

PULBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

The Annual Parish Meeting was held at Pulborough Village Hall on Thursday, 14th May 2009 at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Cllrs. Mrs Botting (Chairman), Mrs Barnett, Mrs Black, Boulton, Denison, Ellis, Jolliffe, Kiverstein, Mrs Lawson, Qusted, Parker, Mrs Roberts and Mrs Watson.

In Attendance: PSCO Neville Warner
Mr Hughes (RSPB)
Mr Jones (Community Cohesion)
Paul Addison (WSCC)
Cllrs Donnelly and Paterson (HDC)
Cllr Mrs Arculus (WSCC)
Lesley Hoff, Parish Clerk
30 Members of the Public

1. INTRODUCTION BY CHAIRMAN

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the guest speakers for attending.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Clarke and Mrs Seagrim.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 8th May 2008 were received and signed as a correct record.

3.1 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT ON ACTIVITIES 2008/2009

The Chairman presented her report on the Council's activities over the past year (attached to the Minutes as Appendices 1 & 2) and advised the members of the public present that she and Cllr Mrs Barnett would be standing down as Chairman and Vice Chairman at the Annual Meeting of the Council. Cllr Mrs Black reported on the work of the Planning and Services Committee and Cllr Mrs Barnett reported on the Recreation and Open Spaces Committee's work during 2008/2009.

5. CHAIRMAN OF FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE

Cllr Kiverstein presented his report on the Parish Council's income and expenditure for 2008/2009 and the budget for 2009/2010. He summarised his report, which is attached to the Minutes as appendices 4 & 5)

Cllr Mrs Botting thanked the Chairmen for all their hard work during the year, stressing that they gave up a lot of their time for the village without any payment.

6. PCSO NEVILLE WARNER

The Chairman welcomed PCSO Warner to the meeting.

PCSO Warner advised those present that he was the Police Community Support Officer for Pulborough, Coldwaltham, West Chiltington, Thakeham and Ashington.

PCSO Warner stressed that incidents must be reported by ringing the non-emergency number 0845 60 70 999. If a resident was alarmed then they should dial 999. He stated that the police for the area were based at Pulborough or Steyning and would respond to a Grade 1 incident within 15 minutes and a Grade 2 in one hour. He advised that any worries should be reported, as this helped build up a picture so that extra officers could be deployed to problem areas at the time when a disturbance was most likely to occur.

He stated the police worked very closely with Pulborough Local Action Team and praised the work of Cllr Ellis, who was trying to get the front desk at Pulborough Police Station manned by volunteers, as was successfully happening at Steyning and Horsham.

A resident asked him for the police view on the new ramp at East Glebe Field. PCSO Warner stated the police were also concerned that the barrier had not yet been put in place, as skateboarders could lose control and end up in Lower Street, perhaps causing an accident. He asked residents to report any anti social behaviour in that area and the police would happily move them on.

PCSO Warner advised the meeting that there was CCTV in Church Place and that it was not illegal to have CCTV in your house or garden, as long as it only pointed towards your own property. This could be done without telling anyone and could be used as evidence, as long as it was not overlooking the street or the neighbours' properties.

The Chairman thanked PCSO Warner for attending.

7. PETER HUGHES (RSPB)

The Chairman welcomed Peter Hughes from RSPB The Brooks, who gave a most interesting presentation on his work and included a slideshow.

The Chairman thanked him for his presentation, which was enjoyed by all.

8. PETER JONES (COMMUNITY COHESION)

The Chairman welcomed Peter Jones to the meeting.

Mr Jones advised he had been in the police for 30 years and had set up the Local Action Team 5 years ago. He explained the work of the Local Action Team and said that the Community Cohesion Working Group had grown from that. He advised that Nick Herbert MP was a keen supporter and had arranged the initial meeting for groups from Southwater, Storrington and Pulborough. He had also attended the first meeting of the Community Cohesion Group.

The idea was to pull together all groups who were involved with youth provision, including the Parish Council, the Pulborough Society, members of the District Council and those who worked with young people.

