

KINGSNORTH PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday, 13th May, 2004
at Kingsnorth Primary School

PRESENT: Dr. H. Moorby (Chairman); Cllr. J. Holland; Mr. J. Debonnaire; Mr. G. Parr;
Mrs. C. Vavasour; Mr. M. Ciccone; Cllr. R. Harrington; Cllr. M. Angell

1. **Apologies** Mrs. L. Ross; Mr. T. Horsman; Mrs. A. Hicks; Cllr. J. Wedgbury; Cllr. R. King;
Cllr. P. Davison; Cllr. G. Weller; Cllr. P. Bartlett.

2. **Minutes of the last annual parish meeting**

It was proposed by GP, seconded by CV and agreed that the minutes of the last annual parish meeting be accepted and they were signed by the Chairman.

3. **Matters arising from the last annual parish meeting minutes** There were none.

4. **Report by Chairman on development Park Farm and eventual extent of buffer zone**

The Chairman produced a large-scale map to show where Park Farm South and East will be built and how far the buffer zone will eventually extend between Park Farm and Kingsnorth village. Management of the buffer zone and areas of open space on Westhawk Farm are still the subject of discussions between the Parish Council and Ashford Borough Council.

5. **Report by Chairman on progress with Local Development Framework and recent Greater Ashford Development Framework Workshop**

The Chairman and Cllr. Harrington, who both participated in the recent three-day masterplanning workshop, explained how the event had progressed matters and some of the ideas discussed about the direction of development. They had vigorously defended the buffer zone from inclusion in the development area of search. The Chairman produced copies of the indicative map from RPG 9 showing the initial development area of search to 2016 and the general direction of growth post-2016. The general area of a A2070/A28 link road is also shown on the map. A follow-up evening event is to be held on 1st June to enable Cllrs. who were unable to attend the workshop to hear about its outcomes and the issues and choices facing the town. Several Cllrs. hoped to attend.

6. **Chairman's report**

Since no parishioners were present, it was agreed that the Chairman would not give her report verbally, but that her written report would be included in the minutes. The Chairman's report was as follows:

This has been a very busy and successful year for Kingsnorth Parish Council. All Councillors take an active part in the running of the Council, very ably assisted by our expert Parish Clerk, Jenny Mills. In addition to responding to the residents of their wards, each Councillor has a particular area of responsibility on outside bodies, both in the Parish and on Borough and County committees. Cecilie Vavasour is Secretary of the Kingsnorth Village Hall Committee and has been Secretary of the Kingsnorth Millennium Sports Association. Tony Horsman and John Debonnaire have been Chairman and Secretary of the Park Farm Recreation Centre Management Committee; Tony is also a Governor of Furley Park Primary School and a member of the Village Hall Committee. John is a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme Co-ordinator and our Highways representative.

Aline Hicks is a Governor of Kingsnorth Village School and, as Vice-Chairman, did a lot of work to get the Parish Plan off the ground. She also represents the Parish Council on the KAPC Ashford Area Committee. Mike Ciccone is Footpaths Officer for the Parish Council and keeps an eye on footpaths in the buffer zone. He is also a member of the Recreation Centre

Management Committee. John Holland is also a Borough Councillor and Lynne Ross is our representative on the Police Parish Forum.

Geoff Parr has helped to edit the new Parish Information Booklet and makes a very valuable contribution to the Parish Council by photocopying many large documents for members. Jim Wedgbury is on the Parish Plan Steering Group and is also a Borough Councillor.

The Chairman is also Chairman of the KAPC Ashford Area Committee and as a consequence of this is a member of the Ashford Strategic Partnership. She has been appointed a member of the 'Town Team', which will be influential in the future development of Ashford, both the town centre and the so-called Greater Ashford.

Several projects which have been ongoing for several years have come to fruition this year. These include the extension to the Parish football/cricket field. It has taken several years to get a 25-year lease on this land and we hope it will be ready to play on this September. The Parish Council has taken an interest in the two Schools, giving them grants for books. They have also sponsored one of the Park Farm Rangers football teams by supplying their strip. Unfortunately, Kingsnorth Cricket Club has decided not to play on our pitch any longer and we are looking for another team to take it over.

The most important event connected with the sports pavilion has been the employment of Geoff Blackmer as our caretaker. He is a great asset to all who use the pavilion. Thanks are also due to Mr. & Mrs. Cleave, who keep the pavilion clean and tidy. Mr. Cleave also does a valuable job in clearing litter from our village roads.

We have continued to support the Kingsnorth Senior Citizens in financing a coach for their annual outing. An annual grant is also given to Kingsnorth PCC to help with the maintenance of the churchyard and the Parish Council also made a financial contribution to holiday events for children organised by Kingsnorth Churches Together. It also assists with the cost of signs for new Neighbourhood Watch schemes.

The 10-year-old Parish Information Booklet has been updated and each household in the Parish should have received a copy. The Parish Council now has a modern means of communication with its residents through a website. This has been on line since early January and, for anyone with access to the internet, has a lot of information about the Parish.

The PC is still struggling to get speed limits on village roads and improvements to Kingsnorth crossroads. We just seem to be getting somewhere, especially in Magpie Hall Road, when the Highways Unit decide that something else is more important and we are let down again. However, we were chosen as one of three parishes for a new pilot scheme called 'Speed Watch', which is being run by the Police. Volunteer residents were trained to use a special speed gun to monitor the speed of vehicles on roads with a speed limit. Anyone found to have exceeded the limit will then be reported to the Police. The Parish Council has also signed up to an extension of the Neighbourhood Watch scheme called 'Country Eye'. This is a computer-based scheme and should come on stream this month.

