



Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Sherfield on Loddon Parish Council, held in the Village Hall on Friday 23 May 2008 at 8pm

There were approximately forty parishioners attending the APM including the Parish, Borough and County Councillors

1. Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everybody to the meeting including Borough Councillors Marilyn Tucker, Martin Bierman, Keith Chapman, Rhydian Vaughan and Ranil Jayawardena.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Elaine Still, John Downes, John Dodd and PC Jewell

3. Minutes of the previous APM held on 18th May 2007

The minutes of last year's annual parish meeting had been tabled. The minutes were signed as a true record of the proceedings.

4. Parish Council Annual Report

A report of the activities of the Parish Council during the last 12 months had been tabled. The Chairman thanked the retiring Parish Councillors, John Dodd and Percy Sims for their years of loyal service to the village. The Chairman also thanked the previous clerk, Lucy Marshall and welcomed her and the other new Councillors David Leivesley and Bruce Jones onto the Council. The Chairman thanked Ken Clark for all his service to the Parish Council and was happy to report that Ken would carry on with his involvement with the new pavilion project.

The Chairman explained that we have now in a new ward, called Bramley and Sherfield and congratulated the two new Councillors Rhydian Vaughan and Ranil Jayawardena for their election success. He went onto thank Marilyn Tucker and Roger Gardiner for their many years of service as our ward Councillors.

Sherfield Park Residents Association was formed 18 months ago and has recently held its AGM. The Association's very enthusiastic founding Chairman, Tony Murray sadly died earlier this month aged only 30; the Association is now being ably chaired by Giles Doe. It has been difficult to generate enthusiasm for the Community Association without a community centre, it is hoped that the new Community Centre building will be open for use in autumn 2009.

The development at Breach Lane has blended into the village very well, although there will always be access problems. Unfortunately, the name cannot be changed to Rectory Gardens as originally hoped as there has been a mix up over restriction imposed in the conveyance of the land.

Minor works have been carried out on the Bramley Road to make the build-outs more visible and, following the concerns about safety that we have put to the Highways Authority, the traffic island at the Goddards Lane/Reading Road junction is to be removed. This could result in an increase in the speed of the traffic passing the Village Hall and shop. There is more white lining to be done in a number of places and we are investigating the possibility of purchasing speed display signs in conjunction with three other local parishes.

There is concern about the safety of children and others crossing the A33 at the Scats junction to reach Sherfield School and also about the general access arrangements for the school which need to be reviewed. The installation of a crossing at this point would require a reduction in the speed limit to 40mph. Representatives of the Parish Council will meet with all parties to see what can be done.

Progress is being made with the football pavilion; there is a working party under the chairmanship of Brian Archer. It has now been decided that a modular building will suit the requirements without being prohibitively expensive. The building will have traditional brick walls and a tiled roof. It is hoped that tenders will be received soon.

The burial ground purchase is complete and will be available for use when the St. Leonard's churchyard is closed. It appears that this will be required sooner than had originally been envisaged, perhaps as soon as 2008.

The Parish Councillors became trustees of the Village Hall in October 2007.

The allotments are managed by Tracy Lander-Sims very successfully and there are two half plots currently available.

The Chairman thanked Tim Boschi and his team at the Borough for their work on Bow Drive; it really has made a great difference.

5. Accounts and Budget

The draft accounts for the year 2007/8 prepared by the auditor David Hitchins and the budget for 2008/9 had been tabled.

There were no questions

6. Reports

Report from County Councillor – Keith Chapman

Councillor Chapman reported that the council tax rose by 4.5% this year and that Hampshire had received only 20% as a rate support grant, in Durham they received 80% from this grant. In 2009/10 Hampshire will have the lowest rate support grant in the country.

There will be changes to the funding of adult social care in Hampshire. In the future individuals will be given a budget to manage for their own social care, this care could be provided by HCC or by other agencies.

The Music Service continues to strengthen with 72 fully supported ensembles. The Hampshire County Youth Band is for the second year running the national champion.

The County Council allocated £10,000 to each Councillor to allocate to village organisations which was spent in Silchester, Hannington and Kingsclere last year, this funding will be available again and should be applied for.

Report from Borough Councillor – Marilyn Tucker

Councillor Tucker said how sad she was that this would be the last time she would stand before this community as a Borough Councillor following the boundary changes. She highly recommended the new Councillors and was sure that they would do a great job.

The recent elections had given the Conservatives an overall majority of 10 seats and there would be a two year period of stability. The composition of the cabinet would be as follows:

Sport and Leisure	Cllr Keith Chapman
Environment and Climate Change	Cllr Mrs Anne Court
Finance, Property and Performance	Cllr James Lewin
Planning and Infrastructure	Cllr Horace Mitchell
Housing and Health	Cllr Mrs Cathy Osselton
Education and Community Support	Cllr Elaine Still
Community Safety and Development	Cllr Clive Sanders

The development of the German Road area has sadly proceeded despite vigorous objection. There has been concern about the safety of the site following the dumping of ammunition over many years. They have a specialist team who are combing the area with hi-tech equipment and have set aside an area for controlled explosions, so far there have been two such controlled explosions.

