

**LITTLEBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 OCTOBER 2013**

**Present:** Parish Cllr Vivienne Spratt (Chairman)  
Parish Cllr Betty Jeffries  
Parish Cllr Mick Giles  
Parish Cllr Pamela Evans  
Parish Cllr Cate Reid  
Parish Cllr Mike Gallagher  
Parish Cllr Geoffrey Barrett  
Parish Cllr Geof Welch  
County Cllr Michael Northey

Guest speaker Larissa Reed, Head of Neighbourhood Services at CCC  
Mrs Gail Hubbard, Clerk to the Council  
There were no members of the public

**98. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were given from Cllr Ken Shaw (holiday), City Cllr Brian Staley, Community Warden Gary Moore.

**99. DECLARATIONS OF CLLRS INTERESTS AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION**

There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensations.

**100. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18 SEPTEMBER 2013**

Cllr Welch proposed and Cllr Evans seconded to accept the Minutes as a true record of the meeting.

**101. GUEST SPEAKER LARISSA REED HEAD OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES CCC – TO DEMONSTRATE THE ONLINE HOUSING APPLICATION SYSTEM**

Larissa began by explaining that things had changed yet again since Monday, MP Mr Pickles had increased the length of time a resident had to have lived in the district from 6 months to two years, before they could apply for a council property in the Canterbury District. You must also have a 'proven housing need', if you are currently in affordable private rented accommodation (affordable represents 1/3 of your income incl bills), earn more than £26,000 pa, do not live in the district or live in a council house already but want a different one you will not go onto the list.

Larissa gave Cllrs a copy of the current application form to view and there was a short video, which had been made by Thanet Council, on applying online. The reason for pushing the online system is to make the process easier and cheaper and that all the required information is entered. At present however when an online application is made, it has to be printed out by CCC and re-entered manually into their system

[www.kenthomechoice.org.uk](http://www.kenthomechoice.org.uk) there is also a direct link from CCC's housing page. Once an application is made it will be processed within ten working days.

Larissa added that if you wish to make an online application but have no computer access, you can call CCC and they will send someone out with a computer to you to enable you to do so.

### ***Changes to banding***

Changes to the banding system, previously there were 5 bands (those in band 3,4 &5 had little chance of ever getting offered). The new scheme will have 4 bands, Band D, the bottom band will be very large and most homes will be offered to those in Band D. The other bands will be much smaller and for those who need to move around in housing stock due to under-occupying or overcrowded, and those who need adapted homes

At present the banding selection is done manually but this will be done automatically in future.

### ***Local Connection Criteria***

Larissa reported that the other main change is that the additional priority previously given to rural areas is now disappearing. This is to do with an 'it's not fair' terminology.

Cllr Giles brought up the matter of no mention of Court or List Meadows within the application form, not giving applicants the opportunity to select if they wished to be considered for this. Larissa said this could not happen as the same would have to be done for the others villages with such properties such as Bridge etc. The form is designed to cater for the majority then anyone mentioning Littlebourne in their application form is flagged up in the office and a local connection form is sent out to them. It was highlighted that even this was not very obvious on the form, where do you would mention your interest in certain village properties? Larissa stressed that although the form was never going to have List & Court Meadows mentioned on it, that something more specific, referring to village locations would be better. Larissa agreed to change the application form to include an additional section referring to local connection to village properties. Cllr Giles asked Larissa "As you didn't honour the agreement made before with regard to putting Court & List Meadows on the application form. How can I trust you this time?" Larissa confirmed that the change will be made but not to include the words Court & List Meadows. Larissa agreed to email the wording to the clerk once it is written; she also stated that she had not been part of the previous agreement with regard to the item Cllr Giles spoke of. Cllr Spratt conceded this to be correct.

CCC will continue to send out our local connection forms to applicants and email the forms over to us for approval before allocations are made. They prefer to do this just before allocation as circumstances may have changed in the period the applicants have been on the housing list. LPC will still continue to send them out when people first apply and to maintain a list of those approved for Court & List Meadows. Larissa made it clear that they will not let Court & List Meadows to people who are not approved by LPC.

Larissa mentioned that she would be happy to attend and speak at a public meeting, if we wished, to explain to our residents what has changed in the policy and how it affects them.

The door is not yet shut, negotiation is still in progress Cllr Spratt is meeting with Cllr Howes, Housing Manager Steve King and Larissa tomorrow morning.

### ***Mutual Exchanges***

The mutual exchange process was expected to be easier than allocation, but in practise it is not. The council are not obliged to carry out any repairs on an exchange property, like they do for an allocation; you take on the property in its current state.

