

**Minutes of the Littlebourne Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting held on
Wednesday 22 MARCH 2017, at Littlebourne War Memorial Hall at 7.30pm**

Present

- Parish Councillors; Cllr Mike Gallagher, Cllr Mick Giles, Cllr Cate Reid, Cllr Brian Hurlow, Cllr Pamela Evans, Cllr Sylvia Wilson and Cllr Melanie Moore.
- County Cllr Michael Northey
- Clerk Mrs Gail Hubbard
- Approx. 22 residents

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chairman, Cllr Gallagher asked the meeting to pause for a minute to think of those that had been caught up in today's events at Westminster.

He then welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending. Thanks were given to Daphne, Jean and Brian for doing the refreshments this evening.

Apologies for absence were received from City Cllr Stuart Walker, Cllr Ken Shaw, Community Warden Gary Moore and Head teacher Stella Byrne.

2. Minutes approval from 2016 APM

The minutes from last year were proposed by Viv Spratt and seconded by Bob Anderson. The minutes were duly signed.

3. Millennium Award 2017 presentation

The Chairman read out the list of nominees as follows;

ANNE RIGDEN – Her dedication and commitment to others and the village. She works in a very unassuming way, not looking for accolades or reward, other than improving the lives of others and the village amenities. Her contributions include; annual collection for local Hospice, regular care and attention for elderly neighbour over many years, regular help with village functions in WMH or Turners Orchard, joint Chairman on Turners Orchard Committee, more recently she has agreed to become a School Governor, specialising in Special Needs.

ANNE PERKINS & ISABELLE STEPHENS – for their work in The Cherry Orchard Nature Reserve. Their quiet and tireless work over the last few years has resulted in a reserve that preserves a wide range of local flora and fauna, providing a valuable wildlife corridor in the village and home to the Great Crested Newt. Their work has been praised by ecologists. The village is lucky to have a hard working knowledgeable pair of ladies working in this special amenity.

LAURA FURR – Help over many years giving the youth of Littlebourne entertainment and guidance. Laura runs both the Youth Group and the Guides in Littlebourne, without her both of these would close. She co-ordinates volunteers and arranges events for both groups. It is refreshing to see a young person taking on so much responsibility and making a large contribution.

PAMELA WILDISH – a posthumous award. Since coming to the village in 1962 she worked hard for many organisations such as the WI, Scout Group and Littlebourne School. Pamela was also Parish Clerk for over 30 years. Many people will remember her as the schools ‘Lollipop lady’

MRS CLAYSON – for all the extra work she does in keeping the village tidy, surely over and above what she is expected to do.

He then presented the award to this year’s winner Laura Furr, who was present to accept the award.

**4. Report on the past year by Littlebourne Parish Council Chairman,
Cllr Mike Gallagher** - Councillor Gallagher read his Chairman’s report below to the meeting.

The year just passed, from March 2016 until now, appeared at our last meeting to be settling into a familiar and predictable pattern at least as far as our Village was concerned. There appeared to be some stability at National level and we thought we could expect a local government funding squeeze but with some heed paid to the Localism agenda of 2011 and a progressive (but perhaps slow) improvement in the nation’s economic wellbeing.

Then we had Brexit at the end of June, the fall of a government, great concern over the economic outlook and, in spite of things apparently holding up, a slow commitment to invest. Business is still very much operating on a ‘so far so good’ basis, but there is lack of certainty about what the future might bring. This attitude is having an effect on a number of things in our area chiefly in the development of The List and in local government terms with the move towards devolution. I’ll look at both areas later.

Council Funding

In July, Canterbury District Council began a consultation on its proposed new system governing the process of awarding grants and support funding. The desired outcome was to reduce the number and amount of both and to monitor very closely any money given under either scheme to make sure that it was being properly applied.

I explained last year that our funding each year is made up of two parts, a reimbursement from Canterbury for those jobs that it performs in the urban areas. This is known as Concurrent Funding and covers litter picking, grounds maintenance, grass cutting, tree maintenance, a small amount of fence repairs, repair of play equipment and Council insurance. The amount paid represents a bit of the Community charge that we pay to the City that they would otherwise pay to a contractor to do the work. For a number of years now our annual budget for this work has stood at around £19,000. This year the award was just under £12,800. We submitted our estimated budget for the four years starting in April 2017 and lasting until March 31 2021 and for each of the years we predicted our Concurrent spend as £19,487. We have been awarded approx. £13,000 per year, confirming our concern that Parishes are again being subjected to ‘double taxation’ since we will have to pick up any additional charges and pay these out of the Precept which you pay.

We are all now being told that this system of Concurrent funding will cease from 2021 and we have no idea how Parishes will be funded for this work after that date.

The other part relates to those responsibilities carried out by Littlebourne Parish Council for the Village and is known as the Precept. The total sum we need is divided over all properties and it is customary for year on year comparison purposes to report the amount payable weekly on a Band D property. The total for the

Village remains the same as the last few years and the Band D rate for next year will be £1.40 per week, a small reduction on this year.

Canterbury District Local Plan

LPC was represented by Cllr Reid at an examination hearing in July at which two omission sites in Littlebourne were due to be discussed, The List and Bekesbourne Lane. In the event, there was no appearance by the objectors and there was no discussion. It is worth noting that The List application had already been passed as we all know the previous October so that the Local Plan had already been effectively by-passed at that stage. A series of amendments have been issued and are on the CCC website to be considered by public consultation although this is due to finish this week (24 March). There is no indication on any of the area maps of Littlebourne developments.

