

Smeeth Parish Council
Minutes of the Meeting
Held on Wednesday 9th March 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).

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

2. To receive and approve apologies for absence.

There were no apologies received.

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 12th January 2022.

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

5. To discuss any matters arising from those minutes

Following the eNewsletter article regarding the Queens Green Canopy, no response had been received regarding planting of trees. Cllr Denyer was asked about planting of trees in the churchyard (St Mary's Smeeth). He explained that this was not possible as there was not enough space.

Cllr Herrick brought to the attention of everyone that Ashford Borough Council and Kent County Council are championing the Solar Together project. Residents are invited to complete a form in relation to being interested in having solar panels. There is a potential reduction in cost due to a united buying power.

With regard to possible charging points for electric vehicles, the Oak Room is a possible site. Brabourne Baptist Church has considered the possibility but is not keen due to previous parking issues on the site. The Playing Field Association has remained silent on the issue. The Village Hall had previously rejected the possibility. The Borough Council have secured substantial funding to install charging points but they are to be installed entirely in the urban areas. The Clerk had been asked to find out installation costs but has yet to speak to the officer at the Borough Council to obtain these. After subsequent discussion, having fully considered this complex initiative, the Parish Council did not see any scope for the installation of electrical charging points in the Parish at this time. The Parish Council would not wish to be involved in direct provision of such points.

Cllr Herrick reported that the village event as suggested by Mr Belcher was definitely not going ahead.

The tree to be planted to mark then centenary birthday of Mr Joynson is to be discussed and arranged by Cllr Herrick.

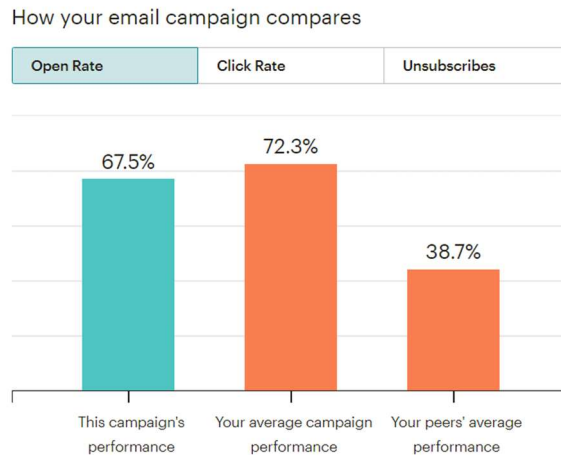
6. Public session: To receive questions and comments from the public on any agenda item

DH

<p>A member of the public reported that trees had fallen in the latest storms from the M20 site across the A20 and felt some still presented a danger to A20 users. Kent Highways are responsible for ensuring the safety of the A20 and the Clerk will report this matter.</p>	TB
<p>7. To receive report from the Borough Councillor</p> <p>No report had been received from Councillor Howard.</p>	
<p>8. To ratify the proposed response to the Land Mapping Commission Questionnaire</p> <p>The response to the Land Mapping Commission questionnaire was agreed and will be submitted by the Clerk. A member of the public asked whether there was any allowance for public consultation and questioned the purpose of the Land Mapping Commission. Cllr Herrick explained that the purpose was to inform any update of the Local Plan to 2030 and the next local plan. No allowance had been made at this stage for public consultation. All members of the public will be provided with an opportunity to view the consultation once the next local plan reaches that stage.</p>	TB
<p>9. To receive an update on the Highways Improvement Plan (HIP)</p> <p>Cllr Herrick reported that the sub-committee had met with Kent Highways to discuss the Highways Improvement Plan. Kent Highways have now put forward a proposal. The meeting was useful but the area survey did not allow for hoped for major proposals to be undertaken. The plan proposes revised signage, gateways, and road markings along Plain Road, Church Road, and The Ridgeway. This will be at a cost of £12,250. VP proposed that the improvements be undertaken, DH seconded this, and all were in favour.</p> <p>A member of the public had contacted the Parish Council with a proposal to reduce the speed limit along Plain Road near Washington Farm. Kent Highways had been contacted regarding this suggestion and their response was discouraging. A speed limit change requires accident data and there is apparently no data to support this. The Parish Council considered whether this request should be placed on the Highways Improvement Plan. Whilst the proposal was considered to have some merit, the response from Kent Highways would indicate it was a non-starter. The Parish Council therefore decided not to take this suggestion forward.</p>	TB
<p>10. To receive any reports from the PCSO</p> <p>No report had been received. PCSO reports are now being sent via the Community Voice as advertised in a previous newsletter.</p>	
<p>11. To receive an update on the Newsletter</p> <p>Since the last Parish Council meeting only one newsletter has been sent out and the results are as follows:</p> <p>Date sent: 19 February 2022 Number of recipients: 369 Open rate: 249 (67.5%) Clicks per unique open: 59 (23.7%)</p> <p>Most popular links clicked:</p> <p>Brabourne Parish Council Agendas and Minutes – 32 Smeeth Parish Council Agendas and Minutes – 15</p>	

Walking in England – 13
 Planning Application Missingham Farm – 6
 Ashford Planning Portal – 5

Some other fun stats:



12. To receive the KALC Representative Report

JM reported:

Ashford Area KALC met on 3rd March at Civic Centre.