Once an exchange is carried out, the tenant takes over the actual tenancy, with all the benefits of this, such as the right to buy. For example if tenant A with 5yrs tenancy exchanged properties with tenant B with a 25yr tenancy, tenant A would take over the 25yr tenancy with the right to buy immediately with the full discount of £75,000. CCC obviously would like to clamp down on this but they have no means of doing so, as at present it is set by Government, previously there were 13,000 council owned properties in the district but now only 5,500 remain.

Larissa said that there is currently no regulation with regard to mutual exchanges, which, can only be stopped for three reasons in law;

1. One of the properties is in a state of disrepair
2. One of the tenant is in rent arrears
3. One of the tenants is required to give up possession under a court order

Larissa mentioned she was a member of ARCH – Association for Retaining Council Housing.

### ***New bins system***

Larissa asked the Cllrs how they were finding the new bins system, the general consensus being that providing you had room for the bins they were proving successful, although the drop in for paper too small for most households. Larissa accepted they were having problems in sheltered accommodation getting the waste sorted correctly.

The mid Kent scheme, where paper, glass and plastic are all mixed in together, will have to be changed by 2015 as it does not meet the EU Directives. So they will then be operating a scheme like ours.

10,000 student properties in Canterbury are having weekly collections, as the students were struggling to put out the correct bins and waste was not being collected.

Larissa stated that the high cost involved in enquiries, makes the web enquiry the most viable option

County Cllr Northey gave some examples of enquiry costs at KCC;

£13.00 a letter enquiry

£4.00 a telephone enquiry

13p for a web enquiry

The Chairman thanked Larissa for coming out to speak with us this evening.

Larissa departed at 8.10pm

## **102. POLICING, SECURITY AND NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH & KCC COMMUNITY WARDEN**

A report had been received from Community Warden Gary Moore, as follows;

This last month has been very busy with an increase on parish home visits to vulnerable people, some referred to me by KCC social services, and other through Age UK.

There has also been an increase in youth anti-social behaviour reported to me which I have been endeavouring to deal with before it reaches the authorities. I think it has been reasonably successful with some good feedback from some parents. I have patrolled regularly through turners orchard and have spoken with dog owners about dog fouling which was well received. I have reported a number of uneven pavements and pot holes to KCC highways and await their work to be completed. Relationships are still building between myself and various parts of the parish but I feel I getting embedded well. School parking is still a problem and one which is difficult to be resolved without more official intervention.

With the winter months approaching I shall be stepping up more community work with any vulnerable folks that can be found or pointed my way to make sure they are catered for. It's been a good time for working with PCSO as well and have had a few joint patrols.

## **103. ADJOURNMENT OF THE MEETING**

There was none.

#### **104. COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT**

Cllr Northey had has a full and detailed discussion with Cabinet Member Jenny Whittle about the retention of children's services in the village.

Cllr Northey also reported that the bollard in Jubilee that had been damaged had unfortunately not been fitted with reflectors. KCC Ryan Shiel had been on site today to inspect the damage and the contractor will return to fit reflectors and replace the damaged one. Cllr Spratt thanked Cllr Northey and Ryan Shiel for their very prompt action today with this matter.

Cllr Northey departed at 8.35pm

#### **105. PLANNING**

The Planning applications and tree works are recorded on Appendix 2 attached to these minutes.

**CA//13/01722/FUL** - Littlebourne Court, Church Road, Littlebourne, CT3 1TU - Installation of a tennis court with associated fencing and landscaping

The plans had been circulated in the normal way and Councillors had viewed the response from the Barn. The LPC response would be compiled from these comments and submitted to CCC.

**CA/13/01750/FUL** - Vogt Solar Application for Swanton Lane, Littlebourne. The plans are to be checked through thoroughly but now include a flood risk assessment, visual impact assessment, much more detail than was given to us previously. CCC will make the final decision; they have the expertise, as LPC do not for some of these reports. Cllrs comments will be compiled to make the overall response back to CCC by 11<sup>th</sup> November.

