

## KINGSNORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 29<sup>th</sup> November, 2007, at Kingsnorth Sports Pavilion

PRESENT: Mr. T. Horsman (Chairman); Cllr. Mrs. A. Hicks; Mr. R. Gardner; Mr. J. Sheehan; Mr. N. Shorter; Mr. M. Ciccone; Mr. S. Bates; Cllr. J. Holland; Cllr. J. Wedgbury.  
For part of meeting: Mr. D. Bacon Cllr. M. Angell; Cllr. P. Bartlett.

1. **Apologies** Mrs. L. Ross (on holiday); Cllr. P. Davison; Cllr. Mrs. T. Heyes. Mr. Bates and Cllr. Bartlett apologised for arriving late. Mr. Bates apologised for leaving early.
2. **Open Forum** There were no parishioners present.
3. **Park Farm Recreation Centre finance & subsidy for 2008/9** The Chairman suspended standing orders and welcomed Mrs. Emma Wood and Mrs. Odette Collard-Woolmer from the Ashford Leisure Trust. Mrs. Wood provided notes to support the financial information circulated to Cllrs. prior to the meeting.

Mrs. Wood explained that they were looking for agreement for 3 years' funding so that the Centre could be operated under a better business plan. The plan she had produced runs from 1.4.08 to 31.3.11. In 2008/9 total funding required would be £22,600, which was less than in 07/08. ALT would take over responsibility for maintenance from the Trustees so that this work can be bolted on to bigger contracts to make savings. A better standard of alarm monitoring would be set up. A Development Manager had been recruited who would research opportunities for development at all 3 ALT facilities. Mrs. Wood thought that there was scope for increasing the children's programme at the Rec. Centre. There were just under 130 direct debits at the moment. The budget was based on having 150 DD Fitness Centre members. However, it would be hard work to maintain this level. It was the number at which the present staffing levels could cope and also took into account the number of pieces of equipment. An outside caterer had been appointed and it was hoped that one of their staff would be available for events so that only one staff member from ALT would be needed. Mrs. Wood confirmed that a hot drinks machine had now been installed. JH queried the signage to the Centre which he considered to be inadequate. Mrs. Wood would talk to Officers about this. Mrs. Wood confirmed that ALT had met the Little Acorns Committee, and they were now paying the commercial rate.

MC queried the figure of £2,000 for grounds maintenance. Mrs. Wood thought that it covered only management of the vegetation on site and not the tarmacked areas. She would query this with ABC. MC said that the budget required the Trustees to continue paying the building insurance. However, the Trustees will not necessarily have the funds to do so as fundraising is difficult. He thought that ABC ought to pay this as they owned the freehold. Mrs. Wood pointed out that ABC were happy to take responsibility for structural repairs but not insurance as they did not pay this for the other ALT facilities. ALT was taking over the responsibility for plant repairs. It was agreed that the Trustees should meet Mrs. Wood and Mr. Carty to discuss this before Mr. Carty writes his report to the Executive Committee.

RG queried whether the subsidy requested for 2008/9 gave ALT enough room for manoeuvre. If not, he thought the subsidy should be larger. Mrs. Wood said that the budget was challenging and confirmed that there was not much head-room. NS asked if anything had been cut to achieve the budget. Mrs. Wood said that corporate support from other staff had not been coded in the Rec. Centre account. NS asked if there are any other opportunities to develop the Centre which had been cut because of lack of

funds. Mrs. Wood thought that ALT could help Little Acorns develop their facilities and the room could perhaps be used during the summer holidays.

Mrs. Wood was asked if ABC had seen the budget and subsidy proposals and if they were still willing to continue with the 50/50 subsidy arrangement. Mrs. Wood said that ABC officers had looked at the budget and were aware of the subsidy required. There was no indication that ABC would not continue supporting funding.

