

**LITTLEBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 MARCH 2014**

Present: Parish Cllr Vivienne Spratt (Chairman)
Parish Cllr Cate Reid
Parish Cllr Mike Gallagher
Parish Cllr Geoffrey Barrett
Parish Cllr Geof Welch
Parish Cllr Betty Jeffries
Parish Cllr Pam Evans
Parish Cllr Ken Shaw
County Cllr Michael Northey

Mrs Gail Hubbard, Clerk to the Council
There was one member of the public.

207. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Mick Giles (recuperating), City Cllr Brian Staley and Community Warden Gary Moore (on leave).

208. DECLARATIONS OF CLLRS INTERESTS AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensations.

209. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 FEBRUARY 2014

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

210. POLICING

Further communication had been received from PCSO Elaine Cannadine with regard to the damage to the youth shelter, LPC feel this has taken far too long to be sorted out. The Police have been made aware of some other aggravation in the Village and the chair will provide further information if necessary.

211. ADJOURNMENT OF THE MEETING

There was none.

212. COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

Cllr Northey spoke on the Jubilee Rd bollards, saying he would be in attendance at tomorrow's meeting with Cllr Gallagher, Ryan Shield and Martin Twyman, to hear the problems for local businesses with large delivery lorries trying to turn into Jubilee.

Cllr Northey departed a 7.17pm.

213. PLANNING

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

214. FINANCE

- (a) RECEIVED the bank statements for February 2014, and TO RESOLVE the signature of the Chairman thereon;
- (b) NOTED £11.99 will be taken from our account by DD on 15th March for our 1x1 website

(C) NOTED the clerk has prepared invoices for 4VPO, Rec Club and WMH for the recharge of the CCTV maintenance works, £80.68 for each of the 4 parties

AUTHORISATION OF ACCOUNTS

Receipts totalling £294.72 were NOTED. The expenditure list previously circulated to Cllrs as Appendix 3 totalling £3387.82 together with a supplementary sheet Appendix 3a of expenditure presented to the meeting totalling £748.12. These were proposed by Cllr Reid and seconded by Cllr Welch so it was RESOLVED that the financial matters and accounts, as set out be authorised for payment.

The invoice for the CCTV callout CHQ3329 £387.30 was queried, as the callout charge should already be included within our maintenance contract. Clerk to check with Cllr Giles before releasing the cheque. (after meeting invoices checked and CHQ3329 has already been paid by clerk)

REPORT BACK FROM FINNACE MEETING

Minutes not yet available from this meeting, but to be circulated next week. Cllrs discussed jobs to be completed before year end, clerk to obtain quotations and move forward. It was also agreed to use David Frost as our internal auditor for the accounts for 2013-14. It was also agreed that LHS should go ahead with the works to the boundaries, following the receipt of the two quotations they had obtained.

Cllr Reid mentioned the possibility of some repairs to the large noticeboard in the carpark.

215. CLERK REPORT CORRESPONDENCE

A. Update on Fracking;

- On 13 January 2014, David Cameron announced that councils would be able to keep 100 per cent of business rates they collect from shale gas sites. This adds to community benefits already agreed with the extraction industry of £100,000 when a test well is fracked and a further one per cent of revenues if shale gas is discovered.
- The Government has offered considerable support for the exploration and possible development of shale gas, despite the controversy surrounding the associated technique of fracking. Water contamination and seismic disturbances are among the associated environmental risks.
- This briefing deals with what is known so far about shale and oil and gas deposits in the UK, the associated risks and possible benefits, and the regulatory regime governing onshore exploration and development.
- It will be of interest to members and officers in all tiers of local government with an interest in environmental sustainability, local economic development, and planning. There is an open public meeting to be held on Wednesday 5th March 7.30pm Barham.

B. REPEAL OF S.150 OF THE LGA 1972

The Local Government Act 1972, that requires all cheques or other payable orders to be signed by two councillors. A draft Legislative Reform Order (LRO) which repeals s.150 (5) has been approved by Parliament and, because of its applicability to Wales, by the National Assembly of Wales.

Please note that the LRO has not yet been formally made by the Minister.

