

Smeeth Parish Council
Minutes of a Meeting held on Wednesday 6th November 2019 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). Seven members of the public attended.</p> <p>2. Apologies Apologies were received from Cllr Howard (ward member).</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 4th September be approved and confirmed as a true record.</p> <p>5. Borough councillor's report No report in Cllr Howard's absence.</p> <p>6. Local Needs Housing – presentation by Tessa O'Sullivan (Rural Housing Enabler, ACRK) Miss O'Sullivan was welcomed by the Chairman. Miss O'Sullivan stated that she is responsible for the Rural Housing Enabling Project for ACRK [Action with Communities in Rural Kent] to deliver Local Needs Housing [LNH]. She advised that LNH is affordable housing built in villages and is for those with a local connection, citing Fortescue Place as an example. Such housing is either rented below the market rate or is in shared ownership (part owned and part rented). ACRK works with Parish Councils, community groups, local authorities and Housing Associations to bring forward such developments. These are built on 'exception sites', ie sites which would not get planning permission for market housing; Fortescue Place was outside the village confines at the time of development and was, therefore, an exception site. Land without an open market value is cheaper, making building more affordable for Housing Associations [HA]. Miss O'Sullivan stated that ACRK also assists Parish Councils in finding suitable sites. LNH is either rented through the HA or part-owned. LNH developments are usually small, being up to eight houses. S106 conditions are attached so that the homes are only for those with a local connection. There are eligibility criteria for LNH, eg income. There is no 'Right to Buy' for LNH, thus the house is owned by the HA in perpetuity. Shared ownership is up to a maximum of 80% of the value, which prevents its sale on the open market. Miss O'Sullivan advised that ACRK carries out Housing Need Surveys to assess need. These go to all households for completion and the replies are assessed against the eligibility criteria. The most recent survey in Smeeth and Brabourne was undertaken in 2011 and identified a need for 40 homes, comprising 20 singles, 10 couples, 10 families. Miss O'Sullivan stated that much work had been done to find sites but none had come forward, landowners were unwilling to sell. She felt that there is likely still a need for this housing in Brabourne and Smeeth. Cllr Mrs Morey asked for the definition of a local connection. Miss O'Sullivan replied that local authorities have their own definitions in Planning Policy, those for Ashford Borough Council are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I currently live in the parish and have done so continuously for the last 5 years • I have previously lived in the parish and have immediate family who currently live there and have done so continuously for the last 10 years • I have lived in the parish for a total of 7 out of the last 10 years • I am in full or part time employment in the parish • I need to move to the parish to take up full time or part time employment 	SW
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I need to move to the parish to give or receive support to or from an immediate family member. <p>Cllr Kimpton noted that Policy HOU2 in the Local Plan states that if there is insufficient need for such housing in the parish, it cascades out to other parishes, and finally to the Borough Council. This may result in the Borough Council deciding who would occupy Smeeth LNH. Miss O'Sullivan replied that these would be extreme circumstances and would be because the HA would not wish the property to remain empty. The cascade system is in place in the S106 agreement.