In July, the village Post Office closed but, with the co-operation of the Post Office, the Village Hall Committee and the Parish Council, a part-time Post Office has opened in the Village Hall.

As usual, planning has been a large part of Parish Council work. We have commented on 92 planning applications this year. In addition, we have objected to an appeal by Wards Homes for extra houses on Brisley Farm. We also took part in a public inquiry, held last December, into the latest proposals for the Ashford area, Regional Planning Guidance 9. The results of this

came out last week and I am pleased to say that some of the objections put by the Parish Council were acted upon.

The biggest planning challenges for Ashford, however, are how to build 31,000 new houses and provide 28,000 new jobs by 2031. The Chairman and several of your Borough Councillors have been to intensive workshops on the town centre, and at the end of April, a 3-day workshop on the development of 'Greater Ashford'.

It is KCC and Ashford Borough Council policy to preserve the character of our villages. To help defend Kingsnorth, we were asked by Ashford Borough Council to produce a 'wish list' of things the residents would like to see developed in the village. Following on from this, it was decided at a public meeting held in the Recreation Centre in September, to go ahead with production of a parish plan. The questionnaires for this have been distributed and the results analysed

7. **County Councillor's report**

Cllr. Mike Angell had very kindly agreed to stand-in for Cllr. Richard King who had a prior commitment.

The Highways Maintenance programme included re-dressing the whole of Magpie Hall Rd. after which Highways will be looking to impose a 40 mph speed limit in Magpie Hall Rd and Tally Ho Rd. The Police will carry out a period of enforcement of the new limit, but say that it will be difficult to enforce long term. Next week, work will start on laying a non-skid surface at the junction with the A28. Maintenance work will soon be taking place on the A28 between Great Chart and High Halden; this will cause delays.

Cllr. Angell said that another KCC Local Board meeting will be held on 14th June at Tenterden. This is an opportunity for the public to question local County Council members on various themes. Each Local Board also runs a grant scheme, with each Cllr. being able to allocate £10,000 a year to schemes that will benefit the local community. Any community group can apply but grants are on a first-come-first-served basis. There is also a county-wide fund with maximum grants of £20,000 per grant. The effectiveness of the new interactive speed sign was discussed and the possibility that in future the PC could contribute, possibly with a Local Board grant, towards another.

The Boundary Commission has approved the new County Council ward boundaries. The next electoral role will be based on the new wards and be used for the elections next May. There will be 7 County Council wards in Ashford instead of 6. The Kingsnorth area will fall within the new division, Ashford Rural South.

MC asked about the new rateable system and whether the County Council still has an influence over the Police and Fire Brigade now that they are precepted separately. He felt that services were not improving despite the increased contributions paid through Council Tax. Cllr. Angell confirmed that there are several members of the County Council on the Kent Police Authority and the Kent and Medway Fire Authority. The Chairmen of both are County Councillors and the County Council does still have a considerable amount of influence, although the Home Office has overall control. The role of Community Wardens was discussed. Kingsnorth had applied for two and Cllr. Angell would try to find out when they are likely to start.

JH mentioned that the system for recruiting School Governors did not seem to be working well because of the heavy load of training courses and duties now expected of them. It was agreed that there should be a better Government recruiting programme. At the moment, County Cllrs. often have to look for Governors. Cllr. Angell reported that the Social Services and Education

sections of KCC now worked very closely together. The Chairman thanked Cllr. Angell for his contribution and for standing in for Cllr. King.

8. **Borough Councillors' reports**

Cllr. Davison had sent a written report. He represents the Stubbs Cross area of the parish. He thanked the PC for making him feel welcome and for letting him be part of their work. During the year he had been active in helping with specific speed control and highways problems. He had also been working on crime prevention and secondary education problems and on the Borough Council budget and reductions of Council Tax. He sits on a number of Committees including having the Chairmanship of the Overview and Scrutiny's Resources and Best Value Committee and is a member of the Planning Committee, the GADF and the LDF Task Groups. In particular, he is very concerned about the future building of development to the south of Ashford. Most people he speaks to want to live in a country environment and enjoy a village way of life. He is very apprehensive about the decisions that may already have been taken for the expansion of Ashford. Since January he had been lobbying for a meeting between the vulnerable edge-of-town parishes and the Strategic Planning Dept. of ABC. This had been put off but he now understood that there would be a meeting on 1st June.

Cllr. Harrington had also attended the recent GADF workshop and felt that there was a certain amount of 'brainwashing' as to what was wanted. During the 'board game' exercise a fair number of the houses needed were placed on areas south of Kingsnorth. He was waiting for the July workshop to see how matters will progress. There will be a public exhibition in County Square on 22nd May about the GADF. Cllr. Harrington mentioned the difficult situation a Borough Councillor could find himself in when wishing to express opinions on planning applications at both parish level and as a member of ABC's Planning Committee.

Cllr. Holland said that he had mostly concerned himself with problems arising in his own Ward and had been trying to meet constituents. However, he was also a member of some committees and will shortly become a member of the Joint Transportation Committee and the Policy Advisory Group. He had been assisting with several issues that had been raised during the year by the Brisley Farm Residents Association including problems with the 106 agreement. There were also problems with flooding on Court Lodge. Chart Road will be closed for 3 weeks for work on a new sewer.

9. **Parish business**

No parishioners were present to raise any comments or queries.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9 p.m.