AH asked if any different avenues for development were being pursued. Mrs. Wood said that the Project Development Manager would look at this. There was some potential for improving equipment. No purchase of new equipment had been included in the budget; some old equipment would be available from Stour Centre but there may be a need for more equipment in year 2 or 3. Only operational costs had been budgeted. Leasing options were available for 3, 4 or 5 years. The existing 20 pieces would have to be replaced eventually otherwise attendance would drop. However, she did not think that the standard of equipment was the main reason the fitness centre was used at Kingsnorth; it was more because of its location and convenience. Cllrs. felt that an asset management programme was necessary to replace failing equipment otherwise the Centre would not be viable in the long-term. Mrs. Wood said that she could include a line in the budget for equipment replacement. MA mentioned that local government is planned by 3-year rolling budgets with reviews after 12 months.

Mrs. Wood was asked if income targets were not met whether she would ask for more funding or make cuts. She said that she could ask for more, otherwise cuts would have to be made in the staff establishment. Mrs. Wood confirmed she would look at asset management and make enquiries about leasing of equipment. There was a S.106 payment of £40,000 for improvements to the Rec. Centre which had not yet been assigned. This would have to be discussed with the Trustees. The Chairman thanked Mrs. Wood and Mrs. Collard-Woolmer for attending the meeting.

4. **Approve minutes of previous meetings** It was proposed by JH, seconded by NS and agreed that the minutes of the last monthly meeting on 25.10. should be approved. It was proposed by RG, seconded by JS and agreed that the minutes of the planning and budget meetings on 22.11. should be approved.
5. **Matters arising**
  - (a) Bell Chapel Close pond This pond was still awaiting clearance. The work had been scheduled after the Entrance Park work had been finished. Although part of the Entrance Park pond had been cleared, RG said that a small section was still full of rubbish. The Clerk would contact Mr. Fry.
  - (b) New crossing, Romney Marsh Rd. Highways had confirmed that the Toucan crossing would be completed shortly. It was pointed out that a significant number of schoolchildren were ignoring the crossing and using a short cut across the roundabout. This was considered dangerous and the Clerk was asked to contact Highways to ask if a barrier could be installed to prevent this.
  - (c) 'House of ill-repute' JH reported that Enforcement Officers had met with residents. A letter had been sent to the resident at the property concerned.

## 6. Correspondence

- (a) Request for donation from Kingsnorth School The Head Teacher had written to ask if the PC would consider donating £500 towards the purchase of an additional 'gazova' to create another area of shade and seating accommodation in the playground. It was agreed that this would be discussed under finance at the January 17th meeting.
- (b) Hallam Developments Some residents had sent a copy of their letter to JMP Consulting concerning a brochure sent to residents in Pound Lane about the proposed Court Lodge development. AH said that residents in Magpie Hall Lane had also received it. They objected to consultation of this sort when the development was not being endorsed by ABC and the Parish Council. AH had contacted Mr. Alderton about ABC making a press statement to distance themselves from this consultation. ABC's Communications Officer will monitor the local media and make a statement if further coverage is given.
- (c) Burst water main RG had reported to the Clerk on 17.11. that there was a burst water main on Ashford Rd and Park Farm had no water. AH later forwarded an e-mail from ABC to say that Mid-Kent Water was in the process of issuing precautionary 'boil' notices to 56 properties in the Kingsnorth area following a burst water main. It was anticipated that the need to boil water would be lifted on the Sunday and they were delivering bottled water. RG had subsequently written as a resident to Mid-Kent about deficiencies in the way their call centre had handled the emergency and the way supplies of water had been made available.
- (c) Parking problems, Bishopswood, PFS A resident had complained about parking obstructions in Bishopswood. The Clerk had contacted PC King, Mr. Bacon, KCC Highways with a copy to Cllr. Angell, JW, RG, TH and AH. Highways had said that parking problems were a Police matter. PC King had patrolled the road on 12.11. to assess the situation and had put warning notices on 2 vehicles. He had again attended Park Farm on 20.1. with PCSO Martin and placed approx. 30 warning notices on vehicles parked on the pavement.
- (d) Neighbourhood Watch Scheme for Barley Way JH reported that the residents of this road on Brisley Farm would like to set up a Neighbourhood Watch scheme and are likely to ask the PC if it would consider paying for 2 or 3 signs. This could be considered at one of the January meetings if further details are available by then.
- (e) KCC subsidised local bus services The KCC Local Bus Manager, Mr. Pay, wrote that the contracts for a number of supported bus services in the Ashford district are due for renewal in April 2008, among which are the 508/528 service Ashford to Park Farm and the 13 service Ashford to Washford Farm. He is planning to maintain existing levels of service wherever possible, but the final outcome will depend upon the results of tenders which he will be issuing in November and also his budget settlement for next year. JH said that he had been asking for 3 years for the Washford Farm service to connect to Brisley Farm but that this had been refused because the subsidy was insufficient.
- (f) KCC modifications to PROW map KCC had sent several modifications, mostly to paths in Gt. Chart/Singleton. There was one for Kingsnorth relating to part of AW293 which commenced on Long Length just south of the Brisley Farm/Court Lodge roundabout eastwards to Court Lodge. This part has been extinguished as there is now a route just to the south, i.e. the access road/path into Court Lodge.
- (g) Also received: ABC agenda for Standards Committee meeting on 4.12; ABC report of Chairman of the Parish Forum meeting of 3.10; Kent Highways, leaflet 'How we help to

