

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF WOODNESBOROUGH PARISH HELD  
ON TUESDAY 15<sup>th</sup> April 2014 AT WOODNESBOROUGH VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30pm**

Councillors D Woodward (Chairman) P Charlesworth G Hall S Hoskins  
B Baker G Boorman

Dist Councillors Pip Russell B Butcher P Carter

30 Members of the Public PCSO Ian Norton PCSO Doreen Lee

Sarah Wells Clerk to the Parish Council

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, thanked them for coming and then introduced the members of the Parish Council.

He then explained that as our PCSO's shift ended at 8.00pm, he was going to change the order of the agenda to allow them to give their report after matters arising.

### 1. APOLOGIES

Cllrs A Boniface & L Baker, County Cllr Leyland Ridings. Jean Miller, Brian Wiseman and Val Smith.

### 2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the last Annual Meeting, held on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2013 had been on the Parish Council web site for the passed 10 months and were available for all present to read.

### 3. MATTERS ARISING

The problems of wheelie bins being left on the pavements in The Street had been reported to DDC.

### 4. POLICE REPORT

PCSO Doreen Lee went through the crime statistics for the area.

	This Year	Last Year
Burglary Dwelling	2	9
Vehicle crime		
<i>Theft of motor vehicle</i>	2	
<i>Theft from motor vehicle</i>	1	
Criminal damage	4	
Theft and handling	3	

30 crimes committed in total from April 2013-March 2014 compared with 62 crimes last year.

127 calls made from April 2013-March 2014 compared with 207 last year.

There will be a regular display of Kent Police posters in local notice boards, which we will be liaising with Gary Hall. Latest information for crime prevention can be found on Kent Police website. Currently, there are thefts from and of motor vehicles, which are usually due to owners leaving their vehicles insecure, so may we remind vehicle owners to lock their vehicles.

A question about speed on Foxborough Hill was asked and the matter was discussed for a few minutes.

### 5. KALC COMMUNITY AWARDS SCHEME

The Clerk explained that The Kent Association of Local Councils Award is to acknowledge and give recognition to those that have made a significant contribution to their local community. The Scheme is supported by the High Sheriff of Kent, Chairman of Kent County Council and Mayor of Medway Council. She said that this year the nomination had been made by the Parish Council. In future the local community may be asked to make the nomination.

The Chairman said that he was delighted to present the 2014 award to Mrs Su Atkinson, the Parish Environmental Engineer. Sue does far more than her job description requires. Any highways issues such as pot holes, lights not working etc that she spots on her rounds she reports to KHS. Su keeps an eye out for fly tipping and reports it for removal. In addition to this she carries secateurs with her and will cut back vegetation from signs and footpaths if necessary. Su is very proud of her local area and does everything she can to keep the Parish clean and tidy.

Su was present at the meeting and accepted the framed award from Cllr Woodward with a spontaneous round of applause from parishioners present.

## **6. NEW COMMUNITY HALL UPDATE**

The following statement had been included with the invitation to this meeting and had been distributed to every house in the Parish.

The Parish Council is pleased to announce that the long awaited replacement for the Village Hall is a reality. Construction is about to start on the land opposite the existing hall (old school) and the Annual Parish Meeting will this year utilise the public meeting to introduce the project and answer any questions.

The shell of the building is to be constructed by the developer of the 24 mostly affordable houses adjacent to the site together with the future proceeds from the sale of the old hall and donations. Applications will also be made for grants to provide necessary equipment. On completion of the shell, the developer will assign the land and building to the Parish Council. The date of completion of the fitting out is not yet known but the hall is expected be in operation before the end of the year.

In order to avoid having to sell the old hall before the new hall has been completed the Parish Council proposes applying to the Public Works Loan Board for a low interest loan of up to £300,000. The borrowing will be similar to an overdraft facility and the Parish Council has resolved not to draw more than the value of the old hall and donations. Repayment of the loan will be made from the sale of the old village hall. The new Community Hall will be managed by the Community Hall Committee (a successor to the Village Hall Committee) under a lease from the Parish Council at a nominal rent.

The new hall will be considerably larger with land and car parking. It will therefore be possible to operate more than one activity at a time and allow for substantial expansion of the activities.

