

KNOCKHOLT PARISH COUNCIL

The first Parish Council meeting of 2008, on Monday 7th. January, got off to a somewhat spluttering start when those Councillors deemed to be suffering with communicable diseases were banished to one end of the Village Hall whilst those suffering with merely notifiable diseases occupied the other end, the Public, however, were protected from the various coughs and sneezes as there were none present, consequently it was a sadly empty gesture when the Chairman opened the meeting to questions from the Public!

The Clerk reported a request from an outside organisation to park up to twenty or so vehicles on the Recreation ground later in the month for a charitable event; it was deemed that due to the soggy conditions prevailing on the Recreation Ground this would not be possible.

EDF have successfully removed about thirty feet from the top of the radio mast to the rear of Ivy Farm which apparently had become subject to corrosion. It is not known if or when the mast will be restored to its original height.

It was suggested that the date for the Annual Parish meeting should be in the week beginning 7th April 2008 – the exact date will be confirmed. After some discussion it was decided to invite the local MP to be the guest speaker at the meeting.

General dissatisfaction was expressed at the quality of road repairs carried out throughout the Parish by Kent C.C. Highways Department. Particular attention was drawn to Harrow Road outside the Coach houses where potholes had been filled on a number of occasions only to reappear after a short period in common with a number of similar repairs in the Parish. It was decided to send a strong letter of complaint to the Department requesting permanent repairs rather than temporary stopgaps.

A letter has been received from Sevenoaks District Council various ways in which the precept might be paid to council this has been referred to the Finance Committee.

A report from Orpington and District Travellers Association confirmed that the Oyster system will come into use at Orpington and Knockholt Stations within the foreseeable future.

The Parish Council have previously approached Cluttons, the managing agents for Chevening Estate, with a request to purchase the Recreation Ground land, which is presently leased, Cluttons replied that this was not possible as the land was 'specified' within the Chevening Estate. Tentative enquiries to lease a further portion of land above the Recreation Ground are still ongoing.

Two non residential burglaries were reported within the Village in the previous month attention was drawn to recent cases of burglary artifice in the Dunton Green Area.

Arrangements are being made to retrain the Speedwatch team in the use of our new equipment, hopefully at the end of January.

The refurbishment of the War Memorial funded by a grant from English Heritage was conditional to a maintenance clause and an annual inspection by English Heritage. As the memorial was originally built by public subscription the Parish Council has accepted ownership and maintenance will be budgeted for within the precept in future.

Finally the next meeting of the Fort Halstead Working Group (representatives of local council looking into the redevelopment of the site), where we are very ably represented by Cllr. Martin and Mr Stevens, is on 17th.January when the Hines representative will attend to answer questions raised at the December presentations.

The next parish Council Meeting is at 7.45pm. on Monday 4th.February 2008 in the Village Hall.

Parishioners have any opportunity to air their views both before the Meeting and at the conclusion so if you have something to say then come and say it!

A Happy New Year to all.

J. MALZER.