

PENSHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly of Penshurst Parish Council held on Monday 16 APRIL 2018 at 7.30 pm in Penshurst Village Hall.

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllrs I Carson, J Cass, S Frederick

2. **The Minutes of the 2017 Annual Parish Meeting**, having been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

3 (a) **Chairman's Report.**

I begin my report this year with an update on progress on the continuing issues of affordable housing for local people and traffic calming measures.

West Kent Housing have announced that they are not continuing with the project to provide affordable housing for local people at Forge Field. Their reason is that this is a commercial decision to allow them to concentrate on larger developments elsewhere. West Kent Housing are not the only provider of affordable local housing, so the Forge Field proposal may well be taken on by another provider in the future.

As part of the new Local Plan, Sevenoaks District Council issued a call for sites for housing development. This is not just for affordable housing, but also to enable them to meet the house-building targets set by the government. The sites put forward in the Parish are:

- Land south of Spile Bank, New road
- Forge Field, High Street, Penshurst
- Land East of New Road and South of Fordcombe Road
- Land West of New Road and South of Smarts Hill
- Allotment gardens, Fordcombe Road, Penshurst
- Elliotts Farm, Rogues Hill
-

Other sites which had previously been suggested in relation to affordable local housing have not been put forward.

Sevenoaks District Council are currently assessing these sites in relation to planning policy and are expected to publish the results shortly. In addition, the Parish Council have also asked Sevenoaks District Council to identify every site within the Parish which meets the criteria for affordable local housing, regardless of ownership or availability.

Once we have both these reports, we will be able to look again at the issue of affordable housing, but for the time being we are unable to make any progress.

Regarding traffic calming measures, we are dealing with Kent Highways so progress is understandably slow. As an example, the latest from them is that we need to provide data of the speed of all traffic, 24 hours a day, for a continuous period of seven days. The speed indicator unit at Glebelands used to record this, but Kent Highways are now telling us that not only does the unit no longer record the data but has never done so. This is simply not true and we have provided them with a sample of data previously downloaded from the unit – we await their response. The Parish Council continue to tackle the obstacles thrown at us by Kent Highways but are aware that the introduction of a 20mph speed limit and any physical measures to reduce traffic speed is going to be a long process.

Potholes, damaged verges, general deterioration of road surfaces and blocked drains continue to be an issue. In the last year, around 30 separate problems were reported, down from 45 in the preceding year. Resurfacing work continues on various stretches of road. Although the condition of some stretches of our roads remains terrible e.g Smarts Hill, overall our roads are not as bad as in some neighbouring parishes. As we have already done with verge mowing, the Parish Council are currently looking into the possibility of combining with other parishes to take responsibility for our own road repairs rather than rely on Kent Highways.

In the past year, there were around 40 planning applications, by far the most contentious of which was the application for permanent polytunnels at Salmans Farm. This led to many objections from people both locally and nationally, and even to protests on the streets of Penshurst. Despite all the points put to the Development Control Committee by myself, Richard Streatfield, the Chairman of Chiddingstone Parish Council, and Sue Coleman our District Councillor, planning consent was granted. It seems to me that the importance given to economic factors

in the National Planning Policy Framework outweighs the importance of protecting the Green Belt and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

In November, Cllr Mrs Coleman organised a meeting on rural crime attended by Tom Tugendhat MP, Matthew Scott the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner, the local Police Commander and other police officers. The meeting was well attended by residents and Councillors and the most prevalent types of crime and preventative actions were discussed. The most common crimes are thefts from farms and outbuildings. It was noted that even if stolen property is recovered, it can be difficult to re-unite it with the owner. The importance of marking machinery, such as chainsaws, strimmers, mowers etc was stressed and owners were urged to keep a note of serial numbers and any identifying marks.

Finally, on a lighter note, following an approach from a television company, Penshurst was entered into Channel 4's Village of the Year Competition. From 475 entrants, Penshurst made it through to the final televised 76. Village events and residents were featured in the programme, but Penshurst did not qualify for the next stage. I would like to thank Cllr Rees for all the work he put into our entry and TV appearance.