#### **106. FINANCE**

- (a) RECEIVED the bank statement for September 2013, and RESOLVED the signature of the Chairman thereon;
- (b) NOTED that the clerk has taken out the months free trial offer on 1x1 my website through 1x1 that we have our email domain with. This will then become £9.99 + VAT per month thereafter.
- (c) NOTED that 5 applications have been received from village organisations for 2014-15;
  - Littlebourne Cricket Club have asked for £844.00
  - Littlebourne Horticultural Society have asked for £1200.00
  - Littlebourne Afternoon Club have asked for £450.00
  - St Vincent's Church have asked for £1000.00
  - Ladybirds Pre- school have asked for £1500.00
- (d) NOTED the clerk has prepared a VAT reclaim for the 2<sup>nd</sup> QTR July – Sept 2013 totalling £180.82.
- (e) NOTED that BT will be taking a quarterly bill amount of £182.25 by DD on 17<sup>th</sup> October. Also the Clerk has requested paper free billing from now on as they are introducing a £2 fee for summary paper bills and £6 fee for itemised ones from November.
- (f) NOTED the renewal notice from 1x1 for the domain name has been received. The contract expires on 4<sup>th</sup> November but will be automatically renewed. The clerk did ask if the contracts (for website & email) could be combined but this cannot be done without cancelling the email (losing everything) and then setting it up from scratch again.

#### **AUTHORISATION OF ACCOUNTS**

Receipts totalling £712.14 were NOTED. The expenditure list previously circulated to Cllrs as Appendix 3 totalling £9965.30, together with a supplementary sheet Appendix 3a of expenditure presented to the meeting totalling £2681.05. These were proposed by Cllr Gallagher and seconded by Cllr Welch it was RESOLVED that the financial matters and accounts, as set out be authorised for payment.

The end of quarter 2 expenditure against budget headings was RECEIVED. A date of Friday 25<sup>th</sup> October was AGREED for the finance subcommittee meeting and any items for consideration to be given to the clerk by Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

The external auditors report for the year ending 2012-13, that had been previously circulated to Cllrs was RECEIVED. The report stated that on the basis of their review, the information in the annual return is in accordance with proper practises and no matters have come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. There was one matter which they drew to our attention, that didn't affect their opinion. They want to see the reconciled cashbook balance in box 8 rather than the pure cash balance shown in next year's figures. The Chairman and Councillors congratulated the clerk on the reports received.

## **107. CLERK REPORT CORRESPONDENCE**

- A. KCC has launched the Kent Freight Gateway [www.freightgateway.co.uk/kent](http://www.freightgateway.co.uk/kent), which is intended to help HGV drivers and transport manager's plan their routes when travelling within Kent. It also provides a mechanism for providing feedback on HGVs that are in violation of local road regulations (see the Lorry Watch section on the Kent Freight Gateway website). You have to enter you origin and destination, then your vehicle dimensions, you are then shown a detailed map with turn by turn directions, with the option to print.
- B. PARISH COUNCIL STREET LIGHTING - Kent County Council will be carrying out structural and electrical testing on all adopted streetlights in the District over the next 2 months. This is part of a county-wide project to comply with the recommended safety inspections. The City Council has agreed that the lighting stock that was transferred over from the Parish Council's in 2005 should be included in this inspection process. Where these specialist structural checks have been undertaken elsewhere, a significant percentage of columns have been found to be unsafe, mainly due to steel corrosion issues. If any columns in our parish areas are found to be unsafe then they will have to be immediately cut down for safety reasons. Once they are aware of the scale of the failure rate across the District they will be in contact with us to discuss the matter further.
- C. The PC were invited by The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) to a meeting on Monday 21 October at 7pm in the Guildhall, Westgate, Canterbury, CT1 2DB.

The LGBCE have concluded the first stage of the Electoral Review of Canterbury City Council and announced that, following the next election in May 2015, there should be 38 councillors elected to represent the council. The next stage of the review will be to create a new pattern of Wards that reflects the council size from 2015. At the meeting, the LGBCE will explain how parish councils and other interested groups can be involved in creating a new pattern of Wards; the kinds of evidence they can and cannot consider when making decisions; specific rules relating to parishes and also answer any questions. Cllr Barrett and Cllr Reid to attend.

Cllr Gallagher attended a meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> October with The Governance Working Group, which is made up of members from various residents groups in the city plus others. The group is concerned about democracy in Canterbury, about the reduction in the number of councillors and about the dominance of the Executive Committee system. Cllr Gallagher attended in an observing capacity and there was discussion about the KCC Hybrid model and the fact that it is possible to challenge governance. At present prime decisions are made by the Executive (10 cllrs) but this will be reduced to 9 under the proposals. There will be a further meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> February to decide how to move forward.

- D. The Department for Communities and Local Government have released a new guide for councillors on openness and transparency on personal it replaces the earlier one from March. It now makes specific reference to the setting of precepts.