The next steps

Before the LRO is comes into force, the following steps are necessary:

1. The “proper practices” being a term that appears in the accounting and audit regulations that apply to councils in England and Wales needs to be updated. Separate regulations apply in England and Wales. In England, “proper practices” is a

reference to the publication 'Governance and Accountability for Local Councils - A Practitioners' Guide (England)' issued by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG). It is available from the websites of NALC and the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC). In Wales, "proper practices" is a reference to the publication 'Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales - A Practitioners' Guide', published jointly by One Voice Wales (OVW) and SLCC. It is available from the websites of OVW and the SLCC.

2. JPAG is due to meet on 17th February 2014 when it expects to approve the relevant amendments to the Governance and Accountability for Local Councils - A Practitioners' Guide (England). This is expected to be published as soon as possible after 18 February.

3. Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales - A Practitioners' Guide currently includes proper practice guidance on making payments. This is subject to councils retaining the two signature rule until such time as an LRO is made.

4. Once the amended proper practices have been published, the Minister is expected to make the LRO and it will come into force in England and Wales on the following day.

5. Once the LRO is in force, every council that wishes to take advantage of it must formally put in place effective systems and arrangements compliant with the proper practices before it seeks to abandon the two signature rule. This effectively means adopting new Financial Regulations, and internal procedures compliant with the guidance.

6. NALC is drafting new model Financial Regulations ready for release as soon as possible after 18th February, together with a more detailed implementation briefing.

The guidance states that the two signature rule must not be abandoned until a council has put in place safe and efficient arrangements in accordance with the guidance. It is essential that councils "maintain robust controls on payments as an integrated part of their overall financial control system". For larger councils this is likely to be relatively straightforward. For smaller councils this may be more difficult. It may well be that an essential element of the control systems in place is the retention of the two signature rule. The important difference is that this will be as a result of a council's own control decisions (e.g. its financial regulations and procedures in relation to the revision of its bank mandates) rather than because, under s.150(5) of the Local Government Act, it was a statutory requirement.

- C. KALC will be holding 3 evening events in Kent this year focusing on Kent Police and the Ambulance Service. The events will provide an update from the Police & Crime Commissioner on progress against her vision for Kent Police and the refresh of the Police and Crime Plan and on the ambulance service's Community First Responder. All three events will commence with registration and refreshments at 6.30 pm for a 7.00 pm start and will finish by 9.00 pm. The events will be held in the 3 Kent Police Divisional areas with the first event being held at the Holiday Inn in Ashford. The first event will be held on Wednesday 2nd April will be at the Holiday Inn, Ashford North (A20), Maidstone Road, Ashford, Kent, TN26 1AR
- D. Bridge PC's meeting with Ian Brown, head of Planning & Regeneration. Clerk Christobel had been in contact with the other clerks and had discussed these problems. Bridge PC then took this forward to Ian Brown, with the following outcomes;
- Request for more flexibility in response time for planning applications. Ian Brown said this was not always possible because there are national time targets for dealing with applications. He gave no clear response to our request that the paper work for applications should be sent out to parishes more promptly. We suggested that Clerks should be informed by email as soon as

CCC had accepted an application. This would ensure that the details were included on planning agendas early, without waiting for all the paperwork before including them. This would potentially obviate the need for extra meetings, which, we pointed out, cause a lot of extra work, time and expense in parishes.

- Website – Ian Brown agreed that the website is unstable and unreliable. This was also causing problems within his department. He said that if there were difficulties Clerks could email their replies direct to Development Control rather than through the website. He was unaware of the problem caused by Clerks having to respond to applications in their own name and that the website had no provision for identifying parish council responses. He would investigate with a view to correcting this.
 - Residents not being informed of planning applications in properties close by. Again Ian Brown was not aware that this was a problem. He would investigate. Similarly we reported that planning notices were not always legible if wrapped round adjacent posts.
 - Enforcement – Ian Brown said that there was no longer a separate enforcement department. Instead planning officers who imposed conditions were responsible for making sure they were adhered to. He said this had made planning conditions more realistic. There was an expert on enforcement within the department (Richard Thompson) but he was also a planning officer and had no special enforcement brief
 - Electronic Planning – It seems inevitable that this is in the pipeline. Our suggestion that applicants should be charged a realistic fee, which would cover the city council's full costs for reproduction and postage, was deemed unworkable. Central Govt sets the fee levels. It seems unlikely CCC will raise this as an issue with DCLG. Ian Brown admitted that trying to see complex planning documents on pcs was not easy. It was pointed out that some councillors did not have access to computers and it would cost parish councils a great deal to buy equipment to show plans for the public to see at Planning Committee meetings. There are no immediate plans to introduce electronic planning because the website is not yet reliable. However I did get the impression that any problems it would cause in the parishes would not prevent its introduction.
- E. 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. There are many inter-related factors which will influence how each individual is affected by the cold weather, including their income, housing type and quality, cost of fuel, isolation and underlying health conditions. This fund has been extended this year to cover individuals, over 60 that been affected by the flooding. We could apply as a PC for any individuals within our Parish. Cllr Shaw has given the clerk details of the properties that have been flooded so we can see if anyone is eligible.
- F. Health and Welfare Sub group - Flood Recovery information for Parishes
In the event of major floods, Public Health England works with local agencies, including the NHS, police, KCC, District Councils and Environment Agency to provide expert advice on protecting the health of the local community, particularly from microbiological and chemical hazards.