A Campbell - Chairman

3 (b) Finance: Mrs Divall had circulated the accounts to members for their consideration. The new audit requirements were complied with for the accounts for the year ended March 2017 and continue for the current year. The internal audit had been completed with no issues of concern raised. It was proposed by Cllr Rees and seconded by Cllr Campbell that the Internal Audit and Accounts be approved by members. Preparation of Annual Governance Statement would be completed for the May meeting, Exercise of Public Rights would be advertised as required on the public noticeboards.

The increase in precept for 2017/18 had enabled the Council to increase the funds being held for the refurbishment and rebuilding costs for both village halls, a total of £40,000 was currently available for this purpose. £2K which had been allowed for fire proof storage would not now be required, Mrs Divall had obtained permission from County Archives for them to hold the documents of historical value in safe conditions. The defibrillator planned had now been purchased and installed with training also completed. The current depreciation fund for the play area equipment in Fordcombe stood at £5,000 with £5,000 being also held for village projects. All the bus shelters had been refurbished during the year, insurance premiums had been reduced with a change of company, and the bulk freighter would now visit four times a year instead of three.

4. The Retreat Charity: The Secretary, Mrs Christine Rose had provided a report to be included in the minutes for members and others attending the meeting.

Both properties remain occupied by the same tenants who seem to be satisfied with their accommodation. The tenant of No. 2 continues to cook a meal daily for the tenant of No. 1 which is a great help for him as his health remains poor, and his mobility is restricted.

Maintenance and repairs: There has been expenditure this year as the boiler for No. 2 had to be replaced.

Finances: In spite of higher expenditure on boiler work the charity continues to have a healthy net asset position.

5. Penshurst School Governor's Annual Review – Faith in our Future

The 2017/18 Academic Year has been a year of significant change and great achievements for Penshurst CoE Primary School.

Mrs Elliott our new Head teacher has worked closely with the Governing Body & her Leadership Team since January 2017 to ensure that there is clarity of vision & purpose for the school and a clear focus on the priorities in our School Development Plan.

The Governing Body has been strengthened by the appointment of a new Foundation Governor, Mrs Sharpe, a Barrister who was appointed by the PCC. There is currently one vacancy on the Governing Body, which we are working with the PCC to fill.

There have been a number of staff changes over the past year, driven by illness and changes to personal circumstances of our staff. A key focus of our School Improvement Plan remains to establish a stable staffing

structure that will enable all pupils to make excellent progress. We are delighted to welcome our new Year 5&6 teacher Mr Hitchcock and Mrs Foy in Year 1&2, both started this week.

Academic Achievements

In July 2017 the school was inspected by Ofsted and we were very pleased to maintain our GOOD rating. The inspection report contained the following statements.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since becoming headteacher of the school in January of this year, you have wasted no time in sharpening the ambition of the school. You have your finger on the pulse of the school, know its strengths and areas for improvement, and have identified the right areas to prioritise. You have focused unwaveringly on raising the levels of expectations of what pupils can achieve and improving the quality of teaching.

Governors undertake their statutory responsibilities thoroughly and know the school well. They make sure that they reach their view of the school by considering a range of information. As a result, they have a clear view of the progress pupils make from their different starting points, and the quality of teaching in the school. Governors offer the right balance of effective support and challenge.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- *pupils of middle ability are supported to achieve the highest standards of which they are capable*
- *pupils are routinely challenged to apply their skills and deepen their understanding in mathematics*
- *rates of attendance improve further, especially for disadvantaged pupils.*

As you would expect, these areas are part of our current School Improvement Plan.

Penshurst CoE Primary School has been accepted on to KCCs 'Journey to Outstanding' Development Programme, which is a fantastic opportunity to work with other schools in the area who are either already outstanding or are judged to have the capacity to become outstanding in the next few years.

