

BRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 15th. May 2008 AT 7.30 PM IN BRIDGE VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllrs A Edmonds (Chairman), C Beesty, B Beinder, J Corfield, M Esdale, J Hill, T Wilmshurst, City Councillor John Anderson, County Councillor M Northey, P Knight CCFC, D Fairclough CCFC, N Fox CCFC, C Seath (Clerk), and 15 parishioners

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Gulvin, Cllr Lewis, PCSO Sue Radcliffe, Mr & Mrs D Stewart, Mr M Seath, and Mrs J Hill.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12th April 2007

The minutes of the meeting held on 27th April 2007 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2007/2008

Councillor Ann Edmonds welcomed parishioners to the meeting. She outlined various village projects that had been undertaken during the year. Bollards had been installed at the parish's expense outside Bridgeway Stores and these had proved effective in preventing parking on the pavement. Kent Highways had agreed funding for the flashing speed sign for Bridge Hill but a shortage of installers had delayed its arrival. The affordable housing project was progressing slowly but it was hoped that a planning application would be submitted in Autumn. The Planning Inspectorate rejected the appeal lodged by the owners of Higham Park and that development would not now take place. The parish council had objected to the application for extended opening hours submitted in connection with the re-opening of Bridge Place Country Club.

The recreation ground had benefited from the wild flower project, which was progressing well and children from the school had helped on a number of occasions. Unfortunately, the youth group had been disbanded in April due to lack of numbers. Should more young people come forward, this decision could be reviewed. However, the new Teen Shelter was installed on the recreation ground in February and officially opened by Cllr Northey on 8th. May. It had been well used and Cllr Beesty was thanked for his efforts in overseeing the project. The parish council was still in negotiation with the city council over the renewal of the lease for the Mill Centre.

Cllr Beinder was having difficulty in locating a supplier of signs for the restoration of old street names, but this was on-going. Cllr Edmonds reminded parishioners of the Welcome Packs for newcomers and asked them to let councillors know of new arrivals in the village.

Cllr Edmonds thanked Mr & Mrs Possee and Mr & Mrs Oakey for their good work on the planters outside Bridgeway Stores and at the chicane. She reported that under Cllr Lewis' coordination a group of volunteers were keeping the village litter free and she thanked them for their efforts. She also thanked Cllr Esdale and residents for their help with putting up and taking down the Christmas trees.

The parish council had written to Stagecoach to thank them for re-scheduling the 9.28am bus so that it left Bridge at 9.30 and Freedom bus pass holders could use the bus without payment. Cllr Esdale had instigated this initiative.

Cllr Edmonds thanked Cllr Hill for chairing the Planning Committee during a challenging year and she thanked other councillors and the clerk for their hard work and support during the past year.

THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2007/8

Cllr Esdale presented the accounts for the year ending 31st March 2007. He explained, with the help of pie charts, the sources of the parish income, how the money had been spent and the plans for the use of the reserves over the next year.

4. REPORT OF COUNTY COUNCILLOR, MICHAEL NORTHEY

Cllr Michael Northey announced that the KCC Cabinet had agreed to subsidise the over 60s free bus scheme so that it would start from 9.00am each day. This would cost KCC an estimated £120,000 in the first year, rising to a projected £150,000 at current prices in future years. This was due to be implemented from 30th June but could be delayed to enable legal formalities to be resolved.

KCC had voted to ban the use of the 'mosquito' device on KCC premises. This device emitted a high-pitched sound, audible only to those under about 23 years of age, and was used increasingly to deter gatherings of young people around shops etc.

Kent Highways Authority had instigated a drive to clear up the backlog of pothole repairs, with 11,314 potholes repaired in the five weeks up to 28th April. Recent legislation effective from July would mean that in future any utility company wishing to dig up the road would have to apply to KCC for permission, justify the work and negotiate a time slot. There would be financial penalties for over-running.

The St Peter's Appeal had been supported by a contribution of £11,800 from Members' funds, following Cllr Northey's recommendation. Cllr Northey congratulated the parish council and Cllr Beesty in particular on the successful teen shelter project. He had been honoured to perform the opening ceremony.

The KCC had an excellent trading standards unit and Cllr Northey urged parishioners to report any 'rogue traders' or dishonest door-to-door sales people. The unit also held a list of approved traders.

The KCC had a turn over of over £2.1billion. It had been able to keep the council tax for 2008-9 to just below the Retail Price index of inflation of 3.9%, which was in the middle range for English councils.

While Cllr Northey did not have a fixed weekly 'surgery', he was always happy to discuss concerns with constituents over the phone, by email and letter or would visit their homes by appointment.

REPORT FROM CITY COUNCILLOR JOHN ANDERSON

Cllr Anderson reported that the new Lord Mayor would be Cllr Mrs Caroline Parry, Conservative councillor for Marshside. Her deputy would be Cllr Charlotte McCaul, Liberal Democrat councillor for Wincheap.

Cllr Anderson was Chairman of the Licencing Board and as such could not adjudicate on premises applications from his own constituency. He was also Chairman of the Joint Transport Board, which works with KCC. Cllr Anderson was rotating Chairman of Housing Appeals and a member of the Rural Area members Panel. He could advise on building matters within the parish.

