

SHADOXHURST PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly, held at the Village Hall, Shadoxhurst, on Wednesday 14 May 2014 at 7.30 pm

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Mr W Hollands (Chair), Miss M Smith, Mrs J Kozlowski,
Mr R Buss, Mr S Frost and Mr B Howe

ALSO PRESENT Mr C Stanley, Webmaster

PARISH CLERK: Mrs J Batt

COUNTY COUNCILLOR: Mr M Angell

BOROUGH COUNCILLOR:

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: There were no Members of the Public present.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Porter, Borough Councillor Mrs A Hicks and Mr P Davison.

2. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

It was unanimously agreed that Mr Hollands should sign the minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on 8 May 2013.

Proposed Miss Smith Seconded Mr Howe

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were no Matters Arising.

4. PARISH COUNCIL REPORTS

Nothing to report.

5. REPORT BY COUNCILLOR MIKE ANGELL - KCC

As you may know KCC is required to cut the budget by £270 million pounds over a three year period. This is an amount of money that is difficult for people not involved in local government to understand. However it has resulted in a major transformation of the council and that is in progress at the moment. Phase one of three phases has been completed with a reorganisation of the strategic director level and has reduced the number of directors and areas of responsibility. This means that they are doing more for less. It should not and must not affect the efficient delivery of high quality front line services, such as Highways, Social Care, Education, Youth Services and Libraries.

I normally each year report on the Iceland issue and this year I can report that £42million has been returned to KCC and the remainder of the £50 million is trickling in monthly. It is expected that there will be interest earned on top. Details can be obtained on the KCC website.

We are all concerned about the situation on the damage to our roads following on from the dreadful weather in the winter. Our partner company (Enterprise, owned by Amey) has the job of fixing the potholes and repairing the damage. KCC has allocated an extra £3million, plus a grant from central government of £8million to do this. It does mean that Enterprise can now put extra gangs on the 5000 miles of roads in Kent and you will notice that there are a lot of temporary road closures to ensure that it is being done as quickly as possible.

For my own part I am involved with Health Overview and Scrutiny. In this area there are concerns about Children and Adolescents Mental Health, Patient Transport and with the reorganisation of the NHS that appropriate services are in place for outpatients.

Also I sit on the KCC Planning Committee which is addressing Waste, Schools and KCC Extra Care facilities.

For the last three months I have been Chairing a Select Committee on procurement and Commissioning of KCC services which will report to County Council in May.

In addition I continue to be a member of the board of the Kent and Medway Fire Authority and also involved with the rail partnership.

Parish councils are very important and may I congratulate and thank you all for the valuable voluntary work that you do.

Please contact me with any questions by email on mike.angell@kent.gov.uk.

Following the meeting at Glebe Farm, Councillor Angell reported that KCC members were very interested in the activities at this site. He said he had received a copy of ABC's response to the consultation along with the analysis and recommendation to

refuse. The comment that ABC had abandoned the application referred to the enforcement notice to move the fence back.

6. REPORT BY COUNCILLOR ALINE HICKS – ABC

One of the main and most obvious improvements attributable to ABC during the past year is the introduction and operation of the new recycling collection service, using the wheelie bin systems at most collections points. This system, in partnership with Swale District Council, Maidstone Borough Council and Kent County Council, uses Biffa Municipal UK to operate the contract.

We also introduced the Residential Space Standards SPD; a planning document designed by ABC to ensure that new dwellings were built to a space standard inside that made them liveable; also the space outside in the garden. These standards at least met and sometimes surpassed those of affordable homes standards. ABC has now been told that they can no longer use their local standards and must comply with the introduction of a National Standard relating to both space and access for new dwellings. These are of course MINIMUM standards, but usually these are the ones Developers' try to work to. We are currently working on another SPD which will ensure we have a Dark Skies Policy.

Ashford Borough Council has not increased their portion of the Council Tax for this year 2014-2015 and plan to keep it the same for next year 2015-2016. As you will have noticed on your Council Tax bills the total has raised slightly, this is due to other services raising their portion of the total bill.

As well as being on the Cabinet, holding the Portfolio for Housing and Customer Services, I also represent ABC on the KCC Commissioning Body, River Stour Internal Drainage Board, and Marshlink and Ashford Leisure Trust, so I am kept pretty busy!

Housing keeps me the most busy with all sorts of queries from tenants, ensuring that we collect rents, keep to a planned maintenance programme, build new affordable homes, making sure the system of allocating homes is fair, improving our aging stock of sheltered housing, liaising with Housing Associations, reviewing our licences for park homes following the Mobile Homes Act introduced last year, working with KCC to provide short term care for residents who may have just come out of foster homes, and aiming to provide accommodation for those who have found themselves homeless through no fault of their own.

I have worked with officers to introduce the Military Covenant to Ashford and this will be signed by representatives of the council and military on 10th May following the Freedom of the Borough March by REME. This national document is a voluntary pledge of mutual support between a civilian community and its local armed forces community, and after the official signing local residents will also be able to sign up on the new website.

The Call for Sites has caused much consternation in the villages where many landowners have put forward their land for consideration of further development. There is still a long way to go before any sites are put forward into the

Local Plan and the public and parish councils will be consulted at every step of the way. In this respect it is essential that ward members are kept informed so that they can represent the views of residents.

I trust this short report shows some of the things that keep me busy during the year.

7. FORUM FOR EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

There being no other business the meeting closed at 7.55 pm.

Signed Date