**Do I need a dispensation to take part in the business of setting council tax or a precept?** Any payment of, or liability to pay, council tax does not create a disclosable pecuniary interest as defined in the national rules; hence being a council tax payer does not mean that you need a dispensation to take part in the business of setting the council tax or precept or local arrangements for council tax support.

If you are a homeowner or tenant in the area of your council you will have registered, in accordance with the national rules, that beneficial interest in land. However, this disclosable pecuniary interest is not a disclosable pecuniary interest in the matter of setting the council tax or precept since decisions on the council tax or precept do not materially affect your interest in the land. For example, it does not materially affect the value of your home, your prospects of selling that home, or how you might use or enjoy that land.

Accordingly, you will not need a dispensation to take part in the business of setting the council tax or precept or local arrangements for council tax support, which is in any event a decision affecting the generality of the public in the area of your council, rather than you as an individual.

- E. A notification was received with regard to the Publication and supply of the revised register of electors. The revised register is normally published on the 1 December every year. This year the Government has delayed the publication of the register due to the start of Individual Electoral Registration (IER) in 2014. CCC have just started the annual canvass and the revised register will be published on 17 February 2014. Copies of the revised register will therefore not be available until after this date.
- F. Cllr Spratt had noticed that the three Rydon owned properties on the Hill were up for sale.

#### **CLERK REPORT PLAY AREA RESURFACING**

This project has now been completed and the clerk has given the new figures to our insurers to make sure the new surface is fully covered.

#### **PARKING REVIEW**

The Clerk forwarded the PC's request for a disabled parking bay outside the Surgery in Nargate Street. Richard Jenkins advised that he has added the request to the Parking Regulation Review 2013 that will be considered next year.

#### **SEWER FAT BUSTING FUNNELS**

Are going well, we have already distributed over 200 funnels in Littlebourne. The school, nursery and children's centre have all given some out for us. There is another box full in the parish office, so any other ideas of groups to give them to please let me know.

#### **PAT TESTING**

The office electrical equipment had its annual PAT test carried out by J Long Electrical Services, all items passed and are safe to use.

#### **KALC**

The clerk contacted KALC with two items to flag up for their AGM in in November. The first being a confidential item and the second the updating of expenses wording for Cllrs to include broadband (as just telephone is now out of date/phone and broadband packages tend to be combined into together). We do not operate on the allowances system our Cllrs want to

remain claiming just expenses back. KALC responded urging us to again consider the Parish Basic Allowance, as it can be paid with no strings attached so would cover this context. The Cllrs were happy to continue with claiming expenses in the current way, it is very difficult to split out what is private and what is PC work as phone and internet bills are combined in most cases.

#### **108. PARISH MEETING DATES FOR 2014**

The dates for next year's meeting were AGREED. The meeting night will change to a Wednesday from January 2014.

#### **109. ALLOTMENTS**

Cllr Spratt mentioned that the allotments had agreed to be open on the 14<sup>th</sup> June 2014 for the open gardens (dated change from 21<sup>st</sup>).

#### **110. KALC**

Cllr Gallagher had attended the KALC meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> October where there had been a report back on the fire hydrants. The rural hydrants are now to be checked every year (as there are so few) by Kent Fire Service and the urban ones every five years. Kent Fire Service are also looking into buying some new smaller tenders as the current ones cannot fit down some country lanes.

KALC urged parishes to comment on the Electoral warding exercise.

#### **111. THE BARN & NATURE RESERVES**

Cllr Jeffries reported that the Christmas market at The Barn would take place on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December.

#### **112. THE OLDER PEOPLE**

Cllr Welch mentioned that there were a few scams operating (door to door and telephone) in the area so people are asked to remain vigilant.

#### **113. TWINNING WITH WIMILLE**

Cllr Spratt reported that the Christmas tea was now booked for Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> December 3.30-5pm. There is a coach of 60 attending from Wimille plus local guests that will be invited. It has also been advertised that residents can apply for a free ticket (limited numbers available).

#### **114. WEBSITE**

The clerk is making progress on the new website, with various data already uploaded. This will run alongside the original website until everything is transferred over. Cllrs to forward any information they would like loaded on to the clerk. Cllr Evans said to not copy over any of the nature reserve information and we will start from scratch with new. Web address to be made available once the site is ready to go live. It was mentioned that any links to commercial ventures would need to be charged and we would be seeking to sell space to cover costs involved. The clerk received thanks from all councillors for the efforts in getting this new venture together as it will be a great improvement on our present scheme which is difficult to manage therefore time consuming.

