

Smeeth Parish Council
Minutes of a Meeting held on Wednesday 6th September 2017 at 7.00pm
Brabourne Baptist Church

1. Present

Cllr Herrick (Chairman) (DH), Cllr Thorpe (Vice-chairman) (GT), Cllr Mrs Alford (HA), Cllr Mrs Morey (JM), Cllr Mrs Pereboom (VP), and Mrs Wood (Clerk) (SW). Ten members of the public attended.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs Nyssens (AN) and Cllr MacPhee (CM) (prior commitments), Cllr Miss Martin and Cllr Howard (ward members).

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

4. Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 12th July 2017 be approved and confirmed as a true record.

5. Open Session

The meeting was suspended to allow members of the public present to comment on items other than those on the agenda.

Concerns were expressed regarding the Andrews garage site: initial rumours of a proposal for 6 dwellings had been superseded by rumours that the proposed number of properties had been increased to 16, with an entrance on Plain Road and exit on Pound Lane; concerns were expressed that the latter would result in problems for cars turning into Plain Road. The Chairman replied that the Parish Council currently had no information on the proposals and was asked that residents be kept informed of any developments in this respect. The Chairman advised that the Parish Council will be consulted if a formal planning application is submitted.

Why is the site not in the Local Plan? The Chairman stated that the site had simply not been put forward by the landowner. Whilst the formal consultation period with regard to the Local Plan to 2030 has now closed and the comments (>1000) are being assessed, he noted that the site could be submitted for consideration at the examination stage, which was likely to be before the end of the year. The Chairman further noted that 16 houses do not constitute a 'small development' and may come forward as a planning application at any time.

Cherry Hill, The Plain: a planning application has been submitted to convert the existing bungalow to a 5-bedroom 2-storey property. There were concerns that this would give rise to overlooking of neighbouring properties and parking provision is thought to be inadequate. The Vice-chairman noted that this is another in a series of smaller properties being enlarged, and the Parish Council's objections have previously been ignored. He acknowledged the concerns about parking provision, and the Parish Council has commented to this effect. He further noted that the consultation period on the application has closed and a decision is awaited from ABC.

The Parish Council was asked why it had withdrawn from Cllr Miss Martin's initiative pressing for the inclusion of the Village Protection Policy (VPP) in its entirety in the Local Plan, after its previous support and agreed financial contribution. The Chairman replied that this was on counsel's advice because of the Hospital Field appeal. The Chairman further stated that Cllr Miss Martin's initial proposal was that Mersham, Aldington, Brook, Brabourne and Smeeth PCs would be represented by Peter Brett Associates at the examination of the Local Plan by the Planning Inspectorate. In the first instance PBA was to send a letter in response to the second draft of the Local Plan, however when Brabourne withdrew from this process because of the Hospital Field appeal, Smeeth was obliged to reconsider its position. It is not clear what support Cllr Miss Martin is eliciting elsewhere, but she understands the PC's position. The Chairman was asked if

the PC will support this initiative when the result of the Hospital Field appeal is known. The Chairman replied that the PC had confirmed its support for the policy's inclusion in the Local Plan in its own response to the Main Changes. The PC again confirmed that the Local Plan will likely go to the Planning Inspectorate before the end of the year, i.e. before the Hospital Field appeal.

The proposal for 50 houses at The Paddocks was raised, noting that it was not in the first draft of the Local Plan: did the PC support its inclusion? The Chairman replied that the PC had expressed concerns because of traffic, whether exiting on to Station Road or the A20; both would be detrimental to Smeeth crossroads. Concern was expressed that this development could lead to creep towards Mersham. The Chairman agreed, noting that this is also occurring elsewhere. It was felt that the objections to Hospital Field could also be applied to The Paddocks.

Smeeth War Memorial renovation: Mr Taylor reported that a public meeting had been held at Brabourne Baptist Church on 2nd September, 36 people attended. There is a need to refurbish the site in accord with those who set up the memorial. The majority want to retain the primrose bank, this was agreed. A paved area will be put in around the memorial after it has been refurbished and relettered; the surrounding trees will not be affected and a handrail will be put in down the steps. The Land Registry has confirmed that the memorial is on church land (but this is being checked with the Diocesan Advisory Committee [DAC]). If it is church land the DAC will have to give its approval - a faculty would have to be applied for at a cost of £300. A committee will be set up to undertake the renovation, Mr Taylor stated that he is willing to be a committee member, Mick Mugridge is willing to be treasurer and it is hoped that the PC will be represented. A member of the public stated that after considerable research some years ago it was thought that the land is owned by KCC rather than the church, but the Clerk advised that KCC had stated that it does not own it. The Chairman noted that ownership may have changed in the interim. Mr Taylor stated that likely costs will be £7,500-£10,000. An application for a ward member grant has been submitted, and other potential funders identified.