### **The Old Village Hall is currently used by: -**

Woodnesborough Gardeners' Club, Woodnesborough Womens' Institute, The Crow Karate Club, Tai Chi and Qigong classes, Coffee Pot, Chess Club, Mother and Toddlers, Amateur dramatics society and Parish Council.

The new hall will be able support many more activities and the Community Hall Committee (through the Parish Council) are looking for ideas and volunteers. The objectives of the Community Hall Committee have yet to be agreed but the building's purpose is essentially to improve the lives of the community which is not limited to Woodnesborough. This will include activities for all ages for example dance, keep fit, sport, education and entertainment. The hall will also be used for wedding parties, social events and various youth activities. There are however many other possible activities that would enhance the lives of our community.

The Chairman asked if there were any questions or comments from the floor. There were none.

Mr Darren Ellis – the developer for the new housing and Community Hall was in attendance. He explained the timescales for the site and answered some questions about works traffic.

The Chairman asked if there were any questions about the Public Works Loan or the sale of the existing village hall. There being no response he thanked Darren Ellis for attending.

## **7. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2014**

First, let me express my thanks to the parishioners and Groups who make this a vibrant village to live in. All the clubs and groups who provide facilities, entertainment, fitness training, etc, most using this hall - except during the past few weeks. I am sorry for the closure of this village hall due to storm damage but you see we are "back home" again.

Many from the Groups have been patiently waiting for the New Community Hall and I personally long to see them using it. I hope, tonight, they are re-assured that it will happen.

Thanks to the team of parishioners who prepare and deliver the parish magazine through the village, ten times a year on a voluntary basis.

To Ken and Linda Butcher who continue to look after the delightful flower bed at the top of Fir Tree Hill.

Of course Su Atkinson whose dedication has already been acknowledged this evening.

Su and Monika Smith who look after a small flower bed beneath the Woodnesborough sign on Sandwich Road.

Our District Councils Pip Russell who attends our meetings and keeps us well informed of Dover District Council affairs and Bernard Butcher who has been a great help in getting the S106 agreement for the new Community Hall finalised .

### **The Council**

Last September Ken Ellen retired from the Parish Council having served 10 years, being our Footpaths Officer, a duty to which he was very dedicated though sometimes frustrated in the lack of action by KCC. Thank you Ken. I was delighted that Linda Butcher stepped forward and was co-opted on to the Council to fill the vacancy. Linda is of course well known in the village especially through the organisation of the Gardeners Club with Ken, her husband.

### **Ringleton Manor**

I made reference in my last report of the unsightly mounds of building waste here. I am pleased to say that later in the summer, following the intervention of the Environment Agency, these were removed and the grassed areas have recovered.

### **Footpaths**

Notification was received from Kent County Council's Public Rights of Way Department that further cuts were being made in the service; thereby maintenance of footpaths would be drastically reduced. The Parish Council did request a cut back of vegetation for foot path EE223, Church Street to Grove Road which was done. We are very fortunate to have an excellent net work of public footpaths – well used by dog walkers- so if you find any which need clearance please let us know.

Two near misses were reported between ridden horses and pedestrians during June and these were reported of the local TROT organiser for assistance in this problem.

Dover District Council is proposing to introduce 4 Dog Control Orders later this year. Two of these orders – The Fouling of Land by Dogs and The Dogs on lead by Direction will cover the whole district. I'm sure extensive information will be published in due course.

### **Planning**

Two contentious applications were considered during year – the creation of a solar panel farm on farm land in Marshborough and the other, change of use of land for the operation of hovercraft at Kestrels

Fen, Ash Road. Neither was supported by the Parish Council and also refused planning permission by Dover District Council. However, both applicants appealed against those decisions the result of which is still awaited.

A total of 16 applications have been considered and only the above mentioned were objected to. The residential development at Lasetts Yard, at the Marshborough Road, Beacon Lane cross roads was supported by the Parish Council but with reservations over of the movement of vehicles on and off driveways onto the two busy roads. Further, the provision of bus stops either side of Marshborough Road should be addressed.

### **Highways**

Pot holes and blocked drains have been reported to KCC Highway Service especially down The Street which have received attention. However, pot holes are still appearing so please report these by phone or on-line.

As I draw my report to a close I have not forgotten our hard working Clerk, Mrs Sarah Wells who is the key figure in the operation of the Parish Council, for which we are extremely thankful.