make our roads safer in winter'; Village Sign Soc. Magazine; CPRE Countryside Voice; CPRE Kent Voice; Clerks & Councils Direct; ACRK Rural News no 85; ACRK Annual Summary 2006/7; KAPC Parish News no. 328; SEERA Update on SE Plan no. 12; agenda for KAPC Ashford Area meeting on 28.11; info. on Marshlink Stakeholder meeting on 28.11; Swift mobile patrols print out for Oct; minutes of North Weald Police Parish Forum of 26.9. (next meeting 12.12); Highways issues update; Kent Fire & Rescue Integrated Risk Management Plan 2008/9 ; East Sussex Rural Transport Partnership agenda for Marshlink Stakeholder Meeting on 28.11 & minutes of meeting on 30.11.06; ABC agenda for Standards Committee meeting on 4.12; Policing Plan & Budget 2008/9 consultation questionnaire; Primary Care Trust Strategy for Eastern & Coastal Kent NHS; Eastern & Coastal Kent Patient Public Involvement Forum Survey re rural health care; Kent Highway Services Survey; details of Kent Highways presentation on PIPKIN 10.1.08; letter from Highways re footpath AW319.

7.	<b>Finance</b>	(a) <u>to approve payments and accounts since the last meeting:</u>	
	1454	Mrs. A. Hicks, refund of payment to Queens Hd for sign event buffet	270.00
	1455	KAPC, lunch at KAPC AGM for AH	7.50
	1456	Mr. G. Blackmer, October salary	318.27
	1457	Mr. P. Cleave, salary from 19.10 – 16.11	359.61
	1458	EDF Energy Customers plc	72.68
	1459	HSBC Invoice Finance (UK) Ltd, Swift patrols for October	239.70
	1460	CJA Consulting Ltd, registration of website domain name (VAT £15.22)	102.21
	1461	Mrs. A. Hicks, car mileage to KAPC AGM	26.68
	1462	Gibbs & Son, mowing football pitch (VAT £1.75)	<u>11.75</u>
			1,408.40

AH declared an interest in cheque nos. 1454, 1455 and 1461

#### Receipts

HM Revenue & Customs, VAT reimbursement 1.6.07-30.9.07	272.91
Bank of Ireland, interest for Sept.	<u>306.05</u>
	578.96

Transfers None this month as at 23.11.07, but one will be required before the end of the month.

#### Reconciliation of bank balances with receipts and payments accounts – 1.4.07 to 23.11.07

Lloyds TSB Treasurer's account at 31.10.	1,063.00
Lloyds TSB 30 day account at 28.9. (less transfers since then)	61,333.09
Bank of Ireland account at 1.11.	<u>71,233.13</u>
	133,629.22
Less uncleared cheques nos.1446, 1455,1457-62)	<u>-847.13</u>
<b>Balance at 23.11.07</b>	<b>132,782.09</b>
Add expenditure 1.4.07 – 23.11.07	<u>47,825.60</u>
	<u>180,607.69</u>
Balance brought forward from 2006-2007	106,938.21
Add income 1.4.07 – 23.11.07	<u>73,669.48</u>
	<u>180,607.69</u>

It was proposed by JH, seconded by NS and agreed that the above accounts should be accepted.

