



**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at
Jacobs Well Village Hall
on Wednesday 27 March 2019 at 7.30pm**

Present:

Parish Councillors:

Cllr D Bird, Cllr P Cragg, Cllr M Fance, Cllr S Fisk, Cllr J Messinger, Cllr S Morgan MBE, Cllr E Nagle, Cllr M Singh, Cllr D Snipp, Cllr T O'Toole and Cllr L Wright.

Staff:

Clerk to the Council – Mrs G White

Assistant Clerk – Mrs V Fear

Groundman – Mr P Trevena

Also present were:

Cllr D Elms – GBC, Cllr B McShee – GBC, Cllr K Witham – SCC, Mr C Ewbank – Chairman, Worplesdon Parish Charities, Mr E Marks-Oldham – Secretary to the Worplesdon Parish Charities, PCSO J Downham (for part of the meeting) and 28 members of the public.

Apologies were received from:

Cllr G Adam – WPC, Cllr N Mitchell – WPC, Rev A Russell – St Mary's Worplesdon, Mrs J Bradley - JW Country Market

Mr R Partridge - Worplesdon Tennis Club, Mr R Dewing – Merrist Wood College, Mrs K O'Brien – Headteacher, Worplesdon Primary School, Mrs J Washer – Headteacher Wood Street Village Infant School, Mrs S Norville – Headteacher Rydes Hill Preparatory School, Curate M Wright, Curate R Brothwell, Miss K Fielding – Surrey Wildlife Trust, Mr S Knight - JWRA, Mr and Mrs D Smith - JWRA, Mrs M Broughton – Worplesdon Memorial Trustees.

To receive the minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting

The minutes of the 2018 Annual Parish Meeting were distributed to the meeting. It was proposed Cllr R McShee, seconded Mr R Wild and unanimously agreed the minutes be signed by the Chairman as a true record.

Introduction of Parish Councillors

The Chairman introduced the Parish Councillors to the meeting.

To receive a report from Cllr K Witham (County Councillor for Worplesdon)

Cllr Witham had provided a written report, copies of which had been provided by the Parish Council. Cllr Witham's report covered the following topics:

- Overview of Surrey County Council's finances
- New anti-skid road surface in Jacobs Well Road, and surface dressing (due later in 2019)
- Parking charges Whitmoor Common
- Highway issues in and around Fairlands
- Bus routes 17 and 17a – Wood Street Village
- The Local Plan
- Guildford Borough Council's Joint Enforcement Team (JET)
- Recycling statistics
- Winter action for Surrey's roads
- Reduced opening times at the Slyfield Recycling Centre
- Support for local voluntary groups
- Events providing a benefit for the residents of the Parish
- Electric park and ride busses

Cllr Witham thanked the Parish Council and the local Residents' Associations, whose meetings he attends for their support and feedback, which he finds extremely valuable.

Attendance Register

A copy of the attendance register was distributed by the Clerk.

Appendix 1 – Copy of the Attendance Register

Presentation by Chris Ewbank – Improvements to the Worplesdon Memorial Hall/use of Parish Council grant

Mr Ewbank, Chairman of the Worplesdon Memorial Trustees, gave a report about:

- The history of the Worplesdon Memorial Hall
- The activities which take place at the Hall and Grounds
- The facilities provided at the Hall and Grounds, including those provided by the Parish Council, and
- The future of the Worplesdon Memorial Trustees and the [Sime Gallery](#).

A short Q&A session then took place.

To receive the Worplesdon Parish Charities Trustees' Report

Mr E Marks-Oldham gave a financial report of the activities of the Worplesdon Parish Charities to the meeting; and advised that the Trustees are finding fewer people in need putting themselves forward for the receipt of a grant. He, therefore, asked residents and Councillors to let people know about the grants available from the Worplesdon Parish Charities.

Mr Marks-Oldham left the meeting at 8.15pm.

Adult fitness equipment for Harry's Meadow?

The Chairman advised that, two years ago, the Jacobs Well Residents' Association (JWRA) had asked the Parish Council to increase the facilities within Harry's Meadow, which is predominantly used by dog walkers. Since

that time, the Parish Council has funded the installation of a commemorative bench and litter bin, in remembrance of the centenary of the end of WW1, has purchased, and had planted, 2,200 bee friendly bulbs. The Parish Council will shortly be installing a second commemorative bench in remembrance of the late Derek Slaymaker, whose exemplary service to the community whilst he served on the Parish Council for sixteen years, was deemed to be worthy of this recognition.

The Chairman also advised that, in recent months, personal trainers have been using the Parish play areas to deliver personal fitness training. This is causing an issue with users of the play equipment. The Parish Council was therefore considering whether, or not, to install adult fitness equipment – subject to 100% grant funding being available for the purchase of the equipment. Wetpour is not required beneath the equipment. Fencing is also not required.

The JWRA had correspondingly set up a Facebook poll in respect of proposal to install adult exercise equipment in Harry's Meadow. Of the 54 Facebook respondents, 76% agreed with the proposal. This could include a variety of fitness equipment as well as a table tennis table and double zip wire.

