

Minutes of
BRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 8th November 2007 in Bridge Village Hall

Present; Cllrs Edmonds (Chairman), Beinder, Corfield, Esdale, Gulvin, Hill, Lewis and Wilmshurst. County Cllr M Northey (to item 7d) & City Cllr J Anderson (to item 7d)

Councillors observed a minute's silence at the start of proceedings in memory of Margaret Jones, a former parish councillor, who died last week.

68/07-8. Apologies for absence; There were apologies for absence from Cllr Beesty.

69/07-8. Declaration of Interest & Lobbying on agenda items.
Cllr Beinder declared an interest in respect of Agenda item 7a (school governor)

70/07-8. The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11th October 2007 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

71/07-8. Cllr Michael Northey addressed the council. The KCC budget was being drafted and would again be subject to a yearly 3% efficiency saving required by the government. It was expected that service levels could be maintained this year but next year there would be cuts if efficiency savings were applied again.
Cllr Northey explained that the parish council could ask him to raise issues in full KCC council where he was allowed one question and one supplementary. In answer to a question, Cllr Northey defended KCC's decision to establish a TV station. This had had 60,000 'hits' since its inception and was valuable in publicising Kent and bringing business to the area.
Cllr Anderson said that he had been working on the redevelopment of the Beaney Institute and Marlowe Theatre. He was also involved in the Higham Park planning appeal and the future of the Mill Centre. He had tried unsuccessfully to have the paper bank emptied and would continue to ask the Street Scene Manager to deal with this problem. He noted that there had recently been poor communication between himself and the parish council.

71/07-8. Disposal of business from the last meeting

a. Recreation ground –

Cllr Beinder was thanked for organising the successful planting session on the recreation ground. She also thanked councillors for their help on the day. Cllr Esdale had ordered new parts for the slide. He had also inspected the rubbers on the swings but they did not need replacing. There had been a lot of rubbish left on the recreation ground following the Halloween party problems. Complaints had been received again about the amount of litter left on the ground following the Sunday football match. A clause had been added to Bridge Football Club's lease warning that the lease could be terminated if litter was not cleared up after matches. The parish council would monitor the situation.

The remaining picnic bench had lost its seat. It was agreed that if the picnic benches were to be replaced next Spring, benches without hinged seats would be purchased.

b. Village Hall Kingpost-

Cllr Esdale had inspected the post and found that, while some varnish was peeling, the kingpost itself was solid.

c. Street Scene & Litter –

Cllr Lewis would be holding a meeting of volunteers next week to decide on how to proceed with street cleaning. The parish council now had four litter pickers. It might be necessary to purchase high visibility vests. Cllr Lewis would contact Serco to obtain plastic rubbish bags and arrange for their collection from the village.

Action; Cllr Lewis

d. Mill Centre –

Cllr Esdale was continuing to negotiate with David Kemp of CCC over the Mill Centre's future. The 2008 rent had been paid so the immediate future was secure but long-term arrangements were under negotiation. The CCC had suggested a very large figure for the purchase of the Centre but this valued the property taking account of future housing development potential. Cllr Esdale had suggested the possibility of buying the Centre at a community rate with the condition that it would be sold back to CCC when no longer required. A decision by CCC on the future of the Centre was due to be taken at Executive Committee in December.