We will continue to monitor this process.

Village Celebrations

In June, Cllr Reid organised a small band of volunteers and Councillors to provide an excellent day's entertainment on the Recreation Ground to celebrate the 90th birthday of HM The Queen together with the 95th birthday of HRH Prince Philip. We were joined by the Twinning Committee from Wimille, with their ladies bedecked with a very chic line in hats. Their leader Mme Christine Cleret looked particularly fetching as did our former Chairman Viv Spratt and Cllr Mel Moore pushing her barrow-load of booze! Many thanks are due to all involved.

Stephanie Farrow, for 30 years mainstay of the Brownies in Littlebourne as Brown Owl, also retired in 2016 and there was a splendid gathering in the War Memorial Hall to make some presentations and reminisce a little.

Turners Orchard provided a number of outdoor events and entertainments and continues to provide an excellent space for Villagers to relax, wander and become involved in some outside working parties to maintain this traditional open space.

Unfortunately, there have been some examples during the year of wilful damage and vandalism as well as graffiti spoiling of the Youth Shelter. A number of Village folk have been involved in cleaning up, particularly the Guides who repainted the Shelter to remove damage and to all of them we give our thanks. Our Village amenities belong to all of us and have to be maintained by all. The Warden and Police are aware of this destructive streak among us and are continuously on the lookout for the perpetrators.

Current Plans

LPC are currently investigating the cost of installing additional lights along the Rec path from The Club to the Youth Shelter and will treat this job as a priority.

We are also investigating the cost of providing two bus shelters, one on either side of High Street by the Roseacre Road junction. We believe that it is possible to obtain 50% grant funding for these and think that they will benefit Villagers when waiting at these two exposed areas.

The CCTV system at the Shop/Hall and Rec Club complex is now ten years old and represents old technology as well as needing increasing maintenance. Some time has been spent with suppliers looking at alternative systems and obtaining quotations for replacement. That exercise has been completed and, together with representatives of The Hall, Shop and Club, LPC has agreed to replace the current system

with the most up to date equipment possible. The installation work has been ordered and will soon be implemented.

Devolution

In 2015 there was talk of the movement towards Devolution in Local Government. Central Government thought that the three tiers of Local Government – County, District and Parish was a costly and inefficient way of running England and they thought the answer would be to reduce this to two tiers. No blueprint was offered but it was put to the Counties and Districts to work out a solution that would be right for each area. In either case Parishes would still represent the most local input.

In Kent there is one County authority, one Unitary authority (Medway), twelve District Councils and 320 Parish Councils.

For the purposes of deciding the best way forward, Kent has come up with a plan which would retain itself and work directly with Parish Councils. The twelve Districts have broadly banded themselves into three groups representing West, East and North Kent and working on the assumption that KCC will disappear and these three groups will take over its functions in their area. Medway would remain a Unitary as now and all four would work directly with their Parish Councils. East Kent would comprise five current Districts, Canterbury, Dover, Shepway, Thanet and Ashford and would retain their independence but share the same office functions.

In order to introduce some clarity into these models Kent Association of Local Councils and the Kent Federation of Amenity Societies hosted a County-wide conference recently and invited representatives from KCC and each of the three Groups of Districts to present their ideas for the future. Perhaps unsurprisingly each has approached their task differently and recommend different outcomes, but more alarmingly there are different rates of progress. It had been thought that once the European Referendum was out of the way, Central Government would push for an organised response from the whole country, but Brexit has thrown a spanner in the works and their priorities are now elsewhere. The Government objective of achieving massive savings on the back of these changes, though, is still very necessary with plans to reduce the Deficit by the early 2020's. You will remember what I said earlier on about the disappearance of Concurrent funding for us as well as each District receiving no support from Central Government in March 2021. So, there will have to be changes made and sooner rather than later!

The outcome of the Conference, for many, was confusion. Not the least, as far as Parishes are concerned, is how will either KCC or Grouped District cum Unitaries cope with 320 separate Parish Councils each of which will have a lot more to do? Clearly there will have to be a grouping together of Parish Councils in areas. None of this has been yet acknowledged or approached.

I said last year that we live in interesting times – but none of us thought how interesting those times are going to turn out to be and what decisions we are going to have to talk about and agree and then implement!

Planning

At the beginning of last year LPC was asked by Minster Parish Council to support an online Petition to the Government requesting that Parish Councils are given the right to appeal Planning decisions to the Planning Inspectorate. Given our experience of the local working of the Planning process, we lost no time in putting our name to it.

Our decision was very much based on our individual and collective frustration that communication was one way, with no response from the CCC Planning Department to any comments or objections that we have raised on any application.

We are a Statutory Consultee in the local planning process and yet feel ignored, to the extent that appearances from our Councillors at Planning Committee hearings are always made reluctantly and with the feeling that the event is a waste of their time. I thank all of those who have attended these meetings and acknowledge their efforts to make this Village a place that we can all live and move about in.

This is not to say that we are about rejecting any scheme that seems fit without causing hardship to others. Many applications are agreed by LPC, but those that are not accepted have genuine reasons for question. Local people may object and sometimes our Sub Committee Councillors might see a reason to do with Traffic flow, potential Drainage problems, rubbish handling, parking or just additional congestion. A key point that we raise time and time again is that infrastructure is just not keeping up with the level of development that the whole District is experiencing now.