Our local health protection centres, liaising with national colleagues who specialise in environmental hazards, infectious diseases and emergency planning, can provide a focal point for health protection advice to local responders and the public. The Environment Agency has a key role in warning people about the risk of flooding, and in reducing the likelihood of flooding from rivers and the sea.

A variety of leaflets have been produced and are available to support and inform people; <http://www.hpa.org.uk/flooding>

CLERK REPORT ALLOTMENTS

The clerk has sent out a number of new tenancy agreements and given permissions for several sheds.

LPC NEWS

Was printed in house this edition on the new printer. Cllr Gallagher asked the clerk to work out the cost of the ink used for printing this in house.

216. ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Chairman reported that we would defer looking at the minutes from the APM of 5th March until the April meeting; they were only finished today so Cllrs had not had a chance to read them. They cannot however be properly approved until 2015's APM. However the Chairman did read out the paragraph pertaining to the interruption of the Chairman's address, which is recorded as follows;

The chairman's address was interrupted at this point by a resident Mr Maynard, who accused the Chair and Clerk as being liars and the chair as a bully, he stated that we had misled KCC into giving a negative response to the Caravan Club with regard to the access to his proposed caravan club site, the error being that we had said the address as 3 School Path, which was confused as the access, but immediately put right and a caravan club site map provided to KCC who strongly oppose the access, as do the Parish Council for safety, not personal reasons. He was advised by a Council member to modify his tone.

He stated that he had not owned a caravan site before and the P.C. had recorded he had, this information had been given by a resident who had a conversation with him, where he had allegedly said he was an experienced owner and had a site before. We had documented what had been said. This would not make any difference to his application in regard to Site access that the Parish Council are objecting too. We cannot verify every statement that is made to us, we take these statements in good faith. Mr Maynard would like it stated in the paper that he has not owned caravan sites, as we had previously put in that he had.

A briefer version of this will be sent to the Gazette for inclusion in the Littlebourne Column, hopefully week beginning 17th March.

Resident Mr Inkpen had brought up a number of queries following the APM guest speaker and had asked LPC for some clarification, Cllr Spratt read out the response to Mr Inkpen and these can be found at the end of the minutes

217. ALLOTMENTS

The Clerk had been in contact with LHS and had advised them to go ahead with the boundary works and also advised them that we would be giving them the full amount of the grant they had asked for the development and clearance of land project (as applied for through LPC grant scheme).

Roger Weaver had emailed his thanks, asking me to pass on to the LPC my appreciation for the rapid decision on the boundaries and especially for the grant to transform the burning area of the allotments.

218. MILLENIUM AWARD

The Chairman had received thanks from Mick Lonergan for being given this year's award.

219. TWINNING WITH WIMILLE

Cllr Spratt reported back from yesterday's trip with Ladybirds to Wimille, on which she had been. They had a great day, the Wimille nursery had made a real effort and put on a great day for the children including songs sung in English to the visitors, an excellent spread for lunch and a superb puppet show in the afternoon.

Wimille are looking forward to their visit here on 14th June.

220. THE BARN

Cllr Jefferies reported that CCC are to do a review of all their buildings, including The Barn. Cllr Jefferies believes it is the only grade 1 listed building in the Canterbury Area.

221. ENVIRONMENT

Several complaints have been received regarding dog fouling in the village, especially along the path to the school from the rec and on the path from St Vincent's Close to the list and Court Meadows to the list.

