

**Smeeth Parish Council**  
**Minutes of a Meeting held on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at 7.00pm**  
**Brabourne Baptist Church**

<p><b>1. Present</b>  Cllr Herrick (Chairman) (DH), Cllr Thorpe (Vice-chairman) (GT), Cllr Mrs Alford (HA), Cllr Mrs Morey (JM), Cllr Mrs Pereboom (VP), Cllr Kimpton (RK) and Mrs Wood (Clerk) (SW). Ten members of the public attended.</p> <p><b>2. Apologies</b>  Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs Moo (YM) (indisposed) and Cllr Howard (ward member).</p> <p><b>3. Declarations of Interest</b>  There were no Declarations of Interest.</p> <p><b>4. Minutes</b>  <b>Resolved:</b>  <b>That the Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 3<sup>rd</sup> July be approved and confirmed as a true record.</b></p> <p><b>5. Borough councillor's report</b>  Cllr Howard's report was read by the Chairman and is attached to the Minutes.</p> <p><b>6. 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>Woolpack Hill: Concerns were raised that cars are parked on the pavement or on the road, rather than in parking bays; this will lead to congestion when nearby roads are closed for the gas main works and traffic diverted along Woolpack Hill. The Parish Council was asked if on-road car parking could be suspended during the works. The Chairman replied that KCC will be asked for a temporary order banning parking. The Chairman also noted that parking on Woolpack Hill had previously been monitored by the PCSO but no apparent problems found when he visited.</p> <p>Cherry Trees, Lily Vale: Has planning permission been given for the recently installed crossover? The Chairman replied that it had not and had been referred to KCC Highways.</p> <p>The meeting was reconvened.</p> <p><b>7. Matters Arising</b></p> <p><b>7.1</b> Stock Lane: The reported obstruction was illegal and has been dealt with by KCC Highways.</p> <p><b>7.2</b> Church Road streetlight: This has been repaired.</p> <p><b>7.3</b> S106 monies from the Church Road development: The request that these be used for a youth shelter is being considered by the case officer. Cllr Mrs Alford queried that the S106 contribution for education will be given to the Norton Knatchbull School rather than the village Primary School; the latter would benefit more local people, given that S106 monies are given to offset the impact arising from a new development. The Clerk replied that the Parish Council had not been consulted on the education contribution.</p> <p><b>7.4</b> Hospital Field village green application: The Inspector's report has been sent to KCC and will be considered by the Regulation Panel. It is not yet known when the Panel will meet.</p> <p><b>7.5</b> Otterpool: A workshop was held on 17<sup>th</sup> July, but no feedback has been received.</p> <p><b>7.6</b> Ward member's presence on social media: Cllr Howard has indicated that he will reconsider his previous refusal. This was welcomed by Cllr Kimpton. The Vice-chairman regretted that Cllr Howard had not attended the July and September Parish Council meetings; the Chairman advised that Cllr Howard can be contacted by email and is in regular contact with the Clerk.</p> <p><b>7.7</b> Communication: Cllr Mrs Pereboom reported that she had met the Chairman of Brabourne Parish Council, and they proposed that an online newsletter be set up. Residents will have to</p>	<p>SW</p> <p>SW</p>
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subscribe [opt in] to receive it, and it will be publicised in Parish News. A sample newsletter is being prepared and will include items of interest, events etc. The need to make it interesting with attractive headers was acknowledged. Cllr Kimpton asked how residents not online could access the newsletter. Cllr Mrs Pereboom advised that copies would not be left at, eg the shop, for collection, to minimise waste and encourage online subscriptions. Cllr Kimpton recommended that a list be left in the shop and pub for those without internet access to sign up and request the newsletter. Cllr Mrs Pereboom noted that because the newsletter is online it can be updated regularly.

**7.8 Old Builders Yard:** Planning officers have visited the site and reported that there are no issues of non-compliance.

### 13. Community Led Plan

Michael Hinchliffe was invited to give an update on the Community Led Plan Group (CLP).