</p> <p>Cllr Kimpton queried the need for such housing, noting that house prices are lower in Ashford. Miss O'Sullivan replied that LNH is for people who want to live in the village. She further noted that the market value of LNH is related to house prices in the area; ownership shares start at 40% and occupiers can then 'staircase', ie buying additional shares up to a maximum of 80%. The majority of homes are, however, available for rent rather than shared ownership.</p> <p>Cllr Mrs Alford noted the need for families to remain in the village to sustain it.</p> <p>Miss O' Sullivan stated that house prices have risen with the result that many cannot afford to buy or rent privately; they therefore leave their communities.</p> <p>Cllr Kimpton said that those eligible for LNH could buy under existing schemes, such as the Church Road development, and took issue with 'exception sites' and building on green areas.</p> <p>Miss O'Sullivan advised that there is some cross-subsidy for LNH, eg in Warehorne a self-build plot is being sold on the open market and the money from the sale will be used to subsidise the Warehorne LNH. She further noted that HA occasionally build market homes to subsidise LNH; such open market homes cannot be restricted to local people but sales are open to local people only for the first twelve weeks. Such homes would only be one or two of the eight properties in the development and planners require viability studies to show the need for cross-subsidy.</p> <p>The Chairman advised that the process begins with the survey which shows the extent of the need, which will remain until the houses are built. They are most probably taken by local people with a housing need. Miss O'Sullivan stated that if there is no need or it is limited to, say two, there would not be a development. Cllr Mrs Moo asked if the survey is to be repeated, given that it was carried out in 2011. Miss O'Sullivan was unsure of the value if there are no sites for LNH. Cllr Kimpton agreed that there is a lack of sites, noting that one of those originally proposed has now been developed for market housing (the Old Builders Yard). Miss O'Sullivan stated that she is prepared to put out a call for sites; this was welcomed by Cllr Mrs Alford who noted that the situation has changed.</p> <p>The Chairman advised that the village confines have recently been defined with a concomitant search for sites, but none was identified. However, with the publication of the Local Plan to 2030 and the confines landowners may be encouraged to come forward. The Chairman suggested that a desk-top survey be undertaken with Brabourne.</p> <p>Miss O'Sullivan acknowledged the concerns re the loss of greenfield, noting that all sites should be sustainable and therefore not isolated.</p> <p>The Chairman noted that LNH offers a choice. Cllr Mrs Pereboom agreed, stressing the need to retain a sense of community and a mix of ages.</p> <p>7. Open Session</p> <p>The meeting was suspended to allow members of the public present to comment on items other than those on the agenda.</p> <p>No matters were raised.</p> <p>The meeting was reconvened.</p> <p>8. Matters Arising</p> <p>8.1 Woolpack Hill: KCC has agreed to the parking ban during the gas main works but it does not appear to have been implemented. The Clerk to follow-up. It was noted that the work is being carried out on stages.</p> <p>8.2 Cross-over at Cherry Trees: No information has been forthcoming. The Clerk to follow-up.</p> <p>8.3 S106 monies from the Church Road development: ABC has agreed that money can be put towards a youth shelter. This information will be passed to the CLP group whose assistance may</p>	<p>DH/SW</p>
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be needed. Councillors are asked to identify projects. The Chairman and Chairman of Brabourne Parish Council (Mike Hickmott, MH) with Paul Dawson (PD) (Chairman, Playing Field Association) will meet to review projects and costings for S106 projects. It was noted that they can only be used for set criteria, including: sports provision, young people's play space, cemeteries (including open churchyards), informal/natural green spaces, allotments.

