

**LITTLEBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 DECEMBER 2012**

Present: Parish Cllr Vivienne Spratt (Chairman)
Parish Cllr Mick Giles
Parish Cllr Betty Jeffries
Parish Cllr Pamela Evans
Parish Cllr Geoffrey Barrett
Parish Cllr Geof Welch
Parish Cllr Ken Shaw
Parish Cllr Mike Gallagher
Parish Cllr Cate Reid

Ms Amanda Sparkes, Clerk to the Council

There were no members of the public

153. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Spratt welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from KCC Cllr Michael Northey.

154. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensation.

155. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 NOVEMBER 2012

Cllr Reid proposed and Cllr Barrett seconded to accept the Minutes as a true record of the meeting.

156. POLICING, SECURITY AND NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Cllr Reid asked that thanks be recorded to the KCC Warden, Jon Lodge, as after the recent weekend of heavy rain he came to check the dyke in The Orchard first which was very kind of him to have done that against his other priorities.

KCC Community Warden report - the warden's report for the last month was as follows:

- Attended Sure Start - delivered a Road Safety talk to the group and discussed car safety information
- A number of fridges have been dumped in the vicinity of Pinewood - Liaised with Howletts to have them removed.
- Reassurance /intelligence gathering visit to a resident in Littlebourne following a cold caller- Liaised with PCSO, gave relevant supportive literature and arranged visit from Handy van to identify any security upgrading required
- Weekly visits to local play park on behalf of the Parish council to check safety of equipment - no defects.
- Took part in multi-agency Restorative Justice event at Polo Farm area , involving Kent Police, KFRS, Enforcement officers and two KCC Wardens - operation to target speeding vehicles through the village

130. PLANNING

At the last meeting there was some discussion around whether Planning Cllrs should approach affected residents for their views and help them understand relevant representations. The Clerk suggested that she could devise a postcard to put through affected residents doors and invite them to contact planning councillors if they have any concerns or comments. Cllrs endorsed this idea. A draft card template was circulated and some amendments endorsed. The Clerk will finalise these and get some printed. Planning Cllrs will use discretion as to who will receive on, based on the details of each planning application.

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

131. FINANCE

(A) FINANCIAL MATTERS

- (a) RECEIVED the bank statements for November 2012, and RESOLVED the signature of the Chairman thereon;
- (b) NOTED that the Clerk contacted the parish council's insurance company and they have added the Dell laptop and back up device (insurance value £1000) to the councils all risks cover free of charge. The Clerk also added the item to the council's fixed asset register and has deducted expenditure from the ear marked reserve schedule held.
- (c) NOTED UK Power Networks – annual wayleave cheque payment for wayleave over Court Hill, St Vincents and Jubilee Road

(B) AUTHORISATION OF ACCOUNTS

The Clerk ran through the expenditure list previously circulated to Cllrs as Appendix 3 totalling £1,518.22 along with the direct debit schedules for the Clerk's salary, Clerk PAYE and employee and employers NIC, together with a supplementary sheet of expenditure presented to the meeting totalling £726.04 . Cllr Giles proposed and Cllr Welch seconded and it was RESOLVED that the financial matters and accounts, as set out be authorised for payment.

(C) PRECEPT BUDGET REQUIREMENT FOR 2013-2014

NOTED that precept finalisation is now delayed in to January 2013 after a city council briefing session on 4 January to explain the impact of changes to the council tax base.

132. WORKS AT SCOUTLANDS

Cllr Spratt drew attention to a late item of correspondence. She had received several comments from residents about works going on in Scoutlands. She wrote to Robert and David Spencer and received a letter back. David Spencer confirmed he has sold some land to the owners of Littlebourne House and this land has now been fenced. No access to or from Nargate Street has been granted to Littlebourne House. The Spencer family will shortly be replanting nursery trees on the land cleared earlier this year – the English grown trees are due to be delivered next week. The "open land" the Chairman mentioned is not open land and the Spencer's may fence it if they wish. In parts they have done so including replacing the gate on to Nargate Street which certain residents obstruct with their cars. Although this is private land the Spencer family are happy to tolerate the public enjoying the space and the trees if they do not cause a nuisance or damage, if so the gate could be locked.

133. CLERK REPORT

- o Action *with* Communities *in* Rural Kent "Rural News" electronic newsletter Canterbury & District NHW Association Newsletter – 'Watching Brief'
- o Kent County Playing Fields Association (KCPFA) November newsletter
- o Canterbury City Council review of their Housing Allocation Policy – the Policy explains how they let social housing and who they let it to. Councillors and officers have developed some general principles which describe who should be allowed on to the Housing Register (waiting list) and who should be given local priority. This consultation will inform the review process by telling the city council whether local residents and partner organisations agree with the general principles to base the new policy, before they spend time drafting a detailed policy document.
http://www.canterbury.gov.uk/authority/survey.cfm?file=xpl_housingallocationspolicy

Surviving Winter

The 'Surviving Winter' Fund has been created to help anyone over 60 years old in Kent & Medway who cannot afford to heat their home and maintain a reasonable standard of living during the winter. The fund is designed to provide hardship funding to individuals and for

small projects which support older people to cope with the cold. The application is in two parts; part one for hardship funding (up to £125 per household, £200 for those over 80 years old) and part two for project funding. The fund is managed by the Kent Community Foundation - for an application form email: admin@kentcf.org.uk . The fund has been created from donations of Winter Fuel Payments - there is a news item: <http://www.kentcf.org.uk/news/2012-coldest-winter>

Helen Bennington, Canterbury City Council's waste and recycling officer

Helen has agreed to attend to give a presentation at the 7 February parish council meeting. This will be held in The Lounge of the War Memorial Hall from 7pm. Cllr Spratt has asked for an advert for this to be put in the next Church and Village publication.

