

LAMBERHURST
ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
On Tuesday 9th April 2019 at 8.00pm
In The Memorial Hall

To be confirmed
at next meeting

MINUTES

In Attendance	Denis Cruse - Chairman Barbara Uren – Parish Clerk Edmund Hastie – Borough Cllr Sarah Hamilton – County Cllr Dave Jenkins - PCSO Graham White - Neighbourhood Plan Chairman	DC BU EH SH DJ GW
	Minutes Secretary – John Mottershead Approximately 40 members of the public at this meeting	JM

1. Chairman's welcome.

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed the Borough & County Councillors, the PCSO; and members of the public. He outlined the order of proceedings.

DC then introduced EH, but first thanked him for his work over the last 8 years.

2. Invitation to County/Borough Councillors, if present, & other Local Representatives, to speak or give their reports.

EH – Addressed the meeting. He started by stating that the application for development on the Fair Field site has been rejected. One key bit of news is the introduction of the new waste contract. He thanked DC for his outstanding job on the Parish Council, and in his position as Chairman. EH finished by donating a bench to the Parish; and thanking the Parish for their support during his time on the Borough Council.

The PCSO, Dave Jenkins addressed the meeting next. He told the assembly that since the first of January until now there had been 30 crime reports on the local police system. Goudhurst had 24, Kilndown 1, and Lamberhurst had 5.

DC observed that we seem to be a fairly low crime neighbourhood. He stated that it is important to report crimes in order to keep the statistics balanced. It's possible that by not reporting crimes, we may lose resources that would be channelled elsewhere. DC emphasised the point that reporting any crimes, would keep Lamberhurst in the eye of the police and crime commissioner, and hopefully attract the necessary resources

DC asked if there are any other particular concerns the audience would like to raise with the PCSO. One member of the public asked what was being done about the parking problems we have? The Chairman asked what could be done, if anything. DJ replied that we don't have the manpower to do much at all.

SH – Addressed the meeting - Stated that she also serves as a Town Cllr & as a Borough Councillor for Paddock Wood. She asked to comment on the presentation made by DJ; and to draw our attention to 'county lines'. These are the ruthless gangs who target young children for drug related crimes.

She stated that it is absolutely vital to report 'any and all' incidents as we can never know if they are connected to wider criminal activity. A member of the public asked why SH had brought up the subject of knife crime when we do not have any here? We need to be aware of these crimes to try and prevent them happening in Lamberhurst.

SH went on to talk about the issue of speeding in the village. She believes that it is possible to request an enforcement officer if we need one.

SH stated that she hadn't heard of a lot of pot-hole problems in the Lamberhurst area. This raised some considerable comments from the audience. BU mentioned the KCC website for reporting pot-holes.

SH talked about broadband in Hook Green. She acknowledged that it is a problem.

She mentioned the rural economy. She would like to encourage local people to use local business; and stated that there is a heritage centre being set up in Paddock Wood to cover all of this area.

SH briefly mentioned two of the committees that she is a member of. One was Pupil Premium and the other was loneliness in the community.

Questions to SH from the floor: -

What is being done about rural public transport? The transport is dire; particularly at the weekend. DC outlined the poor services we do have, especially no easy way of reaching Pembury hospital by bus.

SH stated that she would like to get to grips with this. She would like people to give her more information on the problems we have.

Does the Borough Council have any say on the mobile coverage in the area or is that a commercial issue? Does the Borough Council have any influence?

SH stated that she will find out for us.

DC thanked SH for her presentation and support for the parish.

3. Update of the Lamberhurst Neighbourhood Plan

GW gave a detailed presentation on the Neighbourhood Plan progress.

Questions from the floor: -

What facilities do you have to turn the plan into reality?

Will the plan will carry equal weight with the local plan?

What finances will be available to make this a reality?

Any developers will need to carry out their work in accordance with our plan. For example, if we wanted a youth centre, then we would ensure any developer would be required to contribute in addition to building their own sites. There may ultimately be no development but if there is, it will have to be in accordance with our plan.

Will the Borough Council plan, and our Neighbourhood Plan work together?

We have gone to considerable lengths to ensure that both plans would work together.

GW finished by thanking everyone who has helped in the process so far.

DC asked that we record our thanks to GW in particular; but also the parishioners and parish councillors who have had considerable input into the Neighbourhood Plan.

4. Judging of the Photographic Competition.

SN – Asked that if you have not already had a chance, please look at the photos on display and indicate your choice from each category. There will be a prize of a £50 voucher for each category winner.

5. Parish Council Chairman's Report for the past year.

Copy supplied by DC for appendix.

