

BAPCHILD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting 24th September 2002

A meeting of the Bapchild Parish Council was held at the Village Hall on Tuesday 24th September 2002 at 7.30p.m.

Present: Mr R Bush (Chairman), Mrs C Culver, Mr A Smith, Mrs L Trott, Mrs J Kingsley, Parishioners Mr G Cooke, Mr G Williams, Mr T Luckhurst and Mrs Crispin and a press representative Kerry Goldsmith

Apologies: Apologies were received from Cllr Jordan.

Mr T Luckhurst, being in attendance for this item only, was invited to speak to Members. Mr Luckhurst wanted to know why and from whom complaints had been made caused by the parking of his sweeper lorry. He stated that no licensing nor regulation prevented him from parking his sweeper outside his house and that he had canvassed neighbours and received no complaints prior to him doing so. The Chairman stated that there had been complaints received and that the Parish Council had made enquiries of the licensing authorities and the owners of the sweeper as written on the side of it. Mr Luckhurst agreed not to park outside his house other than during inclemental weather.

Mrs Crispin was invited to speak on a number of matters including the speeding through the village, parking on pavement in The Street and worries concerning a neighbouring empty property.

Minutes of the last meeting held on 28th May 2002 previously distributed with the agenda were signed as a true record.

Membership of the Parish Council: The Chairman reported that the necessary advertising of the vacancy of Parish Councillor caused by the sad death of sitting Member Mr Rogers had resulted in Mr G Cooke putting himself forward provided that no expense would occur caused by an election. It was proposed by Mrs Culver and seconded by Mr Smith that Mr Cooke be co-opted as a Parish Councillor. Mr Cooke signed the acceptance papers.

Mr B Rogers. Members wished to record their sadness upon the sudden death of Mr Rogers. The Parish Council was represented at his funeral and a letter of condolence sent to his widow. As a village stalwart and larger than life character both locally and distant, he will be much missed. Members were asked to consider whether to commemorate Mr Rogers' membership of the Parish Council by way of a framed picture or the like.

Matters Arising From Previous Minutes:

Footway and Highway Matters:

Footpath Closure, Panteny Lane. A letter had been received from KCC which indicated that the Parish Council's application to review this track as a right of way was now actively being considered by themselves. Letters from KCC had been sent to Bapchild and Tonge Parish Councils requesting their views on this matter. The clerk informed Members that Tonge Parish Council objected to the proposal because of the close proximity of another footpath which effectively served the same purpose and joined the same roads. Members acknowledged that there was never a formal right of way however also acknowledging that parishioners had used the track for many years as a footpath. As the Parish Council had been requested by a number of Parishioners to re-instate their lost walkway and as it had been in place many years,

it was agreed to confirm to KCC the Parish Councils support for the introduction of a formal right of way.

Lighting central reservations and on street parking, The Street: The Chairman reported on the history of the central reservations and reported that most illuminated lamps were not working. These issues should have been resolved several years ago. The Chairman and Clerk also briefed Members on conversations they had had with Cllr D Jordan on this issue where Cllr Jordan had spoken with the traffic engineers on this and the other issues raised by the Parish Council. It was agreed that, as Cllr Jordan had a SBC meeting tonight and could not attend, that the Chairman write to Cllr Jordan in an effort to clarify the exact position regarding the issues giving concern (see below).

School Lane - Traffic calming. The Chairman reported that the Parish Council had raised this issue with the traffic engineers and were still waiting for answers to the Parish Council view that the road humps are not to specification.

Panteny Lane - fencing and hedgerow maintenance and parking. The Chairman reported that the Parish Council had raised this issue with the traffic engineers and were still waiting for answers to the Parish Council request for information.

Members noted that there was still considerable parking at the junction with The Street. However, Members were now concerned that in an attempt to improve this situation there may be problems elsewhere if cars were moved, say, on to the estate. There appeared to be no documented accidents recorded for this area. Members noted that there was a vehicle count machine presently in Panteny Lane and that the Parish Council had previously requested improvements to Panteny Lane including a footway.

Footpath, Morris Court Close - overgrowth. The Clerk reported that Mr Ashton, SBC, had informed him that the probation service were unable to assist in the maintenance of the hedgerow as there were no on-site facilities for the workmen. The Clerk had requested, through Mr Ashton, a quotation from Brophy for the work. Members requested that a letter of thanks be sent to Mr Ashton for his good and helpful service during the summer in the duty of arranging grass cutting of parish open spaces and the Churchyard.

Common Land Registration: The Clerk reported that there was no further progress to report on this matter.

Kent Neighbourhood Watch Scheme: Mr Geoff Cook and Mr Geoff Williams outlined the current status of the scheme which was considered to be in the doldrums; both thought that a revamp was overdue and that fresh blood was required to re-invigorate the scheme locally and that a Bapchild meeting could be arranged which would be beneficial by involving the new estate residents. It was noted that a 5% discount on insurance premiums was available to participants of Neighbourhood Watch Schemes.

