Minutes of the Kennington Community Forum Annual General Meeting held on 30 June 2009 at The Enterprise Centre, Towers School, Kennington.

Present: Pat Boorman (Chair), Sandra Dunn (Secretary), Bill Clark, Graham Skinner, James Bracken, Ian and Jen Milbery, Chris and Ralph Morley, Norma and Derek Smyth, J & L Williams, Peter and Doreen Newson, Phil Sims, Cllr Rita Hawes, Lee Robinson, Edna Bone, Robin and Jill Britcher, Kelly-Marie Blundell, PC Phil Smith, Michelle Byrne (Ashford Borough Council)

1. **Apologies**

   Apologies were received from Chris Woolgar, Sue White, David Chandler, Carole Cole and Charles Findlay, Cllrs Elizabeth Tweed, Michael Claughton, Andrew Wickham and Richard King.

2. **Minutes of last meeting**

   2.1. The minutes were agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting. There were no matters arising.

3. **Chair's report**

   3.1. Kennington Community Forum is a group set up to represent the needs and aspirations of the community. We work with other bodies to take any action needed.

   3.2. Funds have been raised to achieve youth projects and we also have links with local schools.

   3.3. I believe we need to do more for the elderly of the area and any ideas would be welcome.

   3.4. Our Planning sub-group has inspected applications for the area and we have objected where necessary, also our concerns have enabled some alternations to be made, for instance, to the 75-bed care home proposed for the original site of the Phoenix School in Bybrook Road. They had one section that they would have let out but it is now to be exclusively for the elderly and dementia sufferers.

   3.5. We are pleased that Kingswood Education and Activity have purchased Grosvenor Hall. We will still have to monitor the access, though, and also have the 20mph speed limit at the lane entrance in Cemetery Lane reinstated. As the land south of the area could be developed for housing we will press for access to the site to be via Trinity Road.

   3.6. Chris Morley has collected an enormous amount of information on the Memorial Shelter and has raised most of the money required for its repair. He raised more funds at the Kennington Fayre, and the tombola on our stall raised £62.05 and I sold 52 books of raffle tickets which made £44.20 after 15% was paid to the Fayre committee.

3.7. I wish to thank Peter, who has produced several newsletters and there is another to come after the AGM. Sandra, our secretary works very hard and she is also the Kennington contact for the Kentish Express.

3.8. I also wish to thank our treasurer, Chris Woolgar and the core group for their help during the year.

3.9. Thank you also to Councillor Elizabeth Tweed for her work on our behalf and also Councillor Michael Claughton.

3.10. We are hoping that our application for a Town Green at Beecholme Drive will be decided in July. The delay was caused by the county council election.

3.11. I raised £16,790 for the Bybrook and Bockhanger Group from 4 applications for funding for our community project at Bockhanger. The kickwall is now in place. The maze and old wall has been removed and turfed. Soon the hedging will be planted and planters have been ordered. A bench will be put in and the area in front of goal will have a grass mat put down later in the year. The PCSOs raised £5615. Out of this, we have already purchased fencing for the outside area for the play group in the hall and have given a donation to the Braethorpe amenities fund. The rest will be put towards the Bockhanger square project.

4. **Treasurer's Report**

4.1. As the Treasurer was absent the Secretary gave the report.

4.2. Cash brought forward was £1904.01. Income was £5569.18, out of which £2720 has been raised for the war memorial fund. The remainder is made up of £75.75 for last year's Kennington Fayre, £350 from Ashford Community Network for the Chairmen's attendance at their meetings and £19.40 in bank interest.

4.3. Expenditure was £1533.26, which included £1249.51 for printing and distribution of three newsletters, £58.75 for hire of the hall for last year's AGM and £225 for public liability insurance.

4.4. Balance carried forward is £4035.92.

5. **PC Phil Smith**

5.1. PC Phil Smith works closely with PCSOs Selina Lawrence and Nikki Relf whose areas are Bybrook and Bockhanger. PCSO Luke Sykes, who had taken over from Laura Zazo in attending Forum meetings, no longer covers Kennington, his area is now the retail park. PC Smith will now liaise with the Forum.

5.2. Over the past year neighbourhood policing in Ashford has developed further, continuing the multi agency working through the Community Safety Unit based at the Police Station. This body incorporates Police, Borough Council, KCC departments including Education and Trading

Standards, Kent Fire and Rescue Service and Health professionals. These stakeholders meet weekly to discuss antisocial behaviour and strategies to limit antisocial behaviour in the Borough through joined up working to support initiatives as well as day-to-day working for specific problems.

5.3. Examples of this multi agency approach over the last year are a roads policing focussed operation which covered the whole district including Kennington, targeting traffic offences and resulting in a large number of prosecutions as well as arrests for unrelated offences.

5.4. Trading Standards and Kent Police have also been carrying operations around under-age sales of both cigarettes and alcohol.

5.5. There is also an ongoing operation centred around antisocial behaviour and crime at weekends, particularly focussed around alcohol fuelled problems.

