

HAMBLEDON PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING MINUTES 25TH APRIL 2019

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Present: John Anderson (chairman of the Parish Council, in the chair); Parish Councillors Mary Grove, Mike Parry, Stewart Payne and Philip Underwood; Parish Clerk Julie Flenley and over 80 villagers.

Apologies for absence were received from Waverley Borough Councillors Nick Holder, Anna James, Surrey County Councillor Victoria Young and Mr and Mrs Paul Stone.

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

These were circulated, taken as read and signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

2. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising that were not covered by other items on the agenda.

3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Good Evening, Ladies and Gentlemen. My name is John Anderson and, as Chairman of Hambledon Parish Council, I would like to welcome you all, and particularly those of you who are attending our annual Village Meeting for the first time.

I would also like to convey apologies from Waverley Borough Councillors Anna James and Nick Holder; and our Surrey County Councillor Victoria Young. Apologies have also been received from Paul Stone. I would also like to welcome our guest speaker Inspector Gary Smith, Waverley Borough Commander of Surrey Police.

Next, I would like to introduce my fellow Parish Councillors: Philip Underwood, Mike Parry, Paul Pattinson, Stewart Payne and Sean Sinnott and Mary Grove and extend my thanks to them for all their hard work, help and support over the last year.

Also, a warm welcome to our new Clerk, Julie Flenley who joined us in January. She has had a rapid introduction and has taken up the reins very well. She succeeds Caroline White who resigned at the end of last year due to increased business commitments. We were sorry to lose Caroline and would like to thank her for a job well done.

Paul Pattinson has decided not to stand in the forthcoming elections on 2 May so I and my colleagues offer him our sincere thanks for all his help and support over the past 12 years.

All the rest of us did stand, as did Robin McKeith. The seven available places are therefore uncontested so no election is required and we look forward to welcoming Robin at our next meeting, on 14 May.

Planning: The new Waverley Local Plan

Although Waverley's new Local Plan Part I was approved in February 2018, it remains the subject of an appeal on the grounds that Waverley should not have to accept an increase in housing numbers to help meet Woking's unmet needs – on top of the 2,600 houses which are already predicated for Dunsfold Park. Part II of the Local Plan is currently out for consultation and should be approved at the end of this year.

Hambledon Parish Council remains concerned about the Plan's failure adequately to address the lack of local infrastructure and facilities, particularly in relation to the increased traffic and its impact on Hambledon's roads that will result from development at Dunsfold Park. A number of these plans were reviewed at last years meeting.

Planning: Hambledon

As I have said before, the Parish Council has always supported affordable housing and small properties, which should be built in villages where there is supporting infrastructure, albeit somewhat stretched. But the expansion of villages may sometimes be essential to meet housing demand, even though this may attract conflicting views arising from the need to protect the Green Belt. We must adapt to change; but managing the balance can be difficult.

Last year the Parish Council supported the application for four two-bed semi-detached houses and one three-bed detached house on the site of the Hambledon House farm buildings. Following the sale of the site, the subsequent developer reconfigured the houses to create three detached and one pair of semi-detached, increasing their size and the number of bedrooms. The Parish Council objected, but to no avail.

English Rural Housing Association's appeal against Waverley's refusal to permit the development of 17 dwellings at Orchard Farm was dismissed by the Inspector last September, broadly on the grounds that it would have been inappropriate development in the Green Belt. This concern has been addressed in the application which English Rural has now submitted for a smaller scheme of nine dwellings, seven affordable and two market, and on a smaller plot which excludes the existing farm house and the adjacent land to the east.

The resolution of the drainage remains a key concern for the Parish Council and this will need to be satisfactorily addressed by Surrey County Council and English Rural.

On 22 March the Parish Council sought clarification from English Rural as to how they intended to proceed as regards the farm house and the adjacent land. In their letter to the Parish Council dated 29 March English Rural stated that they intend to seek buyers for the farm house and the land, but that they would safeguard the land from development in the future.