8.4 Hospital Field Village Green application: No date has yet been set for the Regulation Panel's meeting.

8.5 Ward member's presence on social media: Cllr Howard will monitor the soon to be introduced Brabourne and Smeeth Parish Councils' e-newsletter and will be invited to contribute.

8.6 Parish Councils' communications: Cllr Mrs Pereboom reported that the back page of Parish News encourages people to sign up to the new e-newsletter. This can be by email, Facebook or a link from the parish websites. There have been 16 sign-ups to date. It is hoped that more will sign up. The newsletter will be distributed electronically via MailChimp, which is free to use. The first newsletter will go out in December and will be circulated regularly. All households in Brabourne and Smeeth will be leafleted by the Scouts and Guides. Spare copies of the flyer will be at locations in the village, such as the hall, churches, shop and hairdressers. It will also be advertised on Next Door. Copy for the newsletter should be sent to bandspcnews@gmail.com. Cllr Mrs Pereboom and the Chairman of Brabourne Parish Council were thanked for their efforts.

The parish websites must be migrated to another host to comply with the 2018 accessibility regulation: the current KCC websites do not comply. This will afford an opportunity to update and refresh the websites.

9. Report from PCSO

PCSO Morgan has been redeployed, the new PCSO is Aaron Newell who circulates a monthly newsletter. He held a drop-in meeting on October 24th in Aldington Village Hall, and plans to attend events in the parishes, eg Cafe Wednesday.

10. Financial Report

10.1 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	£
PKF Littlejohn LLP (external audit fee)	360.00
S Wood (salary)	322.14
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S Wood (Fordreds Charity)	180.00
B Podd (salary)	221.67
S&B Football Club (donation)	150.00
GeoXphere Ltd (Parish Online subscripton)	45.00
Smeeth Caretaker Account (balance of 2019/10 contribution)	910.00

Receipts

Details	£
NatWest interest	9.79
Precept	11869.00
Concurrent Functions Grant	185.00
Council Tax Support Grant	282.00
Smeeth Field rent	175.00
Fordreds Charity	180.00

Balance £ 67743.84 (as at 6th November 2019)

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SW
All
DH/MH/PD

VP

Caretaker account**Payments**

Details	£
P Rodway (salary September)	1430.96
P Rodway (expenses)	67.65
HMRC	406.56
KCC re Kent Pension Fund	478.81
Lister Wilder	138.13
T Denne & Sons (storage)	108.00
Fuel Genie (direct debit)	182.05
P Rodway (salary October)	1430.96
P Rodway (expenses)	384.67
HMRC	406.56
KCC re Kent Pension Fund	478.81
Fuel Genie (direct debit)	104.19
T Denne & Sons (storage)	216.00
Lister Wilder	98.56

Balance: £ 20256.15 (as at 6th November 2019)

10.2 To agree a contribution to the Scouts and Guides

The Chairman advised that the Scouts and Guides will deliver the Parish Councils' newsletter flyer to all households [see 8.6] and proposed that a donation be made in recognition of their help. A donation will also be made by Brabourne Parish Council. It was noted that the Scouts and Guides do not receive any other funding.

Resolved:

That the Parish Council donates £100 to the Scouts and Guides for their help in distributing the newsletter flyer.

10.3 Draft Budget for 2020-2021

The draft Budget was tabled.

The Chairman advised that the external auditor had criticised the level of Reserves held by the Parish Council, particularly because none was ring-fenced for projects. The Precept will be set at the January meeting and councillors were asked to review the proposals and suggest additional funding, eg to the Scouts and Guides, a contribution to the footpath across The Warren (although in Brabourne it is used by Smeeth residents), the CLP group.

17 Playing fields

Paul Dawson (Chairman, Playing Field Association), the Association's Treasurer and its Secretary are to step down in a year's time. It is hoped that existing Committee members will fill these roles. The Chairman advised that the Association pays a peppercorn rent to the landowner in perpetuity; Paul Dawson has had assurances that the landowner will not take the land back. A call for volunteers will go into the newsletter.

11. Planning**11.1 Parish Council procedure for responding to planning applications**

The Chairman advised that a revised method of handling applications has been brought in, to ensure compliance with the dispensation granted by the Deputy Monitoring Officer at Ashford Borough Council. The Clerk sends a hyperlink to the applications to all councillors; the comments are collated by Cllr Mrs Pereboom and the Clerk and then submitted to ABC to meet the consultation deadline.

Cllr Mrs Pereboom (Chairman, Smeeth Parish Council Planning Committee) stated that she is keeping a spreadsheet of all applications and councillors' comments. Contentious applications will be brought to a full meeting of the Parish Council, with the Clerk seeking an extension to the deadline.

Cllr Mrs Pereboom stressed that the Parish Council's role is to provide the local point of view;

All

VP

the decision is made by the planners by reference to planning policy.

11.2 Planning Committee report

Cllr Mrs Pereboom reported on the following applications:

19/01243/AS 1 Harvest Cottages, Woolpack Hill: Proposed two storey side extension to replace existing single storey side extension

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

The Parish Council had no objection to the applications.

