

KEMSING PARISH COUNCIL

Clerks Office, St. Edith Hall

Kemsing

SEVENOAKS

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**Minutes of a Meeting held in the Small Hall,
St. Edith Hall, Kemsing on Wednesday, 20th April 2005, at 8.00 p.m.**

PRESENT: Councillor AC Andrews (in the chair)
Councillors P Burfield, MR Cole, GR Croughton, RJ Dawes,
PMH Kendall, W Ross, AV Waters

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs YN Tredoux (Clerk)
18 Members of the Public

APOLOGIES: Councillors DV Bennett, BD Buttifant, M Williams

There were no changes in Declarations of Interest in the Register

The Chairman opened the meeting and said that he was pleased to see everybody, and briefly explained the format of the meeting to the Public.

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 9th March 2005, reference **KPC/03/05**, having been previously circulated, were approved subject to the following amendments:

Page 2 - Item 2(c) : **was** should be **were**

Page 3 - Item 4 : 7th line should read: "different aspects, such as the technical specification and design as well as implementing and installing the CCTV"

The Minutes of the previous meeting were signed by the Chairman.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(a) Provision of a New Parsonage (See Minute 2(a))

Mrs Cole reported that no approach had been received from the Diocese and Members agreed that this item should be removed from the Agenda until any further information is available to report.

(b) Affordable Housing Rural Housing Trust (See Minute 2(b))

Councillors were asked to consider a letter dated 23 March 2005, which had been received from The Rural Housing Trust, and circulated to members. The Rural Housing Trust informed the Council that the Development Manager was still waiting for some of the results of the various site surveys carried out. It would probably be another six weeks before any preliminary plans were available to show the Parish

Council. The Rural Housing Trust also informed the Council that, as part of their partnership with Parish Councils in developing local needs housing schemes, they would arrange to host a Village Information Day. This event would be an exhibition about the proposed scheme, with plans and other relevant information about local needs housing on display in the Village Hall. It is also a consultation event, held over an afternoon and evening, and an opportunity for the whole community to view the plans, make comments and discuss any concerns with members of The Rural Housing Trust and the Parish Council. The Rural Housing Trust would contact the Parish Council as soon as the plans were completed.

A letter dated 16 April 2005 had been received from Mr D Eley and the Chairman read the letter to the Council. In his letter Mr Eley said that he could not understand why it was that the Rural Housing Trust would "host" a Village Information Day, and was of the opinion the Parish Council should be in the "driving seat" to "host" the Information Day. Mr Eley was of the opinion that the Parish Council should have sent a written statement to local residents setting out:

- The critical housing situation for "key workers"
- Reports from Sevenoaks District Council as the Strategic Housing Authority
- A plan showing the site the Council is proposed to sell
- The Council's aspirations regarding quality of housing design, etc. and the criteria on selecting tenants.

The Chairman briefly outlined the history of the development of Affordable Housing and said that a Survey done in 2003 under the guidance of The Rural Housing Trust, revealed a need for low cost housing in the Village. In response to Mr Eley's letter, Mr Andrews said that this process could take as long as five to seven years to complete and felt that a report could be given to local residents, once all the information and facts were available. The Chairman referred to a booklet compiled by The Rural Housing Trust and a copy of this booklet was handed to Mr Eley.

A discussion took place and Mr Burfield felt that the problem was the way in which the information had been distributed to local residents and said that there was a lack of communication. He was of the opinion that the Council should have explained the situation and the reasons for the need of Affordable Housing to the Public, however some Councillors felt that there had been sufficient communication. Evidence of this were publications in local newspapers, such as the Sevenoaks Chronicle and Local Advertiser. Reference to Affordable Housing could also be found in the Minutes of the Parish Council Meetings, which had been made public in the Library and the Village Hall Notice Board.

Mr Kendall felt the Parish Council should explore the possibility of compiling a leaflet in which details of the proposed plans were set out, and that the leaflet would be distributed to local residents.