Action; Cllr Esdale

72/07-8 Reports from Representatives to Outside Bodies

There were no reports from outside bodies

73/07-8 Notice of proposed work to trees in a Conservation Area

The following proposal was noted;
68 High St, Bridge

Reduce flowering cherry in front garden to previous cutting point

Action; Clerk

74/07-8 Matters for Discussion and Action

- a. **Primary School Admissions policy –** Cllr Northey noted that the church had indicated it was unwilling to give up its connections with the school. At the recent meeting held at the school to discuss admissions policy it had been explained that ticking the box to request a church school was simply an indication that parents acknowledged the Christian ethos of the school. Non-Christians could ask to withdraw their children from assemblies. All local children had been admitted on appeal. Cllr Beinder pointed out that that had made the Reception Classes very large. Following discussion Cllr Northey undertook to try to get the policy changed for 2009. It was agreed that the parish council would write to Mark Dance of KCC again (copied to Cllr Northey) expressing dissatisfaction with the outcome of the meeting at the school and putting forward the strong case for primary age children to go to local schools. It would also suggest rewording the clause indicating a preference for a church school as this was currently ambiguous. **Action; Clerk**
- b. **Recreation Ground Contract –**Following the tendering exercise it was agreed to award the contract for recreation ground maintenance for 2008 to Kent Landscape Services. **Action; Clerk**
- c. **Higham Park Planning Appeal –** It was agreed to ask Canterbury City Council how best the parish council could assist it in fighting the appeal by the Higham Park developers, which was being lodged with the Secretary of State. The parishes of Bekesbourne with Patribourne and Bishopsbourne would be contacted with a view to holding a joint meeting to discuss strategy. The city council would also be asked to hold a meeting to brief the parish councils on how they could support its case. Dr Wendy Le -Las, Planning Consultant who had prepared the objection letter, was willing to assist and the parish council agreed that money would be set aside for her fees. It was also hoped that the other parishes would agree to contribute if required. **Action; Cllr Gulvin & Clerk**
- d. **Parish Council Budget for 2008/9** Following discussion the Concurrent Funding Function requests were approved and precept and budget set for 2008/9. Among the major items of expenditure was the provision of a skateboard park. £5,000 was proposed for this as an initial sum but application would be made for grants, some of which would require matched funding. £5,000 was proposed to cover planning advice that might be required for the Higham Park appeal and 24 High Street legal challenge. (Cllr Gulvin withdrew from the discussion on funding for planning advice). A rise in rental for sports clubs using the recreation ground, apart from Bridge Junior FC, was approved. It was calculated that there would be a 62.4% increase in precept. Cllr Edmunds thanked Cllr Esdale for his work on the budget and for taking the minutes at the Extraordinary Parish Council meeting on 2nd November in the absence of the parish clerk on holiday.

- e. **Village Hall Booking Policy** – Cllr Lewis raised the problems caused in the village by gate-crashers who arrived at a Halloween Party in the village hall on 26th October. The parish council agreed that this was an isolated incident and that the policy on hall bookings was a matter for the Bridge Village Hall Committee.
- f. **Tree work on Recreation Ground** – It was agreed to ask a tree surgeon to examine the dead tree by the Bifron's Path entrance to the recreation ground and the rowan near the sandbag store and advise on what work was required. **Action; Clerk**

75/07-8 Sealing of Documents

The agreement between Bridge Football Club and Bridge Parish Council for the 2007-8 season was signed. **Action; Clerk**

76/07-8 Correspondence - Noted

77/07-8 Transfer – The transfer of £3,000 between Parish Council accounts was noted

78/07-8.The following items were authorised for payment; (note that 2 signatures are required on the invoice, cheque stub and cheque)

Payee	Amount	Purpose
Christobel N Seath	£585.28	Clerk's Salary and office allowance – October 2007
Audit Commission	£334.88	Audit fees 2007 £285 +£49.88 vat
Streetmaster Products	£668.58	Purchase of replacement bench + carriage £569.00+ £99.57 vat
Ann Edmonds	£36.00	Frames for Village of the Year commendations
Mark Esdale	£69.25	Bench fixings £16.26 (£13.64 + £2.62 VAT) Litter Pickers £52.99 (£45.10 + £7.89 VAT)

79/07-8. Any other business:

- a. **Teenshelter** - The application for funding had been completed by the Youth Group and submitted for consideration
- b. **Health Questionnaire** – Cllr Beinder agreed to complete a questionnaire on Rural Erosion of Health Care requested by Eastern & Coastal Kent Patient Public Involvement Forum. **Action; Cllr Beinder**
- c. **PA System** – It was agreed to use the PA system at future public meetings
- d. **A2 slip road** – It was agreed that if the request for rumble strips on the A2 slip road was refused again the parish council would seek local technical advice.
- e. **AGM of CPRE 23rd Nov** – Cllr Hill would try to attend this meeting
- f. **Wincheap regeneration-** The Wincheap Regeneration office had reported that a decision on the new A2 sliproad at Wincheap was likely before Christmas. The current regeneration plans depended on this being agreed for 2010. An outline plan for the area was due for consultation with parish councils and others in February. It was hoped this would include an expanded Park & Ride Scheme, which might obviate the need for the proposed Harbledown Scheme.
- g. **Bekesbourne Parish Council 12th. Nov-** An invitation had been received to send a representative to this meeting as the police would be present to discuss traffic issues. Cllr Gulvin agreed to try to attend and to take the opportunity to discuss the Higham Park appeal. **Action; Cllr Gulvin**
- h. **Bonfire Night signs** – It was noted that a large number of signs had been put up advertising the bonfire, many of them illegally on the highway and chicane. They had not been removed promptly after the event. It was agreed that Cllr Esdale would contact the PTA of Bridge School to pass on the parish council's concerns. **Action; Cllr Esdale**
- i. **Litter in the fields** – This continued to be a problem and no reply had been received to the parish council's letters of complaint to the local farm. Cllr Esdale had contacted Public Rights of Way officers and they had undertaken to look into the problem.

The meeting closed at 9.48 p.m.

The next meeting of Bridge Parish Council will be on Thursday 13th. December 2007 at 7.00 pm in Bridge Village Hall.