Church School

Following our 'Good' SIAMS Inspection Grade in September 2016, we have continued to build stronger relationships with the Church and the wider community. This includes Reverend Holme and members of the Church Community regularly coming into the school to pray with the children, engage in Act of Worship and work with our Leading Lights. We also have a programme of events in the Church during the year, which parents and the wider community are invited to attend.

Other Key Achievements

In December the school put on a production of Joseph and his amazing technicolour dreamcoat with Penshurst Amateur Dramatics Society. This was a fantastic production, which was very well received by the whole community.

A number of children from the school took part in the Tunbridge Wells Speech & Drama Festival in March and all performed to a very high standard, with many of the children being placed and a couple being invited to perform at the GEMS Concert in the Trinity Theatre. We were particularly proud of our younger children who entered this year for the first time.

Penshurst has successfully competed in a wide range of sporting events this year. Pupils are encouraged to develop their skills across a range of sporting activities and their personal achievements are celebrated within school.

Forest School has continued to allow our curriculum to be enriched through the use of the outdoor environment. The Forest School ethos is particularly successful with our pupils who need to be active. Taking part in Forest School has benefitted all pupils and enabled them to develop a love of being active outdoors.

Enrichment & Broadening Our Curriculum

Having purchased a new curriculum last year called 'Cornerstones', we are now starting to see the benefits of this rich and innovative curriculum which is inspiring both children and staff within our school.

We have continued to review and increase the range of provision of extra-curricular activities within the school.

We now have an even wider range of clubs funded through the sports funding we receive and run by parent helpers and volunteers from the community. These include Gymnastics, Dance, Fencing & Archery, Netball, Running Club, French Club, Football Clubs, Karate, Craft Club, Art Club, Chess Club and Bridge Club.

We have also introduced the Daily Mile, giving the children and staff the opportunity to walk, jog or run at least a mile a day. Regular exercise has proven health benefits and we will be adding up miles and plotting them in our school hall. Parents are invited to join this activity on a Friday morning before school.

The School Council

The School Council have continued fund raising this year, for example raising over £500 for Sports Relief in March. This is an amazing achievement for a School with only just over 100 children and we are very proud of their achievements.

Mrs E Woolman, Chair of Governors – April 2018

6. Fordcombe School Governor's: A precise of their report is provided below:

Chris Blackburn - Headteacher: The year ended with a performance by the Year 6 pupils of Joseph and his Technicolour Dreamcoat for the families which show happy, well round pupils ready to move on to their respective secondary schools. They are leaving school, all having achieved academically: the 2017 KS2 SATs results show they have all met or exceeded expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. In addition they have been able to take advantage of a tremendous range of activities at the school including music and PE plus Book Weeks, Maths Days and Faith Days. Residential field trips and visits themed on the curriculum, visitors to the school, leading an aspect of school life in the role of Sport Leader or Sports and Music Captain to organising and leading Church services at St. Peter's, each experience adding something to each young person.

Ash Class: The class had done everything from dancing as minibeasts, eating ice-creams, making potions, watching lambs being born and walking for miles around the village green dressed as farmyard animals embracing every learning opportunity with energy and enthusiasm. The children performed 'What the Ladybird Heard' to the whole school in assembly, dressed as farmyard animals for the sponsored walk, visited Holly's farm which allowed the children to see lambs that were only minutes old, feeding a pony and sitting on tractors. The opportunity the children experienced this year would not be possible without the support of Mrs Scott and all the parent volunteers who help on trips and support in the classroom on a weekly basis.

Beech Class: A fun and busy year commenced with a bang when there was a crash landing in the school, the children met the loveable Beegu, an alien from outer space who was learning how to make friends. During autumn they learnt 'who came first' and investigated first inventors, great explorers and began to learn about Kings and Queens of England. They loved the school doing the Nativity - Lights, Camel, Action! Mrs Piper still has 'Funky Camel' stuck in her head. During spring they discovered the wonders of China learning all about the country and its famous landmarks.

