

**LAMBERHURST PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2016**

**Members present:**

Cllr Denis Cruse	DC
Cllr John Uren	JU
Cllr John Francis	JF
Cllr Steve Cannella	SC
Cllr Clive Stott	CS
Cllr Sam Nicholas	SN
Cllr Rolf Smith	RS
Cllr David Hurst-Brown	DHB
Cllr Bernard Bryant	BB

**In attendance:**

Barbara Uren (Parish Clerk)	BU
Chris Hamilton (Minutes Secretary)	CH

**3 members of the public**

**Welcome**

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

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

These had been received from SC

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none

**3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF 19<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2016**

These were approved with one amendment: Councillor Bryant (BB) should be added to the list of those present on page 1.

**4. MATTERS ARISING**

**Common Land Walkabout**

This had not yet taken place but was scheduled for the following Sunday.

**Page 1 Lamberhurst Community Cinema**

The matter of the hearing loop was under investigation.

**Village Post Office**

This was still operating on Monday and Wednesday mornings with no further plans to extend this at present.

**Pg 2 School Access Improvements**

It was thought that Francis Trew was awaiting a report from officers at KCC.

**Parking at Scotney Castle.**

SN reported that a productive meeting had taken place. Scotney was very aware of the situation and had found a new site for around 200 vehicles. The plan was to turn this field into a hard standing car park in the long term and a bid had been submitted to a National Trust funding pot for this. It was hoped that the additional 200 cars spaces would help in the short term although this would not solve the problem if the land became very wet. It was felt that Scotney had taken LPC's comments on board. They had been asked to direct traffic outside to park on one side of Spray Hill only. DHB felt the more

serious problem was the road past the Brown Trout. However, Scotney were investigating the possibility of producing a leaflet for visitors showing a parking map, which LPC would have the chance to see and comment on. SN felt there was now a much increased understanding of each sides' concerns.

#### **Common Land and Allotments**

There were concerns that the lower allotments at Brewer Street were grassing over and encroaching on the only one that was in use. The clerk reported that there had been 4 enquiries for allotments since the advertisement in the community column of the Courier.

**Pg 3 Civic Amenity Vehicle**

The new arrangements appeared to be generally well favoured.

#### **PWCAC –Newsletter and Four Year Plan**

This was being followed up.

#### **English Heritage Re-enactors of the Route to the Battle of Hastings**

DC had had no further contact despite sending a reply

#### **Speeds on School Hill**

RS had emailed but still had no response.

#### **Hopping Do**

This had been a great success despite the weather. LPC offered its congratulations to the Bonfire Society for this splendid event.

#### **Letters to Greg Clark and Alex King**

These had been sent.

#### **Replacement Trainer for Defibrillator**

SN was still looking into this

**5. CHANGING ROADS IN YOUR AREA – HOOK GREEN SPEED LIMITS**

Three Hook Green residents were present. They raised the question of speed limits in the hamlet. These were considered inconsistent and signage relating to them was both excessive and confusing. Residents had unanimously agreed to present a petition to address these issues.

Michael Price gave a history of the speed limits. He highlighted the problem that the 40 mph signs in one direction were often obscured by vegetation, giving motorists the impression that the speed limit was 50 all through the hamlet. There had been a substantial increase in traffic over the last 30 years. Six footpaths lead off the road in this area, some of them well – used and featuring in walkers' guide books. A 50 mph limit in an area where there were no pavements made these paths dangerous to use. Hook Green residents were seeking the council's support to take this further, with a view to securing a 40 mph limit along Furnace Lane, from Lamberhurst to the county border. Councillors were asked for their views. SN queried whether speed signs changed the habits of motorists but approved the move and suggested that there was currently a move towards a more minimal approach to signage. RS wondered about the installation of an interactive flashing sign but it was believed that the road was not straight over a long enough stretch for this to be practical and it would further add to the already excessive street furniture. The consensus was overwhelmingly to approve the move and DC asked the residents to let the council know if there was anything else that it could do to help in the meantime.

The residents left the meeting after this discussion.

**6. ACCOUNTS**

JF had circulated these. He explained that the Limited Assurance Review had concluded satisfactorily. Certain items would need to be published on the village notice board and on the website. BU and CH would deal with this. He reported also on the NALC update to their new model for financial regulations, which he intended to examine further. Payments since the last meeting were approved.

**7. COMMON LAND AND ALLOTMENTS**

SN explained that she intended to nominate the gravel pit, for improvements to habitat, for the Richard Neame Local Wildlife Site award, which was managed by Kent Wildlife Trust.

BU and JU had met with UK Power Networks regarding work near the Elephant's Head public house, where lines ran through trees. It was their policy to cut trees back to 5 metres from lines but this was not always practical and 2-3 metres was often more appropriate.

Some other issues were likely to arise from the next walkabout in cases where parishioners were misappropriating common land. It was agreed that face to face contact was needed in the first instance, to be followed up in writing if appropriate or necessary. JU also felt that the common land group might need the authority to employ a land valuer.