#### **115. ENVIRONMENT**

Cllr Jeffries reported that volunteers had been working in Cherry Orchard on Saturday and Sunday mornings, the last one would be the weekend of 27<sup>th</sup> October. Anyone interested in volunteering should contact Cllr Jeffries.

Cllr Welch reported that the contractor had been back out to deal with the drainage issue where the gully water was running away from the drain. But had yet to solve the problem of Cllr Welch's garden becoming flooded.

The clerk had written two letters to residents regarding overgrown hedges from last month's meeting, but both are still yet to be trimmed. The clerk was asked to write a letter to another resident from this meeting.

**116. FRACKING**

Cllr Spratt began by giving some background to Fracking in our area, licences have been applied for in Sheperdswell and a licence was granted for Woodnesborough in 2011 to sink a test bore hole, this work is yet to start. It was agreed that if an application for a licence was made for Littlebourne or the environs LPC would hold public meetings, to enable us to make informed decisions and represent the residents.

**117. THE RECREATION GROUND**

It was mentioned that a good job had been made of the new safety surfacing under the play equipment.

**118. HIGHWAYS**

Cllr Giles and Cllr Reid had attended the road safety/ Speed watch & events planning seminar at Eastwell Manor on 16<sup>th</sup> October. There were guest speakers attending from the KCC Road Safety Team, as well as the Central Traffic Speed Watch Co-ordinator for Kent Police. A lot of this was information they already had but the events planning section was interesting.

Cllr Gallagher reported he had been in contact with Guy Rollinson over the Wednesday evening motorbikes, that race along the A257, the eventual response being that the Police could not be everywhere. Now the evenings are darker it was hoped this would cease until the spring.

Cllr Reid mentioned that PC speedy would be out in the village tomorrow morning.

**119. WAR MEMORIAL HALL TRUST**

There had been a few complaints about the parking notices in the hall car park. Some residents were concerned they may get a ticket. It was explained that the main parking problem is with those vehicles left either overnight, over the weekend or all day whilst the owner catches the bus to town. This takes valuable spaces from those who pay to hire the hall with a car park. Occasional use is fine, as is those using the hall/club of an evening, having a drink and leaving their vehicle to collect in the morning.

**120. AOB FOR DISCUSSION ONLY**

Cllr Gallagher mentioned that he had attended the consultation meeting on the Cathedral on 15<sup>th</sup> October. They wanted representatives from community groups to a community event and wanted to ask people's views, as representatives of a local community group, about how they can engage with a wider audience and explore people's opinions about the cathedral and the role it plays in the life of the District. They had previously applied for a Lottery Grant and it had not been awarded as they needed to do something for local communities and businesses.

The meeting closed at 10.25pm.

*Dates of future meetings: 14 November, and 12 December 2013*

Signed..... (Chairman)

Date.....

**New Applications**

|                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CA/13/01722/FUL | <p>Littlebourne Court, Church Road, Littlebourne, CT3 1TU</p> <p>Installation of a tennis court with associated fencing and landscaping</p>                                                                                                                                                                            | <p>Response by 21 Oct<br/>Out of character as would form a very dominant feature of modern appearance. Inappropriate so close and with shared access to the 13<sup>th</sup> Century barn.</p> <p>Should this be in an out of view position it would be considered.</p> |
| CA/13/01786/FUL | <p>29 Jubilee Road, Littlebourne CT3 1TR</p> <p>Two –storey rear extension to detached dwelling and new entrance porch.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                            | <p>Response by 4 Nov<br/>No Objections. The footprint of the proposed property is very little larger than the existing, it is a good sized plot. The obscured glass to the RH elevation maintains privacy for the neighbour. Porch adds to the street scene.</p>       |
| CA/13/01750/FUL | <p>Land to east of Swanton Lane, Littlebourne</p> <p>Installation of ground based photovoltaic farm (total area 22.14 hectares), estimated output 14.96 megawatts, and associated infrastructure including 11 inverter/transformer equipment cabinets, 2 onsite substations, grid connection and associated works.</p> | <p>Response by 11 Nov</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

**Notifications**

|                 |                                                                                                                                                                                           |                         |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| CA/13/01432/FUL | <p>Mews Lodge, 19A High Street, Littlebourne, CT3 1SX</p> <p>Conversion of garage to facilitate study area and utility room with provision of new parking space to front of property.</p> | <p>GRANTED 20/09/13</p> |
| CA/13/01421/FUL | <p>Land adjacent to 56 Bekesbourne Lane, Littlebourne, CT3 1UY</p> <p>Erection of dwelling. (Resubmission).</p>                                                                           | <p>GRANTED 19/09/13</p> |