Elm Class: During the autumn children covered World War Two with many real accounts being studied including Anne Frank's Diary. A trip on the Bluebell Railway was enjoyed by all as the children learnt what it was like to be evacuated and to go to an air raid shelter. The class was invited to the VE Day Celebration at the end of term, singing WW2 songs and dancing to the jitterbug along with guests who shared their real evacuation stories. Learning about Fairtrade, what it meant to farmers and their working conditions, inspired children to create a new snack in a group competition. This culminated in a Fairtrade Fair in the hall parting parents from their money on an amazing ray of goods. The children were very skilled at marketing and selling! Spring saw all things Egyptian, a trip to Chiddingstone Castle gave the children the chance to see many real artefacts and learn how to mummify an orange. A life size mummy and tomb were created in the classroom! Summer gave the children a chance to study science including light and shadow which linked in a shadow puppet show created in Literacy. Russia was the topic chosen, this included a Russian dance workshop, a visit to a Russian pop-up restaurant where they prepared and enjoyed a three course Russian banquet. To finish the term, each child used their newly discovered sewing skills to make a set of three different sized Russian dolls. Mrs Hood and Mrs Pearch

Oak Class: Oak Class started their work on Ancient Greeks – a day in Ancient Greece with a real market place and Olympic games lead by actors from 'Living History'. The children wrote in role as characters of the Odysseus myth, constructed mini Parthenons, modelled and painted Greek pottery and parents watch their amazing stop animations of Greek myths. Spring started with a food tasting event, the subject being The Mayans and South America. Little is known of this ancient civilisation however, lot of work and a visit from a Mayan priest provided information for reports, diaries and stories. A more modern civilisation was also studied – Brazil, its landscape and inhabitants, the project finale was a Samba performance to parents and a work sharing session. The final term saw the children trying to work out which culture we were studying through the food that they were tasting. The trick was that the foods were from a great mixture of cultures and reflected how London is a great melting pot of cultures and races. Key moments in London's history were studied before ending the year in modern day London, which will focus on a new set of 'invaders' – tourists. A hit with the children was a ride on the London Eye and a sightseeing river cruise, a truly inspiring way to encourage the pupils to think about how living in Fordcombe and its surrounds compares with the big city! The project is due to finish with a traditional London knees-up .. Cockney style! With SATs out of the way Oak class stretched themselves physically and mentally at Carrotty Wood outward bound centre, before pushing themselves artistically to rehearse and perform the end of year production, 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat'. Mrs Watling

Music: A busy year started with the choir performing at the village fete in September, the Penshurst Christmas Market, the village Luncheon Club and on the Pantiles bandstand in Tunbridge Wells. The orchestra were also busy joining nine other schools at the Sevenoaks Partnership Orchestra at Sevenoaks School, an amazing experience for all involved playing music from the movies. Ash class have learned songs on a range of topics from Antarctic Fishing to Pirates, Beech class learned about composers, sung Chinese songs and learned about 'musical opposites' ie using instruments to investigate high and low, fast and slow, soft and loud. Elm class learned Samba rhythms, wrote their own protest songs and raps and prepared for the 'Joseph' production. There was a samba workshop from Bloco Fogo in Oak class and Elm class went to see Kidenza's 'Around the World' Concert. We are very grateful to the Parents' Guild for fundraising for new classroom instruments, four instrumental teachers now visit teaching flute, piano, violin, saxophone, guitar and brass to 17 children across the school, hopefully the number will increase next year.

French: Elm Class pupils have quickly picked up new French rhymes and songs and have been incredibly enthusiastic in their performance. On one occasion we even managed singing in parts! Mime, rap and plasticine modelling have also played important roles in getting the new French words to stick in our heads. A very creative Elm Class has made great progress in this. Oak Class pupils have been busy learning dialogue phrases in French, practising and recording French conversations, showing confidence and independence. We have looked at French prices and practised some key shopping sentences. We have also taken the first steps to understanding some grammar points in French, which hopefully will help Year 6 children in their Secondary language lessons. In all, a very positive and productive year from some keen linguists!