6. Open session.

SH – Asked if Lamberhurst takes part in the annual heritage open day? She would like to liaise with the Parish to raise awareness of this event. DC asked for the details to be sent through to the Clerk.

Meeting closed at 21:45

Appendix A

Chairman's Report for 2018-2019
for the Annual Parish Meeting 9th April 2019

During the past year the Parish Council membership has seen a change. Last summer Cllr Bernard Bryant died. He was a long-standing member of the council and served the community faithfully for many years and we regret his passing. A co-option procedure resulted in Dawn Beeby joining the Council in July, joining the remaining Cllrs John Uren, Clive Stott, Rolf Smith, Sam Nicholas, David Hurst-Brown, John Francis, and Steve Cannella. Of these, John Francis has been our RFO and has kept a close eye on finances and regulatory matters. Barbara Uren has been an efficient Clerk and John Mottershead our Minutes Secretary. Chris Hepher who has been keeping information on the parish website updated decided that she wished to hand this on and Cllr Beeby has undertaken this role. Our Borough Councillor Edmund Hastie and our County Councillor Sarah Hamilton have continued to support the Parish, especially in planning matters and road safety issues in different parts of the parish. To all these we owe thanks for the time and effort they give to Parish matters. The Parish's views are represented at regular meetings of the TW Parish Chairmen, at the Town Hall, and the local section of the Kent Association of Local Councils: your Chairman tries to attend as many of these as possible. Cllrs and the Clerk also try to make reasoned responses, as far as their areas of expertise permit, consultations from TWBC or KCC.

The responsibilities for Common Land and allotments continue to take up much of the Clerk's time, duties she performs with admirable efficiency. The Council has sought advice about the best way to manage much of the wooded areas of Common Land to maintain its character and biodiversity and a Woodland Management Plan was constructed and a grant obtained for work to maintain and improve maintenance of our extensive areas of Common Land. Further lights were added to the trees on the village green in time for last Christmas, which were favourably commented upon. The requirements of the GDPR laws took up much of the Clerk's and RFO's time, especially, and frustratingly, as the rules applying to Parish Councils were initially unclear and then changed.

Road safety in the parish has continued to give concerns, and your Council has supported requests for some review of traffic calming and for speed checks at School Hill and Hook Green. Our County Councillor has been liaising with Kent Highways over these issues and has supplied funding for further traffic surveys in areas of concern. A Speedwatch group has been working and gathered useful data about the incidence of speeds in excess of speed limits.

Your Council continues to work with the WMH managers for the upkeep and improvements of this important memorial to parishioners of earlier generations and has provided grants for aspects of the building and funding for the eternal public conveniences. The Hall is a memorial, and your council assisted in the commemorative events which were held last November. Your Council liaised with Shepherd Neame to replace the height barrier at the entrance to the car park behind the WMH to improve security there and beyond onto the playing fields. It is encouraging to see the playground there much used, even in poor or cold weather.

Your council has made comments on planning applications, giving local information which the officers at the Town Hall might not be aware of, making constructive suggestions where appropriate but recommending refusal of inappropriate proposals. Proposed developments at Bewl Water, although outside the parish boundary, would affect some parishioners and councillors have been keeping a watch on the plans.

In this regard, a Neighbourhood Plan is an important benchmark against which proposed developments within the Parish can be assessed. Much work has been done, led by Graham White as Chairman. Three councillors - Cllrs Nicholas, Hurst-Brown and Stott - have been working with the group along with a large number of parishioners. We are grateful to all of these for all the time and thought that they have devoted to this task, which will be a great asset to the community in making plans for our future. TWBC officers have also been of assistance, and meetings with them by Cllrs and others on the NP group have been informative, in particular with regard to the progress of TWBC's Local Plan.

There are elections this May for TWBC councillors. Our Borough Councillor, Edmund Hastie will not be standing again. I should like to put on record our thanks and appreciation for all that he has done for the parish during his time as our representative, attending not only council meetings but other events such as the Remembrance service and bonfire night, helping us with liaison with TWBC officers and providing funds for a number of projects. We shall miss him. There are 4 candidates listed for our ward on the TWBC website and I would encourage you to vote.

Council Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of alternate months, starting in January, and these are public occasions to which any Parishioner can come. At each there is a 15 minute session from 7.30p.m. for questions, suggestions and comments to be brought to the Council. We are now three quarters through this Council's term. Many of the current Council have been members for many years and there will be elections in a years' time, when I believe that several current councillors might not offer themselves for re-election. The Parish needs Councillors to keep it functioning. Please do come along to PC meetings to see how the Council operates and find out if you would willing to stand and give us feed-back – all are welcome to see how we conduct business in your name! Thank you for your support!