The Parish Council has therefore informed Waverley that it supports the current application with the provisos, first, that Surrey County Council commits to the required drainage works and, secondly, the conclusion of a binding commitment by Waverley and English Rural in relation to the adjoining land. The Parish Council has also requested the removal of Permitted Development Rights from the properties to be built by English Rural.

The Parish Council is mindful of the concerns that continue to be raised by some people about any development at Orchard Farm. However, there has also been support within the village for this smaller application. So, a balance has to be struck. In reaching its decision the Parish Council has recognised that effective drainage and the future of the land that does not form part of English Rural's application are the key issues for most people; as is the importance of the affordable housing being prioritised for those with Hambledon connections.

During the past year 22 other properties in the village have been the subject of eight planning applications plus 14 requests for Certificates of Lawfulness and Permitted Development Rights. Just about all of these are to increase the size of existing houses, from two or three to four, five or even six bedrooms; by adding conservatories and double garages; and, in the case of two barns, changes of use for residential purposes, and all of this in the Green Belt. The Parish Council would have liked to have seen an increase in the number of smaller units to counter-balance this trend – but it was not to be.

The Parish Council supported the installation of five shepherd's huts to provide additional accommodation at the Merry Harriers, together with the creation of additional bedrooms at the rear of the pub and within the pub itself. It also supported further commercial units at the Old Coal Yard, which add to the commercial activities that help to maintain Hambledon as a thriving village.

Finance

Budgets for 2017/18 were distributed. It was noted that once more, budgets from Surrey County Council had been cut which is leading to a rise in the parish precept.

Traffic and speeding

During the past year the Parish Council has become increasingly concerned about the amount and speed of traffic passing through the village. Thanks to the persistence of Mary Grove and Stewart Payne, speed data surveys were carried out last month along Malthouse Lane and the Hambledon Road and we shall be hearing more about this from Cllr Payne and Inspector Smith later this evening.

The other major issue is road safety at the Hydestile Crossroads and along the narrow Salt and Markwick Lanes which are being used by 2,700 vehicles a day. Paul Osborne, who lives in Salt Lane, launched a petition which attracted 251 signatures, mainly from Hambledon and Hydestile residents, as a result of which the matter will have to be addressed by Surrey County Council. Here again, we await further news.

In the meantime, thank you Mary, Stewart and Paul for all that you are doing to try and make Hambledon a safer and more traffic-friendly place.

Village Maintenance and Infrastructure

Under the stewardship of Mike Parry, with the help of some modest funding which Victoria Young was able to obtain from Surrey County Council and with input from Tim Coleman and Colin Rapley, the Parish Council completed a full programme of maintenance and infrastructure work during the past year. However, a higher-than-usual amount of funds had to be contributed by the Parish Council, at the expense of the annual grants which it normally pays to village organisations.

Village Organisations

The 2018 Hambledon Festival was so successful that it raised sufficient funds to make good and more, the shortfall in grants normally paid to several village organisations by the Parish Council. So many

congratulations and thanks to the organisers for their industry, efforts, input and enthusiasm and, not least, for their financial generosity to, amongst others, St Peter's Church, the Cricket and Football Clubs, the Village Hall and Shop. These and all the other organisations between them provide opportunities for social interaction and ensure that Hambledon is a vibrant, active, friendly and caring village. Having lived here for as long as I have, I sincerely believe that we are part of a very special place. And that is in no small part due to the huge range of highly successful village organisations from whom we will be hearing shortly. So thank you all.

But before we do, I would like to make a special mention of St Peter's Church. It has been here longer than any other institution in the village and is at the heart of our community, regardless of our personal beliefs. The international reaction to Notre Dame when it came to serious harm was heart-warming and immediate; no less heart-warming, and equally immediate, was Hambledon's reaction to St Peter's Church when its future came under threat. Thank you.

