

**Minutes of a Meeting of
BOUGHTON MALHERBE PARISH COUNCIL
Tuesday 28th August 2012
7.30pm in Grafty Green Village Hall**

Present: Robert Turner, Chairman
Ron Galton
Mike Hitchins
Tony King
Barbara Pearce
Christine King, Clerk

Cllr Jenefer Gibson MBC
Cllr Richard Thick MBC
Cllr Jenny Whittle KCC

Sean Bone-Knell, Assistant Director Service Delivery, KFRS
Bob Cherry, KFRS

5 Members of the Public

1. Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Keith Anderson; Alan Beech; John Collins

2. Adoption of new Code of Conduct

The council voted unanimously to adopt the Kent Code of Conduct

3. Councillor Notifications of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests Declarations

The Councillors, with the exception of Ron Galton who is seeking advice, signed their completed DPIs and handed to them to the Clerk who will post them to the Monitoring Officer. MH will upload them to the Parish Website.

Action MH and CK

4. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 8th May 2012, having previously been distributed, were unanimously **agreed** and the official copy was signed as a true record by the Chairman.

5. Local Policing

5.1 Police Report.

CK read Alan Beech's Report:

Crime Figures for Boughton Malherbe / Grafty Green.

Period - 01-05-2012 – 06-08-2012.

There has been a total of 4 reported crimes for this period:
Theft Miscellaneous, including theft by finding x 2, Earthing rod; Vehicle body part.
Burglary other than dwelling - Theft x 1, money taken.

Assault on a person thereby occasioning them actual bodily harm (- section 47)
X 1, Adult v Adult.

There is nothing else to report on these crimes.

Alan Beech will be attending the Parish once each month to do a Surgery. This has already started and takes place in the Mobile Police station parked outside Grafty Green Village Hall. He would urge any residents that have something to report or who need advice on to look on the web site and come and see him.

5.2 Speedwatch Report

CK read Keith Anderson's Report:

Since the last Boughton Malherbe Parish Council meeting in May, we have carried out several sessions with great success. One persistent vehicle was caught a number of times speeding through the village, 54mph being the highest speed. This vehicle will receive special attention from the Police; they will target and stop the vehicle. I am also receiving plenty of feedback from the roads policing unit with regard to our success rate.

Chris Wheal related what he experienced on a visit to Goudhurst, 'restorative justice', where police stop speeding vehicles after checking with a speed gun, the Police and then the Parish Council have a word with the offender, then fire brigade show some graphic videos of the consequences of speeding. If the Offender is contrite they may get caution, if they argue they will get a fine. It seems to work well.

6. Highway and Footway Matters

6.1 Speed Indicator Device

This has not yet materialized, nor has the cheque from BMPC for £450 been cashed. CK has written to Ben Hilden who has passed on the complaint. Jenny Whittle will investigate. Also the speed limit signs on Liverton Hill should be erected by the start of the new school term.

6.2 Dangerous verge by Grafty Garden Centre

Done

6.3 Flooding at Crumps Lane Corner, Headcorn Road

Done

6.4 Ditches in Woodcock Lane

Still not done,

Action CK

6.5 Blocked Gullies Church Road

Still not done, and another still outstanding, a gully on the right half way up the hill towards the Punchers'

Action CK

6.6 Liverton Hill

RT had recently photographed a massive lorry on the hill. Jenny Whittle said she can fund a weight limit sign though doubts it, alone, would be adequate prevention. There is a

Lorry Watch Scheme that Boughton Malherbe could take part in but the sign would need to be in place first, then Trading Standards can enforce with fines of £1,000.

6.7 Missing Finger Post, Chain Gate

Still not done

Action CK

6.8 Grass Verge Cutting

Reported, response awaited. Jenny Whittle explained that Kent Highways maintain the verges owned by Kent Highways and elsewhere it is up to landowners to cut their own verges. Kent highways cut in July and spray in October. This year, heavy rains caused exceptional growth.

Action CK

6.9 Pot holes

Potholes in Elmstone Hole Road, Colebridge Lane, Grafty Green end of Church Road, and broken road surface below Blenberry Farm, were all reported last week.