Pupil Council The Pupil Council, led by Mrs Scott, have organised and hosted numerous activities ranging from assemblies to dress-up days. Meetings are on Tuesdays in the library when 'matters' of the week are discussed. The year started by hosting 'Fordcombe's got Talent', which was open to the entire school. The KS2 Pupil Council called for auditions and whittled it down to 15 or so acts, which then were performed in front of the rest of the school – and a panel of judges. Everyone was very successful and it was a lot of fun! A 'crazy hair day' was organised in aid of Red Nose Day, more recently a collage competition - run by friends of 'Woodbury Park Cemetery' – was entered and we were asked to attend an awards ceremony – and came third! They have also raised money for various charities by dressing up in costume and have added to the variety of playground equipment, based on things that people in the school have suggested – and had loads of fun!

Teaching and Learning Committee Teaching is dynamic, creative and designed to engage and inspire. Lessons are tailored to support and challenge every individual, whether they are struggling with a concept or need to be stretched. Academic results are excellent.

Finance Committee The school is largely funded by the state and based on the number of pupils in the school. This has stayed the same for a number of years and is not set to increase, but we are still expected to

meet the rising costs of running the school. This is not unique to Fordcombe but careful budgeting at Fordcombe means we can still offer a breadth of opportunities to the children including specialist French and music teachers and a wealth of sporting opportunities. This is helped by the ongoing support of our fantastic Parents' Guild which we are, as ever, extremely thankful to.

Policies Committee David Jepps Chairs the Policies Committee which meets at least quarterly to create, monitor and update a multitude of policies that the school is required to have by law together with other arrangements that the school itself decides should be in place. David, his fellow governors on the committee and the Head Teacher —with the help of the school office and with feedback from staff — will analyse current developments, tailor arrangements to the needs of the school, and recommend policies for adoption by the Full Governing Body. The Policies Committee will also meet on an “as required” basis to consider exceptional matters such as applications for admission outside of expected year group.

Faith Committee The teaching staff has done an excellent job which is borne out by the results of the SIAMS inspection that was carried out on behalf of the Diocese of Rochester earlier this year. In giving us an Outstanding Classification they said in their report: a clear Christian vision underpinned by explicit and by implicit Christian values pervades both the physical environment and the working practice of the school; collective worship is highly valued by the whole community, including parents and has been developed by excellent practice using pupil voice evaluation; recognition of each child's inherent worth (by the leadership and management) results in high aspirations and celebration of pupil's unique gifts and talents. Pupils are taught to be very aware and respectful of those of other faiths. They understand why other children may look different or dress differently and have visited diverse places of worship to aid their understanding.

Fordcombe Parents' Guild The focus this year has been on renewal and reinvigoration; encouraging parents to get involved in school activities and PG fundraising events. A welcome cafe and table sale aimed at new parents was held, year representatives were reinstated, a weekly briefing was emailed to each parent and the profile of the PG at school events was raised.

The drip-drip approach to fundraising—regular book fairs, the cake stall, the ice cream stall, and discos—are popular and successful and this year we added a recycling scheme and film night to the rolling programme. Larger events and those outside school hours or at weekends have not met with as much enthusiasm. None the less, we did organise a summer party for parents and will do so again next year. We also held a Pamper Event and a Fashion Show & Swishing Party. Christmas remains the focus of fundraising with a bigger and better fair as well as a Christmas card fundraiser. We introduced a new Santa this year and the grotto and Christmas parties remain an important part of the calendar.

We raised over £5,500 in 2016/17 and donated £4,000 to school for such diverse items as engraving trophies, leavers' and Christmas gifts, revamping the outside space, the author visit, school trips, resources for the classroom and a large donation to the music department. Attendance at meetings has been disappointing but we have a loyal core of dedicated parents who are positive and energetic and have continued to run events and we have an increasing number of parents willing to help out at events.