Conclusion

And in conclusion, some personal thank-yous. To Julie Flenley who, despite being so new to the job, is already learning how to keep the Chairman under control. Julie, thanks you. To Nick Holder, who, as the one of our two Waverley Councillors, has taken Hambledon under his wing for the past eight years. His help and support have been much appreciated by us all. Nick, thank you. And last, but by no means least, Paul Pattinson: I personally and, indeed, all my fellow Councillors will miss the wise words and thoughtfulness which he has contributed to our doings since he joined us 12 years ago. Paul, thank you very much.

And to you Hambledonians, thank you all. Keep up the good work. And remember, you can start doing this by taking part in the litter pick this Saturday at 10am outside the Village Shop followed by a BBQ at noon.

4. FINANCE

The audited accounts for 2017-2018 were circulated to all present. There were no comments.

5. TRAFFIC IN HAMBLEDON AND SURREY POLICE – STEWART PAYNE AND INSPECTOR GARY SMITH

Traffic and Speeding

Inspector Gary Smith was welcomed to the parish meeting to discuss speeding within Hambledon, in tangent with Cllrs Payne and Grove, who went on to discuss the recent traffic survey within the village. This survey highlighted the fact that there was significant through traffic within Hambledon, and that there were cars which were driving above the prescribed speed limits but not in high enough quantities and that there were not 'enough' injury accidents to highlight speeding as only injury accidents were recorded and as such, Hambledon was regarded as not a 'problem' village by both Surrey County Council and Waverley Borough Council. Consequently, he also discussed the benefits of Community Speed Watch and being able to police traffic within Hambledon, which could be used to our advantage. Speedwatch is being driven forward by Cllr Grove who is assembling a list of potential volunteers.

Inspector Gary Smith then went on to comment on the problems surrounding speeding within Waverley and highlighted budget issues and restraints faced by Surrey Police with regards to staffing, including the fact that Surrey Police had a total of 244 PC's for Waverley until 2016, which had, at that time, been reduced to 22 PC's. However, despite heavy staffing cuts, Waverley still remains one of the safest Boroughs in Surrey and are happily receiving a 100% uplift in Community Officers, which will bring the total to 4.

Inspector Smith went on to say that speeding and its consequences needs to be tackled within the borough; officers are being trained to use laser speed radars, not just to ticket offenders, but to educate people on the dangers of speeding. Training for this will be ad hoc. PC's will assist villages with Speedwatch by training community volunteers to use the radars – speed is recognised as a problem but Surrey Police believe that educating drivers about speeding works to reduce speeding. Repeated offenders will receive letters, and tougher action if necessary.

Inspector Smith also reported that speeding occurs everywhere but officers are usually dispatched to higher risk areas to attempt to prevent accidents occurring. Inspector Smith closed by saying that Community Speedwatch is a great way to raise awareness of speeding, educate drivers and is something which is strongly supported by Surrey Police.

Inspector Smith stayed to the end of the meeting and answered questions from villagers.

6. PARISH ORGANISATIONS REPORTS

It was great to hear about organisations within Hambledon; Ruth Cadnam reported that the **Village Hall** was doing well, but it required £4,000 per year to keep it running however activities including a tabletop sale contributed to this total. In recent months, the emergency lighting has been upgrade and redecorating has taken place and Ruth was pleased to note that the hall would soon be home to the monthly village cinema.

Hambledon Village Trust, which was set up in 2003 was also doing excellent work distributing grants within Hambledon including a grant award for the village website, and managing Pendle Cottage and Hambledon village shop.

John Hindley reported that the **Parish Magazine** was doing excellently, supporting 54 pages worth of parish news and advertising local businesses with an estimate of between 400 and 500 readers with a large team of people working hard each month to deliver the magazine on time to us.

Hambledon Village Nursery School also reported a successful year with changes to the pond and vegetable garden enhancing the children's learning activities via a grant from the Henry Hall Nurseries Charity Fund. The children regularly use Hambledon's woods and fields and have raised some much-needed funds for nursery equipment through holding events like a 'danceathlon'.

Hambledon Ramblers provided an entertaining slot; twice monthly on a Tuesday, a lively bunch go off for either a long 8 mile walk or a shorter 5-mile shorter walk taking in other villages and countryside

within a 20 mile radius of Hambledon and finishing with a well deserved pub lunch. Lifts can be provided in exchange for a token amount towards petrol.