19/01253/AS Rustlings, Woolpack Hill: Erection of log cabin for counselling and therapy

The Parish Council objected to the application.

19/01486/AS Bower Road, Mersham: Prior notification for the installation of 25m telecommunications slimline lattice tower and associated supporting equipment

The Parish Council supported the application.

19/01403/AS Bridge over the M20, Station Road: Advertisement consent. The Parish Council did not submit any comments [the application was dated 2nd October and consent given on 4th October].

It was noted that there is a mobile large advertisement for a Tapas Bar on Hythe Road. This will be raised with Highways because sight lines are impeded and the location and size are thought inappropriate.

11.3 Joint Neighbourhood Plan with Brabourne Parish Council

The Chairman reported that a detailed map of the two parishes is to be prepared and submitted. This will be drawn up by the Parish Council Chairmen with the Clerk.

11.4 19/01193/AS The Byre, Station Road Proposed stables, riding arena, muck store and associated yard for private equestrian use and keeping of horses

The Parish Council had no objection to the application but asked that a condition be attached that use be private and not commercial.

The Vice-chairman advised that permission had been given [in 1989] to convert a derelict barn on the site to a one-bed dwelling, notwithstanding the Parish Council's objections. There were further developments on the site including a garden room and link to the new room. The Vice-chairman expressed concerns that the site will be further developed.

11.5 The Plough Inn

The Chairman advised that the developer and architect presented their proposals at a meeting of Brabourne Parish Council on 29th October: the existing building will be retained and converted to a 5-bed dwelling. There will be a single storey extension to the rear and a double garage with room over at the front of the plot (offset from the house). The proposals were well-received by those present at what was a well-attended meeting. Pre-application advice had been obtained and the planning application will be submitted shortly. If permission is granted work will start in the New Year.

11.6 Posting planning applications on the community Facebook page

The Clerk is uploading planning applications with commenting turned off, in a pilot running until the year end. There has been no feedback. Applications will also be publicised in the newsletter.

11.7 Nuholm, Plain Road

The Chairman advised that the case officer originally agreed that the balcony did not comply with the planning permission and would enforce. This has, however, now changed following a review and a planning application invited for the balcony. Any permission will have conditions attached.

12. KALC representative report

Cllr Mrs Morey reported that the Minutes of the last KALC meeting on September 25th together with KALC Bulletins and various other notices from KALC have been circulated. Information and details about a number of Seminars organised by KALC have been sent out. Cllr Mrs Morey is hoping to attend the Highways Seminar on November 13th and Steve Reeves (possible Emergency Plan co-ordinator) has been made aware of the Seminar on Building Flood resilience and improving flood preparedness response and recovery in the health and social care sector which is taking place on the same day. The KALC Local Council Survey was completed online on 16th September having incorporated all the responses received from Smeeth Councillors. A response was also made on behalf of Smeeth PC to the NALC Policy Consultation on E-briefing

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and mobile coverage in rural areas. Cllr Mrs Morey has circulated details about the KCC Budget Consultation 2020-2021 so that if anyone had any comments that they wished to raise they could do so at the meeting on 6th November as the consultation runs until 25th November. The next KALC meeting is on 20th November and Cllr Mrs Morey hopes to attend. The Chairman noted that the Parish Council has not commented on the KCC Budget previously.

13. Footpaths and Highways

13.1 Gas main works in Bridge Road: Completed without too much disruption, efforts were made to maintain access.

13.2 Junction 10A: This is partially open and will continue in its current form for five weeks.

13.3 Operation Brock: This has been suspended.

13.4 Damage to verges in Pound Lane: Due to water run-off. In hand with Cllr Mrs Moo.

13.5 Gas main works: The gas main works between the village and the A20 at Sellindge have commenced and the road is officially closed although essential access is being maintained.

14. Emergency Plan and Community Led Plan

CLP: The Chairman read Michael Hinchliffe's report [CLP group secretary] which is attached to the Minutes.

