

LAMBERHURST PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 11th July 2017

Members present:

Cllr Denis Cruse	DC
Cllr John Uren	JU
Cllr Steve Cannella	SC
Cllr Clive Stott	CS
Cllr Rolf Smith	RS
Cllr Sam Nicholas	SN
Cllr Bernard Bryant.	BB

In attendance:

Chris Hamilton (Minutes Secretary)	CH
Two members of the public	

Welcome

The Chairman welcomed the councillors and those in attendance to the meeting.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A resident, on behalf of other residents of Brewer Street and Hopgarden Close, asked for an update on the planning application on land north of Hopgarden Close, behind the allotments. The chairman reported that the council had responded (this response was available to view on the planning portal) but did not yet have any further information. The applicant was also present and gave an update. He explained that he had met with the planning department the previous week and had learnt that the application had been made incorrectly and was not valid. He was withdrawing it and intended to submit a revised application. The planners had laid out their reservations and discussed ways forward. They wanted the resubmission to propose fewer houses and more open spaces. They considered 13 stand-alone and 5 assisted units a more acceptable number. TWBC had recommended that the applicant should speak to LPC regarding the access situation, which was unclear. He wanted to work in consultation with LPC on all aspects in order to find a solution which worked for the village.

JU explained that LPC make recommendations to the planners but TWBC have the final say in such matters. Various options for access were discussed. It was thought that the road was specifically an access road to a car park and not one to carry services such as electricity or sewage. JU pointed out that allotment holders also had a right to park on that road. There were more general concerns about the increased traffic flow and parking space. The chairman was concerned that Brewer Street was already problematic in terms of traffic and parking and residents had made representation to the council about this recently. 18 new homes potentially meant 36 or more additional vehicles to accommodate. The possibility of relocating allotments was also raised. JU explained that this would involve applying to the state department and seeking ministerial approval. It would also be disruptive and impractical for allotment holders.

It was suggested that the village needed more smaller, low-cost homes but

clearly the economics needed to work for the developers. The parish council felt that 18 homes might still represent over-development. It was agreed that the position regarding the existing access road needed to be clarified and that all needed to consider what would be in the best interest of the community before further discussions took place. The applicant agreed to make rough plans and bring them to LPC in consultation, liaising with JU. It was suggested that the initial consultations should involve the applicant and LPC but that further down the line, with permission, a group of residents might be involved. DC thanked both the resident and the applicant for putting their position and concerns to the meeting and hoped a reasonable compromise might be achieved.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

These had been received from DHB and JF, who were both away and BU, who was indisposed. County Councillor Sarah Hamilton hoped to attend later but was held up at a KCC meeting

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF 2ND MAY 2017

There was one amendment. On page 3, item 7f '*external*' should read '*internal*.'

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Pg.1 Water Leak

It was reported that the leak had been resolved but then another had occurred. The toilets had been shut for 4 days.

The problems were now sorted but the bill was being contested and was currently in the hands of Francis Trew.

Pg.2 Hook Green Speed Limits

There was no further news

Old School Clock

JU was dealing with this. He had been up in the tower and the clock was functioning. The receivers seemed to be supportive, had the new quotes and would hopefully recognise their liabilities.

Playground path

SC explained that work at Brewer Street had taken priority but the path was to be done shortly.

Pg.3 Planning Applications: Court Lodge

DC reported that he continued to raise this regularly with the planners but there was still no decision.

Non – Performing Assets

(see exempt)

5. ACCOUNTS

JF had circulated these. The payments were standard. The posts on the Down had been replaced where necessary and looked different from the existing ones but it was noted that all were to be replaced eventually. RS was concerned about the appearance of the chain opposite the doctors surgery and this would be investigated.

6. COMMON LAND AND ALLOTMENTS

Common Land

The common land draft management plan was discussed. This comprehensive plan included ideas for coppicing, maintaining tree safety, control of invasive

species and subsequent habitat improvement. It was agreed that costings were needed for the different aspects and SN could potentially obtain quotes for all of these. Some of the work would require a professional but it was thought that there were areas which could be volunteer led. There might also be opportunities for hedge laying. It was agreed that the common land group should meet to discuss this in detail on DHB's return, liaising also with a local expert who had previously expressed an interest, and that SN might then submit the plan to Sussex Lund to see if a grant might be available.

DC thanked SN and DHB and the common land group for the work undertaken in this regard. As a parish with one of the largest areas of common land in the south east, this was an important part of the council's work.

