

ICKHAM & WELL PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Council Meeting (APCM) – 24th April 2017 at 7.30pm

Minutes of meeting

Present: Councillors J deGraft-Johnson (Chair), S Hipkin, K Richards, L Shouls, K Tatman.

Public: 5 members of the public.

2017/001: Apologies

Councillors P Hodges and G Wyant.
Councillors M Northey and S Walker.

2017/002: Declarations of Interest

There were none.

2017/003: Minutes of the meetings on 20th February and 20th March 2017 and the previous APCM on 18th April 2016

The minutes were all signed by Councillor deGraft-Johnson as true records.

2017/004: Matters arising

Councillor deGraft-Johnson stated that any matters arising would be covered by items in the agenda and all agreed.

2017/005: Treasurer's report

005/01: Councillor Hipkin distributed copies of the accounts for 2016-7 which showed receipts of £7,019.55 and expenditure of £4,472.29 for the year. He explained that it was necessary to set aside £1,200 pa for tree surgery on the trees protected under TPOs and to build up parish reserves.

005/02: Councillor Hipkin also reminded the meeting that it had been confirmed that it was not possible to claim costs for cutting the grass in the churchyard under the terms of CCF. Councillor deGraft-Johnson stated that the costs for the year 2016-7 would be met by the precept levy.

2017/006: Revised Standing Orders

In the absence of Councillor Hodges who had been handling this, the matter was deferred to the following meeting.

2017/007: Highways

007/01: A257: Pavement from Duckpitt Cottages to Littlebourne: Highways had surveyed the pavement and said it would be very expensive to resurface and they could not afford it. They had passed the issue to “Schemes” who may have a budget. Councillor deGraft-Johnson stated that this might be a safety issue as the pavement was narrow and the cars went fast down the road.

007/02: Potholes at Port Rill, Wingham Lane. No further progress

007/03: Interactive Sign opposite Bramling House: Awaiting response from MPs to the speed limit letter the A257 Traffic Group had sent them, (at their request). It is likely they are too busy at present to action further.

007/04: A257 road sign damage on junction of Bramling Road and A257 is still awaiting repair.

007/05: A257 road surface: Previously the surface between the Bramling bend and White Cottage had been resurfaced but this had covered drains and utility inspection hatches. The drains were uncovered relatively quickly but the inspection hatches have only just been done. Unfortunately, this left a drop of a few inches from the new road level causing a lot of noise when cars pass over them (i.e. constantly).

007/06: Accidents: Nothing since the last meeting.

007/07: A257 Traffic Group: No meeting since the last parish meeting. The next meeting is designated in May to be attended by our MP’s and District Councillors; however, the MP’s are likely to be busy!!

007/08: Pending road closures: Wingham and Littlebourne High Streets are set to be closed on the nights of 4/5/6 May and 9/10 May respectively, from 19.30pm to 5.00am for resurfacing. Councillor Tatman had heard informally that Wingham will be open to one-way traffic via temporary traffic lights during that time but did not know if that was the case through Littlebourne.

007/09: Councillor Richards reported that a resident’s wall had been hit by a tractor but the farmer would repair the damage. She said that farmers would be supportive of yellow lines preventing parking at the narrowest part of The Street but it was pointed out that a similar suggestion had been made the previous year (2016/005/05) and rejected.

007/10: The difficulty of cars exiting the Oast Houses was also mentioned as their visibility was blocked by parked cars and they had to edge into a single lane roadway and try to estimate the speed of approaching vehicles. Generally,

there was opposition to yellow lines within the village but more plant pots, such as those by Ickham Court Farm entrance, were suggested as a means of improving visibility by restricting parking. It was later noted that the pots in Ickham Court Farm were on privately owned land.

007/11: Funds had been raised by the FOI to purchase signs asking motorists to drive slowly through the village.