Of course, my thanks go to my fellow Councillors for your support throughout the year. I especially thank my three colleagues Cllrs Steve Hoskins, Peter Charlesworth and Linda Butcher who with me form the New Community Hall Working Group, for their enthusiasm, time, knowledge and support, they have given to the Parish Council over the past year.

Thank you for your attention

### **8. FINANCE REPORT**

The Clerk gave the Finance report for the year ending March 31<sup>st</sup> 2014. Copies were available for members of the public.

<b>Woodnesborough Parish Council</b>
<b>2013/14 Finance Report</b>

<b>Receipts</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	
Carried Forward	8,777.87	15,433.80	
Precept	15,000.00	14,134.10	
Housing support Grant	0.00	1,665.90	
VAT	507.76	131.27	
Interest	88.41	144.96	
Other	0.10	0.10	
	<b>24,374.14</b>	<b>31,510.13</b>	31,510.13

<b>Payments</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	
Admin	4,765.89	5,101.52	
Village Hall	972.93	701.43	
Village Green	1100.00	1145.00	
Cllr Expenses	0.00	35.00	
Training	60.00	120.00	
Grants	700.00	0.00	
Street Cleaning	1,098.24	1260.48	
Flower beds	75.00	51.66	
VAT	131.27	136.56	
Misc	37.00	17.00	
	<b>8,940.33</b>	<b>8,568.65</b>	<b>-8568.65</b>
			<b>22,941.48</b>

<b>Bank Reconciliation</b>	
Current Account	60.00
Reserve Account	10,374.54
Bonus Saver	13,100.19
Petty Cash in Hand	35.65
	<b>23,570.38</b>
Unpresented Cheques	<u>-628.90</u>
	<b><u>22,941.48</u></b>

## 9. REPORTS

### i. District Councillor Pip Russell

After a frustrating period when our regeneration agenda seemed to take three steps back for every two steps forward, 2013/14 has been a year in which real progress has been achieved and a strong sense of momentum has developed.

The Dover Town Investment Zone is now at the stage where we have issued compulsory purchase orders on the County Hotel and Burlington House. As objections to these orders have been raised these will have to go to a tribunal, a process that regrettably will take several months, but as no alternative scheme has been offered we are confident of a positive result, while continuing to hope that the owners of these properties will come to the table for meaningful negotiations to avoid the need for a tribunal. The scheme involves a hotel, a six-screen cinema, an M&S store, a variety of retail and catering outlets and a small amount of housing.

On the Western Heights outline planning permission has been given for a hotel and conference centre, together with a renewal of the Napoleonic fortifications, including the Drop Redoubt, which will allow these to become a visitor attraction. There will also be housing on the site, as well as at Farthingloe. Plans are also in preparation for a Commonwealth War Memorial on the Heights.

Agreement has been reached with the Land Trust and the Homes and Community Agency for the Trust to take over the historic Fort Burgoyne and make it accessible to visitors. In view of its proximity to the Castle this will become another tourist venue. The agreement will also allow the development of the Connaught Barracks for housing.

A major success has been the decision by Hadlow College to create a new campus on the Betteshanger Colliery site. This is a highly prestigious development which will bring many students and many jobs into our area and will be of great benefit to all of East Kent.

The Discovery Park goes from strength to strength, with 83 companies and over 1500 jobs now on site and more in the pipeline. As well as its Hi-Tech core companies the plan for the Park includes light engineering, green energy companies, a supermarket and housing.

After many delays work has finally started on the new hospital on the Buckland site.

A major employer, Viking at Whitfield, which specialises in marine recruitment and training, has recently considerably expanded its operations, which will create more demand for hotel beds in Dover. A new arrival, Multipanel at Tilmanstone, which has relocated to the UK from China, has just gone into production with more highly skilled jobs available.

Moving on from regeneration, we have introduced a new tenancy strategy and policy for our social housing. This will see introductory tenancies and fixed term tenancies for new tenants, encouraging them to look after properties and be good members of their community. We have made a start with building new council houses for the first time in many years. The first three are at Elvington and other small sites will follow. Several successful projects have been completed using the 'no use empty' funding to bring empty properties back into use.