He stressed that any misdemeanours should be reported and said the Local Action team had had successes but it did not happen overnight.

The Chairman thanked him for attending and stated he did fantastic work, a lot of which went unseen.

9. PAUL ADDISON (VILLAGE TRANSPORT PLAN)

The Chairman thanked Mr Addison for giving up his time to report to the Meeting.

Mr Addison gave a brief overview of the work of the Village Transport Plan Working Group. He explained there was funding of £200,000 for sustainable transport in the Village. This covered walking, cycling and the use of public transport, namely buses and trains.

He informed the Meeting that a questionnaire was available and the results would be collated and reported back to the Village Transport Plan Working Group to put together a strategy to spend the funding effectively and also to look to future needs.

A Councillor stated it would not be a fair survey if the questionnaire would only be available to the people at this meeting. Mr Addison explained there was to be an exhibition on 26th and 27th June 2009 at the Village Hall and questionnaires would be available then. It would also be included in the next edition of the newsletter, so would go to every household. The Councillor asked who would collate the information. The Chairman explained Mr Addison did that as part of his job and was fully trained. A resident asked about the topographical survey of the West Glebe Field. Cllr Mrs Arculus informed the Meeting that this was being done by Horsham District Council and was not part of the remit of the Village Transport Plan Group and was only mentioned in the minutes as it might affect the decisions of improvements to be made to the station forecourt.

Mr Addison stressed that amendments to the Plan could still be made, as it was not yet finalised. The Group was looking at larger projects, which could take years and smaller ideas that could go ahead quickly.

The Chairman repeated that Mr Addison was only involved with **sustainable transport** and thanked him for attending the meeting.

10. CLLR ROGER PATERSON (THE DIFFERENT ROLES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL AND THE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP)

The Chairman invited Cllr Paterson to speak.

Cllr Paterson started by recommending everyone should visit the RSPB, stating it was the most popular visitor attraction in the area.

He advised the Meeting that the Parish Council has statutory powers from the Government. It consists of 15 members, who have to stand for election. They do a fantastic job, being extremely hardworking, for which the Council gets no thanks and no pay.

The members are consultees and get its funding purely from raising taxes ie the precept. This costs the average Band D Council Tax payer £83 per annum.

In 2003, the Countryside Agency set up Community Partnerships, which work purely through consultation with local residents and can do what the Parish Council cannot do and that is raise funding through grants. He gave the example of the Community Partnership having obtained a grant to provide the two counters in the new Post Office, due to open in the summer.

He informed the Meeting that the Parish Council and the Community Partnership held quarterly meetings, so the Partnership could update the Parish Council on its plans. Two Councillors also attended Partnership meetings. He suggested there might be a legal agreement between the Parish Council and the Community Partnership, as in other parishes.

A resident asked why they did not have a website, so people would be able to read the minutes, just like the Parish Council. It was stated that only grants for specific projects were allowed and the Partnership had no other funding. The Meeting was advised that the Partnership planned to do a newsletter, which would be circulated to all households with the Parish newsletter.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Paterson for making the difference between the Parish Council and the Community Partnership much clearer.

11. QUESTION TIME

The Chairman invited the District and County Councillors to sit at the top table to take questions.

Cllr Paterson first gave an overview of the planning system.

A resident asked for his reassurance he would not allow building in a Conservation Area. He replied he had lived in the Village since he was a child and wanted to see a well-balanced community in Pulborough.

Cllr Donnelly stated that all development had been to the north and east and the station should be the centre of the village.

A resident asked about the development of 137 homes at the Oddstones site, specifically the entrance for construction traffic. Cllr Mrs Black stated the Planning & Services Committee had objected to the application when it was 87 houses. Cllr Donnelly said the site is brownfield but the developers were now expecting to expand into greenfield, which was not in the Local Development Framework.

A resident asked whether there would be more pressure on Pulborough, now that it bordered a National Park. Cllr Mrs Arculus said "yes".