The Haymarket Theatre is now under the management of Anvil Arts and is back in action.

There are plans to make the library in Basingstoke into a Discovery Centre following the success at Winchester library.

The railway station at Chineham is still being looked into and Basingstoke and Deane are trying to help provide better parking at stations like Bramley.

Questions

1) A member of the public asked if there could be notification of the explosions at Bramley as some have been very loud?

Councillor Tucker agreed to look into this.

2) A member of the public asked about the value of the planning process if the community were to be consulted and then ignored as had been the case with the German Road development?

Councillor Tucker sadly agreed with the sentiment in this question.

Report from Borough Councillor – Martin Bierrman

Councillor Bierrman stressed the importance of the new Community Association building planned for Sherfield Park especially after there had been so many disappointments – failure to provide a school and Medical Centre being just two examples.

The South East Plan will result in an increased amount of housing in Hampshire, some of which will be built in the Basingstoke area and probably in this area. There needs to be a decision taken about whether it is best to build a large development such as Manydown or whether it is better to build in every village or maybe a combination of the two.

Questions

1) A member of the public asked about the extreme distances some children had to travel to school and why it was that no new school was planned?

Councillor Bierrman explained that no new school would be built until all the spare capacity in the Borough was used.

2) A member of the public asked why there were signs for both Sherfield Park and Taylors Farm?

Councillor Bierrman responded that Sherfield Park was a marketing name and that the land was on the OS map as Taylors Farm.

Report from Borough Councillors –Rhydian Vaughan and Ranil Jayawardena

They promised to do their best for the local community.

They reported that the C32 (Bramley Road) would be closed for 5 weeks from early June and that the Highways Department had promised to create a better alternative route than the one they chose when the Bramley Road was closed earlier this year.

Report from Borough Councillor – Elaine Still (read by the Chairman)

Cllr Still apologised for her absence.

The children's playground plans are underway and this should be built this year .Cllr Still would like any residents who have questions/complaints to make contact with her and she intends to hold regular surgeries to deal with local issues.

Village Charities

Due to some administrative issues, the payments were not made in October as usual, it is hoped that there will be a meeting in July and payments will be made after this.

Village Hall Trustees

Ivan Gosden reported that the Parish Council took over as trustees in October 2007 and thanked the previous trustees for their contribution.

There is a management committee of five of the trustees who handle the management and administration of the Hall. The Friends of the Village Hall is a committee set up to raise funds for the Village Hall as the hall cannot survive on its letting income alone. There is a lengthy list of urgent renovation work which is required to keep the hall operational and funds must be raised to cover this. Ivan asked for more volunteers to join this committee with new and fresh ideas as although the Parish Council can precept for some of the required funds, most of it must come from fund raising.

Ivan reported that the Insurance issues following the 2007 flooding are still being dealt with.

Village Green

The Chairman thanked Simon Hennessey for chairing the Village Green Committee for so long, unfortunately, due to his work commitments Simon had given up this role and it had been taken up by Bruce Batting. The Chairman went on to thank all the Village Green volunteers who make such a difference to the village scene. The Village Green remains the jewel in the crown and any help with its maintenance will be gratefully accepted.

The BMX track organised and re-furbished under the project management of Dick Gaiger has been a great success and is now in constant use.

The new basket goal area and NoMow surface have improved the facilities for older children and has been in constant use.

7. Questions from Parishioners

Member of the public asked:

1) What was the Parish Councils response to the planning application at Brunlea and Oaklands?

Bruce Batting responded that the council had objected to the application.

2) Could School Buses be marked as such to prevent overtaking?

Bruce Batting replied that the Parish Council would investigate this.

3) Could anything be done to relieve traffic on the Bramley Road as it is increasingly heavier and faster?

Bruce Batting responded that relieving traffic through opening Dixon Road may actually make things worse and that the Parish Council supported Vehicle Activated Road signs as these appear to be very effective. It was hoped that one could be placed intermittently on the Bramley Road.

4) Could anything be done about the flooding at the Plantation by the pond?

Bruce Batting responded that the Parish Council would investigate this, perhaps the ditch needs clearing.

5) The weed in the ponds although not Pygmy Weed is still there, can it be cleared?

Bruce Batting responded that the Parish Council would ask Hampshire Wildlife Trust for guidance.

8, Chairman's closure of the meeting

The chairman thanked everyone for coming and contributing to the discussion and closed the meeting.