5. a. REPORT ON YOUTH SHELTER – Cllr Colin Beesty

Cllr Beesty gave a presentation on the processes that had led to the installation of the youth shelter on the recreation ground. He explained that a consultation process had been undertaken over several months, starting with the village fete in 2006. The consultation had involved the village youth organisations, villagers and older school children. A short list of designs had been drawn up after consultation and this was narrowed down to one design after a further exhibition outside Bridgeway Stores in October 2007. Permission had been obtained from Cantley Estates to erect the shelter on the recreation ground and there had been extensive discussions with residents living round the recreation ground as to the siting of the shelter. The youth group had secured a £5,000 grant from KCC, the parish council added a contribution of £1,745 and the order had been placed in January 2008. Cllr Beesty showed pictures of the shelter being erected and of the formal opening of the shelter by Cllr Northey on 8th May. He thanked parishioners for their support for the project.

b. REPORT ON PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO THE VILLAGE HALL – Cllr Mark Esdale

Cllr Esdale reported that the village hall was used at least once every day. Five years ago there had been discussions about building a new hall but there had been difficulties over finding a new site. It was impossible to extend the present hall in any direction and the main problems were lack of storage space, particularly for playgroup equipment, and

the need for upgraded disabled toilet facilities. Cllr Gulvin had drawn up plans which would provide new disabled toilets, a new storage area, table trolley and chair storage and a re-designed, smaller kitchen. The cost would be about £30,000. The parish council had applied to the city council for funding under a capital grants scheme. Unfortunately this scheme was over-subscribed and in order to obtain funding this year, projects had had to score 78 points and above. Bridge's project scored 76 points. The parish council would re-apply for a grant in the next financial year and hoped to begin building in 2009. There would be no change to the Hunter Room.

C. REPORT ON FIRST SEASON OF CANTERBURY CITY FOOTBALL CLUB AT BRIDGE – Phil Knight, Chairman CCFC & Norman Fox, Press & Media CCFC

Phil Knight reported that Canterbury City Football Club currently ran 8 teams; the First Team, Development Team (Reserves), a Ladies team, 2 girls teams, 3 youth teams and a special needs club. The club had had a very successful season with the first team becoming the Kent County League Division Two Champions. The club were also the Kent Junior Cup winners, Kent Ladies team champions, Kent Youth League Under 16s Champions among other successes. Mr Knight thanked the Bridge village website for its prompt match and results reports.

The club currently supported over 30 youth and community projects in the area. He highlighted in particular the SNAAP project which supported special needs children in sport, the half term coaching initiatives as the Canterbury Barracks for the children of servicemen currently serving in Afghanistan and the Activ8 schools programme. In addition the club supported the Pilgrim's Hospice as its charity, helping to raise both funds and awareness. They hoped to receive the Charter Standard for a Community Club.

The club currently had 200 members and 30 corporate members. It had been honoured with a civic reception in recognition of its success. It had a well used website and produced a club newsletter. There were plans to organise 11 teams for the 2008-9 season, including a veterans team.

Bridge had been an ideal home for the first team. The officials had noticed a reduction in graffiti and damage to the pavilion, as more local young people had been involved with the club. The club was aware of the on-going problems over litter, disturbances to local residents caused by the crowd and some reports of bad language. It was pointed out that there were stewards to monitor the crowd and deter bad language; the club had a zero tolerance policy towards bad language among its players. It was planned to use a large litterbin to clear up after each match and to establish a litter duty rota. The club was investigating ways of communicating the fixtures in advance.

The long-term goal of the club was to have its own ground in Canterbury and negotiations were on-going with the city council. It was envisaged that the Bridge ground would still be used for other teams, possibly the Ladies team, once the First Team moved to new accommodation. The club was grateful to Bridge residents for the welcome it had received and to the Plough and Harrow, which was the club's official pub. At the close of the presentation, the club officials answered questions from parishioners.

6 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Schools Admissions - Cllr Edmonds explained that the parish council had sent letters and had meetings with representatives of KCC, the Anglican Church and Bridge Primary School governors over the criteria for admissions. It was clear that there was no support from any of these groups to change the admissions policy at present.

Bottle Bank – Fly tipping was an increasing problem at this area. The parish council was aware of this and it would be discussed again at the next council meeting.

Parking on the High Street – It was pointed out that a blue Kia car regularly parked partly on the pavement outside 24 High Street. While this was anti-social and to be deplored, in fact there was nothing that could be done to stop it as, unfortunately, parking partly on the pavement was not illegal, although driving on the pavement was.

Country Club Opening Hours Application – Cllr Edmonds explained that an extraordinary parish council meeting had not been held in this case, unlike the meeting

to discuss the Red Lion's application last year. This was because it had been possible to include the Bridge Place application as an item on the normal parish council agenda and give the requisite notice to parishioners. In the case of the Red Lion the application had come between parish council meetings so it had been necessary to hold an extraordinary meeting to meet the deadline for comment to the Licencing Board. Cllr Anderson urged parishioners to write to the Licencing Team if they objected to the proposal and informed residents that they were entitled to attend and speak at the hearing if they wished.

The meeting closed at 9.05p.m.

Chairman

Date