Mr Hinchliffe reported that the outdoor gym was handed over to Brabourne Parish Council on 17<sup>th</sup> August, and it is being used on a regular basis. There was a report of attempted vandalism.

There were complaints that basketballs from the basketball court on the playing field were landing in gardens on The Ridgeway and the Playing Field Association had sought the CLP's help. Mr Hinchliffe advised that the CLP had asked Jackson's Fencing for a quote for remedial measures; its quote of £135 will be taken to the next meeting of the CLP, to be held on 10<sup>th</sup> September, 7.30pm in the cabin of Brabourne Baptist Church. Cllr Howard has offered a ward member grant to meet the cost.

Future projects are:

- Footpath, parallel to Bridge Road, running across the village green at The Warren from the bus stop to the telephone kiosk. Costs are likely to be ~£20,000.
- Refreshing the village lamp posts, to include cleaning and repainting. (~£6500.)
- Community shelter. (Hopefully from S106 monies.)

Mr Hinchliffe reported that Smeeth and Brabourne Parish Councils had in past years paid the CLP's insurance premium and requested that the Parish Council again contribute 50% of the premium.

Mr Hinchliffe advised that the maintenance schedule for the outdoor gym has been given to the village caretaker.

### 8. Report from PCSO

No report from the PCSO.

### 9. Financial Report

#### 9.1 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	£
S Wood (salary)	322.14
S Wood (salary)	322.14
S Wood (half-yearly expenses)	151.13
B Podd (salary)	197.04
R Kimpton (expenses)	21.50

##### Receipts

Details	£
NatWest interest	19.30
VAT refund	1324.49
Caretaker account (reimbursement – caretaker fuel)	462.02

Balance £ 57573.22 (as at 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019)

SW

**Caretaker account****Payments**

Details	£
P Rodway (expenses)	30.93
P Rodway (salary July)	1430.96
KCC re Kent Pension Fund (July)	478.81
HMRC	400.28
P Rodway (salary August)	1430.96
HMRC	406.56
KCC re Kent Pension Fund (August)	478.81
Smeeth Parish Council (reimbursement – fuel)	462.02
Lister Wilder	81.13
T Denne & Sons (storage)	108.00
John Childs (Garages) Ltd (van MOT)	54.85
Fuel Genie (direct debit)	112.28

Balance: £18363.06 (as at 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019)

Invoices for the balance of the year's payment to the caretaker scheme have been sent to , Brabourne, Brook and Mersham Parish Councils, and Smeeth School.

## **9.2 Request from the CLP group for a contribution of £128.80 towards its insurance premium**

### **Resolved:**

**That the Parish Council contributes £128.80, this being 50% of the insurance premium for the CLP group.**

## **10. Planning**

### **10.1 Planning Committee report**

Cllr Mrs Pereboom reported that two applications had been received:

Evegate Business Park 19/01103/AS: Extension of existing park (resubmission of 18/00867/AS).

This was supported by the Planning Committee.

I Harvest Cottages 19/01243/AS: Two storey side extension. The plans are with the Planning Committee.

Andrews Garage 18/01454/AS: This was discussed at ABC Planning Committee but a decision deferred. Cllr Kimpton attended the Committee meeting in a personal capacity and reported that the Committee had stated that it needed more time to look at additional material and had concerns re design and layout.

Church Road 18/01801/AS: Outline planning permission has been given; the Parish Council had submitted comments on traffic movements, the proximity of the playing field, school and pinch point, but KCC Highways raised no objection. The Chairman noted that a full planning application will be submitted in due course and the Parish Council will make similar representations.

Facebook: The Chairman advised that Brabourne Parish Council has proposed a trial of uploading a list of planning applications to the village Facebook page with a link to the Borough Council website. Commenting will be turned off because the list is for information only; comments should be made to the Borough Council or Parish Council. It was noted that residents can sign up to receive an alert from the Borough Council or attend Parish Council meetings for information on planning applications. These are also uploaded to the village website with a hyperlink.