We are in a solid financial position and are optimistic for a profitable 2017/18. More importantly, we have received great feedback from parents and staff for our activities and we feel that has been reflected in the atmosphere at the school gate.

Those present congratulated both schools on their activities and their successful academic achievements during the year.

Members wished to record their congratulations to the respective schools for their hard work and resultant very successful years.

7. Sevenoaks District Councillor Mrs Sue Coleman: This is my first annual District Councillor's report since being elected last August. I hope many of you will have read my monthly articles in the Parish Magazine, which I have tried to make informative as well as passing on Council 'news', so you probably have some feel for the wide variety of issues I have dealt with since being elected but I thought it might be worth summarising some of them for this meeting.

Although individual councillors have no direct executive power, by influencing effectively both political colleagues and officials, I have been able to get things done to help local residents, for example by helping two Fordcombe families resolve their accommodation issues and by helping a Penshurst resident and a Chiddingstone Hoath applicant achieve planning permissions for proposals which were supported by their respective Parish Councils but which officials were minded to refuse. I have also been your voice at the Council, advocating on your behalf about planning matters, noise issues and fly-tipping in particular.

Right from being elected I was active in opposing the application for the polytunnels' temporary planning permission to be made permanent. The site is in the AONB and although I am from a farming family I simply didn't believe that an exceptional case for development had been made. The Conservative group on SDC are committed to protecting the Green Belt and I think the decision to grant permission was wrong.

I have been working with Environmental officers to try and ensure we don't suffer a repeat of last year's noise pollution from weddings and festivals. Regulations are now in place for the management of events at Chafford Park Farm so hopefully Fordcombe residents will have a more peaceful summer this year!

Flytipping is an increasing national problem but its also a local problem, with perpetrators exploiting our quiet rural location to get away with this crime undetected. SDC have appointed fly-tipping officers who are trying to tackle the problem from an intelligence angle, but successful prosecutions have been few and far between. I will continue to support further resources being deployed to tackle this problem and am in discussions with the Portfolio Holder about this.

Flytipping isn't the only low level crime in the area however, there has been a spate of tool thefts from vans for instance, so to facilitate community/police cooperation I organised a public meeting in November to discuss rural crime issues and welcome our local police attendance tonight. We must all do our best to help them help us.

I have been nominated to the Board of CAB in Edenbridge and was surprised and impressed to learn the volume of cases they deal with each year. They are a vital resource for people with financial, housing, and other difficulties and I will promote their services as much as I can.

Having been appointed to the District Council's Development Control Committee, which decides contentious planning applications, I am not allowed to express my views on specific applications before the committee hearings, as I must be seen to be impartial. I can however make general comments. I very much support Affordable Housing in principle and, as a trustee of Penshurst Almshouses, feel strongly that we should enable local people of lesser means to remain living in our community. Housing location and allocation are still nitty-gritty details we need to get right though.

Since being elected I have maintained a close liaison with Peter Lake on KCC matters, mainly road related issues. The major pothole problems and concerns about speeding are not things I can fix at SDC but I can, and will, be your voice if you ask me to be.

Looking to the future, the most important thing on the SDC radar is updating the Local Area Plan, which will provide the framework for planning decisions in the District for the next 20 years or so. There will be a further public consultation this year when the Council publish their draft plan, with a view to it being adopted after Secretary of State consent in 2019. The Council have undertaken comprehensive modelling of expected demand for both residential and commercial development and believe that this extra demand can be met largely from brownfield sites in existing settlements together with redevelopment of greenbelt land already built upon. Larger developments of up to 800 houses in Westerham, Sevenoaks and Edenbridge are still under consideration, rightly with significant scrutiny from the local press. It is apparent from Theresa May's comments that a Local Area Plan with no new development is going to be unacceptable to central government, but I will fight to ensure that development only happens in areas with appropriate supporting infrastructure.

Looking forwards even further, some of you may have read an interview with Peter Fleming, Leader of Sevenoaks District Council, in the Chronicle recently, where he explains that the Council now have a 10 year budget, which shows local services such as weekly bin collections (which are increasingly rare elsewhere in the country) can be protected given the Council's self-sustaining revenue base, even with zero government grants.

I would like to thank Margaret Cooke and her family for their kind support when standing for election for Paddy's position which I much appreciated. I have tried to help with real issues in the Parish and like to live and let live but I think it is important that we always show consideration to others. Planning, noise issues and cyclists have been some of the items I have been approached with and I have tried to be as accessible as possible to parishioners. I provide articles for the parish magazines to try and let everyone know what is happening. I have enjoyed my first eight months as your District Councillor and look forward to serving you over the coming year.

8. County Councillor Lake: I am very pleased to have been elected once again as your County Councillor and I will do my very best to serve you all over the next three years.

We have all received an illustrative handout with our Council tax demand from Sevenoaks District Council showing how every £1 we pay is shared with our local authorities, Kent Police and our Kent Fire and Rescue services. 70p in the £1 goes to KCC, to be spent on roads and pavements, schools, social services, libraries and public transport. In my view this list hardly scratches the surface, and tells so little about what KCC really does on our behalf, so let us look at the real headings.

Under the **Schools** heading, we cover children's centres, parenting skills and health, KCC provides primary, secondary, college and sixth form education. It is a massive undertaking and just to illustrate this 20,731 applications were received this year for secondary schools alone. The range of services includes special schools, free school meals and transport to school.

Under **Roads and Pavements**, Kent Highways Services is responsible for all our roads and bridges in Kent with the exception of our motorways and the A21 which come under Highways England. Trying to keep our roads in good order is an almost impossible task, with a limited budget, especially at this time of the year. KCC is also responsible for road safety, issuing blue badges and for disabled parking. It has been calculated that we need nearly £600m to bring our roads up to a satisfactory standard.

Under **Social Services** we include public health, fostering and adoption, young asylum seekers (1400 in our care in Kent). In Adult Services we provide for specialist housing and care homes. Working closely with the NHS we offer integrated care to get the elderly out of hospital and then to care for them in their own homes. We have nearly 200 members of KC working in mental health with Kent and Medway Partnership Trust.

Under **Libraries** there is so much more in the leisure and community portfolio but obviously libraries play a vital role for the community. In this section the list includes Broadband, Country Parks, Kent's History and Heritage, grants to the community, volunteering, trading standards and consumer protection. We also list births and deaths, wedding and civil partnerships and citizenship ceremonies.

Under **Public Transport** we provide subsidised bus services to care for isolated communities. More than £40m

of bus related business is commissioned by KCC. We have a duty to maintain services, to improve rural access but also to deliver at a lower cost. I understand that we are shortly to consult with parish councils, commercial and community transport providers and technology providers to explore new ways to replace our conventional subsidised bus services but to offer great access for rural residents.

Cllr Lake also reported that most applicants obtained their first, second or third choice of secondary schools with 97% being allocated their first or second choice of primary places.

Julian Cooke would be accompanying Cllr Lake on an inspection of the condition of the local roads. KCC do not intend to cut any bus services if help becomes available from central government. Cllr Lake was currently Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee.

Questions: Cllr Lake would obtain information on the number of children from outside Kent applying for places in local schools, it was noted that a number of Kent children also attended schools in surrounding counties. Cllr Lake share the opinions of members with regard to the condition of local roads and was, as part of his responsibility with the Scrutiny Committee, obtaining information regarding the level of damage repair costs being refused – 90% - by highways, it was noted Amey had approximately 18 months to run on their current contract. He was working with the new Cabinet Member for highways in trying to obtain a 20 MPH past schools.

Cllr Lake concluded in thanking the members of Penshurst Parish Council for all their efforts on behalf of the parish and also wished to thank Andy Campbell and Evenly for their time in looking after the villages.