26 COURT MEADOWS - Cllrs noted that the new tenant met the Littlebourne eligibility criteria, following a query at the last meeting.

134. ALLOTMENTS

The Clerk has been liaising with Littlebourne Horticultural Society (LHS) and sent reminders for outstanding plot rents, and arranged new tenancy agreements for change of plot holders.

Cllr Jeffries advised that The Barn produce show produced a donation of £35 to LHS.

135. THE BARN

Cllr Jeffries gave dates for 2013: 7-14 June Sirius Art Show, 26 August Produce Show, 7 and 8 September Heritage Weekend, and 1 December 2013 Christmas Market.

136. HERITAGE

Cllr Jeffries explained that the committee is waiting for the Green Room to be decorated. Cllr Reid advised this should be done next week. The committee had a donation of two lockable metal cupboards and a filing cabinet thanks to Cllr Gallagher. These were transported by Bernie Hoare's two sons and are in the Green Room. A vertical map chest and table will be ordered soon.

137. KALC

Cllr Gallagher explained he will attend the January meeting which considers a "Village Caretaker" scheme – the Clerk had circulated the report from the pilot areas to all Cllrs. This item will be discussed at the January parish council meeting.

138. STREETSCENE MEETING

Cllr Shaw explained he had attended a city council's streetscene meeting and learnt of the new waste and recycling scheme. Any resident not wanting the extra bins can write to the city council and state that they don't want them. Serco have been awarded the contract for waste and recycling but other parts of their existing contract such as grounds maintenance are still being negotiated. The Serco depot is eventually going to re-locate to Hersden. A new fleet of split bodied vehicles is to be purchased for the new scheme. A council officer is to attend the February parish council meeting to fully explain the new scheme and new bins.

139. TWINNING WITH WIMILLE

Cllr Spratt advised that all is ready for the visit to the Christmas Fair. Wimille have organised a shopping trip for their villagers to Canterbury on Saturday 15th December. They have asked to bring 66 people for tea here in Littlebourne from 4.00 – 5.30pm.

Teacher at the primary school, Anne Hardy, has left which has affected twinning works with the school. Cllr Spratt has had discussions and offered to help. Dates are being discussed for June.

140. MILLENNIUM AWARD

The December edition of LPC News and a poster on the noticeboard asks for nominations for the millennium award to be made in writing to the Clerk by 31st January 2013.

Cllrs discussed the criteria at the November 2012 parish council meeting and agreed:

- The recipient does not have to be a resident of Littlebourne if they have shown outstanding service to Littlebourne.
- The award can be made to a project in Littlebourne and not just to an individual.
- The award can be made to a club or Society
- The award can be received more than once if it is for different reasons but only if their achievement is higher than other nominees who have not been previously recognised.
- If there is no real worthy winner the council does not have to award it in any year.

Nominations will be scrutinised by Cllrs at the February Meeting to allocate the award the 7 March Annual Parish Meeting.

The Clerk advised she has received one nomination so far.

141. LITTLEBOURNE NATURE RESERVES

The committee's Action Plan for September 2012 to August 2013 had been circulated prior to the meeting and a copy filed with the Minutes.

Cllr Evans explained the gate had come off at Little Fosters Farm but KCC have now repaired this.

Cllr Evans explained the Cubs, Scouts and Explorers are seeking £60 to be divided between them for a community day in the Spring of 2013 which they would use to build benches and so on for the Littlebourne Nature Reserves. Cllr Evans will suggest they apply for funding from Littlebourne's own 4VPO Community Fund.

142. PINE WOODS

Cllr Evans explained concerns about Pine Wood and the very full and informative responses to these from David Sutton, the Head Gardener at Howletts Wild Animal Park:

1) That the area has been 'over coppiced' and that the character has been radically changed with the amount of cutting that has been done.

Reply: Howletts are well within the limits of the licensed area in terms of cutting. The current license runs until March 2016.

2) The use of heavy equipment has obliterated footpaths and effectively altered the drainage pattern so that they are and will remain swampy.

Reply: Howletts have to use the main tracks as access routes so as to avoid damage to the cut stools which could cause a reduction in re-growth, which the forestry commission would be unhappy about. It is not feasible to extract the materials from the wood in any other way than with 'heavy vehicles'. Howletts will be making repairs to the tracks during the winter period to ensure that they are in a usable condition again whilst they are not working in the wood. However, in the short term, the solution is to simply walk to the side of the worst areas which will have little effect on the woodland or the flora & fauna that it supports.

