

SHADOXHURST PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly, held at the Village Hall, Shadoxhurst, on Wednesday 10 May 2017 at 7.30 pm

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Mr D Ledger (chair), Mrs S Ellis, Mrs C Procter,
Mr K Carroll, Mr R Crowley, and
Mr M Richmond Coggan

PARISH CLERK: Mrs J Batt

COUNTY COUNCILLOR: Mr M Angell

BOROUGH COUNCILLOR:

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: There were 2 Members of the Public present.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An Apology for Absence was received from Mr S Cass (prior engagement).

2. **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

It was unanimously agreed that Mr Ledger should sign the minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on 11 May 2016.

Proposed Mr Carroll Seconded Mrs Ellis

3. **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no Matters Arising.

4. **PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

My first year as Parish Chairman has been a steep learning curve and kept me busy nearly every week, and often each day too. I am proud to serve as Chairman and take the role very seriously. There are a lot of things to be done. In the last 12 months, we filled all the vacant posts of Councillors and I am pleased to report that we have a very good and dedicated team, every one of whom is keen to work for the good of the village. Previously there has been rather a turnover for a variety of reasons, and often at least one vacancy. In 2017 I am hoping that everything has stabilised and the team will stay together to deliver the exciting things being planned.

We formed the Village Forum last June and villagers have embraced it and every meeting is well supported. There are some 70 villagers on the mailing list. We also started the Coffee Club, which initially met fortnightly, but soon moved to weekly. Apart from a break at Christmas, it is supported each week by regulars, and others less regular but never the less continue to support it. I count it as a great success and thank Val, Sheila and Colin for being the mainstays of the Club.

We are I think, gradually building up the morale and motivation in the village thanks to all the Parish Councillors and others regularly involved in the Forum. All this takes team work and I hope that we can take this to new heights in the coming months. Communications are key, and we are striving to improve these. Village events have been held, including the Table Top Sale, spring clean and Showcase Event. Other events are in the wings for this year. All need people to help. I thank you all for stepping forward.

Planning and development issues continue to dominate my Parish involvement, and whilst we lost a key field to development recently, as long as I am able to put time and effort into local affairs, I promise that I will work hard to protect the village as best as I am able. There are a number of residents that help with the planning work and I am grateful for their continued support.

In spite of the development threats facing us at the moment, I will co-ordinate and lobby for the rectification of the twisted planning process we currently have nationally. The system is so heavily weighted, the injustice must be highlighted and I for one choose to fight and not roll over in the face of undue pressure. Testing times are ahead.

A hearty thank you to each of the Parish Councillors for all the work you have done and the support that you have given to me. I am very grateful for this, I think we do make a good team. Finally, I must thank Judith for all the work you put in. it is tough to juggle all the parishes you do, but you are always there to help me when I ring or turn up on your doorstep, you put me back on the straight and narrow and give advice, no matter what else you were doing at the

time. Printing the newsletters at weekends and a myriad of jobs in the evenings too are all much appreciated by me.

5. PARISH COUNCIL FINANCIAL REPORT

The Summary Receipts and Payments for the year 2016-2017 were circulated and questions taken.

6. REPORT BY COUNCILLOR MIKE ANGELL - KCC

Savings have been achieved by restructuring the County Council, entering in to commissioning contracts for services which have reduced overheads and still get value for money and which have not affected the delivery of front line services. All this includes balancing the budget for this financial year.

The levy from the public wrapped inside the 2per cent increase on Council Tax for Social Care has helped and indeed another 24 million from central government has also helped but not completely covered the cost of care for the elderly.

Before you ask the money that was invested in Iceland has now been recovered not only by KCC but also the Kent and Medway fire and rescue service plus interest (over 1 million pounds)

I have been engaged as follows at County Council: during the last year I was: Chairman of Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee which involves the monitoring of improvement and future plans, and a direct contact with the Care Quality Commission. Commissioning Advisory Board, Planning Committee. Chairman of the General Purposes Fire Authority Committee, Sussex Community Rail Partnership Strategic Board, Joint Transportation Board, Ashford Chairman Youth Advisory Group and Local Children's Board to do with specialist children's services.

This has kept me pretty busy as well as constituency matters which are growing with the housing developments. Most of my enquiries deal with Highways matters, apparent lack of infrastructure and no doubt there will be school appeals to come to my attention. There are issues which concern me in that the pressure is now on our rural roads and infrastructure or lack of.

There are now regular discussions about traffic calming as a result of the very soon to start building at Chilmington Green. This includes the upgrading of the A28 between the tank roundabout and the Matalan roundabout. Work is also going on in design and finance seeking for an extension to the dual carriageway on the Great Chart bypass. In addition, I am informed that the work on Junction 10A will commence next year. The JTB has been pressing Highways England for the Barry Road entrance to be redesigned with a roundabout. We await their agreement.

Among other things I have been pressing the NHS for a health centre in Chilmington Green with facilities for Minor injuries, ray and consultant clinics in order to reduce the need for patients having to visit the William Harvey.

My very best wishes to the Parish Council and thank you for your excellent voluntary support to the community.

7. REPORT BY COUNCILLOR ALINE HICKS – ABC

Mrs Hicks was unable to attend the meeting. Please see minute of Annual Residents Meeting for her report.

REPORT BY COUNCILLOR GARETH BRADFORD – ABC

Mr Bradford reported that he has had a very busy year with up to 30 meetings a month on a whole range of subjects.

It is an exciting time to be a Borough Councillor and a positive time to be in the Cabinet. Ashford Borough Council is not a council in decline.

The new college is due to open in September and is already oversubscribed.

A question about student accommodation was raised. Flats are being developed in Victoria Way and part of the complex will be made available to students.

Most of the buildings in the Commercial Quarter have been rented.

The One Stop Shop is being run as a 2-year pilot scheme and will hopefully lead the way for Preventable health care to be a regular feature.

Mr Bradford said he has not been so busy on the Ward but he is always available.

Mr Ledger asked whether Ashford is still a growth area. We were one of the first to be nominated as a growth area and Kent now has a lot of projects planned – for example the Paramount Theme Park, which will have its own academy and employ 7000 people. The signalling on the Eurostar will bring European trains through and it should soon be possible to get on a train in Ashford and travel to Munich and other continental cities.

8. ANY OTHER SPEAKERS

There were no other speakers.

9. FORUM FOR EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

There being no other business the meeting closed at 7.47 pm.

Signed Date
Chairman