Two areas that caused us particular concern were the applications for additional bungalows at the top end of Roseacre Road a stretch of road often congested and the building of two properties on the High Street next to The Anchor where we were concerned about the reduction in parking capacity at the pub and also the reduction of sightlines at the critical junction across the High St. In each case our objections were set aside and a request for a site meeting at The Anchor with the Planning Committee was ignored. In both cases the purpose of Parish Council consultation, in order to bring local experience into play, was completely bypassed.

You will all be aware of our attempts last year to determine the Village view on what facility should replace the proposed Doctor's Surgery in The List development – those of you at the Planning Committee meeting the previous October might remember the Council Member's long discussion and their feeling about passing an application that included a building (the Surgery) that the Village would, in all probability, not require. In the end the discussion led to a suggestion to include an extra Condition to facilitate further consultation with the Parish Council. You might also remember that both the Planner, Planning Manager and CCC Solicitor did not rule this option out.

The Condition those Members referred to was to be part of the Section 106 legal agreement associated with the granting of Planning Permission. We corresponded with Rydon and told them of your preference, expressed through the Village Survey carried out at the Exhibition weekends and online, for the area of land at the lower end of The List to be given to LPC as an open space and for an extension to be built on the Hall. We obtained a drawing for what we decided to make a separate building and had this costed together with a small extension to the Car Park. In the meantime, Rydon had replied to say that they would include our wishes on the donation of both plots of land and donate a sum towards the cost of the building. The Planning Permission appeared on the CCC website on 30 June last year, followed a week later by a copy of the S106 which included, not the condition that Rydon had said they would include but the original one in the application relating to the provision of a Surgery.

There then began attempts to find out from CCC Planning why the document had been written in this way. We also contacted Rydon to ask them what had gone wrong. They replied that they tried to put in our agreement but were told by CCC that they could not and must abide by 'the decision of the Planning Committee'. Our response to that suggestion is that what we had agreed was what the Planning Committee had itself agreed. We have spent the remainder of the time from July to January trying to gain written statements from CCC for their reasoning and taking legal advice from a variety of quarters to work out our

next steps. We have also contacted Rydon on two further occasions to ask if they are prepared to carry out their original offers outside the Planning S106. On both occasions they have said that their hands are tied and they can do no more.

This whole event became entangled overnight when Cardy Construction went into administration in July leaving us unsure as to whether we were going to get the original Surgery planned for Court Hill. That issue has now been sorted out and a successor company to Cardy is preparing to begin the build as we speak tonight.

Throughout all of this episode, indeed since October 2015, we have never had any direct communication from the CCC Planning Dept about any problems that they might have had with actioning the decision of the Planning Committee that night or any involvement in discussing the agreement we were hammering out with Rydon. Indeed, we did try to involve the Planning Officer, but met with no response.

We have now initiated a legal process as reported in this month's LPC News and will report back progress.

In the meantime, I must stress, as I do to everyone that asks (and there are many) that we have heard nothing about when the development on The List will start and will similarly let you know when we do. Please bear in mind that Rydon told us when we started direct talks in December 2015, that one of their options is to sell the site to another developer.

There has been a further instance of a failure to notify our Village, through LPC, of a planning item and that matter concerns the proposed increase in numbers at Wickhambreaux School. This issue does not concern CCC but in this case KCC. Let me say immediately that we on LPC have no wish to stand in the way of Wickhambreaux School or indeed our own here in Littlebourne. We have to bear in mind that Wickhambreaux village comprises a population (including Stodmarsh) of under 500 people and to increase the School size to 140 (as proposed) represents a daily growth of 25% in people circulating that tiny place. The School is not well sited and nearly 60% of pupils are brought to the Village each day by car from a widespread area and that is with a pupil roll currently of 105. The increase (of nearly a third) will come by car and those vehicles will add to the local congestion. So, we have the issue of more traffic.

It then emerged that the funding for the Wickhambreaux extension would be coming from the Developer contribution of over £200,000 arising from The List development. One of the reasons given for The List development was that Littlebourne is a sustainable village, meaning one which has all of the amenities here in the Village necessary for people without having to travel by car. We are faced with the prospect of children from The List being taken by car to Wickhambreaux past the front door of our School increasing risk to our children and parents and adding to our congestion.

We believe that we should have been told of this proposal by KCC as part of their Planning process. Following emails and discussions with our County Councillor, Michael Northey and the KCC Cabinet Member Cllr Roger Gough there may be some change in KCC's consultation protocols. We await developments on this issue.

Finally....

I must pay tribute to my fellow Parish Councillors, some will give you their reports before the end of the meeting but all of them deserve my heartfelt thanks for everything that they have done this past year both in their respective responsibilities and as a Council (and especially for all those extra meetings called at short notice).

I am also grateful for all of the help (mostly voluntary) from Emily Shirley, familiar to anyone present at the CCC Planning Committee on The List, and Duncan Milne a solicitor and also one of our Villagers. Both have helped immeasurably to sort out the legal jungle that we have had to enter to try to get what we feel is rightly ours.

Lastly, none of us could begin to function without the tireless efforts of our Parish Clerk, Gail. Whether it's been urgent meetings or evening meetings, just copies of this huge document or that, together with my endless calls on her 'Bekesbourne' days – a huge thank you and Paul and the kids for putting up with us. Thank you so much.