Emergency Plan: The Chairman reported that Steve Reeves is not yet able to assist because of other commitments. The request for a coordinator will be put in the newsletter.

YM

15. Village caretaker scheme

Cllr Mrs Morey reported that the Village Caretaker scheme continues well. Both the ride-on mower and wood-chipper needed repair recently but Cllr Mrs Morey stated that the Clerk has advised that a new firm has been located to carry out any necessary repairs on the machines in the future. Recently Paul mentioned in his weekly report that he had to dispose of abandoned bikes in Brabourne. If anyone is made aware of work that requires the attention of the Caretaker they are asked to inform the Clerk.

The Vice-chairman congratulated the caretaker on his efforts.

VP

16. Speedwatch

The Chairman reported that no Speedwatch sessions had been scheduled due to illness, but sessions are now being arranged. The Canterbury Road site has been reinstated and the Lees Road site moved to opposite Orpins Stores. The new SID is very effective with a long range. More volunteers are always welcome.

17. Playing fields (contd)

The basketball hoop remedial works are in hand with the CLP.

The Fireworks event on 31st October was a great success. There was some criticism of the date but the choice was explained by the organizers.

18. Adoption of the Parish Council's Risk Register

The Clerk advised that this arose from the 2019-2020 external audit, which asked for details of the Parish Council's arrangements for and discussion of financial risk. The draft financial Risk Register was tabled and the Chairman proposed that it be adopted.

Resolved:

That the Risk Register be adopted.

19. 75th Anniversary celebration of VE Day and VJ Day

Nothing to report.

20. Correspondence

All electronic correspondence has been circulated.

21. Any other business

21.1 Remembrance Sunday Service: The Chairman will attend the service at St Mary's Church, Smeeth on November 10th and will lay a wreath on behalf of Smeeth Parish Council.

21.2 Placement of bamboo canes on grass verges outside properties: These are thought to

have been put in place to protect the verges, eg after reseeded. It was noted that they are a safety hazard and the verges are Highways land. A notice will be put in the newsletter and Parish News; this will include a reference to overhanging vegetation which is a nuisance.

21.3 Wembdon Farm: Reports of double decker buses operating from the farm will be reported to ABC. It was noted that R&J Coaches operate from the site, but the approach is a single track road. Cllr Kimpton noted that the operators' licence may have been varied.

22. 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 23, namely distribution of Fordred's Charity payments.

Resolved:

That the press and public leave the meeting during discussion of Fordred's Charity payments.

23. Fordred's Charity

The payments will be distributed as agreed.

24. Date and time of next meeting

Wednesday 8th January 2020 at 7.00pm in Brabourne Baptist Church.

The meeting closed at 9.10 pm.

Item 14: Emergency Plan and Community Led Plan

Activity has been quiet within the CLP programme, however, more planting of bulbs is scheduled. The call for donations of bulbs has resulted in a modest response provided so perhaps we could re-issue the plea. As before if anyone would like to donate some bulbs for planting out in the village please either leave them at Chapelside, which is behind Brabourne Baptist Church, or email me on clpep@btinternmet.com and I will collect them.

It's not all bad news. Fortunately we do have some bulbs to keep us going, the CLP provided £50 for the purchase of some and a few friends of Lucie, who organises the planting, have chipped in. The planting plan is as follows:

Children from Brabourne School are going to help with some planting as the the Head is keen to support the CLP in any way they can. The Head also put out a plea for bulbs in a newsletter to the parents and explained what the children would be doing.

Brian Sanders put out a plea for the Gardener's to support this area of the CLP. They are going to replace the broken planters by the village Hall and with the help of Brabourne School are going to plant them up.

We decided to plant around Mountbatten Way and further round to the bench area so it is safe for the children. When we get more bulbs we will do the roadside areas, which need to be done by just adults.

Michael Hinchliffe

VP/SW

SW