

Harrietsham Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on
Wednesday 25th April 2018 at 8.00pm in St John the Baptist Church

Introduction

Parish Council Chairman Eddie Powell opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and reminded all present that the Annual Meeting booklet was available containing the reports provided by the Parish Council and Harrietsham Groups. Cllr Powell thanked all of the organisations that had submitted an article.

1. **Present**

Cllr E Powell (Chair), Cllr G Dean, Cllr J Sams, Cllr T Sams, Cllr J Moore, Cllr F Stanley, Cllr V Foster, Cllr T Griffiths, RFO M Cuerden, Clerk A Broadhurst, Community Warden Martin Sherwood and County Cllr S Prendergast

Approximately 18 members of the public.

2. **Apologies for absence**

PCSO Boyd

3. **Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 26th April 2017**

David Oversby proposed (from the floor) that the minutes of the Annual meeting held on the 26th April 2017 be approved. This was seconded by Peter Brown, with 17 in favour.

4. **Guest Speaker - Kent County Council Fostering Services**

Mim Nichols from KCC Fostering Services gave a presentation on the service that they offer. 700 families in Kent are currently fostering over 1,000 children. Teenagers and sibling groups with more than 2 children are the hardest to place, with a family of 8 children having to be split. Children are often fostered due to neglect, with one child found wandering down the street in a nappy. On investigation the mother was found intoxicated, there was no food in the house for the child to eat and there was a dog with broken bones. Drug, alcohol and mental issues were some of the main reasons that children are taken into care but judges always try to place them with family first. If this cannot be arranged they try to keep them close to their extended family so that they can keep in contact. Foster children must have their own bedrooms when being fostered and carers need to be emotionally and physically fit.

Being a foster carer is a career and there is lots of training and support, with BTEC qualifications being something to work towards. Due to domestic abuse, some children will view relationships incorrectly so carers have to be able to support them. Carers must be at least 21, can be from all backgrounds and don't have to be married.

For further information visit www.kentfostering.co.uk or 03000 420002

Cllr Powell commented that he had been involved in a recent case where 6 children needed to go into care as the mother was being sectioned. He added that the work undertaken by KCC Fostering Services is amazing. County Cllr Prendergast added that, when she was elected, she went out with a team and it had been a humbling experience.

During public discussion the following points were covered:

- Query on how the placement of litter bins in the village was decided
- The issue of dog's mess in the village and the 'Flag and Bag' initiative

The formal meeting closed at 8.40pm

Cllr Powell invited all present to stay for refreshments.