

These are the unadopted Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday, 13 April 2015 in the Zebon Copse Centre, Danvers Drive, Crookham. Please refer to the Minutes of the May Parish Council meeting for any amendments.

Present: Cllr. Simon Ambler (Chairman), Residents of the Parish, Ward Cllr. Jenny Radley and Parish Cllrs' Julia Ambler, Richard Eastment, Clive Eastwood, David Jackson, Judy Johnson and Wendy Makepeace-Browne.

Apologies were received from Cllr. Peter Crawley and County Cllr. John Bennison.

1. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Good evening ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the 2015 Annual Parish Meeting for Crookham Village Parish Council. As always, I should like to start by extending my thanks to all my fellow councillors for all their hard work over the last year. In addition to the formal business of the Council, they do a huge amount of work to help with the various projects in which CVPC is engaged. Their time is given on a voluntary basis and is unpaid. We also have four members of staff, all of whom work incredibly hard and we are very grateful for the dedication they show to their roles.

Planning

I am speaking about this item first because, at present, this is the topic which we are spending most time on. Several of us are in the throes of working on information to be presented to the Appeal against the refusal by HDC of outline permission for 300 houses on Land at Watery Lane. The appeal starts at 10am tomorrow and is being held at the Lismoyne Hotel in Fleet. Parish Council members plan to address the Inspector on three areas –

- Councillor Jackson, as Chair of Planning, will be going through our reasons for objections as originally submitted to the application.
- Councillor Mrs. Ambler as Chair of Finance will be detailing our concerns relating to the current draft of the S.106 agreement which covers the planning gain to be provided by the Developer should the Appeal be allowed. This is very important, in the event that the Inspector allows the Appeal, to ensure that any new facilities do not have a detrimental impact on our current Parish amenities and provide appropriate facilities for the residents of the new dwellings.
- Finally, Councillor Eastment will be updating the Inspector on the progress of our Neighbourhood Plan. Although still underway, we feel that it is important that the good progress made by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group over the last 8 months is recognised.

The Parish Council has also been working closely with Face-It who will be making submissions about Transport issues. Apart from the Watery Lane planning application, we have also been involved in discussions on the Grove Farm application. We held a well-attended planning meeting here at ZCC in August 2014 and submitted our objections to this application shortly after. We are now waiting for the date of the HDC planning meeting when this will be considered.

Precept

This year saw a rise in our overall budget of around £17,000, this results in a precept charge which is fairly close to the average for Parish's in Hart. Whilst the amount of increase is relatively modest at £8.34 per band D household, we always think hard before implementing any rise. The increase covers two major items, £5,000 to allow us to contribute to a transport scheme to help residents following the cessation of bus services in the Parish. Another £5,000 goes towards environmental upgrades, such as footpaths and canal towpath works. The remaining amount unfortunately just accounts for increased costs of ongoing overheads. We obviously work hard to ensure value for money in all areas and hopefully will be able go back in future years to a zero or inflationary only rise.

Lea Green Play Area

Over the last year, CVPC has completely changed the play equipment in the Netherhouse Moor children's play area. Initially, we provided a new toddler's play area and have then worked to supplement this with equipment for older children and adults in the surrounding open area. Due to the unusually wet winter, the replacement of the toddler's play area took longer than anticipated but by May 2014, the ground was dry and the new play area opened to the public. We completed the first stage of work by upgrading the crumbling pathway to a tarmac surface in June. CVPC has also been negotiating with Hart DC, the landowner, to transfer the lease for the area and we finally achieved this in October last year. This spring we added new equipment for older children and will shortly complete the project by installing adult exercise equipment.

Crondall Rd Traffic Calming

I have reported at the end of the last three years that this project is imminent. However, despite reassurances from HCC, we are still crawling at a snail's pace towards a conclusion on this project. We are assured that the work is imminent and hope to see the scheme implemented shortly (confirmed as 20 April start date).

Pilcot Road

I mentioned the completion of the project last year, the footpath was formally opened in July 2014 by CVPC, Hart DC and HCC Councillors. This project was started by the Council in 2004 following a campaign by local residents to point out the dangers of walking with their children along Pilcot Road to Dogmersfield Primary School and a 500 signature petition organised by local residents Sarah and Jerome Farrell.

