

Smeeth Parish Council
Minutes of the Meeting
Held on Wednesday 8th March 2023 at 7.00pm at Brabourne Baptist Church.

Cllr Herrick welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Cllr Herrick explained that Cllr Alford is not standing for re-election, consequently we have now lost 2 Councillors. We are sorry to see Cllr Alford leave and are grateful for her contribution.

1. To note those present.

Cllr Herrick (DH), Cllr Mrs Alford (HA), Cllr Roger Baker (RB), Cllr Rev Denyer (CD), Cllr Grant (SG), and Cllr Mrs Morey (JM).

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

2. To receive and approve apologies for absence.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Pereboom.

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 made.

4. To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 11th January 2023.

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

5. To discuss matters arising from previous minutes that are not covered by the agenda.

Quinn Estates meeting (William Howard)

Nothing received from William Howard despite chasing.

Caldecott

CD reported that a meeting and visit was in hand.

SPC website - Councillors and Organisations

The Clerk reported that she had looked through the organisations and they are all up to date as far as the PC is concerned.

It was agreed to update the Councillors page after the elections in May when up to date details can be published.

Community Events Group (CEG)

The first CEG meeting was held on Tuesday (7 March). The first meet only had 2 attendees. The idea behind the CEG is that there may be people interested in running events who need assistance and the CEG would be a forum for advice and information as to how an event might be run.

6. To receive report from the Borough Councillor.

There was no Borough Councillor Report.

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

A member of the public attended to discuss the traffic on the A20. There was another accident on the A20 near the crossroads this week and the junction is considered dangerous. The Parish Council will revisit their Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) post-elections and will certainly discuss the A20 crossroads with Kent Highways. The HIP group had previously been told that Kent Highways had carried out some improvements and the effectiveness of those needed time to be reviewed.

8. Financial report

8.1 To approve the Financial Statement

The current financial position of the Parish Council was noted. The Parish Council has a balance of £87,687.89 as of 28th February 2023.

8.2 To agree payments in accordance with the Budget.

Paul Rodway	£1460.14
HMRC	£ 325.69
T Denne and Son	£ 118.80
Kent Pension Fund	£ 577.00
Fuel Genie	£ 40.04
Zurich	£ 277.00
P Rodway	£1460.34
HMRC	£ 352.49
Kent Pension Fund	£ 577.00
Lister Wilder	£ 26.95
T Denne and Son	£ 118.80
HMRC	£ 142.60
Mrs. Podd – litter picking	£ 228.00
T Block	£ 284.80
T Block	£ 285.00
HMRC	£ 142.40
T Block expenses	£ 124.28
Brook PC – 50% of noticeboard	£ 325.81
Brabourne and Smeeth Playing Fields Association	£1500.00
Brabourne and Smeeth Village Hall	£1000.00
Brabourne and Smeeth Scouts and Guides Mgt Comm.	£ 500.00

8.3 To approve donations to Brabourne and Smeeth Scouts and Guides, Brabourne and Smeeth Village Hall Association and the Playing Fields Association in accordance with the budget.

Scouts and Guides - £500.00

Brabourne and Smeeth Village Hall - £1000.00.

PFA - £1500

9. To receive the KALC Representative Report.

Cllr Morey reported:

I attended the KALC Ashford Area Committee meeting at the Civic Centre on 1st March.

An update from Ashford Police was given by CI Sarah Rivett included i) rural crime (targeting sheds for equipment stored within), ii) the targeting of the elderly by criminals purporting to be from Met Police, iii) property had been stolen from gym users' lockers (bank cards and phones) arrests had been made, and iv) thefts of catalytic converters continue.

An update on the new Planning Portal was given. Although a further training session on the new Planning Portal had been suggested for mid-March it is now thought likely that any further training would be put back until June 2023.

The Government's proposal for relaxation of GPDO is of concern in some new estates where the car ports / car barns were being enclosed and used for storage. The proposed street referenda appear to be potentially divisive and could create mini neighbourhood plans and it was agreed that a letter is to be drafted to Ashford MP from KALC seeking the challenge of any such proposal.

The closure of ACRK was discussed and Mr J Smith (Wittersham) Ashford Area KALC chairman is supportive of the view that services previously provided by ACRK should continue in some form. The Housing Service (Tessa O'Sullivan) is to be administered on a temporary basis for two years by ABC. However, the Advisory Service previously provided by ACRK to Village Halls and the Coffee Caravan is not likely to be taken over by ABC. The coffee caravan was funded by the

Lottery and could possibly be reinstated but it was important that any new venture should have a sound business plan and limited liability status.

Next meeting is to be 3rd May.

Smeeth PC have nominated someone to receive a KALC Community Award.

10. Newsletter Report

There was nothing to report about the newsletter. Further discussion will be needed post elections.

11. Planning.

11.1 Planning Committee report.

The Planning Report was circulated.

11.2 To agree any outstanding planning responses.

Planning application decisions made:

PA/2022/2701 – the Parish Council will re-iterate their objection.

PA/2023/0254 – the Parish Council makes no comment to this application.