Mrs Culver reported on her visits to the Police Liaison meetings, which she considered were of limited use and thought to be too social occasions. Jan Milgate, Police Liaison Officer, had promised a streamline newsletter but this was overdue. It was noted that the Rural Police Force were dedicated to rural areas and were of covert and intelligence gathering in nature. Whilst it was acknowledged that Bapchild was not a hotbed of criminal activity, there were significant local policing issues and problems and it was agreed to invite the Rural Police Force to a future meeting of the Parish Council.

Parish Website: It was reported that work on the website was continuing. The initial and ongoing costs were to be reported to the next meeting which would be the precept setting meeting of the Parish Council.

Residential Caravan, Hemstead Lane: The response from the planning department of Swale Borough Council was read to the meeting which explained that the site was allowed for non-permanent occupation. Members also noted that residents at this site had entries in the telephone book and the election register. It was agreed to advise Swale Borough Council regarding this.

Accounts:

It was proposed by Mr Cooke and seconded by Mrs Culver and agreed to draw the following cheques:

D Akhurst – Out of pocket expenses re village clean up - £40.00

K Funnell – Internal Audit Fee – £30.00

Internal Audit Arrangements – The Clerk explained the background to the new system of internal and external audits effective from 2001-2002. The KAPC had published a list of available persons who would undertake internal audits and Mr Funnell, who is local and had already undertaken other internal audits, had agreed to undertake this Parish Council's internal audit at a charge of £30 per hour. The Clerk had agreed to this and the internal audit had taken place and a report of this is reported below together with the 2001-2002 Annual Accounts for approval.

Internal Audit of Accounts:

The Internal Auditor, Mr Funnell has raised the following issues, Parish Council Members agreed response in italics:

1. Tax and NI deductions from payments made by the Parish Council. Currently, the Parish Council pay the clerk gross. There is an exposure should the clerk not declare this income. It is recommended that the Parish Council obtain a statement and evidence from the clerk that he does declare his salary. *Agreed.*
2. Insurance. The Parish Council should check that the Parish Councils insurances are adequate at each renewal. Also, the Parish Council should check annually that their assets insured by the Village Hall Committee are adequately insured. *Agreed.*
3. Financial Regulations. Currently, the Parish Council are working on arrangements agreed and minuted in 1996; the clerk read from the minute book the arrangements agreed at that meeting. *It was agreed that the current arrangements continue as previously minuted.*
4. Clerks duties. *It was agreed that the current arrangements continue as previously minuted.*

Annual Accounts – 2001-2002:

The Clerk referred to the 2001-2002 accounts circulated with the agenda and the Annual Return for that year which had been completed by the Clerk and the Internal Auditor where appropriate. It was agreed to accept the accounts and the Clerk and Chairman signed them.

Planning Matters:

Planning Applications:

17 The Street – change of use from house and shop to full residential – no adverse observations.

23 The Street – extend drop kerb – object - concern was expressed that the Parish Councils response was received too late by SBC. The Clerk was asked to investigate this.

24 School Lane – photo studio & ext. to garage – no adverse observations.

34 The Street – Front dormer – no adverse observations.

Land at Panteny Lane – amenity space use as a site compound – application has been withdrawn.

Hemstead Lane – imitation grain silo use as a mobile ‘phone mast – agree with Tonge PC that a normal mast would be less intrusive.

- remove three plum trees - no adverse observations.

Planning Decisions:

17 The Street – change of use from house and shop to full residential - granted

23 The Street – extend drop kerb – granted

34 The Street – Front dormer - granted

Landsdown Primary School – new staff room – granted

24 School Lane – photo studio & ext. to garage - granted

Other:

Morris Court Farm, School Lane – planning enforcement – the Chairman agreed to speak directly with Mr Bessant, Swale Borough Council, regarding the inactivity of planning condition enforcement.

Route of the Northern Distributor Road (NDR). The Chairman reported that a meeting was arranged for a future time with Mr Bessant, Swale Borough Council, and was appropriate when the Baptie feasibility report was published. Mrs Culver reported on the Sittingbourne Area Committee meeting she and Mr Wood, Tonge PC Chairmen, attended where Mr Wood gave a passionate speech recommending a holistic approach to the proposal. It appeared that Swale Borough Council Members were suspicious of the route in general and appeared not to accept piecemeal provision, which might result in unfinished roads.

DEFRA – Parish Councils future role in planning. It was noted that the current status quo was to be maintained although some wording appeared confusing. Members would be alert to any diminution of Parish Councils rights to be consulted.

KCC – Local Transport Plan

Dept of Transport – The Future Development of Air Transport in UK: South East.

South East England Regional Assembly from Crisis to Cutting Edge – Regional Transport Strategy Consultation Draft.

