

SHEPHERDSWELL WITH COLDRED PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held in Shepherdswell Village Hall on Wednesday 17th April 2018 at 1830hrs.

1) Present

Cllrs: A Barter (Chairman), B Crush, M Cobb, M Elgar, M Harris, K Regan, C White, A Williams, C Tearle (Parish Clerk) and 16 members of the public.

2) Apologies of Absence

Cllrs; J Collier, R Edmonds, G Peagram and P Walker (DDC).

3) Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 19th April 2017

It was resolved that these were approved.

4) Provisional Financial Report (C Tearle - Parish Clerk)

Balances are slightly down on last year so therefore the Council thought it prudent in view of the ever increasing cost of regulations e.g. The Data Protection Act, to Precept for £38300 which is a rise on the Parish Rate of 0.55% or 31p/week.

Some differences over last year were:

Income on the cemetery was down by £1.4K.

Legal Fees +£2.6K mainly, but not all, to do with the cost of the village hall lease.

Insurance and associated valuation costs are up by £2.7K.

Cricket nets for the cricket club £1.3K.

5) Chairman`s Annual Report (Cllr A Barter)

a) The PC agreed to provide a 50% funding grant to the Cricket Club for a set of portable nets for practice. This will be of great value to both Senior and Junior Cricket

b) Permission was given for a "Boot Camp" training session on Sunday Mornings at the Recreation Ground. Despite severe misgivings from certain quarters this did not prove to cause any problems.

c) Following the retirement of the owners of the Post Office, the outreach Post Office finally began operation in late summer for a couple of hours on Mondays and Fridays. The start was delayed considerably because BT Openreach took a very long time to provide a suitable Telephone Line.

d) New bus timetables came into operation in late Summer. Despite initial fears that the service would worsen as a result, the actual outcome was an improvement in the service, including regular buses to Canterbury, albeit by a somewhat circuitous route.

e) There are on-going problems with the sewage system, particularly effecting residents of The Glen. This is of course a matter over which the Parish Council has no control, but continued representations to Southern Water have resulted in a detailed investigation by Engineers being commissioned, and it is to be hoped that a solution will be found and instigated as soon as possible.

f) There has been dis-quiet about certain operations which took place at the East Kent Railway causing complaints on grounds of noise. These operations have now ceased, but DDC Environmental Health are maintaining an open file should there be any re-occurrence.

There were also allegations that EKR had carried out works without Planning Permission, but an investigation by DDC showed that this was not in fact the case, and nothing had been done which was not covered by their operation as a Statutory undertaking.

g)The small Parish Notice Board on the railway bridge was taken down and thoroughly overhauled by Mr Cox. It looks splendid, and we have already extended our considerable gratitude to him.

h) There was considerable disruption to traffic for an extended period over the Winter Months, because of Roadworks by Highways England re-surfacing the A2, and the traffic lights being operated on a timer only, with the traffic sensors out of action. The time taken for these works seemed excessive, but eventually things returned to normal.

i) The Pre-School now have a properly regulated new Lease in effect, giving them security to carry out their very useful function. Owing to errors made a considerable number of years ago, they had not previously had a valid agreement or any

5) County Councillor`s Report (Cllr G Lymer KCC)

HIGHWAYS

A number of key projects have been progressed.

1. Freight Action Plan to reduce the impact drivers of foreign registered HGVs have on the local communities.
2. Measures to support active sustainable modes of travel, to access employment, education and training.
3. £3 million “pot hole blitz” starting now and continuing throughout the Summer the works to be commissioned to local suppliers.
4. Conversion of street lighting to LED. To date over 68,000 lamp standards converted already, KCC now working on the more challenging main road network conversions. Programme anticipated to be completed by 2019. I did manage to get the main road of Whitfield converted earlier than scheduled on their works programme, due to shift workers walking to and from their place of work.

The LED street lamp standard conversions will save the County Council £5.2 million per annum

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

KCC has delivered 15000 young person passes and new contracts for SEN. pupils. Due to the heavy amount of subsidies KCC is contributing to leading public road transport companies, I have been promoting some charity carriers which operate in the Dover area, for they have the additional benefits of a door to door service, transport to the two main hospitals, travel to main surgeries and shopping centres locally with the ability to convey wheel chair bound customers.