Cllr Donnelly finished by saying that Cllr Mrs Botting and Cllr Mrs Barnett were great people and were excellent sources of information. They had both made a huge contribution to village life and had weathered the flack. He commended them for achieving so much for the good of the Parish.

12. CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS

The Chairman closed the meeting and invited all those present to join the Parish Councillors for refreshments.

The meeting closed at 10.12p.m.

..... **Chairman**

..... **Date**

PULBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMANS' ACTIVITIES REPORT 2008/2009

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL

REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

I cannot believe it is a year since the last Annual Parish Meeting! Where does the time go?

It has been a year of comings and goings; achievements and disappointments.

We have lost 3 Councillors, Howard Barrett, Jim Noble and most recently, Peter Reeve - all through commitments elsewhere. We welcomed Paul Clarke in July, as an Associate Councillor, as he had not lived in the parish for a year, one of the stipulations of becoming a councillor. He was formerly with Southwater Parish Council for many, many years and his expertise has proved invaluable. Paul Parker replaced Howard in January 2009. Paul works for HDC Parks Department, so was immediately co-opted onto the Recreation and Open Spaces Committee, where his knowledge is priceless! Peter Reeve only left in March 2009 and as yet, has not been replaced. If you have thoughts on becoming a Councillor, please get in touch with Lesley Hoff, the Clerk for further information. The job is unpaid but very rewarding!

We also said "Goodbye" to Jim Leadbeatter in October, our Groundsman for more than 20 years but were very relieved when he offered to become our litter-picker and we have received many compliments on how clean he keeps our streets! Glenn Lewis took over as Groundsman from Jim and the Sports Clubs advise that the pitches are looking very good.

This might be a good time to mention the office staff. Lesley has passed the Certificate in Local Council Administration, a qualification necessary for Pulborough to become a Quality Council in due course. Sarah has been with us for 18 months

and is a whizz with anything to do with figures. Between them they have given us a very efficient and well-run office.

Let me move on to the achievements-

There is now a roundabout by Stane Street Close, which the Council managed to get reduced in size and planted by Bellway Homes. It is now much safer and more attractive.

New playground equipment was erected in the play area at Rectory Close. It is lovely to see the children coming out of school and swarming over it like ants!

More work has been done at Nutbourne Common Recreation Ground by volunteers from the Council and the village, led by Dan Cornell of the South Downs Joint Committee. There are even a couple of rustic benches made from offcuts of wood from the Ground.

Councillors now have a monthly surgery at the Farmers' Market. Please take any of your queries or bright ideas for the Village along to the surgery. They will be pleased to see you.

The new allotments are under way, with 8 new plots to be made available. As our waiting list is now over 20, you can see they are certainly needed. The provision of allotments is a DUTY that the Parish Council must, by law, undertake.

The car park at the Pavilion has been resurfaced and parking bays marked out and the Council is also providing a Village Transport Plan, with the help of Paul Addison from WSCC. I won't mention anymore about that, as Paul is here to give us an update and I would not want to steal his thunder.

Our only disappointment was caused by the Recession. Our plans to build a new pavilion have been put on ice until grants are again available.

I must also let you know about the grants we have given and received. I have included these in a separate written report, as I feel I have gone on for long enough!

One final thing - I am bowing out as Chairman of the Parish Council at the Annual Meeting of the Council on 21st May 2009 and Christine Barnett is stepping down as Vice Chairman. Both of us have held these positions for six years and feel it is time for a change. We have seen a great change in this time, with a lot more new legislation than ever before. The moment has (nearly) arrived to let someone else hold the reins!

Jan Botting
Chairman

REPORT FROM THE RECREATION AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

The Recreation and Open Spaces Committee continues its close links with the Sports Clubs, holding monthly meetings with representatives of the various clubs that use the facilities.

The Committee is also responsible for the maintenance of the recreation grounds at Rectory Close, Cousins Way and Nutbourne Common. Some of the tasks undertaken by members are too small to be noticed, such as cutting back the brambles at Cousins Way Ground, whilst others have a greater impact, such as the provision of new playground equipment.