Lengths man Scheme

Hampshire County Council are currently running a scheme which allows Parishes to do some minor highway and maintenance works that would normally fall to the County or District to complete. They give us a grant of £1000 per year and in FY 2014/15 CVPC joined this scheme. Due to some delays on the part of HCC, we had a slow start but going into the new financial year have had confirmation that we will continue to be supported and included in this scheme. We have engaged with the community Payback management whereby offenders doing community service spend their hours doing manual work such as litter picking, verge tidying, path works etc. We have a regular session each month with the Payback Team and are working in collaboration with HDC to improve our verges, roundabouts and roadway footpaths. My thanks go to Cllr Makepeace-Browne who has led on this project on behalf of the Council.

2. REPORT ON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN & OPERATION RESILIENCE

Cllr. Eastment reported as follows on the Neighbourhood Plan and Localism. The Plan got underway last May with the plan area designated by Hart Council on 7th August. The process is being managed by three councillors from the Parish Council supported by three members of the community who have joined with them to form a steering group. Currently there is Tina Collins from the village, Philippa May from the Zebon Copse Residents Association and Richard Hellier from the village. Outside Consultants have been engaged to guide the Group. Public consultation has been through a range of methods; regular liaison with key personnel such as District and County Council Officers, local community groups, transport, health and education providers. The Steering Group is funded by the Dept., for Communities and Local Government and match funded by the Parish Council and has also received a grant from Hart Council.

At an early stage the Steering Group agreed to organise the Plan under the following banners; Transport and Movement; Historic Conservation and Heritage; The Environment; Leisure, Health and Well-Being; Housing; the Economy, Employment and Retail; Education. Each of these sections sets

out driving principles derived from community consultation and research and these will form the basis of the plan policies. There has been extensive research in each of these areas and additionally data and statistics collated from a range of sources including the Parish Plan, the Parish Survey, Hampshire County Council, and the Census, Council for the Protection of Rural England and Dept. of Communities and Local Government. The emerging neighbourhood plan addresses key areas of concern for the local community and these are focused on; the impacts of large-scale housing development; traffic and road congestion and the lack of options to mitigate this; loss of the green environment and biodiverse wildlife which is highly valued; the ability of the road, transport, education and health infrastructure to cope with large population increases as capacity has already been reached; encroachment of urban overspill narrowing the green gap; loss of rural character; land prone to flooding; the quality of SANG (Sustainable alternative natural greenspace).

From the consultation processes with various community groups there is a majority view that the community would support high quality, small-scale developments if sensitively located. There is an ageing demographic which will need to be addressed as will the need for affordable housing for local people.

The Steering Group will make a submission to the Albany Park Inquiry to show how much consultation it has undertaken and, therefore, that it has direct evidence of the opinions of parishioners.

Cllr. Eastment then updated the meeting on the Operation Resilience project which he had promoted and which was for use in disaster emergencies.

HCC had run a series of meetings around Resilience in the event of a major incident (such as extreme weather; flooding or national infrastructure failure. Given the squeezed resource that the County Council is suffering from, and assuming a major incident will affect a large area and so limit emergency services ability to cope, the Parish Council prepared a local Resilience Plan to help with the immediate response to an incident in our Parish.

The Resilience Plan has been agreed with the Emergency Planning Department at the County Council and shared with Hart Council.

A lot of the plan is around Communication and so it lists all of the relevant agencies and how we can get further support. The assumption is that, in the unlikely event of an emergency, the Parish Council will set up a control centre in the Zebon Community Centre which can be used to liaise up to Hart and Hampshire and down to local facilities.

Sadly, there have been few volunteers willing to help in the event of an emergency and there is still a need to add any medical staff, 4x4 drivers and anyone with relevant skills into the plan. The Council will continue to seek this via the newsletters.

An application was made to the British Heart Foundation for a grant to position two defibrillators within the Parish (At the SPAR Shop and the Post Office). Last week we were informed we had been awarded one defibrillator for the SPAR shop because of its extended opening hours and investigations are ongoing to get another one sited within the village. There are 10 videos showing how to use the defibrillator on the rubber doll which Cllr. Eastment currently holds.

Other Parish Councils have now started to prepare Plans and ours has been shared with three parishes to date.

3. COUNTY AND DISTRICT CLLRS' QUESTION TIME

None of the public wished to ask any questions of those Councillors present.

4. TRUSTEES AND APPOINTEES REPORTS

(i) Memorial Hall Trust

Cllr. Simon Ambler reported as follows:

This local facility is well established and well run and little changes from year to year. There are two halls, the Memorial and Willis halls which are owned and managed by the Trust, they both continue to have a high level of usage. Whilst the business model is completely different from that which we use for ZCC, being operated as a charity and relying mainly on volunteer assistance, the halls provide a valuable community facility. The Committee acknowledge that the new Church Crookham Parish venue will be in close proximity when it comes on stream in the summer. They feel however that there is sufficient demand and the venue offers different facilities that it will compliment rather than threaten the viability of the Memorial Halls. The Trust maintains a reasonable reserve equivalent to around two year's expenditure and income continues to match or slightly exceed expenditure.