Mr Burfield proposed and Mrs Ross seconded: *That the Parish Council set up a small Committee to produce a leaflet and distribute to all the local residents.*

CARRIED by 4 in favour, 3 against, 1 abstention

(c) Kemsing Heritage Centre (See Minute 2(c))

The Chairman informed the Council that there was nothing further to report and suggested that this item would not be carried forward until The St. Edith Hall Management Committee could update the Council of any new developments.

(d) Closed Circuit Television (See Minute 4)

As agreed at the previous Parish Council Meeting, The Home Office Research Study 292 (Assessing the impact of CCTV) had been made available at the Annual Parish Meeting as well as in the Clerk's Office. Councillors had been asked to note a letter received dated 17th March 2005 from Mrs D Springall, which had been circulated by the Clerk.

Mr Andrews briefly summarised the Home Office Study and said that the detailed document was available on the Internet. From this research it was clear that CCTV had not been effective in most situations, with the result that the Government had ceased issuing grants to CCTV Schemes. Mr Andrews said that installation and controlling of CCTV was very expensive and did not always prove to be cost effective. Mr Andrews said that in order for CCTV to be effective, a surveillance control room would have to be manned for 24 hours, and people on the ground would be needed to respond to incidents in progress and these teams would have to be in direct communication with each other.

[Mr Croughton handed out copies of the Home Office Research Study Summary to members of the Public.]

Mr Waters reported that in recent crime scenes in Sevenoaks, where CCTV had been installed, the criminals could not be identified, due to the poor quality of pictures taken by the CCTV surveillance cameras.

Mr Andrews proposed from the chair: *That the Council did not proceed with any further investigations into CCTV matters unless further evidence is put forward.*

CARRIED unanimously

(e) Campaign for the Sustainable Communities Bill (See Minute 5)

A letter of thanks was sent to Mrs Copleston for her involvement and for bringing this to the attention of the Parish Council. The relevant documents were completed by the Clerk to support the Campaign.

(f) Annual Parish Meeting (See Minute 8)

The Annual Parish Meeting was held on 16th March 2005, with approximately 70 members of the Public attending. The Chairman proposed from the chair that the Council received the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting, which had been previously circulated.

3. **COMMITTEE & OFFICER REPORTS**

(a) Planning Committee

Mr Dawes proposed and Mr Waters seconded: *That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 21st March 2005, Reference No P/5/2005 be approved.*

CARRIED unanimously

Mr Dawes proposed and Mr Croughton seconded: *That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 4th April 2005, Reference No P/6/2005, be approved.*

CARRIED unanimously

(b) Highways Committee

Mr Croughton proposed and Mr Burfield seconded: *That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 6th April 2005, Reference No H/02/05, be approved, subject to the following amendment:*

Page 3: Second Paragraph, last sentence: "promote" should be replaced with "contribute".

A brief discussion took place and Mrs Cole enquired about the possible consideration by the Highway Committee to abandon the Jubilee footpath in future. She felt that people are still using this footpath and that the Council should attempt to keep it. Mr Croughton explained the various problems the Council experienced with this footpath, especially time and effort to keep it clear. It is a very narrow path and very difficult to keep clear, and some members felt that the footpath have now outlived its usefulness, however, other members felt that the Council should attempt to maintain the footpath.

Mr Andrews proposed from the chair: *That the Chairman of the Highways Committee would take the necessary action for the work to be carried out to clear the path.*

CARRIED 6 in favour

Mrs Course addressed the Council on another Highway issue and informed the Council that the kerb at the Landway/West End Roads have been repaired by District Council. However, the officer had informed Mrs Course that the repairs done was adequately done to meet the current requirement, but would not stand up to sudden heavy torrential downpours.

(c) Reports from Officers

Mr Andrews read a letter to the Council from Mrs June Mantle, thanking the Council for the farewell gift she had received.

The Chairman recorded the Council's thanks to the Deputy Clerk, Mrs Sharon Palmer, for her contributions to the News Letter and her efficient response to such short notice. All members agreed and acknowledged their thanks to Mrs Palmer.