Forthcoming commitments

Mr. G. Blackmer, Nov. salary plus refund for 50kg salt for softener	333.92
Mr. P. Cleave, salary from 17.11. to 14.12	359.11
ABC, Rec. Centre subsidy July – Sept. (VAT £859.08 already claimed)	5,768.08
ABC, ID badges	40.00
HSBC (Swift Security), security patrols for Nov.	259.68
Gibbs & Son, Nov. mowing (if any done)	11.75
Village Sign/VH Centenary event, entertainment	?
Neighbourhood Watch signs	90.00
Trans-Fire Protection, annual check pavilion extinguishers	c 110.00
Chart Glass, repair Park Farm notice board (VAT £13.65)	91.65*
Mr. D. Thompson, reimburse cost of pedestrian rails and materials to install these & the commemorative bench (NB he has not asked for labour costs) (VAT £90.82)	609.78

\*The acrylic cover had been cracked for a while, but when the Clerk went to the board on 16.11. it was broken into pieces. She got a quote for replacement from Chart Glass for £78 + VAT and authorised them to do the work.

Income expected

Bank of Ireland interest for Oct.	c305.00
ABC, street cleansing grant for 2007/8	1,696.00

(b) To discuss matters relating to possible Rec. Centre subsidy required for 2008/9

MC declared a personal interest as the PC's representative on the Recreation Centre Board of Trustees. RG asked if there was any conflict of interest for dual-hatted Cllrs. but Cllr. Bartlett thought not.

MC felt that the PC should agree a subsidy for 2008/9 which would include an amount for leasing of equipment. The fact that ABC still holds the S.106 amount of £40,000 from the developers for improvements to the Rec. Centre was mentioned. MC did not think it should be used for equipment replacement, but this would have to be discussed by the Trustees. JH said he would be happy to support a sum to include an element for equipment replacement provided ABC agreed to provide the same amount. RG supported this as he thought the present budget was too tight and needed some headroom, provided this was paid 50:50 with ABC. Cllr. Bartlett confirmed that a figure had been put in ABC's first budget draft for the Recreation Centre subsidy which would allow for this. TH agreed provided ABC was providing equal funding. SB supported an increased subsidy in principal but thought that the business plan should be much more robust and detailed. NS was critical of the business plan as it did not provide future-proofing for continuous development and he thought it should be amended. He proposed that the PC should ask Mrs. Wood to revise her figures to take account of deterioration of the fitness equipment and to build in refurbishment/replacement. This was seconded by SB and agreed.

AH suggested allocating £15,000 a year for 3 years from the PC and thought that the PC should have a 3-year rolling budget. However, each year's results and requirements for the Rec. Centre and the PC's budget would be different and at the moment it was only possible for the PC to agree the subsidy it was willing to give for the 2008/9 financial year. There was also a need for the Trustees to meet with Mr. Carty to discuss the building insurance, the lease, etc. It was acknowledged that Mrs. Wood needed to know that she had the PC's support over the next 3 years, but that the subsidy would have to

be agreed on an annual basis. It was agreed, as before, that the Recreation Centre was an important community facility which should be supported. JW felt that the PC was thinking too much of protecting itself. However, it was pointed out that the PC was responsible for spending community money and must be careful when doing so.

RG proposed that the PC should agree a subsidy of up to a maximum of £16,000 for the 2008/9 financial year provided that ABC agrees to contribute the same figure and that Mrs. Wood re-draws the budget to include head-room for some replacement of equipment. This was seconded by AH, and supported by a majority of Cllrs.

(c) To amend the budget if necessary & to confirm the precept for 2008/9

The Clerk had revised and circulated the draft budget figures to take account of changes made at the budget meeting on 22.11. and the information about the likely balance to be carried forward to 2008/9. A draft Local Tax Base figure of 3,937 had been obtained from ABC. Last year's had been 4,143.60. It is lower because ABC say new builds are slowing down in Kingsnorth. The recommendation is for concurrent functions grants to increase by 2.5%. The revised figures had been included in the income expected for 2008/9.

JH felt that the PC had been carrying too large a balance in recent years and proposed that the precept should be reduced to £10. There were no seconders for this proposal. NS proposed that the precept should remain the same for 2008/9, this was seconded by SB and agreed by a majority of Cllrs.

(d) To discuss the request from Kingsnorth PCC for a contribution to production costs of the Parish magazine The Treasurer, Mr. Davis, had asked if the PC would be willing to make a contribution to the PCC's costs for copying the Parish Magazine. Cllrs. thought that the publication was an asset to the community. It was proposed by NS, seconded by RG and agreed by a majority that in accordance with its powers under sections 137 and 139 of the Local Govt. Act 1972, the PC should donate £500 from the 2007/8 budget which, in the opinion of the Council, is in the interests of the area or its inhabitants and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure.

## 8. Recreational matters

(a) To report on progress with proposed new playing field/football pitch Planning permission had been granted. Mrs. Jones, ABC Legal Services, agreed to speak to Property Services about a similar lease to the existing one which was for 21 years at a peppercorn rent. She had reminded Brachers about the query over their costs to approve the sub-lease.

## 9. Planning matters

(a) To consider any new applications since the meeting on 22.11.

*60 Lucilla Ave* Single-storey rear extension. (S) JS declared a personal interest as he knew the applicant.

(b) To report decisions by ABC received since the meeting on 22.11 There were none

Application gone to appeal

*21 Primrose Drive* First floor extension. Objection to condition 3 regarding the need for obscured glass in some windows.

10. **Highway and footpath matters**

- (a) Park Farm South & East Traffic calming scheme Mrs. Wickenden had sent an update as follows: "I can confirm that the Programme Delivery Team had a meeting this morning and it is envisaged that design will start in January/February with handover to Ringway March/April. We have no firm construction dates yet, but will of course keep you fully updated." This meant that there will be a further delay in implementation. RG said that the new piece of road from Bluebell Rd to Finn Farm is virtually open. Increased traffic circulation will make the crossing of Bluebell Rd even more dangerous. He proposed that a letter drafted by him and circulated to Cllrs be sent to Cllr. Ferrin of KCC expressing dissatisfaction with the continued delays and asking for details of a committed start date for the installation by 15.1.08 otherwise the PC would present their concerns to Damien Green MP. This was seconded by MC and unanimously agreed.

11. **County Councillor's report**

Cllr. Angell reported that KCC Children's Services and Social Care is preparing a self-assessment document for the Audit Commission's Comprehensive Performance Assessment and is hoping to be awarded 'excellent' status again. There was a meeting on 6.12. about Local Govt. Authority funding; it was not expected that sufficient funding would be granted by Govt. KCC had won the title 'Transport Authority of the Year' at the UK Bus Awards. It also won two more awards for infrastructure and for winning new customers with its Fastrack bus scheme in Dartford and Gravesend. MA is involved in a South East regional committee trying to make progress on funding from the Dept. of Health for dementia care. JW queried emergency planning and finance to protect Kent's two international stations from terrorist threats. MA said that this was currently being looked at. JH had a query about a fence that had been moved too close to the pavement at the KCC site at the corner of Millbank Rd and Kingsnorth Rd. He would send an e-mail to MA about this. RG raised the continued delay in installing the traffic calming on Park Farm. He felt that residents were now very sceptical about when this would happen and that it was ever more dangerous for parents and children crossing Bluebell Rd. MA had been trying to expedite the matter and agreed that the PC should send the proposed draft letter.