5. County and City Cllr reports:

i) Cllr Michael Northey - Kent County Council

Cllr Northey's report was as follows:

Littlebourne is a very busy place. It has a church, a school, a pub, a village hall, a shop, a post office, a surgery, great recreation green, good bus connections, a strong parish council, lots of societies and clubs. It has also a special spirit of its own. As I mentioned last year, I still can't forget judging the village dog competition in 2013, with its very happy spirit – there were so many beautiful dogs in one place, all lovingly cared for and a credit to the canine breed and their owners.

So here we are at the annual meeting again. It is an honour to be your County representative. Your parish council is very active, under Mike's vigorous leadership, supported so well by Gail. Many thanks to you all.

With regard to the Wickhambreaux School proposal and the lack of consultation felt here in Littlebourne, I have been speaking with Roger Gough the KCC member for education about making changes to the current process which does not allow for consultation with neighbouring parishes. Hopefully this will be changed for future applications.

Last year, as you know, I finally managed to get the 7.5 tonne weight restriction placed on the relevant section of Nargate Street. The money for this came from my Member's Grant.

This year I was able to give Littlebourne £300 from my Member's Grant, towards the Queen's Birthday celebrations. As you know I have ten parishes, and around six other residents associations. Very many of them had similar parties. So this year we had to spread the money around more widely and thinly. I always aim to use the money wisely for valuable local projects and over the years be fair to everyone.

I am much involved in the meetings of the A257 Traffic Group, which Mike and Mick go to. We are constantly aiming to make the A257 as safe as possible. I am looking carefully into funding from my Member's Grant a possible change in the speed limit sign at the Canterbury end of the village, to examine if we move it further away from the village. This would give motorists more time to notice and act on getting their speed down before reaching the village. I have received conflicting advice of where the signs should be positioned. I plan to go further into this after May – if re-elected of course!

Three years ago, I had £45,000 annually in various grants available for local schemes, highways and community. For 2015/16, it went down to £25,000 and for 2016/2017, it was only £20,000. The good news is that it will go up to £22,000 for the coming year, 2017/18.

This is in spite of the of the fierce restrictions in the money available to Kent County Council. The revenue

budget for 2017/18 was for £907 million and savings of around £76 million were required. There are constant rising demands, rising costs, and cuts in government grants. Over the last six years KCC has had to make savings of £514 million, and there have been cuts of £221 million of government grants. From 2016/17 to 2019/20, the government will only offer KCC 'flat cash', i.e. the same money each year, but not taking rising costs, demands and demography into account.

None the less KCC still does a huge amount. There are over 300 services available. I recommend the KCC website to see the wealth of activities, including education, roads, lighting, libraries, rubbish recycling, social services, consumer protection, looking after vulnerable children, fostering and adoption services and many more.

One particularly good initiative is the change-over to LED lighting for all the street lights of Kent. This will save on energy costs, carbon emissions, light pollution. As we speak the lights are being done in Canterbury District. It will save just over £5 million a year. Set up costs are around £40 million, so after eight years the cost benefits will be with us for years to come.

In all, KCC is in good heart, working hard to serving all of Kent. Many thanks to them; and to yourselves for all the good work you do. Michael Northey

ii) Cllr Stuart Walker – Canterbury City Council (read by Clerk)

The Clerk read the following;

Thank you for all of your support over the past year and please accept my apologies for not being with you this evening but whilst you are listening to this I will be at The Guildhall discussing the proposed 4 council merger.

It has been another year full of hard work and achievements some of which are listed below. If you would like any more detail on any of them please get in touch.

In our ward it has been another year of helping with planning applications, dealing with waste issues including fly tipping and other local issues. All of which I have been able to draw on some fantastic support from Mike and the rest of the Parish Council. I thank you for that.

Across the District there's also been a lot to do;

- Passed another balanced budget. It gets harder every year but this year we will be able to continue to deliver the services that you expect even with the cut to funding from central government.
- The Local Plan. We seem to be finally at the end of a very long road and should soon be able to adopt a complex Local Plan having included most of the comments from our highly engaged residents
- Enforcement. It's taken longer than we would have liked but now all the pieces of our enforcement strategy are coming together. The local residents have asked for a more hard-nosed approach and that is what we will deliver this year. We are already getting recognition for the hard work that's going on with fly-tipping.
- Litter. The joint working between the Council and residents on litter-picks is a massive success story and one we should all be very proud of.

- Parking. We had a very successful trial of the ANPR system and the procurement for a whole-district system is now underway. The preparations for the Station Road West multi-storey are going well, including the temporary car park.

- IT. Somewhat under the radar, the whole council staff are about to switch over to Google email and applications. Not only does this save a large amount of money, it allows more flexible working.

- Culture. A major shift in how we deliver cultural services in the district. Firstly deciding to work on putting the Marlowe into a trust. Secondly the concept of repurposing the Heritage Museum as the Marlowe Lab and a cultural centre for community arts. Both will be key drivers of the cultural economy. This isn't just simply selling tickets, but should be a real source of job creation in the next few years.

- Whitefriars. The largest property purchase that we've ever made went through at a pace that a commercial organisation would have been proud of, with full scrutiny.

- Higher education review. A huge piece of work. It could have been a source of division between the various parts of our community, but instead it was a thorough and balanced report which got real buy-in from everyone.

- Devolution and governance. Reviewing all the ins and outs of the potential East Kent merger has taken a huge amount of time as such a serious decision warrants.