7. Resources and Environment Matters

7.1 Woodcock Lane trees

The situation is on-going with notices still on the trees. A second arborist's report states that different trees from those first suggested are contributing to subsidence at Ash Tree Farm. Further information is awaited.

7.2 Tyres dumped in Church Road

At the last meeting, CK had reported reporting them; they were removed within a week

7.3 Garden Club

CK asked Doreen Hulm to discuss with the Garden Club committee how maintenance and bills be done and then contact her.

7.4 Emergency Plan/Village Plan

RT suggested groups need to be created, not led by Parish Council but with a Parish Council representative present. An advert in Malherbe Monthly for help with an Emergency Plan received only one volunteer. This needs to be done so an appeal will go in Malherbe Monthly again. The same will be done for a Village Plan to gather people's views, eg: maintain the village envelope as it is?; how do people wish to see their Village in years to come?; etc. Other Parishes' plans will be looked at to see how others have approached this.

Action CK

7.5 Diamond Jubilee

This was a very successful afternoon and evening. The Parish Council supported the Village Hall; the Hog Roast went very well. Thanks were expressed to Jamie Clark for his permission to have the Beacon on his land, and to everybody involved for their help.

7.6 Litter Picking Group

This was suggested by RT at the last meeting, to have a litter picking day led by Joan Drury. A meeting was suggested. To be followed up.

7.7 59 Bus - report from John Collins read by CK

The last meeting of the East of Maidstone Rural Transport Group was held on 16th July.

Following the changes to the service in April (Grafty Green not really affected) and KCC picking up the funding for the 0721 to Maidstone on Monday to Friday non-schooldays and the 1725 from Maidstone on Mondays to Fridays, the 59 service is now said by the Arriva representative to be performing financially very well and no further changes are seen to be needed.

I asked that the 12.20 from Maidstone on Mondays to Fridays should now return in service to Maidstone, as it always used to, instead of returning 'not in service', as the reason for it having to get back to Maidstone quickly no longer existed after the service changes in April. The Arriva rep agreed to consider this suggestion which had the support of the other parishes present.

The KCC rep advised that there were no current plans for subsidy withdrawals for financial year 2012-13 but stressed that pressures on the budget during this time (resulting from commercial service withdrawals e.t.c) could change this situation. Awareness therefore needs to be given to the fact that the joint 13,59,28,29 Saturday contract could be under threat if such pressures were forthcoming. He agreed to advise the group as soon as possible if such a scenario was likely.

The Saturday contract is due for renewal from April 2014 and the KCC rep confirmed that any decision on a reworked contract would take place in the summer of 2013 ready for the new contract start date of April 2014 and that the group could be involved in any such discussions.

New buses are due in Maidstone in the next few months which should enable all buses on the 59 to be worked by low floor (easy access) vehicles from Feb next year.

The next meeting of the group is scheduled for 14th January 2013.

7.8 Queen Elizabeth Yew Tree

The Yew Tree is an interesting part of the Parish, on private land. Does it have a preservation order? RG had prepared a plan to support the surrounding brick and ragstone wall at an estimated cost of £2,000. CK wrote to Jamie Clark in June as decided at the last PC meeting, informing him of the (then) intention to re-point the wall. RT to arrange to meet with Jamie Clark. Grants may be available for the work, or Lottery Funding.

Action CK and RT

7.9 Garage opposite Kings Head

CK reported that improvements had been carried out within days of the last PC meeting. There had been no Parish Council intervention.

8. Public Session

A member of the public reported that the 30mph signs by Wrens Nest have been moved and are no longer opposite one another which has an adverse effect on Sat Navs. This has already been reported to Kent Highways. A copy of the e-mail will be forwarded to Jenny Whittle for her to chase up.

Action CK and JW

A member of the public suggested that a Footpath Map, showing footpaths within the Parish, on the Village Green would be useful. Also that the footpath sign at Judge Farm has fallen over and that the path is badly overgrown at one end.

The footpath at Broadstone Cottage is an old fashioned stone sign by people's garden, and it offers no direction.

Action CK

TK suggested a large parish map on a board would be very useful as a geographic aid when a location is being discussed.

Action CK

9. Planning

9.1 Petsfield, Eastwood Road

RT explained that a building has been erected on this site without planning permission. CK reported this to the Planning Enforcement Department and has received a letter of acknowledgement dated 31st July 2012. Since then, more families have been seen moving in.