Appeal Decision – re 93 The Street – erection of brick wall with piers – appeal dismissed

Correspondence: It was agreed to note the following correspondence -

Kent Assn. Of Parish Councils -

Parish News No's 284, 285 and 286.

Swale Area Committee:

Minutes 10/06/2002

Agenda 02/9/2002

Swale Borough Council –

Sittingbourne Area Committee – Highway Budget

Lay-by and Traffic Calming Schemes – Sittingbourne

Leader +, a new grant opportunity for rural areas

West Kent Healthy Homes

Funding Advise

Kent County Council -

Kent Trails.

Annual Plan

Rural Revival

KPA News – July ‘02

Victim Support Swale – request for funds

Upchurch Parish Council – Village Appraisal

The Countryside Agency, Spring 2002 – Vital Villages

NALC – Development Strategy 2002

Commission for Racial Equality – The Duty to promote race equality

Clerks and Councils Direct – May '02 and July '02
Local council Review – May '02 and July '02
Section 17 Crime & Disorder Act '98 – A practical guide for Parish Councils
Mudlark – Spring/Summer
The Kent Tree Warden Scheme
Mid Kent Leader +
The Boundary Commission – Periodic Electoral Review of KCC
The Countryside Agency – Access Rights in South East
O2 – Airwave Service
Kent Youth
Post Office – review of closure of Bapchild Post Office. It was agreed to reply to the Post Office that there were no new commercial outlets in the village that could accommodate a post office service

Any Other Business:

Mrs Culver raised concerns from residents regarding bad behaviour from children congregating on the open space in Morris Court Close. Members noted an increase in complaints regarding this issue throughout the parish. Members queried whether there was a byelaw prohibiting the playing of ball games. It was agreed to find out and also enquire whether the Borough Council would object to a more intensive planting of trees and shrubs to deter ball games. The Clerk was asked to inform the police regarding this.

The Chairman stated that he had received Mrs West's resignation. It was agreed to advertise the casual vacancy.

The date of the next meeting was noted as 19th November 2002 at 7.30p.m.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.50p.m.

Chairman.....
Date.....

The Annual Assembly of Parishioners of the Parish of Bapchild was held at the Village Hall on Tuesday 28th May 2002 at 8.30pm.

Present: Mr R Bush (Chairman), Mrs C Culver, Mr B Rogers, Mrs L Trott, Mrs J Kingsley and Parishioner Mrs V Smith and Cllr D Jordan.

Apologies: Apologies were received from Mr A Smith (vice Chairman) and Mrs G West.

Minutes of the last Annual Assembly were read and signed as a true record.

Matters Brought before the Meeting:

Speed humps School Lane. It was agreed that the majority of them were not to specification at did not reduce the speed of traffic sufficiently. It was agreed to press the Swale Borough Council traffic engineers to resolve this issue.

Footpath, Morris Court Close. It was agreed that the Parish Council arrange to clean up this footpath.

Panteny Lane Estate – boundary with Panteny Lane. The Chairman had spoken to Wards directors and the Clerk had asked Swale Borough Council traffic engineers regarding the maintenance responsibilities and nobody could clarify this. It was agreed that this matter should be clarified as in future there would be issues and problems if this was allowed to lapse. It was agreed the follow this up to resolution. Cllr Jordan stated that he had seen the engineers and that matters were in hand discussing these issues and the road integrity with Wards.

Bapchild Motoring World – Parking. It was agreed that there was still a problem particularly with mothers and pushchairs (as there was no drop kerb at this point) and that the Swale Borough Council traffic engineers should be pressed for a resolution.

Panteny Lane Estate – Landscaping and open space fronting A2. It was noted that a shortcut was being used across this area with the boundary shrubbery being damaged. It was agreed that a fence panel be requested to stop this happening and to raise this with Wards at the site meeting. Regarding landscaping the Chairman had spoken to the Chairman of Wards who, after investigation, has admitted that the situation was unsatisfactory and has discharged the landscaper and appointed another. Swale Borough Council would probably not accept the open spaces for at least another year. It was noted that all of these issues would be raised at the site meeting with Wards.

Panteny Lane Estate – junction with A2, parking. It was noted that a whole line of cars are regularly parked here. Cllr Jordan stated that there would be no new double yellow lines until a full borough wide review had taken place but recommended that the Sittingbourne area committee be approached to get around the moratorium. The request needed to be specific in its content. It was agreed to write to Swale Borough Council Sittingbourne Area Committee in this regard.

Traffic Islands – A2. It was noted that Baptie was responsible for the maintenance of these islands and that the road width was insufficient for operatives to work safely. SEEB are to be on site by the end of week to repair the faulty mains supply. Regarding the island furthest east, new reflective bollards will be provided shortly.

There being no further business the chairman closed the meeting at 9.35pm.

CHAIRMAN.....
DATE.....