And this isn't the half of it. Whether it's been work done in the planning and licensing committees; looking after the day to day business through the service committees; or dealing with all our residents' queries and problems.

The coming year brings its own challenges - and opportunities as well. In particular we should start to finish some of the projects that we've started;

- **Regeneration.** The work in Herne Bay and at Kingsmead Field should get underway.

- **Enforcement.** Delivering on what we know our residents want - through every channel at our disposal.

- **Parking.** We should be able to roll out ANPR across the district when the procurement is finished.

- **Property strategy.** We need to start making even better use of our property portfolio as well as the new property company - both to further our regeneration plans and increase revenue.

- **Budget.** It doesn't get any easier and we need to start laying the groundwork for dealing with any potential coming cuts in our government funding.

Finally - the future of our district. It's a serious decision. Whichever way our decisions go as well as those of our partners, this will have a significant effect on the services that residents receive. No-one will ever be able to say we've taken this responsibility lightly.

The future for local government is as uncertain as I've ever known - but I know we'll rise to all the challenges that will come in the next year; and your support will be what keeps us delivering for our residents.

6. Reports from local organisations:

Sloyden and Durrant Charities – Cllr Mick Giles

A report by Cllr M Giles at the Annual Parish Meeting held in the War Memorial Hall on 22nd March 2017 to which all residents were invited.

The Sloyden & Durrant Charity exists to help residents in need or hardship however last year no payments were made.

We are of course reliant on cases of hardship and need being brought to our attention and can assure that any help given is strictly confidential.

I became a Trustee of the Charity in 1988 since when payments of **£1965** have been made.

Cllr Ken Shaw has also served continuously as a Trustee since 2002.

The financial balance as at the 28th Feb 2017 was **£1386.93**

The account book is available tonight to anyone wishing to see it, or at any other reasonable by written application to the Parish Council Clerk.

As there may be some residents who are unaware of how the Charity came into existence I would like to say a few words regarding its history.

John Durrant in his will of 9-JAN 1560 left a bequest of the ground rent on the Malthouse Cottages (now the Maltings) to be distributed to the poor of Littlebourne

The ground rent was sold out to Bridge Blean Rural District Council in 1969

for £20 and the money invested, Charity no 206253.

Harry Sloyden in his will dated 5-JAN 1568 left 7 acres of land which was let and the money used for the poor of Littlebourne and Wickhambreaux.

This continued until about 1965 when the land was sold to J Mount & Sons for £450.

This was split into two accounts, one for Littlebourne and one for Wickhambreaux.

Littlebourne's share of £225 invested, Charity no 206645.

This combined sum of £245 purchased 255 shares which are held in the Charities Investment Fund and on Dec 31st 2016 were worth £3446.55

The income from these shares in 2016 was £115.28.

In 1995 to cut down on excess form filling and Charity returns we managed to merge the two Charities into one and is now known as the Combined Charities of Sloyden & Durrant Charity no 206645

Media & Communications – Cllr Melanie Moore

My name is Melanie Moore and I am responsible for Media and Communications for the Council – one of my many hats.

I wanted to report the focus this year and in the coming year for the parish council when it comes to media.

We have continued our on-line presence and developing our website further to make it easier to use and the place to go for local news and useful information. We are increasing our impact on twitter but in fairness we have been using facebook much more. Our facebook page has now nearly 300 followers and posts are

reaching in excess of 200 people each time. For those that are not Facebook savvy, imagine a pile of leaflets sitting in the side in the local shop – our posts are the leaflets and around 200 people are picking up the leaflets each time we put them out.

We would encourage you to send us local information via the Facebook page so we can post it out there for the village to see – the instant nature of this means that road accidents, lost cats and other lost property incidents can be brought to people's attention almost immediately.

We appreciate that not all of the village gain their news via the internet and so we continue to put news and events in the Kent Messenger and we will continue to publish the LPC News in the Church & Village to communicate.

So what do we have planned?

Recently we have commissioned the local designers Hayward Print to create a logo for the Parish Council and we would like to thank Geordie Hayward with his help with this project. Hopefully you will see the logo appear on projects the parish council are involved in – such as the bus shelters.

We also plan to send out a village survey to all residents to gain an insight into residents' needs and how best to communicate to you. As a parish council, we have the obligation and duty to provide you a service and a council that is fit for purpose and an asset and value to all villagers and we can't do this without firstly finding out what you need and communicating what we can deliver – hopefully meeting somewhere in the middle.

The aims of the Media and communication team will always be to answer your queries (the best we can) as swiftly and effectively as we can, spread news and ensure the all residents know what is going on and know where to go if they need support or assistance or just to know how to book the hall!

Littlebourne War Memorial Hall – Committee Chairman Cllr Cate Reid

Last year, I reported that we had quite a lot of work carried out in the building, which included work on the roof. Well, sadly even more work was needed this year, so more expense, mainly on the roof! However, we were incredibly fortunate to get a charitable grant for a new boiler in the main hall and also to add the small meeting room to the Lounge system – all very much needed, the boiler being over 25 years old. The grant was kindly provided by Quinn Estates and we are very grateful to Mark Quinn for arranging this generous funding. We are looking forward to more reasonable gas bills as a result.

We were also fortunate to receive a Grant towards redecorating from the Four Villages, Post Office and Shop Association, for which we thank them.