Mr Andrews read a letter dated 14th March 2005, which had been received from Sevenoaks District Council. The Community Development Officer for Health and Sustainability from Sevenoaks District Council explained that District Council and Kent Wildlife Trust, Countryside Projects, Mid Kent Water and Kent County Council and other councils in Kent have joined forces to run the Gardening for Wildlife Award Scheme 2005. This Scheme helps to recognise the efforts that people

have made in their gardens to make them more attractive for wildlife. A District Awards Ceremony would be held in October for the winning entries in all categories. The Council had been asked to support this Scheme by sponsoring the overall winner from our Parish with an award. Details of this scheme would be advertised on local Notice Boards.

Mr Croughton proposed and Mr Kendall seconded: *That the Parish Council would contribute £25-00 for the purpose of providing an award.*

CARRIED by 6 in favour.

Mr Andrews acknowledged and thanked Mrs Joyce Course on behalf of the Council for the sterling work she had done over the years.

Mr Burfield reported that the funds from the 30-days notice held with Alliance & Leicester had been transferred to City Asset Management for investment.

Mr Andrews reported that an invitation had been received to a seminar on the SEEDA Kent Rural Towns Programme. Councillors were asked to contact the Clerk for more information.

4. **Police Community Support Officer (PCSO)**

(a) Letter from Mr Kozlowski

Councillors had been asked to consider a letter dated 9th March 2005, which was addressed to Mrs J Course and circulated to Councillors. In his letter, Mr Kozlowski expressed his concern and long-standing problem with youngsters congregating in the shop doorway in afternoons and evenings. This is at the parade of Shops at Dynes Road.

He felt that at times, his shop doorway had been a meeting-point, or unofficial clubhouse for local youngsters. Mr Kozlowski felt that all these incidents made them feel like they are living under siege. Mr Kozlowski was of the opinion that without the ongoing presence of a PCSO, with regular visits to the Dynes Parade, he cannot see that the situation would be resolved.

Mr Andrews acknowledged receipt of the letter, and members sympathised with Mr Kozlowski.

(b) Funding PCSO

Members were asked to discuss the email received on 30th March 2005 from Lesley Bowles, Community Development Manager at Sevenoaks District Council, which had been circulated to members. This email informed all Parishes that the next round of funding for PCSO's would be announced shortly, and that at this stage, the local contribution figure as well as what amount of funding would be contributed from the Home Office, is unknown. During the last round, 50% of the funding was found by the Home Office and local funding was £15 000-00 per annum per PCSO.

The Clerk to Seal Parish Council, contacted the Council and enquired whether Kemsing Parish Council would be interested in discussions to perhaps "share" a Police Officer on the beat between the two Parishes, which would reduce the costs involved. She had been in contact with Knockholt and Halstead Parishes. Both these Parishes

were in "joint share" of a PCSO. The PCSO worked 37 hours per week, between 7a.m. and 11 p.m. He has made himself known in the village to local businesses and clubs and also the local youngsters in the villages. The report from Knockholt and Halstead is that this had proven to be very successful.

A meeting explaining the exercise in more detail could be arranged with Seal Parish Council and the Police, if Members were interested.

A discussion took place and members generally were of the opinion that people would feel more safe and secure if a PCSO was present in the Village. Mr Croughton felt that consideration should be given to the concern about crime in the village, not only to serious crime such as the recent raids on shops, but also "petty" crime, such as vandalism and graffiti, which our village had been subject to from time to time. Mr Burfield indicated that the village was already contributing £201,000 to Kent Police per year. This figure had risen with £30,000 in the last 2 years.

Mr Andrews said that consideration should be given to questions such as:

- How many hours of service we would get from the PCSO
- Would there be any night cover, because most of these crimes were happening at night
- Were there significant crime statistics in Kemsing to justify an expenditure of £7500
- Was there any evidence that this type of activity could prevent crime?

It became clear that members felt that "sharing" a PCSO with a neighbouring village such as Seal, would make people feel safer. The Chairman invited members of the Public to offer their opinions and in response to the possibility of installing CCTV being rejected by the Council, Mrs Springall said that she felt the matter was very serious and that the Council should investigate the possibility. Mrs Farrow said that she would fully endorse an investigation into this Scheme and she thought that this Scheme would benefit everybody.