There were complaints concerning a noise nuisance to residents of The Ridgeway caused by a drying-machine at Joe Farm. Mitigating measures have not proved effective. The issue has been raised with Environmental Health (ABC), but they have indicated that they are not willing to attend a meeting with the agents (Strutt and Parker). The Chairman stated that the PC supports the involvement of Environmental Health and would involve Cllr William Howard. The Vice-chairman advised that the function of the grain dryer is to reduce the moisture content to <12%; it should be turned off when this limit was reached, and in any event should not be run between 'quiet hours.' It was reported that the machine is run overnight, and will continue to do so. It was felt that no account was taken of residents in The Ridgeway when the vents were put in, they should not face the houses. Cllr Mrs Morey suggested that Strutt and Parker be contacted again. It was accepted that the operation was necessary, but the sound should not be directed towards The Ridgeway; traditionally vents are at ground level and baffled by hay bales, but these were in the roof. The Chairman stated that Cllr Howard will be asked to take action.

SW

The meeting was reconvened.

15. Emergency Plan and Community Led Plan

(Brought forward with the permission of the Chairman.)

Community Led Plan: Michael Hinchliffe reported as follows.

Pothole flyer (showing how potholes could be reported) - has been distributed.

Housing needs survey - is being carried out with the approval of Smeeth and Brabourne Parish Councils, ABC and ACRK, with a deadline for return of 10th September.

Hoskins Pond - work is almost complete and ongoing maintenance will be planned. The leak in the gully in the small pond has been repaired and the village caretaker had helped maintain the vegetation around the pond. It was noted that the pond is a rain-filled, natural pond.

The project to plant, eg daffodils, on the verges and elsewhere - high visibility jackets, road signs and cones will be provided. The WI is willing to help.

Lamp posts - to be repainted.

Basketball hoop - planning permission and funding have been obtained. Quotes have been sought for installation of the hoop and surfacing, but are all >£10,000. This will therefore be

undertaken by volunteers.

Outdoor gym – the Playing Field Association (PFA) has indicated the gym cannot be located on the playing field because of space constraints. It is also thought that vandalism is more likely because the site is out of plain sight; this will also have consequences if there were an accident to an individual using the equipment alone, they would not be found immediately. £7,500 has already been secured but other grants are being sought; alternatively a smaller gym may be put in. If gyms for adults and young people are put in, the latter should be fenced off or be 25m distant from the adult gym.

Other projects – footpath across the village green, parallel to Bridge Road.

Emergency Plan:

A volunteer coordinator is still needed, Cllr MacPhee to update.

CM

6. Matters Arising

6.1 Calland: The start date is still unknown.

6.2 Kennington Road has now reopened, concerns re rat-running through the village had not been realised.

6.3 Horse and Rider Safety Initiative: It was reported that that cars are being co-operative on the road, and many more people are slowing down to pass the horses. This was welcomed.

6.4 Tree felling near the school: this was on private land, not ABC.

7. Report from Community Warden and PCSO

No report in Mr Kingston's absence.

PCSO Ghost had reported three incidents: criminal damage, theft (other) and theft of a motor vehicle.

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 (July salary)	1156.64
HMRC (P Rodway)	255.01
KCC (P Rodway pension)	372.19
Fuel Genie (July, caretaker)	96.49
P Rodway (August salary)	1156.64
HMRC (P Rodway)	255.01
KCC (P Rodway pension)	372.19
Fuel Genie (August, caretaker)	174.07
S Wood (salary)	306.20
S Wood (salary)	306.20
S Wood (expenses)	140.70
P Rodway (allowance for mobile Q1)	25.00
T Denne & Sons Ltd (storage)	108.00
Lister Wilder	80.30
PKF Littlejohn (audit fee)	360.00
PMC Polythene Ltd (dog waste bags)	198.00

Receipts

Details	£
ABC (caretaker scheme)	5000.00
Brabourne Parish Council (caretaker scheme)	4168.46
NatWest interest	0.69

Balance £ 42920.29 (as at 6th September 2017)

8.2 To agree a contribution of £128.80 towards the Community Led Plan's insurance premium

A contribution of £128.80 (50% of the insurance premium) was requested by Michael Hinchliffe, which would otherwise be met from funds, thereby reducing money available for projects. It was proposed that Smeeth Parish Council contributes £128.80 to the Community Led Plan group, towards its insurance premium.

Resolved:

That Smeeth Parish Council contributes £128.80 to the Community Led Plan group, towards its insurance premium.

8.3 To consider a request for a donation from Carers' Support

It was agreed that the request be refused.

9. Planning Committee report

The Vice-chairman reported on 2 applications:

Cherry Hill: The Parish Council had commented that this would result in the loss of a smaller property and parking provision was inadequate.

Old Builders Yard, Plain Road: An application for 7 houses. The Parish Council objected on the grounds that parking provision was inadequate; the proposed 4-5 bedroom properties did not meet local need; there were concerns regarding the width of the access on to Plain Road. Development of the site per se was acceptable to the Parish Council, but the proposed layout was not.

10. Local Plan to 2030

The Chairman advised that the consultation period has closed. The Parish Council has submitted comments on the Caldecott and Church Road proposals, and pressed for the inclusion of the VPP. ABC had held 2 roadshows, in Aldington and Mersham, both of which were well-attended. Submission by Peter Brett Associates: see the Open Session.

Shadoxhurst Parish Council lobbying letter: The Chairman advised that Shadoxhurst PC proposes making representations to central govt on aspects of planning policy, including development and merging of villages, and other concerns common to all parishes. However, the govt is consulting on current policy so the letter may be superseded. Cllr Mrs Morey had been mandated to sign the letter on behalf of Smeeth PC. Cllr Mrs Morey noted that the wording of the letter has not yet been agreed.

11. KALC representative report

The Minutes of the meeting on 19th July have been circulated. The next meeting will be on 27th September and includes agenda items on health. Cllr Mr Morey stated that she will also be attending the Rural Conference.

12. Update on J10A Working Group

Cllr Mrs Pereboom reported that consultation reports are still awaited. Work will begin in January 2018 and take 2 years.

13. Footpaths and Highways

13.1 Sandy Place parking No information has been forthcoming from the planning officer or Cllr Howard.

13.2 Provision of additional parking places in Lees Close The request has been passed to the Housing Dept, ABC, and it was suggested that the PC seeks the help of the ward member.

13.3 Potholes at Washington Farm Some patching has been undertaken but it was agreed that resurfacing is needed.

13.4 HGV parking on the A20 Meeting papers for the Joint Transportation Board state that an experimental trial will be carried out: for an 18-month period beginning at the end of October, all overnight and waiting HGV parking will be prohibited on the A20 from Charing to Orchard Heights and adjoining side roads. Displacement will be monitored; it was thought that Smeeth will be adversely impacted. If the trial is successful the scheme will be rolled-out countywide.

13.5 Traffic islands on the A20 The islands are currently all lit. Monitoring will continue.

SW
SW

<p>14. Parking at Smeeth School Bollards have been installed on the footway outside the school in Caroland, but there were concerns that they are too far apart. KCC is to be thanked for the installation and asked that more be put in. The situation will be monitored. It was noted that this is a countywide problem. Cllr Mrs Alford noted that proposed expansion of some schools has been halted by objections from KCC Highways.</p>	
<p>16. Village caretaker scheme Cllr Mrs Morey reported that the caretaker has kept up with mowing and clearing a crab apple tree. Horse manure had to be cleared from a footpath in Mersham. Residents are asked to contact the Clerk if they identify work that needs doing. Mr Taylor asked if the caretaker could undertake upkeep of the area around the War Memorial, Cllr Mrs Morey advised that the request would have to be put to the Village Caretaker Committee, but cautioned against setting a precedent for requests from other village groups. The Clerk reported that the caretaker has been asked to check fire hydrants in the parish and a map has been provided. Cllr Mrs Alford asked for an update on a DBS check for the caretaker. The Clerk replied that this is to be carried out by ABC, as the 'umbrella organisation'.</p>	<p>JM</p> <p>SW</p>
<p>17. Speedwatch The Chairman presented Graham Snazelle's report: 4 new volunteers have come forward. During sessions carried out in July and August 161 vehicles were recorded as exceeding 35mph [30mph + 10% + 2mph]. The majority of offenders were logged in Church Road. The PCSO attended on a number of occasions, this was welcomed. The Chairman noted that one of the CLP's topics is speed measurement, Michael Hinchliffe will be asked for an update.</p>	<p>SW</p>
<p>18. Local Needs Housing This is on hold pending the outcome of the review of the Local Plan, but see item 15. The Vice-chairman felt that there is a need to revisit sites identified in the desktop survey. The development at Old Builders Yard had been identified as a possible site for local needs housing, however the current application is for market value housing, but the numbers mean that provision of affordable housing will not be triggered. The Chairman noted that ABC could only object to the application on planning grounds, but planners may suggest amendments to the application.</p>	
<p>19. Playing fields The Chairman reported that the PFA Committee met on 26th July, the next meeting is on 1st November. Vandalism of the rabbit-proof fence was reported, repairs will cost ~£500. There were no witnesses to the incident, which may be covered by insurance or met from PFA funds. Cllr Mrs Pereboom and Cllr Mrs Morey asked what measures are in place to prevent a recurrence; it was noted that there is no CCTV in place. It was proposed that Smeeth Parish Council contributes £100 towards the repair costs of the rabbit-proof fencing. Resolved: That Smeeth Parish Council contributes £100 towards the repair costs of the rabbit-proof fencing.</p>	
<p>20. Parish Council's safeguarding policy The adopted safeguarding policy as amended by Cllr Mrs Alford had been circulated and it was proposed that this be adopted. Resolved: That Smeeth Parish Council adopts the safeguarding policy, as amended.</p>	
<p>21. Correspondence 21.1 Flood Warden Demonstration Day, 7th October. To be forward to Cllr MacPhee.</p>	<p>SW</p>
<p>22. Any other business</p>	

<p>22.1 Councillors are asked to bring names for Fordred's Charity to the next meeting.</p> <p>22.2 The annual Remembrance Day Service will be at St Mary's Church, Smeeth on 12th November, the Chairman to attend and lay the wreath on behalf of the Parish Councils.</p> <p>23. Date and time of next meeting Wednesday 15th November 2017 at 7.00pm in Brabourne Baptist Church.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 8.45pm.</p> <hr/>	<p>All</p> <p>DH</p>
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