

LOWER HARDRES AND NACKINGTON **PARISH COUNCIL**

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD IN THE BAKER WHITE MEMORIAL HALL AT 8.00PM ON TUESDAY 12TH APRIL 2016

In attendance were Councillors McCully, (Chairman), the Parish Clerk and 10 members of the public. Apologies for absence were received from Pat Smith (Parish News), Bob Thomas (Nackington Church Warden), Carol Day (Lower Hardres Church Warden, Lyn Cornelius (Gardeners Society) and CCC Cllr Robert Thomas

The Chairman welcomed everyone present including KCC Cllr. John Simmonds and CCC Cllr Rosemary Doyle and opened the meeting.

1 Minutes of the Last Meeting and Matters Arising

It was proposed and seconded that the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 21st April 2015 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

2. Chairman's Report

Planning:

The Parish Council has considered 21 planning application during the past 12 months plus various consultation documents relating to the South Canterbury Development Plan, (See attached box). The Parish Council is in the throes of making further responses to this plan. Any members of the Public can see this plan currently on display at Bridge Parish Church (When?)

In addition the Nackington Solar Farm application has been on every agenda even though there has been no activity for over a year. We now feel that we can confidently remove it from the agenda. However, we trust our City Councillors will keep an eye open on our behalf because this particular development did not accord with the wishes of the vast majority of the population of the Parish and we would hate it to "sneak up" on us again.

There have been some concerns in the Parish as to what is going on at the old Bygones site. We are in communication with the planning authority over a possible breach of planning. The owner has offered to attend our May meeting to explain his proposals.

Community Space:

As you will know, we now have planning consent for a small play area to be located close to the farm shop car park entrance. We have selected the design for four pieces of equipment plus fencing etc, and are awaiting return of the signed leases. We have secured a £5,000 CCC Capital Grant and another possible £7,000.00 from the Open Spaces Department at CCC. The project will cost in the region of £25,000, so we are investigating other organizations for funding. In addition there will have to be some fund raising events in order to obtain the little extras such as benches and picnic tables. Our thanks to Cllr Mrs Lucy Markes for the considerable time and effort she is putting in to drive this project forward.

Website:

Since last year we have set up a website which we are now obliged by law to have. All the minutes, agendas and other important papers are available to read, in addition to the Parish Councillors and their contact details. Very soon all the papers relating to our end of year accounts will be displayed for members of the public to view. The website address is as follows:

www.lowerhardresandnackingtonparishcouncil.org.uk . The clerk's email address is: clerk@lowerhardresandnackingtonparishcouncil.org.uk

Finance:

Unfortunately the Concurrent Functions Funding which is the money we obtain from CCC for the upkeep of play areas and open spaces continues to be cut.

Last November we estimated a budget of £6,573 for 2016-17 and agreed to set a precept for 2016-17 in the sum of £6,406 as against last year's precept of £5,871. The increase is as a result of extra £90 insurance for the new play area, £120 towards the maintenance of the Speedwatch equipment and £400 set aside for much needed office equipment. Unfortunately, on small precepting Parishes like ours the percentage increase is higher than those Parishes with larger budgets.

Broadband:

Over the past year we have kept in touch with the KCC Manager for BDUK (Faster Broadband) and whilst those Parishioners on the Petham Exchange 01227 700 could go "live" within a couple of months, (the man in the Openreach Van told me the other day it would "go live" in the "Summer") it appears that those on the Canterbury Exchange may have to wait for another couple of years. Details will become clear when the KCC & Broadband agree the new plan.

Highways:

Highways in the Parish are beset with the perennial problems of pot holes, overgrown vegetation, HGV's and speeding traffic. Our speedwatch co-coordinator continues to monitor the traffic and is about to take on the role of Lorry Watch Coordinator, which was brought to our attention by Highways England. I am glad to report she has a number of speeding scalps to her credit!

As a result of the appalling problems last year created by Operation Stack, we have recently completed a Highways England consultation document seeking our views on possible locations for a lorry park near the M20; we obviously had to consider which site would have the least effect on the Bridge Road and the B2068 so we opted for Stanford West. We are grateful to County Councillor John Simmonds for the assistance he may be able to give us on problems relating to traffic in particular on the Bridge Road. (Is this correct?)

Other Matters:

Last month we held another litter pick in the Parish. Referred to this year as "Clean for the Queen" in honour of HM's Birthday. Although we were not permitted to pick Faussett Hill B2068 or Bridge Road due to KCC refusing to insure us. We had 17 volunteers who filled between 20 and 30 sacks with rubbish. We thank those volunteers very much for turning out to assist in this unpleasant task.

We have received a number of complaints over the closure of two PROW, we have reported this through the proper channels several times but have not received much response.

We have recently been consulted on changes to the mobile library service and fortunately Lower Hardres and Nackington will retain this service although the time and day has changed.

Elections:

As you are aware, Local Council elections were held last May we did not have sufficient candidates to require an election, which saved money, but fortunately managed to keep the five existing members without having to co-opt any more councilors.

The lack of interest in membership of the Parish Council may be as a result of the massive increase in workload and the amount of documentation, consultations and new legislation that small Parishes such as ours now have to adhere to. It is no longer simply looking after and doing what is best for one's Parish, we are now perpetually involved in much wider issues, many of which have no bearing locally.

Future:

I see the Parish Councils main tasks for the coming year are:

- a. To complete the Community Space (Play area) project.
- b. To continue the battle to improve Broadband and Mobile phone reception throughout the Parish.
- c. To fight to resolve the deplorable traffic problems on the Bridge Road and Stone street caused by Operation Stack and the likely effects of the South Canterbury Development Plan with the related profusion of litter on major and minor routes.

Thanks:

Finally I would like to thank my fellow Councillors for their enthusiastic and meticulous support

throughout the year. I would also like to thank on your behalf Jo McKeever and her Neighbourhood Watch and Speed Watch Teams who make an important contribution to the maintenance of law and order in the Parish, and David Harrison for looking after our two war memorials in the Parish.

I would like to thank County Councillor John Simmonds for his continuing support and advice particularly in the problem areas of Broadband and traffic and to City Councillors Rosemary Doyle & Bob Thomas for their interest in our Parish.

Last and by no means least I would like to thank our Parish Clerk Sue Shaw for her outstanding efforts to keep the Parish Council on the straight and narrow and all the time managing to maintain her sense of humour. All this accomplished against a background of some very serious medical ailments.

3. Reports from Village Organisations – *Copies of which are kept on file with the clerk*

Nackington Church Warden	The Parish News
The Garden Society	Neighbourhood Watch
Village Hall Management Committee	The Parish Magazine
Speedwatch	KCC Cllr John Simmonds
CCC Cllr Rosemary Doyle	

Cllr Simmonds referred to the previous KCC Financial Executive receiving an increase in funding each year, whilst Cllr Simmonds had received a decrease each year. He referred to the massive expenditure on social care being in the region of £500m. On the library service he stated that not one library has closed although there is a review of the mobile library service and on highway issues said there will be a pot hole purge in the spring, and following a question said he would look into the issue of recycling tarmac.

4. Matters Raised by Parish Electors

Mr Munford asked why the disabled car park in Castle Street is being closed for housing development. Cllr Doyle was unable to answer this as it is a commercially owned car park.

Mr Moloney addressed the CCC Member present on the matter of the South Canterbury Development and stated that it would have a damaging effect on a medieval City.

5. Close of meeting

The Chairman thanked all for attending and those for providing reports and closed the meeting by inviting all to take refreshments

The meeting closed at 9.15pm

Signed.....

Date.....