

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2008-09

Borough Green Annual Parish meeting – Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2009

Where last year's report was one described as "exciting" – this year has been more one of consolidation; though in other quarters I often get remarks along the line of 'you do seem to have an exciting time at Borough Green Parish Council'! (BGPC)

Starting, or better, following-on from last year; the minutes of the Borough Green Annual Parish Council meeting continue the previous view of multiple planning applications, together with notes of proposed changes to the planning application process, mention of the Borough Green Parking Review, responses to the Potters Mede Pavilion questionnaire; whilst the ongoing Employment Tribunal still generated considerable workload and featured in Part II.

The June meeting agenda contained matters of establishing the view of residents of Valley View Estate as to the provision of footpath lighting, the results of the Parish Poll and public discussion at BGPC meetings; whereas the July meeting was disrupted by public interruptions; and was temporarily suspended, with Item 36 transferred prior to the suspension. On the undertaking that there would be no further interventions the Chairman agreed to continue the formal meeting. It included the first mention of the possible sale of Isle Quarry West (IQW) land by Hanson, and the provision of a public exhibition.

August (under matters arising from previous minutes) covered the results of both the Employment Tribunal and the IQW Public Exhibition of possible future proposals – but little further information was gained. BGPC decided that it would be wiser to await a formal planning application before trying to make any comment on the proposals as they stood. Cllr Matthew Balfour (TMBC) gave a briefing on the planned transfer of Grange Park School to the Wrotham School site.

September continued the IQW saga, following the exhibition with visits to the site being arranged for those who had evinced any interest. The correspondence for the month recorded the sad news of the death of Lord Sandy Bruce-Lockhart and the details of the memorial service.

The village news included the fact that the footpath from Fairfield Road to Station Approach had been constructed and awaited the fitting of a handrail.

October started us on the "election" route again with the notification of the resignation of two Parish Councillors – Cllrs Enver and Wakefield, both of whom were thanked for the contributions they brought to BGPC. During the month the Chairman and Cllr Steve Parry organised a "walkabout" site visit with staff from Kent Highways Services (KHS) and managed (we hope) to get a mention of all the matters outstanding in respect of street furniture, signage, blocked drains, incorrect tactile indicators, and anything else we thought of as we went round the triangle - High Street (up to the Station) - Western Road – A25 (as far as the end of Station Road). It took a little time but much (but not all) of what was needed has since been achieved.

November brought bad news in that EDF was withdrawing all its footpath-lighting maintenance facilities. BGPC immediately requested an agenda item for the next T&MBC Parish Partnership Panel (PPP) meeting. Central Government introduced a consultation document of a Code of Conduct for local authority members and employees. BGPC agreed that, once approved and adopted, it would apply to its employees. There was yet another re-organisation of KHS – a matter raised at a higher level elsewhere.

During the year we had been sending letters to Paul Carter, expediting information about the BG&P By-Pass, and its outstanding planning permission. In December Platt Parish Council also joined forces, a copy of their letter was included in BGPC correspondence listing. Having experienced the beginning of inclement weather BGPC requested the addition of a non-slip friction surface for the Fairfield Road footpath. Applications for donations were approved for both Y2Crew Summer Scheme and the TryAngle Awards. The Parish Charter was adopted as was the FoI Publication Model Scheme. The BGPC vacancies resulted in a contested election with 5 candidates standing for the two seats.

January this year saw the result of the election declared and Messrs Taylor and Shaw duly elected, declarations signed and both councillors duly welcomed onto BGPC at the January and February Meetings respectively. We were advised of the proposed dates and times of the A25 resurfacing and other road works. The Chairman of the Potters Mede Pavilion Working Party and Cllr Sue Murray met with KCC Sports Development Unit Architect and T&MBC Planning & Leisure Services respectively. Congratulations were passed to Potters FC for winning the Smith's League Cup (Junior Section). At the same time we sent similar congratulations to Alex Rolfe when he was elected to the Kent County Youth Forum and as Co-Chairman of T&MBC Youth Forum. Well done to all concerned!

February saw the agenda amended to accommodate a briefing from Cllr David Evans on changes to Planning Policies, LDF and implementation of both by T&MBC. Additional information about the application to improve the entrance to Hornet Site was also relayed. BGPC thanked KHS for improved surface of the A25 – reducing noise and vibration. March saw the beginning of the resolution of Footpath MR 436 with the discovery of the definitive map of public rights of way with it clearly shown. BGPC asked residents of Station Road to advise their wishes with regard to additional footpath lighting. David Rose retired as the Village Community Warden – and was duly thanked by Borough Green & Wrotham residents for his work in the villages.

Last month saw us with yet another election scheduled for June 4<sup>th</sup> – on the resignation of Cllr Lottie Cook and Cllr Stephen Cole - both of whom were thanked by the Chairman for their individual skills with the PACT committee and Adult & Junior Football matters respectively. We also responded to T&MBC in respect of the MDE – DPD document – lots of work in short time for four members of the council, and the finalised result the product of the new Chairman Cllr Steve Perry. At the meeting this month we continued with business involving the possibility of 20mph

areas on our village roads and, of course, the BIG, possibly KIG or even PIG development about which we know even less than we do/did about IQW.

[I venture to suggest that, because of lack of local knowledge, the inappropriate element of the description as “Borough Green” – arises purely because one of the areas involved is called Borough Green Sandpits – when, if those involved had used maps with Parish Boundaries marked on them – they would have seen and known that 80%+ of “BG Sand Pits” is physically - within our neighbouring Parish.]

The good news throughout the year is that residents are using the installed parking plan, and it is still subject to survey and review on a regular basis, so that any problems can still be discussed, and hopefully resolved with T&MBC.

The latest Potters Mede situation report – extracted from Steering Committee reports – A collaborative option for the Potters Mede site was explored earlier, was found not to be applicable and will not be pursued further. In parallel with developing changing facilities, improvement of the condition of the pitches would also be progressed, possibly including an additional pitch. The Steering Group are liaising with an approved (Sport England Regional recommended) specialist contractor for detailed specification, drawings and costings involved.

Final Good News (also with a Potters Mede connection)

Congratulations to Potters FC and their manager Henry Willard on achieving promotion from the Sevenoaks & District League Division 3. This is in addition to their earlier Junior League Cup Win.

Having relinquished the office of Chairman at the last BGPC Meeting, all that remains for me to do is to thank all the Cllrs and the Clerk of BGPC for their support during my time as Chairman. I will still be a Parish Councillor, and able to continue to contribute to the betterment of the lifestyle of the residents of Borough Green.