Decisions Taken:

The following Planning Decisions received from MBC were **Noted**

9.2 12/0562 2 Church Road, Grafty Green, ME17 2BA

Application for single storey rear extension as shown on drawing numbers 001, 002 and 003 supported by a design and access statement all received 27th March 2012
Approved/Granted with Conditions

9.3 12/0499 Thornden Farmhouse, Lenham Road. TN27 9LH

Application for certificate of lawfulness for an existing development being the use of land for recreational purposes incidental to the enjoyment of Thornden Farmhouse
Refused

9.4 12/0884 Wrens Nest, Headcorn Road. ME17 2AP

Retrospective listed building consent application for erection of single storey garden/hobbies room with link to main house (amendments to application MA/11/1250)
Granted with conditions

9.5 12/0883 Wrens Nest, Headcorn Road. ME17 2AP

Retrospective application for the erection of a single storey garden/hobbies room with link top main house (amendments to application MA/11/1249)
Approved/granted with conditions

9.6 12/0929 Gardners Cottage Chilston Park, ME17 2BE

Erection of a detached garage as show on drawing number AL(0)11/B received on 18/5/12
Approved/Granted with Conditions

Applications Received

The following applications were considered and recommendations made:

9.7 12/0930 Gardners Cottage, Chilston Park, ME17 2BE

Listed building consent for erection of detached garage
Recommendation: no objection

9.8 12/0893 South Barn, Boughton Farm. ME17 2BD

Application to discharge conditions relating to MA/1076
Notification for information only, MA/1076 previously approved

9.9 12/1172 Gardners Cottage, Chilston Park, ME17 2BE

Application to discharge conditions relating to MA/10/1961
Recommendation: no objection

- 9.10 12/1173** Gardners Cottage, Chilston Park, ME17 2BE
Application for discharge of conditions relating to MA/10/1960
Recommendation: no objection
- 9.11 12/1239** 1, Park House Cottage, Headcorn Road ME17 2AU
Part single storey and part two storey side extension, part single storey and part two storey rear extension, single storey front extension and repositioning of front driveway and vehicle access (resubmission of MA/12/0861)
Recommendation: no objection
- 9.12 12/1262** Elmstone Farm, Elmstone Hole Road. ME17 2AJ
Application for conversion of outbuilding to music room, store and garaging (residential) with roof extension and new weatherboarding
Recommendation: no objection
- 9.13 12/1350** Elmstone Farm, Elmstone Hole Road. ME17 2AJ
Application for Listed Building Consent for conversion of outbuilding to a music room store and garaging with roof extension and new weatherboarding
Recommendation: no objection

10. Matters of Report

10.1 County and Borough Councillors' Reports

Jenny Gibson (MBC) spoke a little on the Core Strategy which is progressing and currently out for consultation.

Jenny Whittle (KCC) contributed to Highways and other items

Richard Thick (at the beginning of the meeting as he had to leave early) spoke about problems with Gypsies and planning breaches and how little appears to be done. Jenny Whittle suggested meeting with the 3 affected parishes; Hugh Robertson; the enforcement officer; Cabinet Members and Chris Garland and sort this problem once and for all. BMPC recognizes that the problem here is far smaller than in neighbouring parishes but it is growing.

10.2 The Chairman's Report

RT spoke about the KALC meeting he had attended with CK about the Parish Services Scheme and the principle of double taxation and that, for Boughton Malherbe, it could mean a rise in precept from £9 to £25. We will attend a meeting with MBC as a fact finding exercise to see what MBC has to say.

10.3 A report on Water Supply from Ron Galton

The latest situation is that we have to accept that South East Water is satisfying all legal requirements. It is not known whether the water pressure has increased since the Barn fire as it is thought that work may have been done on the valves. However, pressure seems improved since that first fire, even if down to the system being flushed after opening of the hydrants. RG is in communication with South East Water and informed them of the increase in pressure and suggested a 4 yearly flushing of hydrants. He awaits a reply.

