

LOWER HARDRES AND NACKINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD IN THE BAKER WHITE MEMORIAL HALL AT 8.00PM ON TUESDAY 21st APRIL 2015

In attendance were Councillors McCully, (Chairman), the Parish Clerk and 20 members of the public. There were no apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone present including KCC Cllr. John Simmonds, CCC Cllrs Rosemary Doyle and Robert Thomas 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 8th April 2014 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

2. Chairman's Report

PLANNING: - During the year your Parish Council has considered 23 Planning applications. In addition the three Solar Farm applications have been discussed at length at every meeting during the year. In relation to the Solar Farm I would like to take this opportunity to thank John Showler and Brian Moore for their consistent scrutiny of these applications. Thanks also to Charlie Markes, Kevin Molony and members of the Parish Council for considerable input into our deliberations on the matter. We are also grateful to members of the Parish and indeed people living outside the Parish who have made their feelings known to the City Planning department. The current situation is that since 1st April 2015 subsidies for large scale solar farms are much reduced. The Canterbury City Council Planning department have stated that Green Energy never submitted a valid application due to the errors in their documentation and GE was invited to submit a new set of plans before the April deadline but have not done so. This situation could conceivably be subject to legal challenges but the perceived wisdom is that this is unlikely. We hold our breath!

PARISH COUNCIL: - We welcome Brian Moore who agreed to be co-opted onto the Parish Council to fill the vacancy left by the departure of Tim Hulme to South Africa. In this connection I would like to thank Tim for the considerable contribution he made to our deliberations during his time as a Parish Councilor and we wish him well in his new life in South Africa

FINANCE: - We have continued to support both Churches in the Parish with a grant towards the upkeep of the Burial Grounds, We received £240 income from Bridge and Bekesbourne for the use of our speedwatch equipment and received £110.00 VAT refund for 2013/14. We applied for £2450 Concurrent Functions Funding from CCC but due to cut backs have been awarded £1841 which is 70% of what was paid last year. As a result of a number of Parishes complaining about the perpetual reductions, CCC has agreed to review the Concurrent Functions Funding. We set a precept of £5876 plus £222 Council Tax Support Grant. The precept shows an increase of 10% which is a direct result of an obligation to budget £500 for election expenses incurred by CCC. That said our precept remains amongst the lowest in the Canterbury area. This year the Parish Council has spent around £8000 and is left with a balance of £9872.

LITTER PICK: The staff at the Canterbury City Council declined to support our Litter Pick scheduled for Sunday 12th April on the grounds of "Health & Safety" particularly on the B2068 (Stone Street). When one witnesses the "Boy Racers" on Stone Street they do have a point. However, we are hoping to get CCC to task Serco to carry out the work. If that fails we will take up our County Councilor John Simmonds's offer of assistance from Highways Department towards the end of the month. In any case I would like to thank those of the Parish who carried out their own "informal" litter pick in various places! We hope to find a way of reinstating it next year'

HIGHWAYS: After many years of badgering and thanks mainly to Councilor John Simmonds using part of his highways funding, interactive signs were finally installed on Faussett Hill and near the Granville PH – only to have one of them stolen soon after installation. Fortunately KCC had them insured and we are now back to two signs. We think that they are proving very effective. We continue to request pothole repairs and for footpath vegetation to be cut back with varying degrees of success. South East Water's work on Stone Street is due to be completed at the end of the week which will be a relief

WW1 CENTENARY: With the help of David Harrison we provided a small Royal British Legion wooden cross for all named on the two War Memorials who fell during the Great War. Each cross was inscribed with the person's name, Regiment they served in, their date of birth and death and where they died. Each cross was placed at the base of the appropriate War Memorial together with a wreath from the Parish, following a service in both Churches. In this context I would like to thank David Harrison for his work throughout the year in maintenance of our two War Memorials

COMMUNITY SPACE: Following a request from some parishioners, the Parish Council, under the guidance of Councilor Lucy Markes, managed to find a small area within the village to be used as a play area. We are currently submitting a planning application for change of use, have appointed a solicitor and are attempting to source funding to fence and equip the area.

BROADBAND: As many of you will know the Broadband service in the village is not good. It is a complex problem which I won't bore you with now. However the Parish Council and various individuals are working away at BT and its subsidiary Openreach to try and get substantial improvements to the service. In this we are being assisted by Julian Brazier, the BDUK Project Manager at KCC and Councilor John Simmonds.

ELECTIONS. Since no more than 5 members of the Parish put their names forward for election the current Parish Council have been duly re-elected without a contest which at least saves money.

FUTURE. For the future, I see the Parish council's tasks are to ensure the Solar farm is finally resolved to our satisfaction, to continue with the struggle to improve Broadband & mobile phone reception and to attempt to get the Community Space / Play Area into action.

THANKS: I would like to thank my fellow Councilors for their support throughout the year. I would also like to thank on your behalf Jo McKeever and her Neighborhood Watch and Speed Watch Teams who make an important contribution to the upkeep of law and order in the Parish. I would also like to thank John Simmonds, Rosemary Doyle & Bob Thomas for their support and advice throughout the year. 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 humor. All this accomplished against a background of a very harrowing family tragedy.

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

Lower Hardres Church Warden
The Garden Society
Village Hall Management Committee
The 100
KCC Cllr John Simmonds
CCC Cllr Robert Thomas

Nackington Church Warden
Neighbourhood Watch
The Parish Magazine
Speedwatch
CCC Cllr Rosemary Doyle

4. Matters Raised by Parish Electors

- Michael Munford asked the City Council members about the reported closure of car parks in the city and where and how are the disabled expected to get there and park.
Cllr Doyle responded that it is only going to be small car parks offering very few spaces and that Castle Street multi-storey could be used for the disabled
- Jane Grundy questioned the loss of car parking spaces in some car parks for development
Initially Cllr Doyle said she was unaware of this but then referred to a few being removed for development in Radigans car park
- Bob Thomas asked where the City Council proposed to park all these vehicles once the South Canterbury development was built stating that the new development would cause additional pressure on traffic. He also felt that there had been no improvements in the traffic problems in the 50 years that he lived in the area and said that there seemed to be no liaison between CCC & KHS
The response was that it is proposed to provide a fast bus route to the City from the new development. Cllr Doyle also added that the City Council had considered a huge Kent Highways document during the Parish Plan consultations.
- Kevin Molony and Pat Smith asked for a safe cycling route to the City and also referred to the requirement of safe storage for cycles.
Cycle paths are part of KCC's remit and Cllr Simmonds said there is still some funding available
- Parish Clerk questioned KCC Cllr Simmonds on the difficulties imposed by Kent Highways now refusing to answer emails and that apart from the parish portal, it is impossible to communicate with anyone in Highways.
Cllr Simmonds stated that he too had only seen this message today and would be taking the matter up with Highways
- Jan Janman asked where the proposed play area will be located in the Parish.
Cllr Mrs Markees stated that until matters are finalised this should remain confidential

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 9.30pm

Signed.....

Date.....