The Council proposed that Mr Bannister would be appointed to investigate further into the PCSO and to report any useful information to the Parish.

Following discussions Mr Croughton proposed and Mr Dawes seconded: *That the Parish Council investigates this Scheme further with a view to jointly employ a PCSO with Seal Parish for a period of 3 years or the minimum period stipulated by the Home Office, and that this Scheme would be subject to review after the minimum period.*

CARRIED by 7 in favour, 1 abstention

Mrs Course advised the Council that she had been informed that a replacement for Jackie Allen (Previous Police Constable on the beat), had been found and that further information would be made public in due course.

5. **COLLECTION FOR Mr COLIN COOPER - PENNY STORES**

The Clerk received a phone call from a concerned resident in response to the ram raid at Penny Stores in West End. She expressed her concern and was enquiring whether the Parish Council could support a local collection for Mr Colin Cooper to assist him to cover some of his losses.

Members had been asked to consider this request.

A discussion followed when Members expressed their sympathy to Mr Cooper. Mrs Course offered her services to organise a collection. Mr Croughton wished her every success with the task.

6. **REQUESTS FOR FUNDING**

Councillors had been asked to consider the following requests for donations:

Kenward Trust

West Kent Mediation

SERA - South East Regional Play Association

The John Aspinall Foundation

FWAG - Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group Limited

Kent Wildlife Trust

Open Door Committee

Victim Support

It was agreed that the Council would donate the same contributions to the same institutions as last year.

CARRIED by 7 in favour, 1 abstention (Mr Kendall)

7. **BUSINESS REQUIRED BY STATUTE**

At the previous Parish Council Meeting it was decided that the Chairman would invite suggestions to fill the two casual vacancies at the Annual Parish Meeting. At the Annual Parish Meeting, Mr Andrews invited parishioners to consider undertaking these roles if they had a wide interest in the village. The appointments would be initially for two years until the next elections. No response has yet been received.

Mr Andrews again invited volunteers from the public in attendance to put their names forward.

8. **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

The Chairman invited members of the Public to ask questions. Mr Bob Bannister referred to the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting and pointed out that votes were unanimous in items 2 (a), 2 (b) and 2 (d), and that it was recorded as "Carried by a majority".

(According to the Notes taken at the Meeting, the votes were not unanimous)

Mr Bannister also indicated that there had been no discussions at all with the Hall Management Committee and the Kemsing Heritage Centre in the last 3 months, although the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 9th of March 2005 indicated that "*several issues are still being discussed between the St. Edith Hall Management Committee and the Kemsing Heritage Centre.*"

Mr Andrews said that the Council is very sympathetic to the situation in which the Kemsing Heritage Centre was, but made it clear the matter should be raised with representatives of the Hall Management Committee, and Mrs Cole indicated that the St Edith Hall Management Committee had appointed a sub-committee with Mr Burfield as Chairman, to negotiate with the Kemsing Heritage Centre.

9. **INFORMATION REPORT**

The Council received the information report, which had been circulated with the Agenda, and the papers referred to, were laid on the table.

10. **ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT**

Mr Burfield proposed and Mrs Ross seconded: That the Council approves Payment Vouchers 1-28 and 32-41 and that the Council notes Receipts Vouchers 29,30,31.

CARRIED unanimously

11. **MATTERS TO BE RAISED AT THE NEXT MEETING & GOOD NEWS**

The Chairman requested that the Council followed up on the issues discussed at the Annual Parish Meeting.

12. **DATES OF MEETINGS**

The Chairman requests Members to review and consider the Calendar of Meetings for 2005/2006, previously circulated by the Clerk.

3 May 2005 : Planning

4 May 2005 : Emergency Services

5 May 2005 : (KCC Elections)

16 May 2005: Planning

18 May 2005: AGM Parish Council

Common Field Recreation Ground

25 May 2005: Recreation Grounds

26 May 2005: Downland Management (Thursday)

31 May 2005: Planning

The Meeting was closed at 9h45.

Yolanda Tredoux
Clerk to the Council