Grants for community projects have continued under the Neighbourhood Forum banner, where decisions on which schemes to support are voted on by the community. Parishes in our ward can continue to apply to the Coalfields small grant scheme which has an increased pot of money for the coming year.

Following research that indicated that action on littering and dog fouling is a high priority for residents we have appointed three enforcement officers to work on this. The support they receive from parishes in identifying 'hotspots' in location and timing, so that on the spot fines can be levied, is very valuable.

Events process has been improved and is now online with improved advice to encourage community organisations to hold more events.

We have formed a district Civilian Military Partnership to support ex-service personnel in the district and we have a facilitating role in helping organisations to access the grants available through this route.

Percentage recycling rates remain in the mid/high 40s. We are very grateful to residents who take the trouble to sort their refuse for collection. Dover District Council are working on a plan to invite people to visit the recycling plants so that they may see what residents' hard work is achieving.

Turning to Healthcare, following the recent reforms the GP practices in our ward elected to be part of the Canterbury and Coastal Clinical Commissioning Group. Health and Wellbeing Boards have been set up with representation from the CCG, local authorities, Healthwatch and the voluntary sector. The boards look at the health priorities for the area and work together to improve integration of services. Cllr Chandler is the DDC representative on the Canterbury and Coastal Health and Wellbeing Board.

On the subject of finances, we continue to face pressure from the year by year decline in the Government's Revenue Support Grant, which we expect to have disappeared completely by the end of the decade. Nevertheless we have managed, through tight financial control and seeking to 'work smarter,' to come in under budget for 2013/14 and to have a balanced budget for 2014/15. Council tax is frozen for 2014/15 (though KCC have increased this year), as are parking charges at council-owned car parks. We have been assisted in this by better than expected non domestic rate income resulting from a change in Government policy and by the performance of Discovery Park in attracting new businesses. In the autumn we transferred £12.5 million from the Housing Revenue Account to the General Fund. It is intended that these funds should be used to support our regeneration agenda.

We District Councillors would like to pay tribute to our council staff. We know they sometimes feel that they are seen as marginally less popular than investment bankers, but over recent years they have kept the ship afloat despite significant reductions in their numbers as budget pressures have intensified. Many work long hours to protect the front line services that have been maintained throughout this period of austerity. Their willingness to go the extra mile was never better shown than during the tidal surge crisis at Sandwich in November when many volunteered to fill and stack sandbags, as well as manning rest centres, with the result that the damage was far less serious than it might have been.

In this connection, I have now completed our final draft of the Sandwich Emergency Community Plan, which is being ratified by Sandwich Town Council. I will ensure that Woodnesborough and Worth Parish Councils receive copies of this plan. Obviously the nature of any emergency will dictate the area that will be affected, but in certain cases it could mean that Sandwich, Woodnesborough and Worth will need to work together. The main thing to bear in mind, in the case of any sort of emergency, is that we all need, as a community, to help those who are vulnerable. These people could be our neighbours, those in care homes, the disabled, the elderly living on their own. It is important that each and every one of us spend a few moments just thinking about those around us who might need our help in an emergency, and be ready to act to support them if and when the occasion arises. Thank you.

As you will no doubt be aware, there is an application with DDC for a new Waitrose supermarket in Dover Road, Sandwich. If this is granted, it will include a new building for the Butcher's Surgery and a new pharmacy. It is likely to go before the Planning Committee in June of this year at the same Planning Meeting as the proposal for a new supermarket at Discovery Park.

We still do not know whether or not Manston Airport will be closed, or whether there will be a successful last-minute bid to save it, but numerous talks have taken place with the owner, Roger Gale, MP and our own MP, Laura Sandys.

#### **ii. District Councillor Bernard Butcher**

As Cllr Russell has said a lot has happened since last year with the regeneration of the Hammill site and Dover Town centre, hopefully things are starting to look up. I am very pleased to see the Community Hall Project finally going ahead and wish the Parish Council luck with this endeavour. I am currently serving on the Licensing, Planning, Regulatory & Standards Committees please feel free to contact me if you need help in any on these areas.

#### **iii. District Councillor Paul Carter**

I serve on the Scrutiny Committee and the Investment advisory group, please contact me if you have any problems you think I can help with.

Questions regarding fracking, traffic and transport issues were discussed.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and invited them to stay for refreshments.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm