

PARISH COUNCIL OF BRIDGE

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

DATE AND TIME OF MEETING

THURSDAY 21 MARCH 2002 AT 7.30 PM

PLACE OF MEETING

BRIDGE VILLAGE HALL

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. To read and confirm the minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 March 2001
3. Matters arising from the minutes
4. To receive:
 - a) The Chairman's Report for 01/02
 - b) The Report of the Village Hall Management Committee
 - c) The Report of the Village Sports Trust
 - d) The Report of the Governors of Bridge and Patricxbourne CEP School
 - e) The Financial Statement
5. To receive:
 - a) The Report of County Councillor, Cllr Martin Vye
 - b) The Report of City Councillor, Cllr Bill Oakey
6. Resolutions of which written notice has been given
7. Any other business concerned with parish affairs
8. Talk by Cllr Bill Oakey on the New Cabinet Governance and Its Effect on Local Administration

Refreshments will be served at the conclusion of the meeting

*Biggins Path
Sandbag store (sleeping)
Village Hall pricing up: what levels?
Which are the Housing Assn. houses, 23/7 Riverside Close.*

Chairman

BRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 28 MARCH 2001 AT 7.30 PM IN BRIDGE VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllrs J Anderson (chairman), C Beer, J Connor, J Corfield, P Dobson, M Gulvin, J Hill, and T Walder (vice-chairman), County Councillor M Vye, District Councillor B Oakey and approximately 11 parishioners.

Before the meeting commenced Cllr Anderson asked for 1 minute's silence for Ken Greenaway, previously a long standing member of the parish council, who had recently died in hospital. The meeting commenced at 7.32 pm.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr J Monk, Mrs Joan Hill and Mrs Ailsa Williamson.

2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29 MARCH 2000

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 March 2000 were confirmed and signed by the chairman as a true record.

3 MATTERS ARISING

a) **Village Hall Extension** - Cllr Anderson advised that the negotiations for the purchase of the old village shop to provide an extension to the village hall had not reached a satisfactory conclusion due to a number of reasons.

b) **Mary Gregory Trust** - It was reported that the trust will be wound up on 31 March 2001 and the balance of the funds will be transferred to the Fish Scheme.

4 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2000/2001

The chairman, Cllr John Anderson, welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Cllr Pamela Dobson and the clerk, Geraldine McCombe, who were both attending the Annual Parish meeting for the first time.

Cllr Anderson reported that the work done on the flood alleviation scheme last year had prevented the flooding emergency this winter being far worse than it was. Bridge was one of the few villages that had a flood emergency action plan in 1988 and in light of recent experiences steps are being taken to bring it up to date in co-operation with other villages along the Nailbourne and Stour. The council has been assured that the footbridge over the ford will be replaced by KCC when conditions allow.

It was regretted that a once in a lifetime opportunity to extend the village hall had not reached a satisfactory conclusion.

The Bridge Millennium Festival was an outstanding success last year both in the Summer and Autumn and Cllr Anderson thanked all those whose hard work and enthusiasm had made it such an outstanding occasion. Nearly all the village organisations took part in some way or another to make it a day that will long be remembered. Cllr Anderson also thanked Alan Walton, the Chairman, and Cllr Christine Beer who liaised between their committee and the parish council.

The council, in consultation with the Kent County and City councils, are still interested in exploring the possibility of a footpath and cycle track from Bridge to Canterbury but this is on the back burner at the present time owing to the development of the Park and Ride and the fact that the council officer concerned has changed his allegiance to a different authority.

An exhibition of plans for traffic calming produced by the Kent Highways at the Highway Management Unit at the City Council was displayed in the Village Hall over a 3 day period, including a Saturday, with morning, afternoon and evening sessions to facilitate all parishioners

who wished to attend. In attendance were representatives of The Highway Management Unit and County, City and Parish Councillors to answer any questions that arose. Visitors were asked to complete a questionnaire with their comments and these were analysed to obtain the overall view of the village which was largely in favour of the scheme. This scheme is now in the process of being implemented.

Cllr Anderson introduced Maurice Smith who is empowered to report to the City Council and the Parish Council on street matters and thanked him for the work he is doing on behalf of the village.

With the closure of the footpaths due to the current outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease dog fouling of the streets and footways is now becoming a problem and, although he recognised that not all owners were being irresponsible, Cllr Anderson appealed to dog owners to clean up after their dogs.

During the year vandalism within the village had included the seat outside the Post Office and the concrete seat at the bridge and crime in general was on the increase with an attempted burglary only the previous evening. The Neighbourhood Watch Scheme is due to close at the end of April unless new co-ordinators can be found and Cllr Anderson appealed to parishioners to volunteer and keep the scheme up and running. Finally, Cllr Anderson thanked councillors for their tolerance and support over the last 12 months.

5 REPORT FROM THE BRIDGE VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Cllr Mervyn Gulvin, on behalf of the Bridge Village Hall Management Committee, reported that the Annual General Meeting had been held on 20 March 2001. The licence had been granted and passed on condition of the kitchen being painted and this had been done. The hall is in regular use including weekends and income was above that of last year with more money on reserve. Minor problems had included loss of keys and keys not being returned. A letter of thanks had been sent to Bridgeway Stores who hold the keys for the village hall. The cleaners were doing a good job and some minor repairs had also been carried out. The Village Hall Management Committee were disappointed that the shop could not be acquired to extend the hall especially as the Disabled Act is effective from 2004 and it had been hoped that any necessary alterations could have been incorporated within the extension.

6 REPORT FROM THE BRIDGE VILLAGE SPORTS TRUST

On behalf of the Sports Trust Cllr Mervyn Gulvin reported that the Annual General Meeting was held recently and that the trust pays its way and has a small surplus of funds. A new member has been welcomed for the coming season. Acts of vandalism had occurred but this was mainly broken glass and the trust were determined not to give in to vandalism and erect screens. More storage space is required and this is to be addressed in 2001/2002. The junior and senior football teams have been unable to use the pitch since October due to the extreme weather conditions and may ask for a review of their fees. Cllr Gulvin reported that the trust is in good hands and progressing normally.

7 REPORT FROM THE GOVERNORS OF BRIDGE AND PATRIBOURNE CEP SCHOOL

Mrs Billie Anderson, a governor at Bridge and Patribourne School, reported that the building of new classrooms was progressing well in spite of the weather conditions and to help alleviate the parking problems at the school, Mr Houghton is undertaking traffic duty at the beginning and end of the school day. The school has received a school achievement award, over the last 10 years 5 members of staff have moved on to take headships at other schools, Mr Birrell has been named as sports teacher of the year by the sports district advisory council, Mrs Clubb has been presented to the Queen at a reception at Buckingham Palace in acknowledgement of her contribution to services in education, 2 members of staff have done an advanced teaching course and quite a few young people have come to the school on work experience. All of which is a great accolade to the school. During the year the children have taken part in various activities in the village, put on a display of their own at the Church Flower Festival and the art club are working on a nationwide exhibition

project to be judged in July. Many thanks are given to the PFA who are a great help and support in many areas.

8 THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Parishioners were provided with the Income and Expenditure Accounts and the Balance Sheets for the year to 31 March 2000. It was reported that during the current financial year reserves had been spent on upgrading street lighting, and tree maintenance and ball stop fencing at the recreation ground.

9 REPORT OF COUNTY COUNCILLOR, MARTIN VYE

Cllr Vye reported that the new traffic measures are progressing swiftly and that although he is aware of divided opinion on them he supports the pedestrian crossings wholeheartedly. Cllr Vye said that he did have reservations about the two jetties in Town Hill as he is aware that narrowing the roadway elsewhere can lead to confrontation. However his experience so far is that drivers had behaved with maturity and responsibility.

Cllr Vye reported that traffic congestion at school drop-off and pick-up times remains a problem and that the school, to his knowledge, had not yet produced a 'green travel plan' which was one of the conditions of granting planning permission for the new building. He reported that the school had tried to organise a 'Walking Bus' project without success. However there is a renewed initiative in the district to get such schemes started and there is City Council money for start up costs. Cllr Vye reported that he had been in touch with Mrs Newton and Mrs Whatley and a new attempt is being made to recruit volunteers.

On the matter of flooding, Cllr Vye said that we cannot be sure that the worst is over but the likelihood is that the risk is receding and that the crucial task now is to draw up plans for next winter and the future. He said that Bridge is unique along the Nailbourne in that the Environment Agency did improve the channel through the village last winter and the problems this year came from run-off and newly appearing springs rather than from the stream itself. The crisis had illustrated the deficiencies in the drainage and sewerage systems and Cllr Vye reported that he has assisted in setting up a meeting for the parish councils along the Nailbourne with the intention to establish a list of requirements for essential improvements to reduce damage to property and misery caused to people if there is a recurrence of the deluge. Cllr Vye reported that, as an example, the distribution of sandbags was not handled most expeditiously at the outset of the crisis and he felt that parish councils should be drawn into the emergency planning. Cllr Vye stated that, with regard to the works to deal with the increased flow of water in the valley, he believes that a combined approach by all the Nailbourne parishes to the Environment Agency and Southern Water will be more effective than going it alone, although he knows it will be a tough fight for scarce resources. Finally, Cllr Vye thanked Mr T Pears and Cllr Oakey for the work they were doing with regard to flooding.

10 REPORT FROM CITY COUNCILLOR, BILL OAKEY

In his report, Cllr Oakey said that the last 12 months had been full of activity with some good and a number of bad happenings in Bridge. On the good side was the overdue traffic calming scheme with the first phase of the calming measures having already started. Cllr Oakey said that he had had concerns over the chicane type measures but the first speed measurements following the installation show a reduction of speed from 38 mph to 28 mph at the Conyngham Lane junction. Cllr Oakey reported that last June planning permission was granted for the construction of the new Medical Centre and it would have been in use now but for the heavy rainfall last winter delaying its construction. The NHS advise that the Medical Centre should now be open by this Autumn.

Cllr Oakey reported that on the adverse side was the fact that Bridge had been hit by the flooding Nailbourne although not nearly as badly as the neighbouring villages of Patrixbourne and Bishopsbourne whose flooding started on 20 November 2000. Bridge had been spared the worst by the flood alleviation works carried out the previous year and was not affected until 8 February when 30 houses, 3 pubs and the butchers shop flooded. During the earlier flooding in December,

through swift action by a team of volunteers, all but 2 dwellings were saved despite the deficiencies of the then sandbag policy. The change to allow greater control by parish councillors meant that in February we were in a much better position to deploy sandbags. Cllr Oakey reported that one good thing emerging during the flooding was the spirit of neighbourliness and this was exemplified by the soup kitchen set up in the Village Hall and the impromptu river party set up in Brewery Lane. Cllr Oakey said that none of this compensates the victims who are still dealing with the aftermath of the flooding. Cllr Oakey reported that Southern Water have been particularly irresponsible in using the flooding as an excuse to pump raw sewage into the river Nailbourne and he has taken this up with both them and Ofwat.

Cllr Oakey recommended that the parish council reactivate their emergency task force set up in 1988 and look to appoint a Flood/Emergency Warden and reported that the City Council have set up a Flood Scrutiny Committee to look at ways of better coping with such future emergencies. Cllr Oakey said that he looked forward to a calmer 12 months to consolidate and build on the improvements of the last year and thanked everyone for their attention.

11 **POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - RECENT FLOODING IN THE COUNTY**

Mr T Pears, chairman of the County Council's Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee, gave a brief outline of the restructuring of local government and how this had brought about the committee being set up to undertake a public interest inquiry into the recent and ongoing flooding in the county. The County Council were distressed that Kent had been hit by floods and Mr Pears had been asked to chair the inquiry and as part of the review had visited those parts of Kent most severely affected by flooding, including Bridge. Mr Pears stated that the final report of the Committee was to be put before the County Council in April and he gave a brief insight as to the contributory factors that had been taken into account and the recommendations that the Committee had made which it was hoped would be taken on board. Mr Pears reported that in general on his visits good spirit had been reflected throughout the county during this testing time.

12 **TWINNING**

Cllr Walder reported that the Twinning Association hoped to establish a Petanque Club as part of the Elham Valley twinning with the Vallee de la Course. There is to be a meeting at the Kings Arms, Elham on 8 May 2001 at 7.30 pm for anyone interested in taking part.

13 **RESOLUTIONS OF WHICH WRITTEN NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN**

No resolutions had been received by the parish council.

14 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Parking: A question relating to parking on double yellow lines was raised and it was also reported that a vehicle was being parked on these lines all day. It was reported that 2 parking attendants had visited the village the previous day at a specific time but that more staggered parking attendant visits would like to be seen. Parking on double yellow lines at junctions was also reported as a problem as it restricted a driver's view of the oncoming traffic. Mr M Smith reported that he had attended a Street Monitors Meeting where he was advised that it is apparently admissible to park on double yellow lines for up to 5 minutes for private vehicles and 15 minutes for commercial vehicles to drop off and pick up.

There being no further business the chairman closed the meeting at 8.55 pm.

Chairman Date

Bridge Parish Council

Income and Expenditure Account

for the Year ended 31st March 2001

	Notes	2001 £	2000 £
INCOME			
Precept on District Council		7,100	7,100
Concurrent Functions Grant		8,783	7,900
Loan and Capital Receipts		-	1,000
Interest and Investment Income	2	1,155	1,046
Sports Club Rents		735	860
Miscellaneous		10	3
Grants and Donations		385	150
		18,168	18,059
EXPENDITURE			
Establishment/General Administration	5	7,721	6,308
Election Expenses		-	534
S137 Expenditure	6	-	2,420
Capital Expenditure	8	-	1,271
Operational Expenditure:			
Recreation Ground		2,873	4,136
Footpaths, lighting and Street Furniture		6,529	6,266
Village Hall		95	200
		17,218	21,135
General Fund			
Balance at 1st April 2000		2,840	648
Add: Total Income		18,168	18,059
		21,008	18,707
Deduct: Total Expenditure		17,218	21,135
		3,790	(2,428)
Transfer from Other Reserves	12	1,023	5,268
		4,813	2,840
General Reserve Balance at 31st March 2001		4,813	2,840

The notes on Pages 5 to 9 form part of these accounts.

Bridge Parish Council

Balance Sheet

as at 31st March 2001

	Notes	2001 £	2001 £	2000 £
Current Assets				
Debtors	10	590		774
Cash at Bank and In-hand		24,219		22,893
		<hr/>		<hr/>
		24,809		23,667
Current Liabilities				
Creditors and accrued expenses	11	580		388
		<hr/>		<hr/>
Net Current Assets			24,229	23,279
Total Assets Less Current Liabilities			<hr/>	<hr/>
			24,229	23,279
Capital and Reserves				
Earmarked Reserves	12		19,416	20,439
General Reserve			4,813	2,840
			<hr/>	<hr/>
			24,229	23,279
			<hr/>	<hr/>

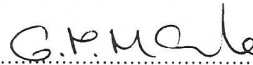
The statements of accounts represent fairly the financial position of the Council as at 31st March 2001 and reflects its Income and Expenditure for the year.

These accounts have been approved by the Council.



.....
Cllr John Anderson
Chairman

Date: 20th August 2001



.....
Mrs G. P. McCombe
Responsible Financial Officer

Date: 20 August 2001

REPORT TO BRIDGE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

March 2002 from County Councillor Martin Vye

First, I apologise for not being able to attend the Meeting tonight.

2001 was dominated, so far as I was concerned as county councillor, by the aftermath of the flooding. I initiated, and have since then sat as a member of, the Nailbourne and Little Stour Parishes' River Management Committee. This has met every month since March 2001 (with good attendance from Bridge Parish Council, and, I believe, has been a particularly effective body in ensuring that the City Council, the County Council, and the Environment Agency work together to minimise the risk of recurrence of flooding on the scale that we have witnessed. In fact, Bridge has had no major works carried out; but undoubtedly the straightening and deepening and clearing of the channel further downstream, notably at Patricbourne, will increase flow and reduce 'back-up' in our village.

The agencies I have mentioned deserve our praise. Southern Water does not. It is still in denial about the problems caused by its sewerage network. I understand that it has allocated some millions of pounds to repair of pipes elsewhere---but our area will not benefit. The parishes' action group, and the City Council continue to press them hard.

Kent County Council has recently carried out a programme of highways drain clearance and investigation in Bridge High Street. The latest news is that £ 70,000 + will be spent on improving the sections of drains that the investigation showed to be faulty: the bulk of it this year, and the rest (on outflow into the river) next year.

A word on Canterbury College. I opposed the planned relocation into green fields between Nackington Road and the old railway line; and as county councillor spoke at the Public Inquiry about the traffic problems it would cause on our side of Canterbury. As a resounding success has been achieved in getting the High Court to quash the Secretary of State's decision to let the scheme go ahead, I am ready to play whatever part is necessary in whatever procedure is adopted to re-play the decision.

Incidentally, councillors have seen off for the time being a proposal to allocate land south of Canterbury in the new Local Plan for a business park. However, there is a long process of consultation on the Plan, culminating in a Public Inquiry, so those of us who wish to preserve the green gap between Bridge and Canterbury will have to be very vigilant. Finally, appeals on secondary schools admissions take up much of my time at this time of the year. This year the process for applying to schools was changed twice due to independent adjudicators making separate decisions at different times about how the county should organise it. And now it is going to be changed yet again for next year! I am happy to give advice, should anyone need it.