Cllr Evans has put up posters at these sites, but some of these have been removed within hours. Clerk has also reported to CCC and will speak with Community Warden Gary Moore when he returns from leave next week.

It was agreed to make a donation to Keep Britain Tidy of £30.00 as we would need to order more dog fouling posters, and they have supplied many in the past free of charge. Clerk to check website to see if we can download and print ourselves.

222. VILLAGE GREEN APPLICATION

The Village Green application Committee Member Panel date has now been deferred until 8th April, when all parties will be able to attend.

223. FLOODING

Cllr Shaw reported that they are starting to collect up sandbags. Two pallets have been placed on Keith Dimonds drive and two more on the drive at 38 Nargate Street.

He is asking those who do not want to keep their sandbags to place them at either location for return to the store.

The river level continues to fall but slowly, hopefully we have passed the flooding threat.

Cllr Shaw has arranged for the water pump to be collected tomorrow.

224. HOUSING

Another application for a mutual exchange has come through from Sanctuary, but the incoming tenant would not be eligible to the Littlebourne criteria.

225. RECREATION GROUND

It was noted that the storage shed is now starting to go up rapidly, now the weather has improved.

226. HIGHWAYS

Cllr Gallagher reported back from the Traffic Management subcommittee meeting held on 20th February. With regard to the Jubilee bollards, LPC would not welcome the kerbs being

changed. The lorries should be able to turn anyway, swept paths have been done by KCC. At the end of the day it is illegal for lorries to drive on the pavement, LPC will not condone this. Our responsibility is to ensure the safety of the pedestrians. An extension of double yellow lines round the corners might make it easier for the lorries to turn.

LPC have now concluded negotiations on the Oldridge Lagoons. Everything else has been agreed except for a speed reduction on the stretch of road during works. Our objection will not be withdrawn.

Cllr Reid reported that four volunteers have come forward for the Speedwatch program. Hopefully a training session can be held soon.

227. WAR MEMORIAL HALL TRUST

Cllr Gallagher said they are currently looking at the budget for next year. They have just had to replace the teaspoons as they all seem to have gone missing. The AGM is to be held on 21st May.

228. 4VPO AND SHOP

Cllr Barrett reported that the committee have now signed off his accounts and he has forwarded on a payment of £4501 to The Community Fund, £3825 which is rent and £676 which is a tax refund from previous years.

229. AOB FOR DISCUSSION ONLY

It was mentioned that the electoral review documents were now out to view.

Cllr Welch would like to record thanks for all the help we've had during the flooding.

Cllr Shaw would like it noted that he thinks the constant pumping out of the cellars at The Anchor and Littlebourne House will be the cause of an accident if it continues. It only needs a harsh frost and the water will freeze on the road.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.

Dates of future meetings: 9 April, 14 May Statutory Annual, 11 June, 16 July, 10 September, 15 October, 12 November, 10 December

Signed..... (Chairman)

Date.....

New Applications

| | | |
|------------------|---|---|
| CA//14/00240/FUL | Church Cottage, Church Road, Littlebourne, CT3 1UA Removal of roof glazing to existing conservatory and replace with an insulated peg tiled roof. Removal of glazing to existing conservatory walls, partial replacement with studwork walling clad externally with weather boarding, with Georgian style windows to match existing. Existing rear facing glazed wall retained, but glazing replaced with new double glazed panels. | No Objections from the Parish Council. Proposal is in keeping with the rest of the cottage. |
| CA//14/00255/FUL | Silverside, 44 Bekesbourne Lane, Littlebourne, CT3 1UY Single-storey side extension. | No objections from the Parish Council The new windows will be far enough away from no43 not to cause overlooking. |
| CA/14/00286/FUL | 30B Nargate Street, Littlebourne CT3 1UJ First floor rear extension | No objection to the development that is shown. But note must be taken to ensure the plans are adhered to and nothing additional is built. Historically work has been done on this property without correct permissions. |
| CA/14/00279/FUL | 64 Bekesbourne Lane, Littlebourne CT3 1UZ Balcony to front of dwelling | This is a very large balcony and is not in keeping with the design of any of the neighbouring houses. LPC have strong reservations about recommending approval |
| CA//14/00380/FUL | 52 High Street, Littlebourne, CT3 1ST Demolition of single-storey masonry lean-to and timber framed porch and proposed single-storey rear extension and formation of a new light well serving existing basement. | Plans in circulation. Clerk to drop in postcards to neighbours |
| CA//14/00424/FUL | 23 Jubilee Road, Littlebourne, CT3 1TR Single-storey side extension. | Plans in circulation |