10.4 KFRS Volunteer Chris Wheal, Reported on work in Grafty Green.

Chris Wheal is now an official KFRS volunteer and so able to do much of the work around the parish and has the contacts for that which he is unable to do. There is only one hydrant that requires further work, by Grafty Garden Centre, although it is operational. Hydrant work will be ongoing, strimming and clearing every 6 weeks, and CW expressed thanks to RT for his help with this, RG for his ongoing work with South East Water, and MH for the all important magazine articles.

11. Fire at Ledgers' Row

2 Members of KFRS: Sean Bone-Knell, Assistant Director of Operations
Bob Cherry

Sean Bone-Knell talked about fire cover for our area and how it has been a challenge. They are looking to improve and he went on to explain that big changes are taking place from the old 'retained' system to a new 'on-call' system. Day cover under the old system has been difficult with people often working many miles from home, so the new system will be a big improvement.

Attendance time to this fire, for 2 pumps coming from Maidstone, was 21 minutes. The first emergency call received stated 'Church Road' which was why the first appliance went down Church Road through Boughton Malherbe. The 3 local fire stations at Charing, Headcorn and Lenham were not in use at the time and when this happens KFRS have triggers in the system which move the resources across to where they are needed. Fire Stations at Headcorn and Lenham are now recruiting so the situation will improve. Two of the Stations will have 24/7 cover and the third day-time cover only, in the short term, staff from other stations are covering those with staff shortages. He went on to say he will be happy to come back and update on local progress.

Chris Wheal complimented KFRS on its work which enables us to enhance protection in the Parish. Issues raised after first fire have been addressed and is indicative of how KFRS are listening and always working to improve. He expressed thanks to Sean Bone-Knell and Bob Cherry, and also to Martin Adams and Steve Lewis, as well as those who had attended a Community Morning in the Village on Saturday 25th September.

12. Councillor Reports on External Meetings attended

Barbara Pearce attended a Joint Parishes group Meeting on 4th July with Cllr Turner. The Core Strategy draft and development at M20 Junction 8 were under discussion. At Junction 8 there are 2 areas under observation: the area previously earmarked for KIG and the area near the Caravan Park. It has been suggested that Detling aerodrome be considered. Overall, BP considered this to have been a very good meeting.

13. Correspondence

Kent Fire & Rescue Service Poster
Drink-Driving poster for noticeboard
Asian Longhorn Beetle notice - for notice board
Missing Persons Appeal - Robert Carlisle
KALC Meeting Minutes 31st May
KALC Meeting Minutes 23rd July
Acknowledgement of report to MBC re Petsfield

14. Finance

14.1 Income since the last meeting was **noted:**
£1,580.00 Concurrent Functions, 1st Instalment

14.2 It was proposed by RT, seconded by TK, and **agreed**, to authorise payments made since meeting of 20th March 2012:

Cheque no			
374	30th March	C King, Salary	£71.30
375	30th March	P Anderson, Salary	£1,013.62
376	30th March	Tax Office	£254.60
377	30th March	Leaving Gift, P.A.	£130.00
378	31st March	Deposit, Interactive sign	£450.00
379	8th May	KALC membership	£204.64
380	8th May	AoN Insurance	£394.58
381	8th May	John Collins, Audit	£60.00
382	31st May	GGVH Jubilee Support	£600.00
383	CANCELLED		
384	27th July	KALC: 2 Courses TK & BP	£144.00

14.3 It was proposed by RT, seconded by RG, and **agreed**, that the following cheque be signed:

Cheque no. 385, Rosemary Smith, £177.00

14.4 It was **noted** that the balance at the bank is £5,108. Available Balance £4,658.00

14.5 Concurrent Functions: 1st instalment received.

15 Parish Services Scheme

RT explained what the Parish Services Scheme, set to replace Concurrent Functions, is, and what this will mean for Boughton Malherbe. RT proposed that we join forces with other parishes, under the guidance of KALC, to fight its imposition, details of which had been previously circulated. MH seconded. All **approved**.

16. Further Information

CK spoke briefly about committees for certain areas of council responsibilities, suggesting that a Planning Committee may be beneficial. There are training courses available and a Planning Conference in March next year which also incorporates formal training. A report, and item for decision, will be on the Agenda of the next meeting.

17. Dates of next meetings: 20th November 2012; 22nd January 2013; 19th March 2013

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10pm.