Cllr Mrs Alford felt that Smeeth residents would be at a disadvantage if Brabourne planning applications were posted but not Smeeth. Cllr Mrs Pereboom agreed and proposed that the Parish Council should join the trial, but it should be time-limited. The Vice-chairman noted that social media is a much-used means of communication. Cllr Kimpton stated that he disagreed with the proposal, Facebook is not a suitable forum for such information, and that commenting could not be avoided, as shown by other posts on the village Facebook page. The Chairman

<p>acknowledged these concerns but it was agreed that although reservations had been expressed at the use of Facebook, Smeeth Parish Council will trial the list of applications until the end of 2019, but with commenting turned off.</p>	SW
<p>Nuholm, Plain Road: Cllr Kimpton advised that neighbours have expressed concerns that work at the property is not in accord with the planning permission. Inward-opening windows and a Juliet balcony have been replaced by outward-opening windows and a balcony with a balustrade, which will give rise to overlooking. Planning Enforcement has been informed (CO/19/00132) and has made a site visit, but with little other apparent action. Cllr Howard is supporting the neighbours, who are also seeking the help of the Parish Council. The Clerk will contact Planning Enforcement for an update and ask that it be escalated.</p>	SW
<p>Planning Committee: Cllr Kimpton asked how the Planning Committee operated, and referred to the Good Councillor's Guide (a NALC publication). This referred to executive committees and advisory committees; the former should meet in public at a meeting advertised. Is the Planning Committee an executive or advisory committee? The Clerk noted that the Guide is for town and parish councillors, some of the content being more applicable to town councils. The Clerk advised that decision-making on applications has been devolved to the Planning Committee [it is therefore an executive committee] and a dispensation has been granted by the Borough Council's Deputy Monitoring Officer. The conflict between the consultation period for planning applications [three weeks] and Parish Council meeting dates was raised by Challock Parish Council, which meets every two months. The Deputy Monitoring Officer has agreed that under these circumstances, a response to a given planning application can be formulated by email rather than at a meeting, provided that the application is not contentious and the decision is reported at the next Parish Council meeting. Cllr Mrs Pereboom confirmed that contentious applications are brought to the full Parish Council, but most are straightforward and all applications are decided by the Borough Council. Cllr Mrs Alford noted that the Committee's comments are in the public domain, being uploaded to the Borough Council website. Cllr Kimpton stated that many of the comments are not on planning issues; he expressed concerns that the Planning Committee could be accused of a lack of transparency, other councillors may not agree with the comments. Cllr Mrs Alford replied that additional comments can be uploaded. The Chairman reiterated that the timescales do not allow all applications to be brought to a full Parish Council meeting. Cllr Kimpton said that applications should be circulated to all councillors rather than just the three on the Committee; decisions should not be made by a small number. Cllr Mrs Morey and Cllr Mrs Pereboom felt that circulation to the whole Parish Council would be too unwieldy; the Chairman advised that a quorum is three. To be discussed further at a later meeting.</p>	
<p><b>10.2 Joint Neighbourhood Plan with Brabourne Parish Council</b></p> <p>The Chairman reported that a meeting was held with Daniel Carter (Ashford Borough Council), Mike Hickmott (Chairman, Brabourne Parish Council) and the Clerk to discuss the possibility of producing a joint Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for Smeeth and Brabourne. The Chairmen also met the Chairman of the Charing Neighbourhood Plan Committee to discuss the NP process and information from CPRE was sent to councillors:</p> <p><a href="https://www.planninghelp.cpre.org.uk/improve-where-you-live/shape-your-local-area/neighbourhood-plans">https://www.planninghelp.cpre.org.uk/improve-where-you-live/shape-your-local-area/neighbourhood-plans</a></p> <p>The Chairman advised that to start the process an application must be made to the Borough Council but preparation of an NP is a lengthy process, Charing's NP is still in development after 3-4 years. There will also be considerable outlay, both financial and in time; grants are available and volunteers' help will be needed. An NP will give the Parish Council more power to control development because it is formally recognised by the Borough Council and is a material consideration in planning. Cllr Mrs Morey noted the need for professional help and there would be a considerable time commitment, as with the Village Protection Policy (VPP). The Chairman agreed, noting that the VPP had been driven by Jane Martin who hoped for its inclusion in the Local Plan. The Chairman stated that help is available from the government for the necessary research. Charing Parish Council held an initial public meeting, with post-it notes on which were recorded likes, dislikes and aspirations – these were used to inform the basis of the NP, and was the process used for the VPP. Cllr Mrs Morey advised that the NP must be subservient to the</p>	