A deep clean has been carried out on all the anti-slip surfaces, bringing them back to a much better finish – a worthwhile job, we feel.

Bookings remain fairly good, fortunately, although I would remind you to consider booking family parties in the Hall. Also, do consider attending the classes that are held here:- Keep Fit, Zumba, Pilates, Bridge, Singing and of course all the children's groups. Make the most of this wonderful village asset.

You will have heard us say before that Grants from Canterbury City Council are reducing, and this will only get worse, so we have to do the best that we can. Villagers benefit from paying a reduced rental, while non-

villagers pay a slightly higher charge, which we feel is right. We have not increased the charges since 2012, so we have now agreed to increase them slightly, apart from the children's groups, like the Guides and Scouts etc.

I want to remind everyone that there is CCTV in operation around the Shop and Hall complex, but please contact me if you see anything untoward being carried out. As soon as possible and giving the time accurately – I can then pass it on to one of those that check the CCTV !

Turner's Orchard comes under the auspices of the Hall Trust, and we are fortunate to have a wonderful lot of volunteers who work in there. Anne and Geoff Rigden are wonderful joint Chairs of the Orchard Committee, which organises events in the Orchard for both children and adults, plus doing a lot of maintenance, with help from their team and I thank them all very much. Anyone who would like to volunteer to give a little time to be involved with the Orchard would, I'm sure, always be most welcome, so please ask Anne or Geoff.

We have been lucky enough to have 8 people volunteer to spring clean the Main Hall, including the cupboards under the stage. It's so lovely when people actually offer to help with a project ! Many thanks to all who came along and if anyone else would like to volunteer for another session, please contact Sylvia Wilson.

I would like to thank Edna May, who has been a Trustee for some time, always willing to help and always supportive. She is resigning, so that she can have more time with her husband, and also not need to go out to our evening meetings – very understandable. I believe that we have someone new willing to become a Trustee, but watch this space. Our AGM is on Wednesday 3rd May, in the Lounge at 7pm and all are welcome.

Another big thank you is to Mike Gallagher for all his work as Treasurer. He is passing over the reins to Sylvia Wilson from the 1st April, and I must record my very grateful thanks to her for taking this job on.

Lastly, I would like to thank each Hall Trustee for all their support this year – I do appreciate it!

Littlebourne Community Fund – Cllr Mick Giles

A report by Cllr M Giles at the Annual Parish Meeting held in the War Memorial Hall on the 22nd March 2017 to which all residents were invited.

Purpose:

To facilitate the distribution of the rent received from the Parish Council funded extension to the 4 Villages Store, by providing finance for community events and projects in the Parish of Littlebourne through the village organizations and / or others and where funding from any other source is not available or is incomplete.

Consideration to make up any shortfall in the Parish Council budget would only be given in **extreme and exceptional** circumstances.

Since the fund was set up in March 2013 we have been able to fund projects and events by grants totaling £10144.81, during last year we supported the Queens 90th birthday celebrations £574, the disabled roundabout £3125.25 and the cricket club £1250 for repair and maintenance of equipment. The current financial balance is £4684.19 and after April 5th we will receive the 2017/18 rent from the 4VPO

which subject to a proportion of expenses should be approximately £3500.

May I remind all village organizations and others wishing to organize events or projects they feel would benefit the community and where funding is not available to make their applications to the chairman Cllr Mick Giles Tel 728228

Or email mickandwendy1@btinternet.com where we will give all applications careful consideration.

Full details including written estimates and quotations are required as is the production of final invoices and detailed expenditure on completion of the event or project.

Turners Orchard – Geoff Rigden

Geoff and Anne are joint Chairs for the Committee; they both bring their areas of expertise to the role. More volunteers have come along this year and the harvest of fruit has been a good one. They have been able to donate fruit to Littlebourne House, Littlebourne School, St Vincent's Church for Harvest Festival and through a table top fruit sale donate £110 to The Pilgrims Hospice.

New apple and plum trees have been planted this year. There are further Bramley trees that are rotten and need removing and replacing.

They were fortunate to receive a grant from the 4VPO of £200 which was used to service the strimmer and buy some further tools.

Wassailing in January was a successful event, Deal Hoodeners performed and there was a bonfire and flares. The weather was kind!

On 21st February the Orchard was closed for the day, and gates locked up. It is not a right of way through the orchard so it needs to be closed one day per year.

On 15th July 2017 there will be a BBQ and music, with an open mic session. All welcome.

Thanks to all the volunteers who turn up and work in the Orchard. The next two sessions of work will take place on 21st April and 5th May – more volunteers wanted please!

Village Traffic & Safety sub-committee – Cllr Cate Reid

Last year saw the remaining signs for the HGV Ban in Nargate Street put in place by KCC Highways, finally. We always ask villagers to take details or a photo if they see any HGVs over 7 and half tons in any part of Nargate Street, as we can report these to the Police.

We have noted an apparent increase in Thanet Waste vehicles going through the village, so have written to them again to remind them that they had previously said that they do not regularly go through Littlebourne !

We have been discussing with KCC Highways the possibility of moving some of the Village Gateways further out of the village, particularly on The Hill as you come from Canterbury and also in Bekesbourne Lane, before the bend. We have also discussed further about 'buffer zones' to cause vehicles to slow before they arrive at the 30mph. Simple you might think, but no, there are various rules and regs that have to be adhered to, making things either impossible, or expensive or very slow and delayed in implementation. It's like walking in treacle, but we will not give up! We have involved Cllr Michael Northey, our County Cllr, who

is supportive of this and who has kindly promised to help with the cost, from his Councillor Fund (assuming he is re-elected in May).