12. **Borough Councillors' reports**

- (a) Weald East Cllr. Bartlett reported on the preparation of ABC's 2008/9 budget. More funding would be required for the Stour Centre, concessionary fares and green waste collection, and also dog wardens as the Police were no longer willing to collect stray dogs.
- (b) Weald South Cllr. Hicks reported that consideration was being given at PAG meetings about waste disposal options with a view to achieving a 40% recycling target.
- (c) Park Farm North Cllr. Heyes was not present to report.
- (d) Park Farm South Cllr. Wedgbury gave information on the Southern Housing properties about which concerns had been raised at the last meeting. He confirmed that the houses are not being sold but are reverting to standard social housing. Mrs. Kerly of ABC is monitoring the process.
- (e) Washford Farm Cllr. Holland had nothing further to report.

13. **Reports**

- (a) Kingsnorth Recreation Centre Management Committee Nothing to report.

- (b) Kingsnorth Village Hall Committee Nothing to report.
- (c) Kingsnorth School Governors' Meeting AH reported that the Governors had reviewed the Secular Inspection of Anglican Schools and the new OFSTED Action Plan. They received reports from all the committees, and were encouraged to go on more training courses. The cluster newsletter will be circulated when published once a term. They talked about school attendance targets and had set a realistic figure for next year. The 5% claw-back which KCC could claim from budget surpluses carried forward has been suspended for three years. The Walk to School on Wednesday seems to be a great success and has identified a reduction of 826 traffic movements on Wednesdays over the last 6 weeks. Further discussions are expected to be held with parents to try to instigate a Walking Bus. The school has access to a Family Support Advisor who held a coffee morning earlier this term. She can give support to families who may have need of emotional, social or behavioural advice in the short and long term, independent of the school environment. The family learning course has continued this term with numeracy awareness and is well attended. The PFA fireworks evening raised £4,000. 27 children are attending the after-school club.
- (d) Furley Park School Governors' Meeting TH reported that the Breakfast Club is successful and well attended. A Walking Bus has been organised and the number of participants is increasing.
- (e) KAPC AGM A report from AH on the AGM had been circulated. There had been talks on 'rural retail' and a review of Kent roads by Cllr. Ferrin and Mr. Harrison-Mee. The traffic on Kent roads is increasing at the rate of 2% per annum. Each parish council will have its own local community officer who can track repairs, etc. This will come on line at the end of March. KCC intend to review all the speed limits in the county by 2008 and make all entrances to villages uniform. They have a programme to replace all traffic lights with LED lights which require much less maintenance and are cheaper to run. When AH had asked why the traffic calming in Kingsnorth had been delayed despite S106 money being available, Mr. Harrison-Mee replied that it could be because they didn't have enough trained staff to implement the plan. It was voted to change KAPC's name to the Kent Association of Local Councils. AH thought that this would be misleading to residents. The subscription rate for 2008/9 had been agreed at 0.525p per band D household subject to a maximum of £945.
- (f) KAPC Ashford Area meeting of 28.11. JS was unable to attend.
- (g) Willesborough Dykes meeting AH reported on the meeting with project officers. There was not enough water to create a wetland area. It had been suggested that there should be no vehicular access. The land on which the hotel is to be built is contaminated from its use during the construction of the Designer Outlet. A masterplan is being prepared. Decisions about the area would probably be taken by the Executive in March.
- (h) PACT meeting RG reported that there had been requests for lighting in the children's play area on Park Farm. PC King had offered to arrange a formal assessment by the Police. RG suggested that when he had received the results, PC King should be invited to report back to the PC instead of indirectly through PACT.

#### 14. **Village responsibilities**

- (a) Closure of Finn Farm Rd junction NS was amazed that KCC had delayed opening the road because the signals were not yet connected. It was thought that Highway staff shortages were exacerbating the situation.

- (b) Road closures JH reported on forthcoming road closures on the road leading south from Junction 9 because of improvement works to the roundabout and creation of the Park & Ride. The road through Newtown would be closed in January to raise the bridge. Residents of the area would have to travel via the Orbital Park and Junction 10.
- (c) Kingsnorth buffer zone AH said that a report was being drafted about an Open Space Trust. She suggested that if the PC was minded to take-over the buffer zone, this might be an opportunity to investigate the possibility. This would need further discussion as an agenda item.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 10.35 p.m.