Hambletots also continues to thrive – the group of mums and babies meets every Wednesday morning with numbers as high as 20. They have their own website which is regularly updated and can be checked to find out regular news and information on fundraising.

Hambledon Football Club reported that they have had a successful season, having run 4 teams this year and are looking to add another Vets team for next season. The First team are still playing and have a chance of winning the league with 3 games left but must win all three. They have also got to the Semi Final and Quarter Final of two cup competitions. New players are always welcome.

Rev. Simon Jenkins reported on **St. Peter's Church**, Hambledon – the church is under much financial pressure to keep it going but thanks to the huge generosity of villagers, recent donations have secured it's future and a new Associate Vicar is being sought. However, donations need to continue in order to keep the church viable in future years.

Julie Llewellyn reported that the **Hambledon Community Fund** (an endowment fund where the interest is used for the benefit of the village) was going well. Locally managed grant applications had been awarded to, amongst others, the football club for a lawnmower, a hearing loop at St. Peter's church and restoration of the Almshouses.

Andrew Falk in turn reported that the **Almshouses** were fully refurbished and that they were financially sound.

The **Village Fete Committee** was discussed by Jon Petersen, who reported that it was now subsumed into a 3-day festival which included a ball, vintage car rally, church service on the village green and the fete. Happily, much of the funds raised through this event was redistributed back into Hambledon for the benefit of it's organisations.

Hambledon Cricket Club had had a good season with the 1st VI finishing in pole position in their league and the 2nd VI winning half their games. The colts section was also posting record numbers of children training and enjoying the game and the club has been awarded the coveted Clubmark. All are welcome to join in the cricketing fun this season!

Nick Massey reported on behalf of **Hambledon Village Shop** that it had a good year. The shop is the longest community-run shop in the south east and remains not-for-profit with 3-6% of the funds being reinvested annually. The shop would not exist if it was not for the volunteers who donate their time to making the shop such a success. Plans are afoot to install a new coffee machine and replace the benches outside which are showing signs of age.

St. Dominic's School reported that things are also going well; the roll stands at 100 pupils who's needs are met by the school and the academy trust which operates it. It was also reported that the development of the performing arts centre is well underway and should be finished by Autumn.

Camilla Edmiston delivered an informative slot on **Oakhurst Cottage**. The cottage had 900 visitors last year but more volunteers are required to meet the demand. Oakhurst volunteers are also fundraising to secure much needed finances to maintain the cottage and she noted that funding from the National Trust was based on footfall at the property so please visit and enjoy our lovely 16th Century cottage!

The **Webteam** (the people who diligently maintain our village website and other social media outlets) reported a successful year with over 17,000 visits last year alone. The website is well used by locals to check on village organisations, including the Parish Council, village shop and the parish magazine.

The **Hambledon Peddlers**, which started in 2003 and led by George Pitt, wends its way around Surrey from the months of April right through to September for 6 to 16 miles, which includes a well-documented pub stop to rehydrate after tackling some of our hilly inclines. All riders are local and all are welcome.

The **Merry Book Club** reported that it meets every few weeks at the Merry Harriers. Members meet to discuss their latest read whilst enjoying supper and each other's company. Information pertaining to the latest and previous books can be found on the village website.

Hambledon Bridge Club takes place in the Merry Harriers weekly. It is informal and friendly and no prior knowledge of bridge is necessary as full training will be awarded. There are also no set partners so all are welcome to come and learn the art of bridge whilst enjoying a tasty beverage on a Wednesday evening.

The Parish Council would like to extend its thanks to everyone who came, spoke and supported the evening – it was lovely to meet everyone and to learn about the various Hambledon institutions and understand how we can work together to make it an even better place to live and work.

7. QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR – none received.

8. VILLAGE CLEAN UP AND BBQ

The Chairman invited all present to take part in these events, on Saturday 27th April. He then thanked all villagers for their attendance and assistance through the course of the evening and brought the formal proceedings to a close.