We had a problem at the end of January with the late night removal by KCC appointed contractors of white lines in the centre of the Village. We registered a protest with our contact, the Canterbury District Highways Manager, but he said that he knew nothing about it. It took some three weeks to gain a response from the KCC Highways Planning Unit, who said that a 'Route Survey' had been carried out and the A257 was not wide enough to have both the kerb extensions and a centre white line. We pointed out that the extensions were first installed in 2008 and the marking had been removed once since then, but then reinstated. We contacted the A257 Group and warned Wingham that they were about to receive the same treatment. They were able to stop any further action in their Village and as a Group we demanded to see the 'Route Survey' itself. To date we have only seen a note stating the recommendations for markings, but none of us have seen a copy of the 'Route Survey' itself and are therefore unaware of any other surprises that might emerge. Littlebourne, and the rest of the A257 Group, have demanded consultation before any further work is undertaken on our roads. This is, yet again, an example of failure to inform and consult the ultimate user, namely ourselves.

Now for things that we need help with, please. We need volunteers to participate in Speed Watch sessions, who are fit and able, and who have reasonable eye sight. Some of us (me !) are struggling to help with this !!! If anyone fits the bill and is willing to train, please make yourself known to me at the end of the meeting, or call on 721 831.

Now, I hate to say it, but there are still problems in some of our streets with inconsiderate parking. Inconsiderate is one thing, but also it may be that this is endangering lives, as a Fire Engine or an Ambulance cannot always get through to the end of a street with no other access. There is also inconvenience to the Serco Waste trucks if they can't get through, which in turn is inconvenient to all the residents. If you are one of these drivers, please decide right NOW to not park thoughtlessly in future. You surely would not forgive yourself if a life or lives were put at risk???

I'd like to thank our Highways and Safety Committee for their work and support this year. I'd also like to thank our Speed Watch folk for their time and commitment in getting out there in, often, cold weather. It can seem a rather thankless task but we really do see traffic travelling slower through Littlebourne for a while after a session of Speed Watch. Thank you for listening.

Resident farmer and land owner, Mr Twyman raised the issue of fly tipping at this point and mentioned the fact that Swanton Lane had to be closed on two occasions recently due to waste being tipped on the road itself. CCC have been very proactive with the use of cameras. The NFU have also asked Mr Twyman to help promote the issue and educate. ITV and Meridian have both been and filmed in the area. From April CCC are employing an Enforcement Officer who will not only investigate fly tipping but will clear it up (incl that on private land).

Littlebourne Primary School – Head Teacher Stella Byrne (read by Cllr Sylvia Wilson)

It has been a further successful year for the school.

In May 2016, our year 6 cohort completed their SATs assessments which are set by the government in order to measure the progress pupils have made in their time in primary school, as well as their final attainment.

Nationally bench-marked data for Littlebourne showed that our children were in the top 6% of schools nationally for their progress in reading and top 9% for their progress in writing. The school is very proud of these results which indicate the ongoing commitment of both the children and the teaching staff to improving the quality of learning provided at Littlebourne.

In June, our Year 5 and 6 children took part in a three day residential visit at an outdoor activity centre near Sevenoaks. The highlights for the children were building and racing their own rafts and lighting campfires in the evening. The whole school visited Stodmarsh Nature reserve to take part in a 'Forest School' day with the older children canoeing in the river (this day was subsidised by a grant from the Four Villages fund), and we spent a beautiful day walking across the fields and along the river to Wickhambreaux for a picnic lunch together.

To end the term, the children enthusiastically performed a 'Pirates versus Mermaids' musical to their parents. The quality of singing was particularly commented on by those attending; a development which has been supported by joint singing activities with the village choir – an on-going venture which is much enjoyed by both the children and the adults. Our choir also performed at the 'Village Extravaganza' in February, receiving very positive feedback from the audience.

In September, we welcomed 15 children into our Reception Class as well as children new to the area into other year groups. Currently, the school roll stands at 80 children. From October to December, our School Council members actively led the school in charity fundraising events from Macmillan coffee mornings, to Children in Need and selling poppies. In total the children raised over £500. Lots of secret practicing is currently underway for the performers at our Talent Show for Red Nose Day on Friday.

In January, the school was visited by a SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) inspector. The focus for the visit was the ethos of the school, the Collective Worship experiences offered to the children as well as the teaching of Religious Education. As many of our visitors do, the inspector commented on the warm, welcoming and inclusive atmosphere in the school and the high standards of behaviour exhibited by the children. She also commented on the supportive relationship that has developed between the school and the church community. The SIAMS report stated that the school had reached a good level of provision in all areas inspected.

The PTA remains active and has organised a Christmas Bazaar, several cake and uniform sales and a recent Quiz Night. An Easter Egg Hunt is being held in the school grounds on Saturday, 1st April. Planning for the Summer Fair is already underway – this will be held on Saturday, 17th June and will incorporate a 'Great Get Together Event' in memory of MP Jo Cox.

We have really appreciated welcoming members of the community to our school events. We have particularly strengthened our links with the residents of Littlebourne House who have attended our church services as well as our fund-raising occasions. Children have also joined in with Occupational Therapy sessions with the residents as well as singing to them at both Harvest and Christmas.