5.6. KCC Education has been involved with Kent Police in school truancy sweeps, and this will continue on a more regular basis through our Youth Crime Reduction Officers and the Education Welfare Officers.

5.7. PACT meetings continue to take place in each ward, asking the residents to come up with their policing priorities for their neighbourhoods.

5.8. Some examples have included speeding vehicles in Bybrook Road and roads off, Faversham Road and Canterbury Road. We have a Speed Indicator Device which can be operated by the PCSO's and this will be evident in the area around the summer as well as the ad hoc attendance of speed checks by me. Long term solutions are hard to come by particularly when the road is an arterial route. It was suggested that it should be placed near The Towers School.

5.9. Antisocial behaviour at Bybrook Shops has been significantly reduced since the concrete maze has been removed. This has discouraged the gatherings that used to congregate here. This may have been displaced to another nearby road but Nikki Relf and I have recently worked together with the residents to try and find solutions. The interventions made by us as well as other actions taken appear to have resolved this.

5.10. Graffiti was a considerable problem in the area. Some interventions were made with probable offenders, technical evidence-gathering equipment installed and patrolling increased and this definitely decreased the instances, although this is ongoing as there are still sporadic instances occurring.

5.11. Of concern to us are the recent thefts from garages and sheds in the area. This series of thefts is being prioritised and investigated by the CID with help from neighbourhood police officers. With prevention in mind we are organising cycle marking days locally as well as trying to spread the prevention method by offering basic crime prevention advice whilst out on our beats. We urge people to lock up equipment in sheds and garages and to report similar offences as well as being aware of the crimes and looking out for any intelligence that may assist us.

5.12. The calls classed as antisocial behaviour cover many incidents from animals loose to drunken disturbances. The Kennington area showed an annual decrease of 20% in these calls for 2008/9 compared to 2007/8. The trend so far for the first quarter is also shown as a decrease.

5.13. To ensure that this trend continues we need the continued support of the community in which we work. We need you to tell us what the priorities should be and to take an active part in solving the perceived problems in your neighbourhood. Some will have very obvious solutions where others may require something more long term and creative.

5.14. Points raised from the meeting included that of Trading Standards investigating the issue of the number of cars that are being sold outside a house in Canterbury Road. It was pointed out that there is a similar issue in the Faversham Road. This will also be reported to Trading Standards.

5.15. There was a campaign in June to monitor mobile phone use while driving. Figures for this are not yet known.

5.16. The issue of a burnt-out vehicle in Towers View was discussed. It was suggested that a mobile CCTV could be deployed in the area. Also car parking near the schools in Ulley Road was reported. PC Smith will take forward the Forum's concerns.

6. Election of Core Group

6.1. The committee stood down and Michelle Byrnes took the Chair.

6.2. As Pat Boorman and Phil Sims had both stood for the position of Chair they left the room and the meeting was asked to vote. Pat Boorman won by a majority vote and was duly elected.

6.3. Pat Boorman took the Chair. As there was a vacancy for Vice Chair this post was offered to Phil Sims, who accepted the position. He was duly elected.

6.4. Chris Woolgar was the only nominee for the position of Treasurer and was duly elected.

6.5. Sandra Dunn was the only nominee for the position of Secretary and was duly elected.

6.6. Nominations for the core group were: David Chandler, Bill Clark, Chris Morley and Sue White. They were elected en bloc

7. **Future topics for discussion**

7.1. Parishing. This matter has been delayed because of the ill health of the ABC officer who was taking the lead. He is now back in post and will be invited to a future meeting.

7.2. Arts and Libraries.

7.3. Sign for Kennington. Following a presentation last month, Jane Padgham will be invited to discuss the matter at a future meeting

7.4. Kennington charity who have sold the almshouses in The Street. Their remit is relief of the poor of the parish. Cllr John Kemp will be invited to give a presentation.

7.5. The proposal to obtain a Sports England grant to improve the pavilion on The Ridge.

7.6. Now that the War Memorial Shelter was in hand, consideration could now be given to obtaining funding to renovate the pump house in Upper Vicarage Road.

8. **Any other business:**

8.1. There is an issue of overhanging branches along the pavement outside 125 – 191 Canterbury Road and another regarding grass not being cut in Frank Edinger Close. *Action: Michelle will report to the appropriate ABC officers.*

8.2. The lack of management of the improvements to the maisonettes in Bybrook Road was raised. Some of the new subterranean waste bins are in place but they are not being used and rubbish is becoming a health hazard. The Chair said that she has been in discussion with the ABC officer involved but would report the matter again. *After meeting note: she reported that the bins were not being used as it was necessary for both residents and refuse collectors to be trained in their use. This has now taken place and they should be in use within three weeks.*

8.3. Lack of facilities for the elderly was of concern and it was requested that the Forum consider taking action on this matter.

8.4. Green waste. There is now no special collection for composting. Green waste will now be included with normal waste and will be taken to be incinerated at Allington to generate electricity.

9. **Next meeting**. The next meeting will be held at 7pm on Tuesday 28 July 2009 at St Mary's Church Hall, Kennington.