

**Smeeth Parish Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting**  
**Held on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 7.00pm at Brabourne Baptist Church.**

Cllr Herrick welcomed everyone to the meeting

**1. To note those present.**

Cllr Herrick (Chairman) (DH), Cllr Mrs Alford (HA), Cllr Mrs Morey (JM), Cllr Mrs Pereboom (VP), Cllr Roger Baker (RB), Rev. Chris Denyer (CD).

5 members of the public and Mrs Block (Clerk) (TB).

**2. To receive and approve apologies for absence.**

Apologies had been received from Councillor William Howard.

**3. To receive declarations of interest (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests). The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared.**

There were no declarations of interest to be made.

**4. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2021.**

The Parish Council approved the minutes as a true record and the Chairman signed these.

**5. To discuss any matters arising from those minutes**

DH reported that the village open event proposed by Mr Belcher appeared to have been shelved, for the time being at least. Councillor Herrick will report back any further information at the next meeting.

DH

DH had delivered all about one of the Fordred's money envelopes for Smeeth - the final delivery is to be pursued.

DH

DH reported that he had attended both events on Remembrance Day. Mr Taylor thanked DH for attending these important Royal British Legion services.

DH asked the Council to consider the placement of trees for the Queens Green Canopy Project and to consider how Smeeth may help Ashford Borough Council in its carbon neutrality target. It was confirmed that the Parish Council owns no land, as had been highlighted by the WI asking about tree planting. Smeeth WI is to ask Brabourne Parish Council whether they may plant a tree on their land. It was suggested that trees may be planted in the churchyard at Smeeth and at Brabourne. CD agreed that he would look at whether there was space for trees at both churches. CD also agreed to investigate the possibility of having a vehicle charging point at the Oak Room. It was suggested that the PFA might be approached and asked if they might have a vehicle charging point in their car park. DH agreed to ask Brabourne Baptist Church if they could have a charging point. The Clerk was asked to gather information regarding costs for such charging points.

CD

DH

TB

It was noted that a dog waste bin had been installed at the Sandpit and a fence is now around the completed pond.

**6. Public session: To receive questions and comments from the public on any agenda item**

A member of the public reported that he had an issue with 20 or 30 tonne trucks passing his home at differing times of the day and night up to 1.00am. The vehicles travel at speed and cause a danger to road users and nuisance to homeowners. It would appear that the lorries are transporting road chippings from the motorway and delivering them to Chapel Farm where they are emptied. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact both planning enforcement at Ashford and Highways England to ascertain whether permission has been granted for the use of Taylors Farm for storing road planings.

Mrs. Taylor (no connection with the above item) reported that East Kent Federation for the WI runs competitions and recently a member of Smeeth WI won a photography competition - this photograph will appear on the cover of a monthly magazine and on the latest WI handbook. It was also reported that Hester Fenwick is coming to talk about her vineyard at the next WI meeting - this is an Open Meeting and the WI would like to know numbers attending in advance, if possible.

**7. To receive report from the Borough Councillor**

No report had been received from Councillor Howard.

**8. To receive an update on the Highways Improvement Plan (HIP)**

There is to be a Teams (remote) meeting regarding the Highways Improvement Plan with members of Kent Highways on the 24th of January.

**9. To receive any reports from the PCSO**

No report had been received recently.

**10. To receive an update on the Newsletter**

VP reported that we had sent out one Newsletter since the last meeting:

**December 2021 Newsletter**

Date: 08 December 2021

Recipients: 368

Opened: 258 (70.3%)

Clicked: 60 (16.3%)

Top links clicked:

<https://brabournepc.org.uk/brabourne-parish-council/agendas-and-minutes/> - 18

<https://smeethpc.org.uk/parish-council/agenda-and-minutes/> - 15

<https://www.smeethsandpit.co.uk/> - 9

<https://planning.ashford.gov.uk/Planning/details.aspx?systemkey=120180&pageindex=0> - 7

<https://planning.ashford.gov.uk/Planning/details.aspx?systemkey=120018&pageindex=0> - 7

**Smeeth PC Website for the last month:**

An average month with

122 sessions

392 page views

88% new visitor's vs 12% returning visitors

Of which 40% desktop

7% tablet

53% mobile

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VP is keen to hand over the reins of running the newsletter.

## 11. To receive the KALC Representative Report

JM reported that the Ashford Area Committee of KALC met on 5th January via zoom. Chief Inspector Sparkes of Ashford Police gave an update of crime and detection rates for the area since November and explained how Dispersal Orders had been successfully used against antisocial behaviour in the town centre. The police are aware of problems of noise nuisance from motor bikes, antisocial parking causing mud on road, littering, antisocial behaviour and speeding on A2070 and urge reports of any such instances to be made to the Police. The Police will be liaising with schools about the problems caused by the illegal use of e- scooters in public areas. The Police and Neighbourhood Watch encourage residents to sign up to the "My Community Voice" App which is a social media platform used by the Police.

The Chairman raised the continued problems with ABC Planning Department over 1) publication of advice given preapplication which should be put on the portal if relevant to the planning application being made, and 2) removal of comments from the Planning Portal made by statutory bodies, such as Kent Highways, regarding previous planning applications which are relevant to new Planning Applications. Lorna Ford (ABC) agreed to raise these matters with Tracey Kerley. Paul Bartlett (Sevington) agreed to resend the letter from Jeremy Smith ((Wittersham) to Terry Mortimer to get a response. It was agreed that it should not be necessary to make Freedom of Information applications to obtain previous responses and comments from official consultees.