Allotments

A water leak was currently being tackled. The water was temporarily turned off. A plumber would be engaged to fix this.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

i. South East Water – notice of maintenance works. Noted

ii. Paddock Wood Community Advice Centre newsletter. Noted

iii. Ricochet: The Repair Shop, seeking projects for their upcoming TV series. The old school clock was suggested but it was thought the programme preferred to deal with transportable projects. JU had rung them and they would get back to him.

iv. TWBC CCTV Services: letter seeking views on possible changes to the service. There was a proposal, currently on hold for consultation, to move to a passive service where footage was recorded but not monitored. TWBC was now asking parish councils if they would be willing to contribute to the cost of the service. It was agreed that LPC would not be prepared to do so.

v. Power Cuts on the Down: letter from parishioner detailing 18 such cuts since Christmas 2016.

RS JU and DC had met with Greg Clark and given him this report. He had taken this up and had agreed to provide a contact to move this forward.

vi. Email from Ticehurst Parish Council asking for £500 contribution towards the fighting fund for the Bewl Action Group. It was not known whether the application had since been passed or whether it had been deferred. Bewl Water was not in the parish, although the parish was likely to be affected by development there. These things needed to be borne in mind when making a decision. DHB had been very involved with this and it was agreed in his absence that, if the application had not yet been passed, DHB should be authorised to provide up to £500 to the action group at his discretion.

8. PLANNING

There was discussion of one application which had been granted with an amendment disallowing high larch fences. Similar fences recently installed at another property would be investigated by the planning committee. DC thanked the planning group for their continued work on applications.

9. REPRESENTATIVES' REPORTS

War Memorial Hall

There was a separate agenda item.

Bewl Water

Nothing further to report

Playing fields

Nothing to report

Youth / Playground Working Group

Nothing further to report

Buses/Transport

DC continued to press for a bus service serving the Tunbridge Wells hospital.

Police

Nothing to report

Highways

Nothing to report

Footpaths

Nothing further to report

Flooding

Nothing to report

Housing

Nothing to report.

Common Land

Nothing further to report

Events

Nothing to report

KALC

Nothing to report

Parish Chairman

DC brought to the attention of the council the TWBC's Loto scheme. He circulated leaflets with information to go on the website and noticeboards. Organisations could register as a 'good cause' for Loto funding and it was suggested the War Memorial Hall should do so.

Business

Nothing to report

Website

Nothing to report.

School

Nothing to report

MP Liaison

Greg Clark's surgery in Lamberhurst was much appreciated. He told councillors who met with him that it was important for the parish to input to the local plan and to this end he was in favour of the parish producing a Neighbourhood Plan. Councillors had also recorded their view that the proposed civic complex did not represent value for money.

10. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

SN reported that the recent meeting had been very positive and a letter had now been formatted for submission. An application did not necessarily mean that the Neighbourhood Plan would go ahead: merely that the process had been started. However, there was no cost involved and all were happy to approve the application. Those who had attended the initial meeting would receive an email to this effect.

11. WAR MEMORIAL HALL

The hall managers had written to the council outlining their intention to make a number of significant improvements to the hall, including refurbishment and modification of areas at the back of the building to create more storage space, refurbishment of the kitchen and toilets, refitting of the existing storage area

and a possible extension upwards. The managers were currently working towards completion of drawings before taking this further but once these were in place a sum of money would be needed to undertake full surveys of the hall and draw up a more detailed submission for the pre-planning stage. A quote for £5000 had been obtained for this work. The council had already agreed a sum of £1000 for the initial drawings which were now being undertaken in house and the money therefore not needed. However, the larger expenditure would be necessary before the first planning application could be made. The managers were asking the council whether they would, in principle, agree to cover this initial cost. Money for the actual improvements after this stage would be sought from grants, fund-raising and donations. This was discussed at some length and it was agreed that the council supported this request in principle.

Additionally there were some urgent works needed at the hall which would not wait for the major improvements to begin. Many of the doors, doorframes and window frames were in need of replacement, as were the blackout blinds in the main hall. It was agreed that the managers should obtain quotes for these and bring them to the council for further discussion.

The question of hand driers for the public conveniences could be discussed at the same time.

RS was still to obtain a quote for a barrier in the car park.

12. MATTERS OF URGENCY AT THE CHAIRMAN'S DISCRETION

DC reported that new, revised plans for the Civic Centre were now available to view.

A parishioner had contacted DC about the re-opening of the George and Dragon and the application for a licence for certain hours of trading. These asked for live music inside and out from 6-11pm weekdays and from 6pm to midnight on Saturdays (in the pub window it stated half past midnight). DC declared an interest in this, as a close neighbour, and the item passed to the vice - chairman. Councillors expressed concern at these hours for live music and objected on the grounds of nuisance to residents in the local area.

It was reported that the work on the beacon on the Down would be done shortly.

13. EXEMPT ITEMS

(See separate page)

