

# HAMBLEDON PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES

of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 26 February 2015 in the Village Hall

Present: John Anderson (Chairman), Karen Jones, Mike Parry, Paul Pattinson, Stewart Payne, Peter Spall and Philip Underwood; Jane Woolley (clerk); Cllr. Elizabeth Cable; PCSO David Boxall; and 4 members of the public

### QUESTION TIME

The Chairman suggested, and it was agreed by all present, that it would be helpful if he first up-dated the meeting on the housing needs survey and on residents' comments on the Orchard Farm proposal.

#### Housing needs survey

A preliminary draft report had been received on 25 February. Of the 314 questionnaires that had been distributed to all households in the village 261 had been completed and returned – an 83.12 per cent return which was described as outstanding.

The draft also indicated that 15 households in Hambledon might be in need of assistance to access housing. The actual breakdown was five affordable, six shared ownership and four “any”.

Councillors had not had time to read the draft in detail and comment on it but, as soon as they had agreed and adopted a final report, a summary of the results would be made available to the community via the village web site and the Parish Magazine.

#### Residents' comments

The Chairman's report is attached as Appendix A to these minutes. All comments had been forwarded to the English Rural Housing Association, which had also accessed the Orchard Farm forum on the village web site.

#### Questions

As not many people used the village web site and not everyone read the Parish Magazine, could some way be found of informing everyone in the village of the above given the general interest in both topics? The Chairman agreed to pursue this suggestion.

Were the 15 households in need of assistance named and would Waverley Borough Council check their credentials? The Chairman stated that, for this purpose, names and addresses would be released by SCA to Waverley, and only Waverley, as they needed also to be included on the housing needs register and that they remained confidential to these two organisations.

### FORMAL BUSINESS

#### 1. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 January 2015 were **agreed** and signed.

#### 2. MATTERS ARISING

There were none.

### 3. FINANCE

#### Cheques

**Agreed** and signed the following

- Workstation: photocopies, ink, labels, paper	£ 153.50
- Jane Woolley: stamps, housing needs survey	£ 159.00
- Hambledon Village Shop: redeemed Smiths charity vouchers	£ 50.00
- Hambledon Almshouses: balance, Smiths charity grant	£1,950.00
- Colin Rapley: hedges/ditches (localism initiative)	£1,596.00
- Tim Coleman: Village Hall leaves and signpost repair	£ 100.00

#### Financial up-date

On consideration of the previously circulated paper

- noted that the Parish Council's contribution towards the Dunsfold transport survey was likely to be £280 (as opposed to the £140 envisaged earlier)
- noted that Busbridge Parish Council would not be considering a contribution to the GU8 superfast broadband project until the next financial year; that it had already been agreed to pay Hambledon's contribution in the current financial year; and therefore **agreed** that payment of £250 should be made forthwith. Also noted the success of this private venture, which would be the first of its kind to be carried out nationally.

#### Risk assessment

Noted that this would be carried out and reported to the meeting on 25 March.

### 4. PLANNING

**Endorsed** the Planning Committee's decision not to object to the following

- WA15/0054: Marepond Farm – new dwelling to replace existing barn (revised application)
- WA15/0095: Highfield, Malthouse Lane – construction of tennis court
- WA15/0132: Stone Cottage, Vann Lane – certificate of lawfulness for detached outbuilding
- WA15/0258: Unit 2, The Old Coal Yard, Hambledon Road – extension to existing commercial building

WA14/2326: Land opposite The Merry Harriers – erection of six, including four affordable, dwellings

Noted that a decision had been deferred due to Waverley's need to obtain more information from the applicant; and that SCC Highways had expressed reservations as regards access, availability of sufficient parking and the lack of any public transport option.

#### Orchard Farm

See Question Time – above.

Noted the useful meeting that had taken place with Nick Hughes (ERHA) regarding drainage problems; that a topographical survey had been carried out and that a further report, which would be the subject of further discussions, was due in a few days; that bore holes were about to be sunk; that more information was required about land levels to the south of the site; and that EHRA was fully aware of residents' concerns and the importance of resolving the problems.

#### Housing needs survey

See Question Time – above.