CASUALTY REDUCTION

Fatal road crashes have reduced, but minor injury crashes have been reclassified under serious injury crashes, therefore serious injury crashes stats have increased.

This covers road collisions where:

- someone is injured on a public highway or footpath
- at least one road vehicle or a vehicle in collision with a pedestrian is involved
- police have been notified within 30 days.

The personal injury collision data does not include:

- confirmed suicides
- death from natural causes
- injuries to pedestrians with no vehicle involvement (e.g. a fall on the pavement)
- collisions in which no one is injured but a vehicle is damaged
- collisions which occur off the highway (e.g. on private roads / carparks)

GOV.UK have more information for this area.

Kent Police are responsible for collecting road traffic collision data for Kent. Each collision record contains over 60 items of statistical data.

Collisions are categorised by severity:

- fatal - a collision resulting in a death
- serious - detention in hospital, which includes paralysis, fractures and severe lacerations
- slight - includes whiplash, sprains and minor lacerations, now being upgraded.

Human error is a factor in 95% of road collisions. Based on GOV.UK figures, the cost to the community of a fatal collision is around £1.9 million, a serious collision costs in the region of £218,000 and a slight collision costs £22,000.

Female drivers found using the mobile phone whilst driving and driving whilst under the influence of intoxicants has increased over that of the male drivers and whilst 78% of men were found to exceed the 30mph speed limit compared to 67% of female drivers, if one then considers the ratio of full licence holders by gender.

There are over 22 million male to 18 million female full licence holders, so where certain professional bodies such as insurance companies have consistently claimed the male driver is the greater risk on the road.

When one apportions the statistical data to the number of full licence holders per gender, it actually demonstrates this is incorrect, especially with damage only crashes, drink driving and mobile phone use whilst driving.

Sources, Brake, DVLA, DfT and the Police

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Over the past 12 months less than 1% of municipal waste has been taken to landfill sites, therefore an improvement on EU targets for 2020.

Recycling is on target at 69% and KCC deals with 730,000 tonnes of waste per annum.

ENVIRONMENT

The County continues to reduce greenhouse gas emissions though KPIs still slightly behind target. LED lighting has helped to reduce emissions, fleet fuel emissions are down from 7% to 2%.

The Heritage Lottery Fund is being used on a four year project to link up isolated patches of chalk grassland to restore downland, covering approximately 10,000 hectares between Kemsing and Detling.

EDUCATION

Ofsted has judged 91.7% of all Kent's primary school as good or outstanding and 89.5% of all secondary schools as good or outstanding.

There are currently 1283 children with Child Protection Plans.

Kent has just over 200, down from over 400 the previous year, unaccompanied asylum seeking children. Kent carries the financial cost of housing, feeding, caring and educating these children who have stated they have fled persecution in their home land.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE

KCC is experiencing still many problems concerning hospital discharges which can then escalate a minor health issue into becoming a major health issue upon release due to muscular, cognitive and similar issues. This in turn places a large pressure on Social Services and partners, especially when it comes to independence and supporting independence.

KCC has put in place 6352 Telecare packages to support independent living where ever possible and practicable, however, Enablement Services are continually receiving new referrals creating greater pressures on this resource.

This problem tends to be greater in this country in comparison to some of our European neighbours, due to having a greater number of fragmented families who rely upon local government to financially support their elder members.

NHS and PUBLIC HEALTH REFORM

The Health Visiting Support Service met their targets of supporting 65,000 clients.

Sexual health clinic sessions fell slightly to 20,000. This number covers sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) of both the young, teenagers to early twenties and those

who are aged between 50-60 plus, for many of this age group have separated or divorced and become once more sexually active. As a result cases of certain STDs have increased amongst this age group such as HIV.

Substance abuse is still a large problem and cost to the County. Mental Health is also on the increase, predominantly due to the access of social media pressures including bullying, pressures of school achievements, pressure from various issues in the work place, those who served in the armed and “technically” unarmed services and a large causational factor, the regular consumption of alcohol and or substance abuse.

