is of concern given that the villages employ litter-pickers. A mower blade was broken by an angle

<p>bracket left on the village green. The scheme continues to go well and the DBS check is in hand.</p> <p>18. Speedwatch The Chairman noted that there had been no update from Graham Snazelle but a number of recent sessions had been carried out. Offenders logged by the session are sent a warning letter by Kent Police, and persistent offenders are visited by the Police. An interactive flashing device will be borrowed from Mersham, this shows the speed of the passing vehicle, and will be moved to different locations in the village. If thought useful consideration will be given to purchase of a similar device.</p> <p>19. Local Needs Housing This is on hold pending the outcome of the review of the Local Plan.</p> <p>20. Playing fields The Chairman reported that the Parish Council has proposed an increase in its contribution to the Playing Field Association (PFA) in its budget for 2018-19 to reflect increased maintenance costs. The Fireworks evening was a success and will be repeated in 2018. The Parish Council was advised that a decision on payment of the outstanding peppercorn rent will be made at the next PFA meeting on 22nd November 2017.</p>	SW
<p>21. Proposed dates for future meetings 10th January 2018, 7th March, 9th May, 11th July, 5th September, 7th November.</p> <p>22. Correspondence 22.1 Listing of Smeeth War Memorial as a building of special architectural or historic interest (Grade II).</p> <p>23. Any other business 23.1 The constituency boundary will change at the next Parliamentary election and the parish will revert to Ashford. The ward boundary will change: Smeeth will be in the new ward of Bircholt, with Brabourne, Brook and Hastingleigh. 23.2 KALC Community Awards Scheme- for those living in the parish who have made a significant contribution. This will be publicised in Parish News, and nominations should be sent to the Clerk. The closing date for receipt of nominations is 26th January 2018. 23.3 Complaints of dog-fouling have been received. A reminder about the availability of free dog waste bags and fines that can be levied for dog fouling will be placed in Parish News and Facebook.</p>	SW SW SW
<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 25, 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 10th January 2018 at 7.00pm in Brabourne Baptist Church. The meeting closed at 9.35pm.</p>	SW/GT