Trees

| | | |
|--------------|---|--------------------------|
| TRE/14/08625 | 32 Nargate Street, Littlebourne, Canterbury, CT3 1UJ Remove a leaning conifer located at the back of the garden behind a brick wall which is acting as a flood barrier | exempt dead or dangerous |
| TRE/14/08656 | 22 Bekesbourne Lane, Littlebourne, | No objections |

| | | |
|--------------|--|---------------|
| | CANTERBURY, CT3 1UY Reduce 7 conifers, 3 holly trees and 2 apple trees by one third | |
| TRE/14/08657 | Albion House, 28 Bekesbourne Lane, Littlebourne, Canterbury, CT3 1UY Reduce two oak trees and three holly trees, located at the end of the garden by 1/3 | No objections |
| TRE/14/08658 | 30 Bekesbourne Lane, Littlebourne, Canterbury, CT3 1UY Reduce a Holly tree by 1/3 | No objections |

QUESTIONS/POINTS RAISED FROM THE APM BY RESIDENT MR INKPEN

- 1) I didn't know there were 20 or more bore holes extracting water - would like to have known more how the water table is affected during the summer.**

When the Conservation Society was fighting increased extraction from boreholes in 1968 a map was made of the boreholes in the gathering area for the Little Stour. This goes almost to Folkestone as well as round here.

- 2) Why has the village hall car park only got one entrance/exit?**

This was looked into when the car park was extended. It would have cost too much even then to a) Get permission to have another entrance onto the A257 especially going across a pavement b) construct an entrance, especially considering the different levels.

- 3) Main road parking and obstacles cause annoyance and pose problems for emergency vehicles.**

At least these slow the traffic down on the A257. Kerb Extensions were put in to curb the speeding through the village, there were so many accidents and car hits through the village, a lady in the cottages on The Hill had 2 cars written off.

- 4) Why were the Littlebourne signs removed from the top of the A2 slip road in Bekesbourne?**

This has been gone for a number of years and we believe in an attempt to reduce the number of vehicles cutting through the rural lanes to the A257. Also to reduce the number of physical signs on this junction, as there were a excessive number.

- 5) No thoughts have been put into helping cyclists on the roads - especially from Littlebourne to Canterbury. Why is this?**

LPC spent a lot of time studying possibilities but for various reasons these were all rejected by Highways and landowners. It would be difficult to create a cycle path on St Martins Hill as there are high walls and banks on either side making the cost prohibitive.

- 6) Our woods are only a shadow of what they used to be - yet the coppicing of trees is one of the only things that improves the earth's surface. The wood must act as a reservoir during the winter.**

In the 1950s 1960s the new owners (Mounts) obtained permission to grub out 50% of the Ancient Woodland in Pine Wood.. It was planted with top fruit (pear) and blackcurrants were planted at Leases Bend.

Now the orchards are gone too. All this loss of trees has a knock on effect leading to fast run off , panning and flooding, flooding down Court Hill. Also some of the dykes are blocked. Tree roots form a pathway for water to percolate down instead of running off to cause flooding

- 7) The hedges and footpaths in the village were mentioned yesterday - but not the removal of ivy growing up trees.**

Many of the uprooted trees had ivy growing in them acting as a sail in the wind. It is best to have a balance

- 8) Why the river is only a fraction of what it used to be? - since I have been in Littlebourne, the river has dried up several times recently, and last year it was only a very small trickle compared with what it should be.**

The river has always been subject to fluctuations, Read the 19th C diary of the Champions (farmers in Ickham and WHB) Floods one year and impossibly hard to plough the next and that was when the river was kept clear. The records of the Geological Society might throw some light on this if they have managed to locate them after being moved in the war .The river dried up in 1949 and according to Ted Wood this was the result of Thanet Water Board's taking out too much water from the aquifer (bore holes) for the visitors in Margate. And this affected the Water Table. A public Enquiry to prevent more extraction was fought successfully by the Conservation Society about this in 1968.

- 9) Does anyone have any say about what crops should be grown around Littlebourne? LPC have no say over what is grown locally, the farmers will grow what is most economic.**