KCC is involved in many more areas of work that the general public never get to hear about such as Economic Growth and Development, to encourage industry to the County to improve local employment possibilities, the working alongside other countries in the battle to reduce pollution which has a detrimental effect on a large swathe of Kent’s population with a view to improving the population’s health and well being. These I can expand upon if you so wish being areas of speciality in which I am involved.

Kent County Council has a deficit of just over £94 million to find this financial year. This is due in part to the high financial costs of Adult Social Care and Public health, for example diabetes alone, which can often be brought about due to a poor diet of take away foods of poor quality, Cola or supposed highly sugared fruit drinks and a sedentary life style creating unnecessary obesity at an early age is costing the Council in excess of £460 million per annum.

6) District Councillor`s Report (Cllr M Ovenden DDC)

She reported on the proposed Dover District Council Ward changes with the reduction in councillors and how it could impact on our parish. It is proposed that it remains a two member ward with the name of Coldred and Temple.

Southern Water upon investigating the cause of the flooding occurrences at The Glen have discovered that 90 properties have the rainwater from there roofs discharge directly into the main drainage system and not into soakaways.

Parking charges will remain free on Sundays.

There are currently 900 traffic movements a day to and from Tilmanstone Salads.

7) Community Warden`s Report (J West)

During the last year she had completed a qualification as a Registered Justice Practitioner and an Emergency Planning Incident Liaison Officer. She had also had training in the “Prevent” strategy which to do with anti-terrorism training.

Her other duties involved dealing with crime, highway, environmental, welfare, community and animal issues as well as adult social care and trading standards.

Council members expressed their thanks for the work that she does.

8) Community Land Trust (Cllr M Cobb)

During the last year the Parish Council led Affordable Housing Working Party has formed ‘A Community Benefit Society’ to oversee the Community Land Trust. Last year we became affiliated to the National Community Land Trust Network having

received a grant and help from the National body to establish the Land Trust for the community. The organization is opening a Bank Account and have applied to DDC for a grant to cover running costs and advertising.

There are about thirty signed up members of the trust and during a public launch in November five officers were appointed by this membership making this truly a community led project.

Our aim is to provide housing within the community for people that have a connection with the village, to live within the village by the provision of affordable housing, in the Southeast of England this is likely to mean but not exclusive to housing at an affordable rent.

During the last year we have approached many landowners in both Shepherdsweil and Coldred but have drawn a blank in finding a suitable plot of land that can be purchased for affordable housing.

Going forward we are now searching for a small parcels of land suitable for development of affordable housing and then obtaining outline planning by Dover District Council before bringing forward a development that will satisfy the proven need within the villages.

9) Shepherdsweil with Coldred History Society (Mrs C Roberts)

Last year has again been interesting and varied in our activities and talks and includes a number of new projects.

- a) St Andrew`s Churchyard-recording and mapping of graves. This started early in the year and takes some time to identify and record information/mapping. The project was not easy during inclement weather and is best done in the dry and warmth of good days!
- b) Since we formed our Society, we have had real concerns about the current state of preservation of the three pre-historic mounds known as Three Barrows Down or Rubury Butts situated along the northern edge of the North Downs Way. They are being used by mountain bikers and motorcycles for riding over and are being eroded. We have got Historic England involved who have visited the site and made recommendations and suggestions on how to protect them. We are looking into funding possibilities.
- c) Our Big History Day last September was well attended with our theme being maps and mapping.
- d) We had our guest talks which included “A Day in the Life of Canterbury Pilgrims”, “Skeletons in the Family Cupboard”- how to, and the best ways of researching your extended family through time and a talk about the Bayeux Tapestry and the reasons for its production.
- e) Our Walk Through Time was Coldred and Coldred Street.

Our calendar of old photos of and around the village sold out!

This year`s DHD is about Shepherdsweil and the WI> WE are looking into who went to fight, who returned, descendants of those who fought, women`s roles, the school, etc. There will be food available based on ingredients and recipes of the time or WW1 military uniform! Swell Singers will enchant us and bring tears to our eyes with their songs.