1. Inspector Johnson from Community Safety Unit gave an update on crime in the area and progress of the Police project "My Community Voice" which engages with the public to ensure safer streets. A number of security CCTV cameras have been installed in urban areas.
2. A Local Council Forum on Anti-Social Behaviour has been arranged for 13th April at 1300-1600 via Teams online.
3. An Online Seminar on Planning has been arranged for 14th March at 14.00. The agenda and joining instructions have already been sent out to Parish Councillors by Tracey Block.
4. Jeremy Smith Ashford KALC Chairman from Wittersham PC is promoting an initiative on behalf of parish councils to support and promote Southern Water's message to residents to prevent flushing inappropriate materials into the sewer network which over time result in blockages and overflow into the local environment. Any parish councils where problems have been experienced by parishioners are welcome to join the project.
5. A reply has finally been received from Terry Mortimer about data management on the ABC Planning Applications Portal. The Council's long-standing practice of removing all consultation responses from the portal when an application has been finally determined will continue i.e., when a final decision has been made and the statutory period for appeal has passed without an appeal being made there is no legal requirement for the Council to place or retain consultation responses on the portal even from Statutory consultees.

Next meeting of Ashford Area KALC will be on Thursday May 12th.

13. Footpaths and Highways

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

The Ridgeway/Church Road triangle - Damage

KCC Highways are to install kerbstones as agreed at the January meeting.

Woolpack Hill/adj. Sandy Place - Parking

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

Church Road closure

It was noted that there will be a road closure on 8th April in Church Road - this is for one day only and is during the School Holidays so should not cause too much disruption.

14. 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.

The Clerk reported on her previous actions:

The Piggeries – It was noted that the appeal had been decided and was refused.

Wemdon – Use as Coach Depot - The Clerk had asked whether double decker buses were considered of the same category as coaches in planning terms and it had been confirmed that they were.

The Stables at Granary Court - The Clerk had raised the surface water condition from the original application with the Borough Council. The Borough Council considers the previous application to have met all its conditions.

DH noted that there had been an enquiry regarding turning a property into a Buddhist retreat but no further detail had been received on this.

DH noted that Ashford Borough Council have met their development numbers (to date) for the Local Plan to 2030 and will therefore not be taken to task by Central Government.

DH reported that he had been contacted by the “Campaign to Save Aldington” group. This is a small group of residents who have created the campaign to “save Aldington” from the larger of the 2 ground solar farms. Aldington Parish Council has said that they will respond to any planning consultation once it is received. Smeeth Parish Council will also respond to any consultation once it is received.

It was noted that the EDF Renewables application is still awaited.

DH also noted that Brabourne Parish Council have decided to rescind the Village Protection Policy (VPP) as it is not a statutory consideration from a planning viewpoint. The Policy was never adopted by Ashford Borough Council - the Village Confines Maps, and the Local Plan 2030 both supersede the VPP. DH proposed that it is removed from the website and no longer considered by Smeeth Parish Council. After some discussion, all agreed.

There was a discussion regarding the possibility of formulating a Neighbourhood Plan following which it was agreed that any further consideration would be put on hold pending the results of the Land Mapping Commission initiative.

15. Financial matters:

a) To note the Parish Council’s financial position as at 31/01/2022

The current financial position of the Parish Council was noted. The Parish Council has a balance of £88,535.02 as of 31st January 2022.

b) To authorise any payments

TB

T Denne and Sons	£108.00
HMRC	£484.47
Paul Rodway	£1629.03
KCC Pension	£671.59
T Block (expenses)	£129.83

B Podd	£133.65
HMRC	£135.20
T Block	£270.73
T Block	£270.53
Website domain renewal	£50.35
T Block expenses	£110.26
Brabourne and Smeeth Village Hall	£1000.00
Brabourne and Smeeth Playing Field Association	£1500.00
Brabourne and Smeeth Scouts and Guides	£500.00

16. Correspondence

The Clerk had circulated all correspondence.

17. To receive an update regarding the Playing Field Association

DH reported that the PFA have completed the hedging and car park maintenance.

The Clerk was asked to request an update as far as the future plans for the PFA were concerned and also a current financial statement and details of the next meeting of the Management Committee.

18. To receive an update regarding the Village Caretaker Scheme

The Village Caretaker Scheme continues to be successful. If there are any matters within the Parish that require the attention of the Village Caretaker, please let the Parish Clerk know.

19. To receive an update regarding SpeedWatch

SpeedWatch has not been active recently. There is hope that there will be additional sessions soon.

20. To receive an update regarding the Community Led Plan

Following the sad passing of Michael Hinchliffe (about whom DH had written article in the eNewsletter) the CLP group are due to meet on the 23rd of March and DH is to attend.

21. The Queen's Jubilee Celebrations

RB had attended a meeting organised by Jon Rose regarding the organisation of an event for the Queen's Jubilee. This is due to take place on the 3rd of June. Jon Rose is to circulate various village organisations in the near future in order to progress this matter.

The Parish Council discussed the potential of purchasing some bunting to decorate the Parish. The Clerk is to source some bunting and a budget of up to £500 was approved.

22. To consider the input for the Parish News

The Parish Council agreed to alter the input to the Parish News to match that of Brabourne Parish Council, highlighting the main points discussed at meetings.

23. Any Other Business (for information purposes only):

TB

DH

TB

TB

Congratulations were expressed to the Clerk for achieving the CiLCA (Certificate in Local Government Administration).

It was noted that Graham Lilley is organising a “Paint for Victory” Exhibition and Craft Fair. This is raising money for the Pilgrim’s Hospice on the 30th of April and the 1st of May in the Scout Hut.

The RBL is holding a garden party on the 4th of June for the Queen’s Jubilee.

An update from the Smeeth Sandpit Society had been received. The pond is now full and fenced and signs have been erected. The website is to be refreshed soon. A kissing gate has been installed and 16 trees planted under the Queen’s Green Canopy initiative. A bench is to be installed soon.

CD explained that a member of the public is looking to be able to install a footpath from Smeeth to Brabourne School. The member of the public will attend the next meeting with a proposal looking for support from the Parish Council.

24. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next Annual Meeting of the Council.

Wednesday 18th May 2022 at Brabourne Baptist Church.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.