Current developments at the school involve a remodelling of the front entrance to provide a lobby area for visitors to wait in, a newly decorated and re-stocked library which will provide a further learning area and the

setting up of small gardens for the children to experience growing vegetables. We have also arranged to visit Wimille again in October 2017.

Our longer term aims are; to steadily increase the number of pupils closer to our full capacity of 105, to continue to improve the quality and diversity of the educational experiences offered to all pupils and to build further mutually beneficial links with the community.

Littlebourne Horticultural Society- Alan Jones (read by Cllr Brian Hurlow)

We have over 80 families currently renting allotments which are located between The List and Court Hill. They are owned by the Parish and managed by the Littlebourne Horticultural Society. The LPC and LHS value the current allotments in the community and aim to provide a thriving, low cost, secure allotment facility for members and their families within the Parish and the Four Villages Community.

The committee includes the following volunteers:

- Ashley Mount; John Pollard; Diane Hoare; Colin Higenbottam; John Dartnell; Carol Hitchcock; Terry Bates; Liz Bates; Alan Jones

I wish to record my heartfelt thanks to the committee for their continued hard work throughout the last twelve months. What this committee has achieved is outstanding.

The LHS has been in operation for nearly 15 years and in this time has:

- Developed an organisational framework, structure and established a routine
- Established a network of volunteers and paid for other work to be done
- Cleared and cultivated overgrown plots
- Diversified plots (sizes, support offered, etc)
- Conducted day-to-day maintenance
- Recovered returned plots, ready for new tenants
- Increased the overall number of plots rented from 62 in 2014 to over 80 in 2017

So what has been happening?

Produce Stall – FANTASTIC !, a special thanks to Terry and Liz and everyone else who pitched in either as helpers or suppliers of veg etc. This is an important source of income for us.

Land Clearance – As a result of a grant from the LPC a very large area of brambles has been cleared to allow for the further provision of plots in the future.

Workshops – The LHS continued to provide these for new tenants

Society Building – As a result of the kind sponsorship of Quinn Estates a new Society Building will be erected on the site soon for use by all tenants.

Our plans for this year include:

- To continue to provide new good quality allotments for use by the community
- Social events, seed scheme, produce stall and other fund raisers
- To develop a plot as a training and educational facility
- To expand the use of the Society building as a resource centre and seed shop etc.

Cllr Hurlow added that LPC are very grateful that LHS run the allotments on our behalf and that they are doing a terrific job.

7. Questions from residents

A resident asked when the Court Hill Surgery would be finished, the Chairman responded to say it is targeted to be complete and handed over next summer.

A resident asked about numbers at Littlebourne School and how many more children could be taken. Cllr Wilson responded to say that 105 is the maximum (15 children per year x 7 years), the role currently stands at 80 so there is presently space for 25 more children. The Chairman at this point reported that the Wickhambreaux School expansion proposal had now been withdrawn by KCC as it would not be sustainable. In a letter from Marissa White, Area Education Officer to the planning department she states 'Littlebourne CE Primary School will have sufficient capacity to deal with any initial pressure arising from the housing development for the village, whilst any pupil pressure arising later will have to be dealt with those families applying to other local schools that may have capacity available in specific year groups until such times as the proposed new school in the Mountfield Park development is opened.'

Cllr Northey was asked about the £200,000 that was going to Wickhambreaux School in developer contributions, where would it now go? Cllr Northey explains it stays with the developer, it might be possible to look again in the future if Littlebourne or Wickhambreaux want/need the funding, if not it will stay with the developer. Cllr Northey explained that when the decision was made to give the money to Wickhambreaux it was an 'outstanding' school and Littlebourne was 'requiring improvement' according to Ofsted. It is not KCC's policy to expand schools that are needing improvement, so Wickhambreaux was the only Primary school they could give the money to.

Another resident raised the future of the Anchor Public House, as it has now been closed for months. LPC are still being told it is closed for refurbishment, although we are sceptical of this.

A relief road to cut from the A257 to the top of Court Hill, to take the HGV strain off Jubilee Road was asked for by a resident. The Chairman explained it had taken years to get the HGV ban on Nargate Street, the likelihood of a new road was minimal. The roads are getting more use than ever before and KCC are struggling to maintain the roads we have never mind putting in new ones. LPC are looking into 20mph zones for central village roads to try and reduce speed on some of these routes.

The great show of daffodils and cherry blossom trees were commented on but it was said the Christmas lights were poor, could we do better this year please. Sponsorship was mentioned.

It was asked why KCC make it so difficult to dispose of waste, if people could access the tip, less would be fly tipped. Cllr Northey said that the trade waste being taken into the tips was costing KCC too much so the restrictions were implemented. Clerk to send details to Cllr Northey asking for this policy to be reviewed. Viv Spratt, NHW Co-ordinator mentioned the Country Eye App which can be used to photograph dumped waste and upload straight onto the app.

It was asked for the No cycling sign to be replaced at the footpath crossroads behind Ellen Court. LPC have repeatedly asked KCC to replace this sign without success to date.

Parking in St Vincents was mentioned and pavement parking suggested as a way to alleviate some of the problems. It was pointed out this is illegal and would bring about other problems such as those using pushchairs being forced to walk in the roadway. LPC have put forward suggestions to EKH for parking, these are to be considered by CCC as estate improvements this year.

The Chairman then thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting at 9.45pm.

Signed..... (Chairman)

Date.....