If it were the wish of the voting public at the Annual Parish Meeting (APM) to move ahead with this proposal, the Parish Council would investigate whether grant funding could be achieved to facilitate the installation of adult exercise equipment in Harry's Meadow. Funding can only be sought for capital expenditure. Ongoing maintenance costs would fall to the Parish Council i.e. tax-payers.

Voting slips had been issued to all members of the public present at the APM. 13 voting slips were returned, of those 54% were in favour of this proposal, 31% were neutral and 15% were against.

Relocation of the Armistice Ceremony annual event from the junction of Queenhythe Road/Clay Lane to Harry's Meadow?

The Chairman advised that re-locating the Armistice Day event to Harry's Meadow in November 2018, for the 100th anniversary of the end of WW1, had proved to be well received. The Parish Council, therefore, wished to seek the opinion of the Annual Parish Meeting as to whether the event should be permanently relocated to Harry's Meadow. The Parish Council considers Harry's Meadow to be a safer, more appropriate location for the short ceremony; particularly as parking is available at the village hall. Recognition of the sacrifice the American 'Lilly Belle II' Airmen made when their aircraft, a C47 Dakota, crashed in Jacobs Well on 25 October 1944, would still be acknowledged. Wreaths would be laid at both the war memorial in Queenhythe Road and Harry's Meadow.

Residents were asked to vote on this matter. Of the 13 voting slips returned at the meeting 69% were in favour, 15% were neutral and 15% were against. The Parish Council would therefore raise this matter with the local historians, who organised the installation of the war memorial, for their opinion.

Use of Harry's Meadow for community purposes

Residents were asked to vote on the use of Harry's Meadow for community purposes. Of the 13 voting slips returned at the meeting 100% were in favour of community use of Harry's Meadow

Use of Harry's Meadow for commercial purposes (i.e. funfairs, circuses.)

At present the only regular funding stream available to the Parish Council, in addition to the precept (council tax), is from tennis court income. The court hire fees are heavily discounted to encourage residents to use the courts. Historically, a small income was obtained from fun fairs using Pitch Place Green. In order to reduce the council tax burden to parishioners, the Parish Council is considering organising commercial events. Suggestions that could be considered include:

- Battle re-enactments
- Jousting
- Circus
- Fun fair
- Gin festival
- Food festival

Residents were asked to vote on the use of Harry's Meadow for commercial purposes. Of the 13 voting slips returned at the meeting 38% were in favour, 31% were neutral and 31% were against the commercial use of Harry's Meadow.

The Council will consider this matter further.

Parish Elections – Being a Parish Councillor – What does it involve?

Cllr Tony O'Toole gave a short presentation to the meeting about the role of a Parish Councillor. Residents were reminded that the elections are being held on 2 May 2019. Anyone wishing to stand for election was encouraged to speak to a member of the Parish Council, or the Clerk to the Council. The deadline for nominations being 3 April 2019.

Refreshments

Chairman's Report

The Chairman gave the following report:

“Over the last 12 months we have made some important decisions about the future direction of the Parish Council following the development of a five-year strategic plan. This has led to a reluctant increase in the parish precept as you will have seen in your council tax statement for the forthcoming year, but it is still below the national average. Rather than read out all of the details relating to the Parish precept verbatim, you will find a number of handouts on your chairs which should answer most, if not all, of your queries.

Your councillors have continued to work hard in close conjunction with the officers.

We have been keeping up the maintenance of numerous areas across the Parish, but most notably keeping sightlines clear pending the installation of the very long awaited, and hard fought for, pedestrian refuge near Gravetts Lane on the Aldershot Road. We are assured by Surrey County Council that this will be in place by September 2019 ready for the children to return to school after their summer break. The Parish Council are contributing 95% of the cost which equates to £27,500.

The Parish Council have continued to seek solutions to problematic flooding issues, whether it be organising for certain areas to receive more regular attention from the Groundsman or requires liaising with the appropriate bodies to resolve. The flooding which used to be clearly visible during the vast majority of the year at the side of Aldershot Road, at Littlefield Common, has seen Surrey Wildlife Trust re-dig a ditch to allow water to flow away from the area rather than into it.

The Worplesdon Flood Forum continues to meet to least twice per year, with the ongoing support of the Rt. Hon. Anne Milton MP. We are going to be touring the sewage and waste water treatment facility at Hockford on 5th July 2019. If you would like to come and are able to walk distances and cope with steps, please contact the Assistant Clerk to have your name added to the list of attendees. Places are on a strictly first-come, first-served basis.

Last Summer, despite the soaring temperatures, our contractors undertook significant improvements to the play areas at both Fairlands and Worplesdon.

At Worplesdon the BMX items were removed and replaced with lots of spinning equipment! The supernova, which is the funny shaped, angled roundabout at the end of the play area has seen lots of activity, including people running on it, which is what it was intended for!

The equipment at Fairlands has also been very well received, especially with its more accessible steps which are a hit with the younger children.