<p>Local Plan.</p> <p>The Chairman asked if the Parish Council should proceed with the application to the Borough Council. This was agreed by the Vice-chairman and Cllr Kimpton, but Cllr Mrs Alford sought more information on the effectiveness of an NP and its benefits. The Chairman replied that the application will not commit the Parish Council to completing the NP. The Clerk advised that NPs arose from the 2011 Localism Act; the Chairman noted that as a recent initiative there would be little data to answer Cllr Mrs Alford. It was agreed that there is a need to gauge the level of public support and if volunteers would be forthcoming.</p> <p>The Chairman advised that the parish has the VPP and the village confines, but the NP will not stop windfall sites. Cllr Kimpton said that the NP would have more detail relating to the village than does the Local Plan, which is more of an overview.</p> <p>The Chairman stated that Charing has offered to let the Parish Council read its draft NP.</p> <p>Cllr Mrs Pereboom felt that if other villages are preparing an NP and Smeeth does not, this may leave it more vulnerable. Cllr Mrs Alford asked if initiation of the NP process would attract developers to move in quickly; this was thought unlikely.</p> <p>It was proposed that the Parish Council will apply to the Borough Council to start the NP process.</p>	
<p><b>Resolved:</b></p> <p><b>That the Parish Council will apply to the Borough Council to commence the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan.</b></p>	SW
<p>The Clerk will inform Brabourne Parish Council that there are considerable concerns re the input and time needed.</p>	SW
<p><b>11. KALC representative report</b></p> <p>Cllr Mrs Morey reported that the Area Committee met on 24<sup>th</sup> July, at which Cllr Neil Bell (ward member, Biddenden) discussed communications between the Borough and Parish Councils - this has led to a survey. Cllr Mrs Morey was mandated to collate the responses and draw up the submission to KALC. The draft will be sent to the Chairman before being returned to KALC. The July meeting also discussed pre-application planning discussions with Parish Councils. Chief Inspector Brittenden attended the meeting (Ashford Police); Cllr Mrs Morey reported that the Police attend all meetings.</p> <p>Transport for the South East is holding a drop-in session at Canterbury, Christ Church University on 22<sup>nd</sup> October from 4.30-6.00pm at which its draft Transport Strategy will be launched. Cllr Mrs Morey advised that she cannot attend, the Chairman or Cllr Mrs Pereboom will attend (subject to other commitments).</p>	JM/DH
<p><b>12. Footpaths and Highways</b></p> <p><b>12.1</b> Granary Court Road closure for gas main works: KCC is meeting the contractors and works are likely to start at the end of October. The contractors will be required to use more men and work longer hours to minimise the disruption caused by the complete road closure.</p> <p><b>12.2</b> Bridge Road closure: Works will be continued along Lees Road beyond Mountbatten Way over an 8-week period.</p> <p><b>12.3</b> M20 closure: The next closure between junctions 9 and 11 is from 10pm on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> September to 6am on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September; other closures are planned.</p> <p><b>12.4</b> Degradation of Pound Lane verges: This was reported to KCC Highways, who asked for more information. The request was passed to Cllr Mrs Moo.</p>	DH/VP
<p><b>13. Emergency Plan and Community Led Plan (contd)</b></p> <p>The Chairman advised that the meeting with the Emergency Plan coordinator has not yet taken place, due to the latter's commitments.</p>	
<p><b>14. Village caretaker scheme</b></p> <p>Cllr Mrs Morey reported that the scheme is working well and any issues should be raised with the Clerk.</p>	
<p><b>15. Speedwatch</b></p> <p>The Chairman reported that Speedwatch sessions were carried out in July and August. More volunteers are needed but there were expressions of interest at the last two sessions.</p>	YM