3) The lack of clear footways will mean that users will end up roaming over areas that were previously untouched and that this will affect habitat for plants and small animals.

Reply: Most regular users of woodland for recreation purposes would understand that the main track is the one that they should be following. Howletts have installed signs to show the public rights of way through the wood and asked that the parish council make local residents aware of the need to use these for their own safety mainly, but also for the protection of the woodland. Howletts are working with a local ecologist to enhance the knowledge of the woodlands residents by surveying for dormice. There has also been surveying of Badgers in the wood and surrounding areas.

Unfortunately the consistently rainy weather for most of this year has meant that the vehicles have caused more damage than normal, but once the cutting is completed and the tracks have been levelled it is likely that they will have in the region of 15 years to settle out before Howletts look at cutting there again. In broader terms the process being undertaken is beneficial to the woodland habitat, and whilst it is a shock to some people to see an area being cleared like this, the long term gain for the woodland and its ecosystem far outweighs the inconvenience caused to its human users in the short term. This is not a new process for this woodland, as is highlighted in the Littlebourne Village Design Statement Pine Wood is believed to have been used for Chestnut coppice since the 16th Century.

Cllrs were happy with the responses and asked that thanks be recorded for such a thorough reply, but commented that notices for the public and parish council in advance would have been helpful.

143. CHERRY ORCHARD

Cllr Jeffries explained the hedging plants have all now been planted by the Cubs and Scouts. A volunteer day prepared areas now sown with grasses.

144. WATERCRESS IN RIVER

Cllr Spratt advised she had taken a phone call from the PCSO to check if any permission had been given for people to pick watercress from the river. Cllr Spratt explained all about the rights of ownership and landowners to the PCSO and confirmed no permission had been given. Cllr Evans commented that the watercress is actually a false watercress and not good to eat.

145. ST GEORGE'S DAY EVENT

Cllr Spratt advised this would be held on 20 April 2013. She will check that the recreation ground will be free of football matches. Cllr Evans kindly agreed to organise another dog show. There is funding potential from the 4VPO Littlebourne rent community fund. The Wimille contacts will also be invited to come over for this event.

146. RECREATION GROUND

The annual inspection report of the ground and equipment has been received. No remedial actions are necessary.

147. RECREATION GROUND ADVERTISING

C/FWD ITEM: At the October 2012 parish council meeting, Cllr Reid raised the idea for the cricket club to engage in business sponsorship, where businesses would advertise only on match days. The cricket club would be responsible for putting up and taking down the adverts. Cllrs had concerns around the legalities, the amount of income involved, the size, type of companies and type of signage – roll up banners seemed preferable. There would need to be controls, and what would the reaction of the villagers be? Perhaps a limited trial in the village for the next season could be considered. The item was again deferred for more information to the next parish council meeting.

148. HIGHWAYS

HGV CONSULTATION

Cllr Gallagher explained there will be a committee meeting called for early January to consider the Department for Transport consultation on Examining the Speed Limit for HGVs over 7.5 tonnes on single carriageway roads (see www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/dft-2012-34). The maximum speed limit for HGVs over 7.5 tonnes on these roads is 40mph. The speed limit for smaller HGVs (i.e. those between 3.5 tonnes and 7.5 tonnes) is 50 mph.

The consultation proposes a number of possible policy options including raising the limit to 45 mph or to 50mph. It also seeks views on: road safety effects; air quality, noise and health impacts; and other impacts. Deadline is 1 February 2013. KALC will be drafting a response, which will be circulated early in the new year. Cllrs resolved to add this to the January 2013 parish council meeting Agenda.

149. LITTLEBOURNE WAR MEMORIAL HALL

Cllr Reid agreed to check the lights and heating not working in the parish meeting room.

150. TURNER’S ORCHARD

Cllr Evans confirmed the Wassailing event in the Orchard would be 6 January 2013.

151. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

Cllrs noted that no donations were received towards the Christmas lights.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Dates of future meetings: 17 January, 7 February 2013 – to be held in The Lounge with Guest speaker, Helen Bennington, Canterbury City Council’s Environmental Promotions Officer to talk about the new waste and recycling scheme to be phased in from 1 April 2013, (7 March 2013 – the elector’s meeting / Annual Parish Meeting with Guest Speakers, Community First Responders), 14 March, 18 April, 16 May, 13 June, 18 July, (No meeting in August), 12 September, 17 October, 14 November, and 12 December 2013

Signed..... (Chairman)

Date.....

**LITTLEBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL
PLANNING REPORT, 13 DECEMBER 2012**

APPENDIX 2

New Applications

None

Notifications

CA/12/01814/FUL	Beech Cottage, 74 Bekesbourne Lane Erection of two-storey and single-storey rear extensions, single-storey side extension and replacement porch	Granted by CCC
CA/12/01567/FUL	68 The Hill Loft conversion incorporating increase in ridge height of existing bungalow and insertion of dormer windows and rooflights to front and rear elevations to provide accommodation in the roof space	Refused by CCC

Trees - None

Enforcement - None.