Aside from our ongoing project on Tree Barrow Down. We have started a project on a ceramic history of Shepherdsweil and Coldred. We would be really grateful for and

pieces of china or ceramics (not floor or roof tiles) found in your gardens, or put out on local walks. If you could wash, bag and write a note of where they are from, this would be very useful. A single piece of Roman Samian Ware has already started the project off well!

We are also keen to find old and historic dumps in the area.

The Society would also wish to thank the Parish Council for their continuing support in our endeavours.

10) Neighbourhood Watch(A Hunter)

Shepherdswell remains one of the safest locations in Kent and maintains an impressive and enviable few crimes.

Over the last 6 months there have been the following number of 'recordable offences' in the ward. Which not only encompass Shepherdswell and Coldred but Eythorne and over to Wootton and Lydden.

These are crime stats from Kent Police and verified/published by the Home Office.

Anyone can view these on www.police.uk and put in their postcode.

Sept 17 - 22 crimes

Oct 17 - 38 crimes

Nov 17 - 10 crimes

Dec 17 - 19 crimes

Jan 18 - 23 crimes

Feb 18 - 14 crimes

6 month average = 21 per month

Annual figure 0.69 crimes per a day

126 crimes in 6 month period, 252 over the course of a year.

Main crime pattern is low level offences, theft from motor vehicle and criminal damage.

Main vehicles targeted are vans containing power tools. There is a strong 'after market' for power tools to be sold on, often for 70/80% less than the prevailing market rate. Money used to fund drug and alcohol addiction, mainly.

My best advice would be, as ever, where possible to remove tools from vehicles overnight or indeed garage vehicles.

Mark Danson (shepcoldnhw@gmail.com) will be taking over NHW and will do a brilliant job with liaison between the police and residents.

There is a new Police Sergeant who has taken over the ward and I have spoken to him at length. He is well aware of the issues and has promised more visibility around the area.

The investigation into the attempted knife point robbery at the Co-op remains ongoing. I have spoken to the staff involved and the management there. All are safe and well. It is believed the assailant is someone not connected with the area.

My thanks to the respective Chairmen, Clerks and Cllrs who have afforded NHW support over the last 3 years, returning it to your agenda.

11) Shepherdswell Breakfast Club (Cllr M Cobb)

The Shepherdswell Men's Breakfast (SLOB) has been running over one year. Twice monthly the gentlemen of the village come together at East Kent Railway Cafe. Normally there are between 14 and 20 people mainly retired but we do let workers in. We meet for some male bonding and to make the world a better place through discussion and humour. The breakfast club is open to all and we especially invite those that are new to the village or those single men to get out and meet others in a friendly and relaxed environment.

12) Shepherdswell Village Hall Committee (Cllr M Cobb)

During the last year the village hall has gone from strength to strength due to usage being up and continuous improvement in the infrastructure. The main hall lighting has been upgraded and now uses LED with dimmable switches. The remainder of the building will be updated forthwith with LED units. There had been some leakage from the new windows on the south west facing wall with remediation now finished we are assessing the damage to the hall floor and will be taking corrective action to get this fixed. Hall usage has increased mainly due to the outreach post office and the use of the community café running three hours each Monday and Friday creating a village hub. There is now a monthly craft fair operating in the hall and it is hoped that a farmer's market can be established.

Going forward we will be getting an energy efficiency assessment certificate for the building and urge the Parish Council provide overflow parking for those occasions such as Wednesday club and village dances when parking becomes difficult.

The final administrative issue is the outstanding lease and this is crawling towards the finishing post following several exchanges between the different parties.

13) Reed Meadow Allotment Association

It would be justified, I feel, if the members of our association looked back on the past year with some satisfaction.

This time last year we had completed marking out the walkways and plots on our new site, and had allocated plots to all applicants on our waiting list. Much digging and some planting had taken place, and a few water butts had been set up and sheds erected.

You may remember the year continued with a good spring and summer with the result that some crops were harvested as early as June. Continuing through the year, many types of beans (but especially broad beans), courgettes and sweetcorn were particularly successful. A small variety of flowers were grown both for their colour and to attract insects - dahlias notably added a welcome splash of colour.

Peas and potatoes were not so successful, with the latter being afflicted by wire-worms. One member has grown and dug in mustard plants to counter this threat.