#### Permitted development rights

Noted that, following the meeting which Cllr. Cable, the Chairman, the Clerk and Barry Lomas (Waverley planning officer) had had with Jeremy Hunt MP, the latter had written to

Brandon Lewis, Minister of State, Housing and Planning, Department for Communities and Local Government expressing concern about the use of Certificates of Lawfulness to avoid planning procedures; that Brandon Lewis' reply had focused on the use of Article 4 Directives whereas the Parish Council's problem was more with loopholes in the legislation; and that Jeremy Hunt had therefore suggested that the Parish Council should address this point in a further letter to him which he would be happy to forward to Brandon Lewis. Noted that the letter had been drafted and awaited possible further comments from Waverley. [Note: it was subsequently confirmed that no further comments would be forthcoming and the letter attached at Appendix B has therefore been sent.]

## 5. VILLAGE MATTERS

### Police

Noted that from 21 December to date there had been one theft and one attempted theft of bicycles in the village, which stressed the need to secure outbuildings.

### Localism initiative

Noted that work to date had comprised ditch and gully clearing through the village together with some hedge cutting and the remaining available funds would be used for further hedge cutting along the Hambledon Road, Vann Lane and Roundals Lane during March.

Noted that the proposed programme of work for 2015-6 had been costed and could be undertaken within the funds requested under the localism initiative and that these would be adjudicated on 6 March.

### Highways

Noted that cabling work by BT along Lane End and Wormley Lane during the week beginning 2 March would require some road closures and that local residents had been informed.

### Local bus service

Noted Stewart Payne's previously circulated report and that an article had also been included in the Parish Magazine and on the village web site.

### Parish Assembly: guest speaker

Noted that Ian Motuel, Waverley planning officer responsible for neighbourhood plans would probably be able to accept an invitation to speak providing it were not too late (as he has a two hour commute). **Agreed** therefore to bring forward the timing to 19.00 for 19.30 and that the pros and cons of Hambledon producing a neighbourhood plan should be the first topic.

### Dunsfold aerodrome: transport review

Noted that eight Parish Councils were now contributing to the review; that the consultant's report was due to be adopted on 27 February; that it confirmed that the reasons why Waverley had refused permission for an eco-town in 2009 remained the same; that this would have implications for three (out of four) proposals for major housing development on the site which were being contemplated for the new Waverley Local Plan; and that Waverley would be able to take account of the findings of the review given the further delays that were being encountered in producing a draft plan.

## 6. VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS

### Almshouses

Noted that £45k had been raised and that, once this figure reached £50k, it would be possible to access a £50k loan to enable work to start on refurbishment of the second property. Noted that tenders were being sought and would be adjudicated by the Trustees on 12 March.

#### Nursery School

Noted that David Evans had been re-elected Chairman at the recent AGM and that reserve funds would probably have to be accessed for essential repairs to the windows.

#### Village Hall

Noted that lettings were down by £800 in 2014 which had also required £5k to be spent on essential (mainly one-off) maintenance; and that letting rates remained unchanged.

#### Village Shop

Noted the open meeting held on 2 February to discuss the future of the shop; that year-on-year trade was up by 36 per cent but that staff costs had risen by 19 per cent; and that a community benefit society was due to be launched by May to enable the shop to access the £30k grant promised by Surrey for up-grades.

#### Oakhurst Cottage

Noted that the volunteers meeting, to brief them on the research and repairs that had taken place during the past year, would be held on 7 March and that the 2015 season would open on 1 April.

### 7. OUTSIDE MEETINGS

SCC footpaths. Noted that the Clerk had attended a meeting on 2 February of eastern villages Parishes to discuss the setting up of a countryside task force to prioritise work and improve communications between Parishes and the Rights of Way officer and that a further meeting was to be held on 17 March.

SCC highways. Noted that Mike Parry and the Clerk had attended a meeting on 25 February of eastern villages Parishes and SCC's Assistant Director, Highways who had given an overview of his responsibilities and budgets; and that problems of communication had been raised by the Parish representatives.

### 8. CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

### 9. OTHER BUSINESS

Village website. Noted that this now carried live information about train services to and from Witley and Milford stations; that there had been more hits since the establishment of the Orchard Farm forum; and that it would be appropriate for the website to feature the re-opening of Oakhurst.