Our latest project is to repair the hole in the fence leading from Chestnut Walk to the Rectory Close with heavy-duty chain link fencing. This is not a Public Right of Way and the fence has had to be repaired three times in the last few months. On the last occasion, it was cut by an elderly gentleman, who came armed with wire cutters!

We are also worried about horses being ridden on Parish Council land, as this is against the byelaws. The byelaws, recently approved by the Secretary of State, are there to prevent anti-social use of the Recreation Grounds, making them a safer place for everyone to enjoy.

The Committee looks forward to this financial year, with plans to refurbish the pavilion and provide more equipment in the Rectory Close play area, amongst other things.

I would now like to invite questions from the floor.

Christine Barnett, Chairman.

ANNUAL REPORT MAY 2009. PULBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Committee has met on average every two weeks, even including August when the other Committees of the Council have a 'break'. The frequency of meetings is to ensure that plans submitted to Horsham District Council are given an official response within the statutory time-frame. Although Pulborough is restricted to 'recommendation' status only, we would like to think that the planners in Horsham take some cognisance of our views – although sometimes the decision reached by them give us cause for some concern.

This past year has seen a reduced number of planning applications – probably because of the current recession.

We were very pleased that larger proposed developments were brought to the Planning Committee prior to the official planning application being submitted to Horsham. In particular this applies to the proposed development of the 'new' Allfrey Plat development at the southern end of Mill Lane and the proposed development for the Winery close to Brinsbury College. Presentations to the Planning Committee prior to submission of plans not only allows the developers to hear the views and queries of the Planning Committee but also allows members of the public to have some idea of what is 'in the air' and to give their views. The Planning Committee, as is the case with all Committees of the Parish Council, is open to any member of the public to attend. There is always time allocated at every meeting for any member of the public to 'have their say' and give their views on any subject on the Agenda.

A few decisions reached by Horsham District Council are 'appealed' by the applicant and the Chairman of the Planning Committee attended one Appeal Hearing the result of which at the time of writing (9 May 2009) has not been given., This matter was referred to in my last year's report ie the erection of a large wooden garden shed for use as a dwelling. The outcome of this no doubt will be available in next year's report!

The Planning Committee does endeavour to look at all the plans with due diligence and arrive at a decision with respect to planning laws only – it is not always easy – we know we are unable to please all the applicants all the time – it is also difficult to please everyone in Pulborough all the time either – but we do our best to ensure that Pulborough remains a vibrant happy and attractive place in which to live.

Hazel Black
Chairman, Planning and Services Committee

**PULBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL
REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE
FINANCIAL YEAR END 31/03/2009**

Attached are draft Income and Expenditure account and Balance Sheet for the last financial year. As in previous years these are subject to final audit. Specific matters to which I would draw attention are as follows;

The precept last year was increased in monetary terms from £125,000 to £145,000.

Other Income also increased due in the main to a grant received for new playground equipment of £23,400.

This year saw Capital spending of £25,496 on the playground equipment referred to earlier. (included under Rec and Open Spaces) and £7,114 on new bus shelters.

Once adjusted for Capital items, expenditure for the year was almost identical to that of last year.

Overall there was a margin of just over £19,000 between Income and Expenditure.

£15,200 of this was transferred to Earmarked funds (£10,000 towards the Sports Pavilion refurbishment/renovation £2,500 towards the MSF resurfacing and £2,700 for the new allotments). The small balance goes to increase our General Fund.

Due to the current financial climate it has been considered prudent to suspend the project under consideration to replace and upgrade the Sports pavilion. Instead the cost of repairing and renovating the building are being investigated. It is hoped that with the help of some small grants for improvements, funds already set aside might be adequate for us to afford this short term solution.

Funds continue to be deposited safely with NatWest Bank.

We are not budgeting for any exceptional expenditure during the next year. Taking account of inflation the precept has been set at £150,295 an increase of 2% per household (band D).

I will be happy to respond to any questions that may arise from the floor.

Ivor Kiverstein
Chairman Finance and Policy