Results: Of 355 vehicles passing, 53 were offenders and 3 were sent letters by the Police. Speedwatch was carried out in Church Road on 28<sup>th</sup> August over a 1.5-hour period and 16 offenders recorded from 112 vehicles passing. The Chairman noted that if the Parish Council wished that the site near the farm be reactivated, this would be passed to the organiser.

#### **16. Local Needs Housing (LNH)**

The Chairman reported that Tessa O'Sullivan [Rural Housing Enabler, ACRK] will give a presentation on LNH at the November meeting. He noted that an NP also has an LNH element (cf Charing), therefore the Parish Council should decide if an LNH survey ought to be commissioned at this time. The number of applicants on the Housing Register who have asked to be housed in Smeeth or Brabourne is being sought from the Borough Council. The Clerk advised that there has been no reply from Tim Naylor (head of Planning, Ashford Borough Council) regarding provision of LNH rather than affordable housing on the Church Road site.

#### **17. Playing fields**

See item 13. The Chairman advised that the Playing Field Association has confirmed that the Fireworks event will be repeated, the date has yet to be confirmed.

#### **18. Commemoration of 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day - 8<sup>th</sup> May 2020**

George Taylor was invited to address the Parish Council.

Mr Taylor reported that the Legion will be hosting a street party to commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day, with a talk on 'The Last Day of War and the First Day of Peace'. Its efforts will, however, be concentrated on the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VJ Day in August, given that this marked the actual end of the war. This will be marked by a Scouts parade and other events (to be confirmed). Mr Taylor advised that a number of nationwide events will be organised, although details are awaited. The Chairman noted that Cllr Howard may be able to offer a grant towards the ceremonies. Brabourne Parish Council has suggested that the beacon be lit, subject to permission from George Jessel.

#### **19. Correspondence**

**19.1** All electronic correspondence has been circulated.

**19.2** A brochure on permanent, outdoor, static table tennis tables will be passed to the Playing Field Association and CLP.

#### **20. Any other business**

**20.1** Fordreds Charity: Councillors are asked to bring names to the November meeting.

**20.2** Remembrance Sunday: The wreath-laying will be in St Mary's Church, Brabourne, the Chairman to attend.

**20.3** Smeeth War Memorial: A report of an incident involving a fall on the steps was reported. This will be forwarded to George Taylor with the recommendation that a handrail is installed.

#### **21. Suggested dates for meetings in 2020**

8<sup>th</sup> January, 4<sup>th</sup> March, 13<sup>th</sup> May, 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2<sup>nd</sup> September, 4<sup>th</sup> November. It was noted that meetings are generally held on the first Wednesday of the month, the May meeting was moved to avoid a clash with the Ashford Area Committee KALC meeting.

#### **22. Date and time of next meeting**

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at 7.00pm in Brabourne Baptist Church.

The meeting closed at 9.25 pm.

#### **Agenda item 5: Borough councillor's report**

I am happy to contribute using member grant to any VE proposals made at the meeting.

This week people may find a sticker gets put on their recycling bin if there are too many non-recyclable elements in the bin. The reason for this is that Ashford has had some recycling loads rejected due to too many contaminants. We must improve our recycling so please make sure you

SW

All  
DH

SW

GT/All

are careful.

Most of the news from the council has been in the news such as the announcement of new businesses opening up in the units at the new cinema including Macknades and a Afro-Caribbean restaurant.

The Leader has announced that Ashford will aim to be carbon-neutral by 2030 with up to 80% by 2025. Early announcements about this hope to be made around Christmas.

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