(ii) Crondall/Crookham/Fleet Welfare Trust

Cllr. Wendy Makepeace-Browne reported as follows:

Originally set up around 1830 to provide fuel for the poor as it had become illegal for people to cut their own turf from waste land, this Trust moved over time to help by giving financial aid instead of fuel, which is how it contributes today. After my severe concerns over this charity last year, things have changed for the better. An ultimatum was given to the board by several trustees of either looking to wind it up or to make a concerted effort to improve the way it was run and to make it a going concern that actually made a difference. I am delighted to say that the latter prevailed and the board agreed to spend the next 2 years doing all that it can to make a go of the charity. Unfortunately, our longstanding secretary and Treasurer Mrs Debbie Moss had to step down due to family health issues part way through last year and whilst she was sorely missed, we quickly found a new treasurer and a new secretary to take on these challenging roles. I was elected Chairman at the AGM and we are up to full strength on the board. In the past year we have given out nearly £2000 and are starting to spend the high level of reserves that had accumulated. We are constantly looking for local people in need and would welcome any information for people that you feel could benefit. We think we live in an affluent area but we have locally a huge number of people being supported by the food bank and other charities who quite literally are on the breadline. Through pride or ignorance, they often won't come forward so we need any help we can get to reach these people. We have funds and we want to direct them to the people who need them.

(iii) Cottrell's Almshouse Trust

Cllr. Wendy Makepeace-Browne reported as follows:

A 16 flat Almshouse, located on Gally Hill Road and started in 1844 by Mrs Isabella Cottrell to look after poor persons of good character who are inhabitants of the district of Hart with special preference for such persons who are resident in local parishes. Over the past year we have had several occupancy changes. It has been great to be a part of helping people onto the housing ladder as was the case with one young couple who fell pregnant 6 months

after they moved in to their flat with us. Through the council system they now have a council house in which to bring up their family. If it wasn't for the Almshouse Charity they would not be in this position as they were living separately on friends/family sofas before so the Council would not have housed them as a family. We have lost some residents through ill health sadly, but that is inevitable with the kind of people that this accommodation attracts, so it is good for them that we can act as a stop gap until they do qualify for total care. The Charity continues to fund itself well and manage its reserves, whilst keeping on top of the high levels of maintenance required to keep the 16 flats in good order. We are about to lose one of our long standing trustees, Mr Richard Smallwood who has served for 10 years and our Chairman Mrs Rosemary Feltham who has been on board for a similar length of time. Both will be sadly missed. For me, it is a privilege to serve on this board of Trustees and I thank CVPC for allowing me to be part of the team and to be gaining this community experience.

5. CONSIDER RESOLUTIONS OF WHICH WRITTEN NOTICE HAS BEEN RECEIVED AT LEAST 7 DAYS BEFORE THE MEETING

None received.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Brian Whyatt asked about the reserves left when Pilcot Road footway was put in and paid for by HCC. He was advised that the reserve had been used for the Lea Green play area refurbishment. Mr. Whyatt asked if the Centre was now self-financing and was advised it was very difficult to break down all the different components – income on the hall is slightly above expenditure but it is the sports facilities which are a drain. The Chairman said that the work going into the Albany Farm Appeal was specifically to ensure that if the Appeal is granted any sports facilities provided by them are properly installed, maintained and financially supported and not a drain on this Parish.

Cllr. Richard Eastment update the meeting with regard to Fleet Link. A meeting had been held to see if we could divert the Fleet Bus Link through the village. He gave a briefing on the meeting. It is heavily used by bus pass holders and busiest in the peak morning time. Perception is that it is for elderly and infirm. HCC are going back to the operator to see if it is feasible to permit residents from the village to use the service. It was agreed that an article be put in the next Parish Newsletter clarifying eligibility. He mentioned the Taxi share service which collects from bus stops and then the Fleet Link service which collects passengers from their homes. A resident asked about the traffic calming on Crondall Road and was advised that the designs are on the website. Further discussion took place on the traffic improvements put forward by the Albany Park developer for the A287/Redfield's Lane junction.

Cllr. Jackson advised that the Parish Plan referred to in the Neighbourhood Plan report had been led by Indra Sinka, Peter Crawley and with lots and lots of help from Tony Clarke.

The meeting closed at 8.50 pm