Canterbury Road/Chapel Farm planning issue (CO/22/00032)

The Officer wrote to the Clerk on 12/01/2023, "Since being assigned this case I (have) reviewed the case and spoken to the owner. As a result of my conversation and the previous investigating officers information I emailed an invitation for a planning application/lawful development certificate for the use of the land. I subsequently received an email from an architect who told me he had been instructed by the owner and intended to make an application by the second week in December.

To date the Council has not received an application and I have sent an email to the architect today asking when the application will be submitted.

The fact that an application has been invited does not bind the Council to a particular decision as all planning applications are determined in accordance with National and Local Planning Policies and any other material considerations.

If an application for a Certificate of lawfulness is submitted the onus is on the applicant to prove to the Local Planning Authority on the balance of probability that a Certificate should be granted."

Update on 8th March – Enforcement Officer stated: "I spoke to the owner at the end of February chasing the application and also left messages with his agent. Still no contact from the agent.

I wrote to the agent again today and if I do not hear anything by the end of next week, I will issue a Planning Contravention Notice from which I can progress the enforcement enquiry. A PCN is a Notice that requires the owner to provide planning information about the land. Once a PCN is returned by the owner an assessment can be made as to the way to proceed."

Mead House planning complaint (16/00819/AS + ENF2023/0029)

On 07/03/2023, Enforcement Officer stated: I can confirm I have visited the property and reviewed the stable block. The stables are definitely being used as stables and although I am in the process of writing my report it would appear that technically the stables haven't been built to plan as the 2 doors on either end of the stables have been removed and 1 set of double doors have been installed instead.

At this time, the removal of 2 doors and installation of a set of double doors would appear to be more functional for horses and is a common design feature for stables across the borough. I have no immediate concerns the building will be used for anything other than stables at this present time.

On 08/03/2023, Enforcement Officer report stated: I have carefully considered the relocation of the single doors from the northern and southern elevation to the form double doors on the western elevation and the inclusion of glazed windows to the external elevations and I do not

believe that the development has resulted in substantial harm in planning terms. It was apparent during my site visit the buildings intended use is to be used as stables.

This being the case I do not think enforcement action could be justified bearing in mind the relatively minor scale of the breach of planning rules and the time and costs to the taxpayer that taking action may involve.

12. Village Caretaker Scheme

The Village Caretaker scheme continues well and if anyone notices anything that requires the attention of the Caretaker, please contact the Parish Clerk.

The waste collection vehicle appears to be churning up the edge of the Warren. The Clerk is to raise this with Cllr Howard.

13. Young Person's Award

a. To receive and approve the terms of Reference for the Brabourne and Smeeth Young Person's Award

The Parish Council approved the Terms of Reference for the Brabourne and Smeeth Young Person's Award

b. To receive and approve the associated Terms of the Young person's Award Working group

The Parish Council approved the associated Terms of the Young Person's Award Working group

c. To nominate 3 members of the working group from Smeeth Parish Council

The Parish Council nominate Cllrs Alford, Baker and Denyer as members of the working group from Smeeth Parish Council.

14. Local Organisations - Updates

Community Led Plan – The CLP is reinvigorated and is flourishing. Cllr Herrick circulated minutes of their recent meetings. The Michael Hinchliffe Memorial bench is to be installed imminently. The CLP will be holding a Coffee Morning on 25th March to promote the CLP and engage with the community. The CLP is also looking into planting up the area of land either side of the Playing Field entrance.

Playing Field Association – No update was received.

Royal British Legion – There was nothing to report.

Scouts and Guides – The Scouts and Guides are looking at sound deadening in the hall. The Beavers are interested in undertaking a community project and they are moving this forward with the CLP.

Smeeth Sandpit Company – Nothing to report.

Speedwatch – Nothing to report. Volunteers are still required. It was suggested that an advert could be placed on the new "villages" noticeboard.

Village Hall – No meetings recently but the AGM is on 6th April. The accounts are available and the defibrillator has been installed.

15. Footpaths and Highways (including parking issues and bridleways)

Church Road footpath – outcome of meeting with KCC

The Clerk met with Kent Highways on Friday 17th February. They will undertake some repairs to the path between now and the Spring but they have no budget available for this so cannot

guarantee any date for repairs.

Plain Road etc. 30mph works (SPC funded)

Not sure of exact start date but the works are scheduled to be completed by 24/05/2023.

Church Road (school) parking restrictions

Asked ABC, still awaiting their response. There has also been no response re parking at Sandy Place.

Church Road speed indicator repair

Reported as log number: 683341 - to be programmed. Chased Highways Officer - still awaiting his response.

Bus shelter proposal (at The Woolpack)

Reported as log number: 686885 - to be investigated. Chased Highways Officer - still awaiting his response.

The following issues are to be reported by the Clerk – Potholes on Church Road near the Oak Room and near The Woolpack. Also Plain Road (drain cover) and flooding in the Ridgeway.

16. Correspondence

The Clerk reminded Councillors to complete their Election forms.

17. Any other business

The Citizenship Award nominations are now open.

A potential Borough Council candidate introduced themselves to the meeting.

18. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.

Wednesday 10th May 2023 and the APM on 17th May 2023 both in the Baptist Church.