007/12: The matter was then opened to public debate:

- Jacque Grimsley raised the point that yellow lines were not suitable for a village and questioned where residents would be able to park. She suggested that the pub owners might be able to negotiate with a local farmer to allow staff to park on their land, and, on occasion, mini-busses, for which recompense would be paid. She also felt that cars would go faster through the village if there were less parked vehicles and that, maybe, Ickham should attempt to have a 20mph speed limit imposed through the village.
- Harry Roycroft agreed with Jacque and asked if it were possible to have solar signs showing, for example, a smiling face if the speed of approaching vehicle was within the speed limit or flashing a warning for those that were exceeding it.
- Sandra deGraft-Johnson said that the FOI would help with any fund raising but were unable to contribute directly as they had had many calls on their funds, including the £1.5k cost of the new noticeboard in the village. She stated that they did not support having yellow lines in a conservation area. She also suggested that part of the village greens might be hedged or cordoned off to allow limited off-road parking.
- Lindsay Dixey mentioned her concern at the speed with which some cars, driven by both residents and visitors, went around the bend near the new village green.
- Councillor Richards stated that introducing parking permits would not be fair on residents who were dependent on street parking and she also questioned who would monitor yellow lines, as the police would not.
- Councillor Tatman said that parked cars did slow down the traffic and he felt that the existing 30mph limit was too fast. He mentioned that Highways had said that the imposition of a 20mph limit only worked where speeds were 24mph or less.
- Councillor Tatman said that, if the PC purchased their own "speed awareness" signs and erected them, (as they have done in Bramling), these would need to be on private land. If Highways [and CCC and the police etc.] agreed to reduce the speed limit and erect speed limit signs this could be on Highways land, but probably at local cost.

- It was noted that a letter asking residents to be careful whilst driving through the village and parking had been distributed a year ago.
- Councillor deGraft-Johnson had had discussions with the pub about displaying signs asking for considerate parking, but that these had now been taken down. He said that he would draft a letter to the owners about this matter and that later he, and 1 or 2 other Councillors, would discuss the issues with them in person, mentioning, in particular, the recently double-parked mini-buses.
- Councillor Tatman reported that a motion is to be put before KALC, (AGM in November), proposed by Wingham PC and seconded, he believed, by Littlebourne PC, to gain KALC's support for a 20mph limit in all Kent villages. If this gained approval it could go up to NALC for a national campaign.
- Councillor deGraft-Johnson said that the problem of excessive speed would continue and that we should seek proper advice on how to deal with it. Consultations could cost more than £1k and he suggested asking Highways if they knew of someone suitable at a lesser cost.
- Measures to limit road width reduction were discussed – such as stopping right angle parking at the end of the wall by the church green and any double parking – because, at times, an emergency vehicle would not have been able to get through.
- The possibility of pub staff being allowed to park at New Place Farm, as they had previously was also mentioned.
- Councillor deGraft-Johnson agreed to draft a formal letter to Josh de Haan of The Duke about the parking issues.
- Councillor Tatman mentioned that, although not popular with nearby residents, speed bumps had been shown to be effective in Littlebourne who were now considering installing one more in Bekesbourne Lane. Ramps could be laid at each end of the village to remind drivers of the need to slow down, He said that these had been laid in Aylesham but he believed that the developer had paid for them.
- The cost of a flashing sign was thought to be in excess of £10k and would require regular maintenance, making it an unlikely option.
- This matter will be further debated in May and the clerk was asked to provide a link to the Faversham 20's Plenty website.

2017/008: River Management

It was noted that there was only a small amount of water in the Little Stour but, in the absence of Councillor Wyant, there was no further discussion.

2017/009: Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

Chairman: Councillor deGraft-Johnson was nominated by Councillor Tatman and seconded by Councillor Shouls.

Vice-Chairman: Councillor Tatman was nominated by Councillor Richards and seconded by Councillor Hipkin.

2017/010: Other appointments

Treasurer: Councillor Hipkin was nominated by Councillor deGraft-Johnson and seconded by Councillor Tatman.

Footpaths Officer: Councillor Richards was nominated by Councillor Shouls and seconded by Councillor deGraft-Johnson.

Highways Officer: Councillor Tatman was nominated by Councillor Richards and seconded by Councillor Hipkin.

KALC representative: In the absence of Councillor Hodges, who was the current representative, this matter was deferred until the next meeting.

Little Stour & NG

Representative: In the absence of Councillor Wyant, who was the current representative, this matter was deferred until the next meeting.

IVH Committee

Representative: Councillor Shouls was nominated by Councillor deGraft-Johnson and seconded by Councillor Richards.

First Aider: Councillor Richards was nominated by Councillor Shouls and seconded by Councillor Hipkin.