9. Community Police Officer: Simon Humphreys advised that he had worked for over twelve years in Edenbridge, Crockham Hill and Westerham. There were 26 police wards in Sevenoaks and two in Edenbridge. Cuts of over £80m had been made in the Kent Police budget and this would rise to £100m by 2020. 1000 police officers had been lost plus administration staff, nine policing areas had been reduced to three with ours being in the Western Division working with their partners ie Sevenoaks District Council. Currently 200 officers are being recruited. There were now 12 PCSOs: 4 in Swanley, 4 in Sevenoaks and 4 in Edenbridge. Originally they had intended to have a PCSO in every ward but this was not sustainable, two now cover Edenbridge, Cowden, Hever, Leigh, Chiddingstone, Penshurst and Fordcombe. Laura Morris now works in the Swanley area. Simon shared his work load with Adam Pennington. They meet regularly with the Community Safety Unit Manager at SDC plus the Anti Social Behaviour Assistant, office based youth engagement team members and others covering vulnerable people. Others also included in the Partnership were West Kent Mediation and the Animal Welfare Officer at Dartford. Other duties, such as noise disputes had been transferred to Environmental Health. Penshurst and Fordcombe was a low crime level area and, although the budget had been cut, demands had not reduced. 101 should always be used for non emergency issues, if members of the public were unsure where to obtain help 101 responders could help to provide this information for them. 999 should always be used if life was in danger or a crime was in progress. If there was no CCTV, witnesses or leads, it was unlikely investigations would be possible but crime should always be reported in order to give a true reflection on what is happening. Matthew Scott, Police and Crime Commissioner, was particularly interested in rural crime, Simon had visited Penshurst Place recently as a result of theft to advise on crime prevention options. The point was made that farm crime was listed as commercial – not domestic – which members felt did not give a true indication of figures in the area. Body worn cameras were being upgraded, a valuable asset when officers worked on their own.

Suspicious activities should always be reported including vehicles – number plates if possible. Crime figures were available on the website giving break downs related to post code areas. The police always welcomed information on local community events where they could attend to help with crime prevention information. Websites available were: Imobilise.com – information on marking property and Securebydesign.com – Home Office crime prevention website. Information was also available on Kent Police Twitter, current focus was on organised crime, CEOPS, social media and terrorism.

10 a. Neighbourhood Watch: Peter Johnson reported on thirteen crimes which had taken place between 2 March and 12 April, although he had reported at the PC April meeting that the area had been crime free, this had not been the case, late reports received included two incidences of tyre damage to cars in New Road, outbuildings at two properties being broken into and various items stolen. A parishioner had mentioned that he thought he knew who had been carrying out various crimes, anyone with such suspicions should contact the

police immediately.

10 b. Alms Houses Report: Peter Johnson reported that a fire inspection had been carried out at all residences on the 18 April with special cleaning of a number of Almshouses also being carried out during past weeks.

10 c. Coach Road Bridge: Excellent work had been carried out by the PROW department in strengthening the upstream parapet of the bridge where it had been subject to movement. Metal straps had been secured with bolts and all voids between components filled with cement. It was now safe for pedestrians to watch an angler catch a fish. Although the cracks and voids on the eastern end of the upstream parapet had been repaired, the source of the bridge problem remains. Years ago metal tie rods placed beneath the bridge deck prevented the parapets from moving apart, however the wing wall connected to the upstream of the east abutment is subject to settlement and the movement, which has not ceased, continues to cause problems with the upstream parapet along the bridge. Placing rocks in front of the wing wall or piling could be expensive or cause movement. Less use by coaches recently appears to coincide with a reduction in movement, therefore the problem might be solved. Movement should continue to be monitored if heavy traffic continues to use the route. The road is called The Coach Road, but in the days of its construction coaches were pulled by horses!

11. Gatwick Airport: Cllr Rees confirmed that night flight discussions were still ongoing, the option of fair and equitable dispersal had been accepted but, with no details of future plans, this was being monitored. Currently Penshurst was not heavily impacted by air traffic. The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting. Arrangements were made for a forthcoming planning site meeting.

Meeting closed 8.35 pm