

ICKHAM & WELL PARISH COUNCIL

Ordinary Parish Meeting 20th February 2017 at 7.30pm

Minutes of meeting

Present: Councillors J deGraft-Johnson (Chair), S Hipkin, P Hodges; K Richards; K Tatman; Pat Heath (clerk)
Councillors Michael Northey (KCC) and Stuart Walker (Canterbury CC)

Apologies: Councillor L Shouls

Public: Mrs deGraft-Johnson

2016/140 Apologies
Councillor G Wyant.

2016/141: Declarations of Interest
None

2016/142: Minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 16th January 2017
The minutes were signed by Councillor deGraft-Johnson as true records.

2016/143 Matters Arising
There were none.

2016/144 Correspondence
A request for a donation towards the cost of running the Kent, Surrey & Sussex Air Ambulance was deferred until the next meeting. Comments on the new Local Plan were required by the 24th March.

2016/145 Planning Applications

145/01: 17/00197 Rectory Cottage; there were no objections to the proposed development.

145/02: 17/00210 Land at Quaives Farm; The proposed development was not within the boundaries of Ickham & Well Parish and therefore no objections could be made by the council.

2016/146: Finance

146/01: Councillor Hipkin had sent Councillor Walker a history of the funding of the churchyard grass cutting but was awaiting a response to our renewed request for the funding to continue as before.

146/02: The accounts looked healthy and the slight surplus would be transferred to reserves to cater for future costs such as maintenance of the trees under TPOs.

2016/147 Highways

147/01: **Potholes at Port Rill, Wingham Lane** Work in progress??

147/02: **Interactive sign opposite Bramling House:** Still after 5 months, no one has seen it working. Councillor Tatman reported that it is apparently set to 57mph which is the legal stipulation on a 50mph limit road. He felt that this was ridiculous as anything travelling at, say, 56mph will not trigger the sign and yet will probably crash. Additionally, the solar panel faces roughly North, because there are too many trees blocking the sun to the South. In all likelihood, if the trigger was reduced in speed, the sign would quickly run out of juice. Councillor Tatman is in discussions with Councillor Northey, (KCC), who was the sponsor of the sign.

147/03: **Accidents:** There has been one since the last meeting (11/02/17), a car skidded on the freshly fallen snow and collided with the chevron warning sign on the junction of Bramling Road and the A257. Car appeared to be written off but no injuries. Councillor Tatman is seeking to get the chevron sign repaired as soon as possible but this has been delayed by the issue being wrongly described on the Highways computer system.

147/04: **A257 Group** met on Sat 18 Feb, on this occasion with our MP Sir Julian Brazier in attendance. Amongst other matters discussed:

- It was reported that there are moves to enforce the use of commercial sat navs within all HGVs. This should reduce the number of HGV's using the A257 without a direct need to do so;
- Councillor Tatman is continuing to draft the "A257 Plan", which will incorporate the views of all Parish Councils and Associations along its length, regarding road users at risk from inappropriate and unenforced speed limits; areas of severe congestion; and areas where pedestrians are particularly at risk. When it is nearer completion, it will be presented to all appropriate Parish Councils, but the salient points that affect Ickham and Well are that we will seek a 40mph speed limit from Littlebourne to Wingham, with 30mph on the Bramling Bend, (where there have been 30 traffic incidents since 2010). We will seek enforcement of these speed limits;

- As part of this work, the A257 Group have been invited to write a brief urgent wish list to our MP, and South Thanet's Craig McKinley, and the KCC. Councillor Tatman has been tasked with writing the draft and it is likely to include the need for:
 - buffer speed limit zones to gradually reduce speed from, say 50 or 60 to 30, particularly the approaches to Wingham and Littlebourne;
 - the implementation of 20 mph limits in Wingham and Littlebourne, possibly supported by chicanes;
 - the reduction of the speed limit to 40 mph between Littlebourne and Wingham;
 - potentially a reduction to 30mph round the Bramling Bend;
 - potentially police camera enforcement.

147/05: Following the report of the A257 Group, there were various comments and suggestions made about the optimum speed on the road to reduce accidents, (there were 13 hotspots on the A257, many locally). It was felt that it would be useful to have a petition and a joint approach from the parishes of Ickham, Littlebourne and Wingham supporting the reduction of the speed limit, as suggested, to 40 mph between Littlebourne and Wingham, with a 30-mph limit at the Bramling Bend. Councillor Tatman pointed out that 2 previous petitions had not succeeded and the difficulty was partly caused by the high legal costs involved. Councillor Northey promised to offer his support if possible but we also need strong local support. It was also suggested that the support of Matthew Balfour, (Cabinet Member at Kent CC for Environment & Transport) be sought.

147/06: **The pavement from Duckpitt Cottages to Littlebourne:** Councillor Tatman reported that there had been unsatisfactory repairs made about 18 months ago, and the project was marked as completed at KCC but he would reopen the issue.

2016/148: River Stour

Councillor deGraft-Johnson reported that the hedgerows by the ditches in Drill Lane had been cut in the previous month but the ditches had not been dredged. The Water Board had reported low levels of water which should ensure no flooding occurred, if there was not unduly heavy rainfall before Easter.

2016/149 First Aid course

Attendees of the first course have now received their certificates. The second course had to be deferred but Brennan Dwyer will re-arrange a suitable date as soon as possible.

2016/150: Standing Orders

Councillor Hodges has amended the Standing Orders in line with those on the NALC website and has forwarded a draft to Councillor deGraft-Johnson for approval. He will then send a copy to each Councillor for their comments and approval.

2016/151: AOB

151/01: Councillor Northey commented that it had been a good meeting of the A257 group and that they were correct in aiming to identify all major problems but to tackle them one by one. He reported that the KCC budget was £907m of which 40% was spent on adult and senior social care, council tax was up by 4% of which 2% was for social care increases.

151/02: Mrs deGraft-Johnson queried whether the poorly functioning solar-powered speed sign at Bramling would be better if some trees were cut back. Councillor Tatman commented on the problem in cutting back trees in a conservation area especially the amount that would have to be cut from the trees on the banks. It was not possible to power the sign electrically but a suggestion was made on raising the solar warning sign higher, above the speed limit sign, and this will be considered.

151/03: Councillor Walker talked about the possible merger of district councils and the consultation that would take place in March. There were various opinions voiced on the benefits or otherwise of such a merger both in financial terms and in service delivery. Councillor Walker also reported that Canterbury City Council would debate, and vote on, next year's budget on Tuesday, although he was not optimistic about the request for churchyard funding.

151/04: Mrs deGraft-Johnson spoke about her concerns on the proposed polytunnels at Quaives in Wickhambreaux. She felt that the councillors had concentrated on the economic benefits, including employment, and not the environmental issues that had caused such concern when faced in Ickham a few years ago. She wished this to be recorded, although it was accepted that it was not within our parish and therefore not our concern in this instance.

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 8.20 pm.

The next parish meeting is on Monday 20th March 2017 at 7.30 pm