2017/011: Budget approval for 2017-18

011/01: The budget estimates were shown to Councillors. There was estimated expenditure of £6,030, to which an additional £100 was set aside to maintain the noticeboards, against an income of £8,392.16.

011/02: Councillor Hipkin stated the need to set priorities for any additional expenditure – for example, to tackle the ongoing issues about traffic through the village and parking; possible bus shelter at Bramling etc. It was agreed that this should be discussed at the APM in May, thereby allowing members of the public to have their say.

011/03: Dependent on the outcome of the meeting, an earmarked reserve fund could be set up for the Bramling shelter and it was suggested that the owners of The Duke could be approached to contribute towards the costs of coping with the traffic and parking issues caused by the increased trade at the pub.

2017/012: Debris in barns and litter in car park behind flats

012/01: Councillor Richards had spoken to Strutt & Parker about the danger of children playing in the barns, which contained debris and they had contacted the farm tenant who had agreed to erect ‘some wiring’ to prevent access. They also agreed to have a further conversation with the tenant regarding the condition and contents of the barns as it was the tenant’s responsibility within the tenancy agreement to repair and maintain the buildings.

012/02: Mark Downes had emailed Councillor Richards about this issue, expressing his concern about the ‘loose and flapping tin sheets on the roof’ about which no action had been taken, despite advising Strutt and Parker of the danger many times. He also mentioned the danger of the children leaving The Duke and playing in the barns which contained rubbish which might include asbestos.

012/03: It was agreed that the pub owners should be told to keep the back gate closed, although they currently advertised the back access to the field, both for safety reasons and, also, as there was no public footpath behind the pub garden, it was private land.

012/04: The Church Commissioners were the owners of the land but it was not known what the terms of the tenancy agreement were. This matter will be further discussed at the next meeting.

2017/013: Correspondence

A letter had been received from the Kent Environment & Community Network, (KECN), seeking a contribution of £500 to help fund the judicial review against the Canterbury South Urban Extension Development. The clerk was asked to check whether this was a registered charity and the application will be discussed at the next meeting.

2017/014: Planning

CA/17/00558 Barton Field Farm Bungalow application - no objections raised.

2017/015: Pre-wedding drinks on the Green 4th August

In Councillor Wyant's absence, this matter was deferred until the next meeting so that it could be explained in more detail, including whether the pub required a TEN and who would clear up any rubbish etc. afterwards.

2017/016: Future participation in Canterbury CC consultations

Councillor Tatman stated that the draft of the Parish Charter currently under discussion commits Parish Councils to actively respond to District Council consultations. He noted that Wingham PC do this by allocating a councillor to each consultation by rota and it was agreed that Ickham and Well PC should do the same. The clerk was asked to prepare a list of forthcoming consultations for the next meeting.

2017/017: Future capital projects

017/01: Councillor Richards was asked to ask the tree surgeon whether the TPO'd trees could be pollarded instead of crowned and how long it would be before they required further surgery.

017/02: The Bramling bus shelter was listed as a possible future project.

017/03: Ideas for projects would be canvassed at May's meeting.

2017/18: Annual public meeting 22nd May

018/01: The clerk was asked to prepare a letter inviting the public to attend and this will be distributed by the individual Councillors.

018/02: Councillor deGraft-Johnson and his wife, Sandra, kindly offered to supply the drinks for the meeting.

018/03: Various ideas for speakers at the meeting including getting someone to discuss the possible closure of the Urgent Care Centre. Councillor deGraft-Johnson will seek Richard Collins's advice on a suitable person to ask.

018/04: It was agreed that, unless we could arrange for a speaker to come and talk about the proposed changes in the health system, it would be better to have a more informal meeting and discuss local issues with the public.

2017/019: AOB

019/01: Lindsay Dixey expressed her thanks to Councillor Shouls and all who helped in the recent litter picking. She mentioned the plywood, previously used to divert the flow, in the ditch at Drill Lane and offered to store it in her garage but it was agreed to ask Councillor Wyant if it could be moved elsewhere.

019/02: Jacque Grimsley offered her thanks to all the Councillors for their work in supporting the village and villagers.

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 9.15 pm.

The next parish meeting is on Monday 22nd May 2017 at 7.00pm