Preparation for the coming growing season took place after the harvest with green beans being much in favour for their ability to fix nitrogen. Two parishioners also contributed volumes of horse manure.

Looking at last year's notes, I see the issue of water much exercised our minds. The problem was partly ameliorated by some of our member installing their own water butts and bringing water onto the site; also by guttering on shed roofs. We are currently looking at building a water collection system on our communal area.

One major, and very enjoyable, social event took place during the year. The site was formally opened by Mrs Reed (who you know is the previous owner of the field), which gave us the opportunity to formally welcome many of your good selves onto the site. The event was topped off by tea and cakes here in the Village Hall afterwards.

We had entertained the Shepherdsweil Art Group onto the site earlier in the year, and we thank Alan Coleman for his painting, which we presented to Mrs Reed as a memento of the occasion. We extend an invitation to the Art Group if they wish to visit us again this year.

In passing, our site was also a 'way point' on a Village Green Association treasure hunt – I understand 'fork handles' were involved.

Administratively, some 'fine-tuning' of our Head Lease with your good selves took place as a result of members' requests: we thank you for your help in these matters. Financially we paid our first rent (of £265) to you in September last year and, following the completion of our rent renewal program, we have just paid our second (for a full year) of £517.

Two members decided not to renew their membership this year, but this was partly compensated for by one new member and three existing members taking additional half-plots. Our membership currently stands at twenty-three. Please note that this exceeds the number of plots due to a move to joint memberships. The title of 'best represented' road is now jointly held by Bernards Gardens and The Terrace, and we continue to enjoy one community interest group in our membership – the Scouts.

In terms of income, we currently have let half a plot less this year than last.

And now the usual advert. We have a few plots available, ranging in size from 75 sq. metres to 160 sq. metres. Applicants are welcome, please contact me.

Last but by no means least, we thank you, the Parish Council, for your continued support.

14) Post Office Facilities (Mrs V Cobb)

Post Office Outreach

Thanks to a number of individuals in the parish, members of the Parish Council and Cheryl Sitch from the Post Office we finally achieved an outreach service for two hours twice weekly on Mondays and Fridays. Opening times are from 12.30 to 2.30pm each session.

Until now according to the outreach operative, Shepherdsweil is the most used as far as transactions are concerned, footfall being between 15-20 each session which has more than double that number over the Christmas period. The service offered includes Bill payments, Banking, Foreign currency, Telephone services, other financial services such as travel insurance, savings and investments and pensions. Another benefit of this service is that parcels up to 10 kilo can be taken where at Eyethorne the post office can only take up to 5 kilo.

A Facebook page has been set up to inform people of developments which has been accessed by over 800 viewers. Positive feedback on the service has come from local businesses and community groups who find it invaluable. Individuals have also made similar comments.

There remain a few issues that would improve the Post Office service overall. As many villagers are working, weekdays are difficult, however approaches to Post

Office Ltd has met with a negative on providing a service on Saturdays. There is also no provision for cover for staff illness, holidays or other unforeseen circumstances resulting in loss of the service in such cases. A post box has been agreed to be placed somewhere near the crossroads at the bottom of Church Hill, however has not yet been forthcoming.

It is regrettable that, since there is no available retail business available that would house a full Post Office Service, Post Office Limited has no plans to change the type of service available to Shepherdswell.

Running alongside the post office is the community café and praise must go to Christine and Keith Roberts for running a nonprofit café and village hub serving soup and rolls on Mondays and a variety of cakes and beverages during the post office hours.

There have been three successful craft markets on Fridays and moving forward it is hoped to have a farmer's market on a Friday. This initiative is hoped to increase the footfall for the Post Office and we would ask all parishioners to support both the café, markets and Post Office in future.

15) Shepherdswell Village Green Association (Cllr M Cobb)

Mrs Cobb reported that there had been many successful events last year and a further six planned for this year with a lot of local support. One of their aim is to have a village sign on the Green similar to Coldred.

On behalf of the Parish Council Councillor A Williams thanked those who gave up their time to run various clubs and organisations in the village.

16) Public Participation

Two members of the public spoke about the negotiations for the Village Hall Lease.