**8. CORRESPONDENCE**

**i. NHS Kent & Medway Patient Trust**

They offered to come and give a talk regarding Mental Health Services that they provided. It was agreed that BU would reply and suggest a talk at the Annual Parish Meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2017.

**ii. Kent Wildlife Trust – Information regarding the Richard Neame Local Wildlife Sites Annual Award . This had already been discussed.**

**iii. UK Power Networks**

This was for information only

**iv. Email from Local Resident**

He was enquiring about the possibility of gaining an access to his garden over Common Land by means of a Licence. This would be addressed, if possible, during the next walkabout and would be followed up with a letter explaining the legal position of the parish council.

**CONSULTATIONS**

**KCC – New Local Transport Plan 4:** Deadline 30<sup>th</sup> October.

Councillors had nothing to add.

**9. PLANNING**

Some communication problems had been evident since TWBC had taken planning back in-house, but it was thought that there were no major problems. The following applications were discussed:

**16/05632/PNOCLA.**

New planning rules meant that the council's comments were no longer required in this case of offices being converted to flats.

**16/06186 .**

Buildings within the curtilage could now be developed (policy HR5). It was thought that this should be acceptable as long as the concerns of neighbours were addressed and the ridge height maintained.

**16/06221**

An extension had been requested so that there was time to investigate. The work had stopped. The enforcement officer had insisted on a retrospective

planning application. There was further discussion on the increased roof height and the visual impact on neighbours and the possible need for an Environmental Impact Assessment in this AONB.

**10. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

There was discussion as to the need for Lamberhurst to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan. A letter had been received from Ticehurst asking if LPC would be interesting in hearing about their plan. Goudhurst was also preparing one. DHB found these plans to be very housing-oriented and felt that he would like more time to research properly what was involved. The size of Lamberhurst was a factor: the village was very small and not under much threat of heavy housing development. SN felt that a neighbourhood plan might be an opportunity for the council to have more control over what might happen in the future as local authorities were under considerable pressure to put in housing. Should we not attempt to have some safeguard in the future? DC agreed to reply to Ticehurst and to pass DHB the letter to follow up with talks. Other councillors were encouraged, in the meantime, to investigate what was happening elsewhere and see what might be helpful for Lamberhurst. This should be on the agenda for the next meeting

**11. REPRESENTATIVES/ SUB- GROUPS REPORTS**

**Playground Group**

The Playground Report 2016 was discussed. All items and pieces of equipment had been found to be of low or very low risk. It was agreed that BU would ask Playdale to quote for the small maintenance items that needed doing and that she should have a budget, to spend between meetings if necessary, with an upper limit of £650.

There was some discussion on how to address the improper disposal of nappies and the like which had created problems in some areas of the playground.

CS was concerned about the area along the tree line near the playground. This had become a path by virtue of the fencing which had been erected there. In wet weather there was an area of 50-60 feet which became unwalkable and dangerous. A simple type 1 path was needed. This was Playing Fields Association land. JF and JU agreed that, providing there was no expense to the PFA, the work could be done. A site meeting was needed followed by some quotations for the work. It was agreed that CS, JU and RS should form a working group and the matter should be discussed further at the November meeting.

**War Memorial Hall**

Nothing to report

**Bewl Water**

Nothing to report

**Buses/Transport**

Nothing to report

**Police**

Nothing to report

**Highways**

BU had been asked by highways to let her know of any potholes that had been brought to her attention.

**Footpaths**

Nothing to report

**Flooding**

Nothing to report

**Housing**

Nothing to report.

**Common Land**

Nothing further to report

**Events**

Nothing further to report

**Neighbourhood Plan**

Nothing further to report

**KALC**

DC asked if any councillor had any comments about the article on Devolution in Kent to feed back to KALC the following week. JF commented that the article was mostly about restructuring KCC and he felt distant from it as there was nothing specific. DC added that with a parish council budget there was little hope of emulating what was done by the borough council.

DC would not be able to attend the next meeting. No other councillor came forward to replace him and he agreed to send apologies on behalf of LPC.

**Business**

Nothing to report

**Website**

Nothing to report.

**School**

Nothing further to report

**MP Liaison**

Nothing to report

**Parish Chairmen**

Nothing to report

**12. MATTERS OF URGENCY AT THE CHAIRMAN'S DISCRETION**

Julia Cruse wanted information about local organisations to put in the church to further disseminate news. Councillors were asked to spread the word about this.

TWCAB had asked if LPC wished to meet their new chief officer. It was agreed that this was not necessary at this stage.

An email had been received from the mayor offering to come to community events to highlight his chosen charity, Beat.

A suggestion had been submitted for the Community Awards.

BU had been asked to disseminate information about another open day at Bewl Water on November 5<sup>th</sup>. Details of this would be put on the website.

With regard to the Woodland Management Plan, BU reported that she had registered the land.

DHB raised the issue of the hedge by the oasts near the Brown Trout, which needed cutting back. BU commented that Kent Highways were the enforcement authority but agreed to investigate.

**13. EXEMPT ITEMS**

See separate page.

**The meeting closed at 9.49pm**