Village pond. Noted that Arthur Frearson, who was a member of the Haslemere Angling Club, had offered to maintain the pond in return for its being used by the Club for the rearing of young fish; and agreed to accept the offer, subject to Philip Underwood clearing it with Stephen Dean in his capacity as Lord of the Manor.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 20.45

**Date of next meeting: Wednesday 25 March 2015**

**Orchard Farm – Hambledon residents' comments**

Comments were invited at the public meeting held in the Village Hall on 28 January and subsequently in writing or via the Hambledon village web site.

Where comments were received from more than one person in a household these have been amalgamated. The same has been done in the case of speakers who commented subsequently in writing or via the web site.

The breakdown per household is as follows:

Speakers	23
Written/web site comments	<u>39</u>
	62
Less duplicate speakers/written	<u>10</u>
Total number of comments	52

This represents 16.8 per cent of all households in Hambledon, of which there are 310 (2011 census).

The comments were wide ranging and came from all over the village. The Parish Council decided on a simple analysis as follows: those against the proposed development at Orchard Farm as set out by the English Rural Housing Association at its presentation to the village on 15 January; those in favour of the proposal but with concerns; those in favour; and general comments.

Those against	6
Those in favour but with concerns	25
Those in favour	19
General comments	<u>2</u>
	52

The main concerns were:

- the number of houses/the need to reflect the findings of the current housing needs survey	26
- drainage	13
- access/traffic	11
- design	11
- lack of school, medical, transport, etc facilities	3

Eight respondents commented favourably on the inclusion of a public open space/possible playground.

Seven respondents referred to Hambledon's need for a better housing mix.

Five respondents were/knew of other qualifying people in current or future need of affordable housing.

28 February 2015

The Rt. Hon. Jeremy Hunt MP  
2 Royal Parade  
Tilford Road  
Hindhead, Surrey GU26 6TD

Dear Jeremy

Permitted Development Rights

On behalf of Hambledon Parish Council I am writing to thank you for sending us a copy of the letter which you received from Brandon Lewis, arising from our concerns about the impact which permitted development rights are having on rural communities such as Hambledon. We have discussed this with our Waverley Borough Councillor, Elizabeth Cable, and with Waverley planning officer Barry Lomax.

None of us disputes the process, but we do query Brandon Lewis's suggestion that Waverley could have had recourse to an Article 4 Direction. Sections 2 and 3 of replacement appendix D to DoE circular 9/95 indicate that these should only be considered where the exercise of permitted development rights would adversely affect an area and Waverley has imposed them to address immediate threats of unauthorised and damaging development. However, in common with many other local authorities, it has never thought it appropriate to seek a direction in respect of an individual property, even when this is located within a conservation or otherwise protected area such as an AONB, on the grounds that it would be unlikely to be upheld; and it took this view in the case of Farm Cottage.

Over the years, various amendments to the original legislation have created anomalies and loopholes and it is these that we feel need to be addressed. In the case of Farm Cottage, it was possible to obtain a Certificate of Lawfulness to turn a two-bedroom cottage into a five-bedroom house because of the wording of the legislation as it applies to front extensions. Limits apply to side and rear extensions yet front extensions are only ruled out where the principal elevation fronts a highway. Farm Cottage's principal elevation is set at right angles to the highway which enables the house to be extended from 6.5m to 20m with an additional 6m of garage. This is surely not what was intended when the concept of permitted development rights was introduced. Front extensions, regardless of which way they face, should be treated in the same way as side and rear extensions.

This is not the only loophole that has been identified but it is the one that is of particular concern to us and to other Parishes within Waverley where significant enlargements have been made to properties which would not have been permitted if planning considerations had applied.

Permitted development rights were introduced to allow householders to improve and extend their homes without the need to seek a specific planning permission *where that would be out of proportion with the impact of works carried out* (my italics). This is a principal with which we all agree. However, it has been distorted by some of the amendments made to the GPDO since its introduction 20 years ago. Would it be possible for you to write again to Brandon Lewis, sending him a copy of this letter and suggesting that his department revisits those amendments which, probably because of mistakes that occurred in their drafting, have resulted in loopholes such as the one to which we refer above?

Yours sincerely

Jane Woolley  
Clerk