The Topic for discussion at the next Local Council Forum was raised as the Planning Department had indicated to Michelle Byrne that they had insufficient resources to enable them to come to the next Forum at which it had been hoped to discuss Planning issues. Accordingly, Michelle Byrne suggested that the next topic on 18th March would instead be Crime and Anti -Social Behaviour.

Dates of next meetings of the Ashford Area Committee of KALC throughout 2022 were discussed. The current dates of meetings on 1st Wednesdays in the month had caused problems for Hothfield and it was therefore suggested that using alternative dates of 1st Thursday or second Thursday could be considered. The date for the next meeting and further dates throughout the year would accordingly be advised in the minutes.

## 12. Footpaths and Highways

The Clerk reported on the following actions following the last meeting.

### **The Ridgeway/Church Road triangle - Damage**

KCC Highways are awaiting a definite response from Smeeth PC regarding whether kerbstones or posts would be acceptable at the location. Following a discussion, the Councillors agreed that kerbstones should be requested.

### **Woolpack Hill/adj. Sandy Place - Parking**

The Clerk has approached Ashford Borough Council is awaiting a response – ABC have been chased again this week.

### **Pound Lane/Plain Road – Sight Lines**

The KCC Highways Officer has agreed to approach the landowners to request removal of hedging planted outside of fence line.

It is noted that there are several road closures coming up in East Brabourne within the next few

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weeks.

A member of the public asked what the situation was with regard to streetlights at this time. DH explained that currently all streetlights will remain as they currently are.

**13. Planning matters: to authorise a response to any application(s) and to note any recent planning decisions by Ashford Borough Council or any correspondence on planning matters.**

The Planning Report had been circulated and was formally accepted.

**a. To receive update from Pivot Power – Sellindge battery storage**

The Clerk had attended a Teams call and circulated notes following this. Any further questions should be directed to the Clerk who will communicate with Pivot Power.

VP and JM had attended the meeting regarding the new Solar Farm planned in Aldington.

The Clerk reported on her previous actions:

**Andrews Garage/The Piggeries - Access**

This is not a planning issue as an application can be made on land owned by someone else.

**Cherry Trees - Access**

This is being investigated by Sophie Oliver, Planning Enforcement Officer – case no: CO/20/00153

**Delstead – Building Works**

Has permission for rear and roof extension and change of use of land enabling vehicle access and parking. Planners cannot see that there is anything being undertaken that does not have permission.

**Wemdon – Use as Coach Depot**

Site has planning permission for change of use to coach repair and long-term coach storage. The Clerk was asked to find out if double-decker buses are considered coaches.

A member of public queried whether the Borough Council is concerned about the conditions of the previous application for the Stables at Granary Court that appears to have not met the condition regarding surface water. The Clerk was asked to raise this with the Borough Council.

DH also noted that Brabourne Parish Council is looking to review its policies regarding planning and may rescind the Village Protection Policy as it is not a material consideration from a planning viewpoint as it was never adopted by Ashford Borough Council. The village confines maps and the Local Plan 2030 both supersede the VPP.

**14. Financial matters:**

**a) To note the Parish Council's financial position as at 31/12/2021**

The current financial position of the Parish Council was noted. The Parish Council has a balance of £91,316.07 as of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021.

**b) To authorise any payments**

T Denne and Sons	£108.00
HMRC	£324.26
Paul Rodway	£1390.65
KCC Pension	£550.69
P Rodway expenses	£25.31
DVLA	£275.00

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Green Flag	£115.00	All
B Podd	£240.57	
HMRC	£135.40	
T Block	£270.73	
T Block	£270.53	
Village Caretaker Account (second payment)	£1735.00	
Palmstead Nurseries	£96.00	
<b>15. Correspondence</b>		
The Clerk explained that she had received a communication to be circulated from the Land Mapping Commission. The Parish Council will need to consider the possible location of additional housing should the Land Mapping Commission approach the Council.		
<b>16. To receive an update regarding the Playing Field Association</b>		
DH reported that there's not much going on regarding the PFA currently although the field is used by the Rush sports group and by a keep fit group. The play area has been updated. Some planings are required for the car park and hedge cutting is also required on the field. The PFA is looking for a flail-cutter to cut the hedges.		
<b>17. To receive an update regarding the Village Caretaker Scheme</b>		
The Village Caretaker scheme continues well. Following damage caused to the tree planted on The Warren in memory of Marie Green, a new sapling has been purchased and is to be planted by the Scouts. If there are any matters that require the attention of the Caretaker, please let the Parish Clerk know.		
<b>18. To receive an update regarding Speed Watch</b>		
Speed Watch has not been active recently and there is no planned activity at present.		
<b>19. To receive an update regarding the Community Led Plan</b>		
The CLP has also not been active recently. DH is to follow up with the CLP group regarding the possible installation of the additional fencing for the basketball hoop by the PFA.		
<b>20. Any Other Business (for information purposes only):</b>		
The vandalised tree on The Warren is to be replaced. The replacement being planted by the Scouts.		
A tree will be planted in the Spring to celebrate a centenarian resident.		
Brabourne Parish Council had proposed that an area of the village hall be named after Michael Hickmott, the final decision to be made by the Village Hall Committee.		
There are currently no plans for celebrations for the Queen’s Jubilee, however, this is to be an item on the agenda for March.		
<b>21. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.</b>		
Wednesday 9 <sup>th</sup> March 2022 at Brabourne Baptist Church.		
Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> May 2022 at Brabourne Baptist Church.		
<b>The meeting closed at 8.30pm.</b>		