In time for Summer 2019 we will be replacing the Wicksteed climbing frame with a new play frame from Proludic. The new frame includes a slide, which has been asked for by parents of small children attending the pre-school. It offers a lot more play value than the existing frame. Due to its location within the fenced off area, it was decided that the replacement equipment would be better served if it appealed to a younger age group.

We have continued to report instances of fly tipping across the Parish, and informed residents via both social media and our quarterly newsletters, that they can report this effectively themselves direct to Guildford Borough Council. In one instance, a significant quantity of waste from a domestic residence in Ripley was dumped just off Keens Lane, behind Pitch Place. This was reported and the home owners have been fined by the Joint Enforcement Team for failing to ensure that their contractors were registered waste carriers.

In response to concerns about an increase in dog fouling across the Parish, the Parish Council invested in a number of signs from Keep Britain Tidy. The glow in the dark eyes on the signs had provided exceedingly effective at psychologically encouraging dog owners to be more responsible and pick up after their dogs.

These signs have been installed at known 'hot spots' across the Parish, although disappointingly, the ones that had been located in Harry's Meadow were stolen by persons unknown.

Following an escalation of parking related problems in Fairlands, particularly around the school, the Parish Council have purchased two large bespoke planters. These are to be located on the verge outside the school in an attempt to encourage parents or carers not to park there. Surrey County Council have awarded a grant to fill them with soil and plant them up, and Worplesdon Primary School will be responsible for their ongoing maintenance.

We have reiterated in numerous newsletters that considerate parking, even if it just for the short duration of a pick-up or drop-off, would make the residents of Fairlands a lot happier.

The annual Armistice Day service was temporarily relocated from the war memorial on Queenhythe to Harry's Meadow behind the village hall in November 2018. This was to allow for the unveiling of a special commemorative bench. We were especially pleased to see such a high turnout of Parish residents, and to have the support of the local scouts and Alexander Dennis. Alexander Dennis kindly brought along a vintage fire engine which was much photographed and admired. They had also kindly had a collection which was sent on to SSAFA.

In the evening, to commemorate the 100-year anniversary of the end of the First World War, a beacon lighting ceremony was held in Harry's Meadow. It was held in conjunction with the national Battle's Over tribute, coordinated by the Queen's pageant master, Bruno Peek.

Rachel Doyle, from the Surrey Police Band, played the Last Post and Reveille.

We were very fortunate to have Kenneth Thomson, a Jacobs Well resident, play the bagpipes at both services.

In response to the JWRA's request for uses of Harry's Meadow, bee friendly bulbs were planted in Autumn 2018. Some of the bulbs have already started to bloom, and we look forward to seeing how the remaining bulbs fare over the remaining year!

An avid hardcore of Councillors, supported by the Clerk and Assistant Clerk, have been continuing to monitor speed around the Parish. The equipment is moved around the villages in the Parish and the location is not advertised so that an accurate cross-section of vehicle movements can be obtained. The eagle eyed amongst you may have noticed that the speed data recorded is currently located right outside this very village hall!

We also have a complement of Councillor volunteers who have, or are about to undergo, training to use the Community Speed Watch Equipment which the Parish Council owns. Residents from across the villages have expressed an interest in supporting the venture, but as yet, only one has been trained.

If you would like to be trained, two further training sessions have been arranged by the police for the 9th and 10th of April. Please contact the Assistant Clerk to be added to the list or for further information.

When the late Derek Slaymaker co-ordinated the scheme in Jacobs Well village, he, and his team, managed to reduce the average speeds by 10 mph.

Please do approach the Victoria, the Assistant Clerk, if you think you would like to assist.

We are continuing to promote the Council's assets. These include our splendid tennis courts which can be hired for just £4.50 per hour – and are free to children under 16 during state school holidays.

We continue to respond actively to vandalism across the Parish. Sadly, we are seeing increased instances of this in respect of damage to bus shelters. At Fairlands the glass panes of the shelter at the entrance to the estate have been replaced with perforated metal after three panes were shattered in one incident and replacement glass panes cost £780 & VAT per pane. In Jacobs Well the bus shelter outside this village hall recently had the sides kicked out. Our groundsman has repaired and reinforced the sides. May we remind residents to report all instances of anti-social behaviour and any crimes to the police on 101 or using their online reporting system."

Open Forum (20 minutes maximum)

The following questions had been raised in advance of the meeting: A hard copy of Appendix 2 had been issued to everyone present at the meeting.

Resident A:

- (1) What additional benefits the Parish has seen as a result of this substantial increase in precept.
- (2) What additional legal obligations have been placed on the Council in the last five years.
- (3) Why, when we are short of money for police, schools and social services from our council tax, it is better to spend money on an office.

Answer: For questions 1 – 3 above - See Appendix 2

Resident B:

- (1) Assuming that the JW residents do want exercise equipment (and I hope that this is the case), that WPC fund the purchase of equipment and that it is sited in the Jacobs Well Recreation Ground and not in Harry's Meadow. The equipment would be more accessible to all, be able to be used whilst parents let children play in the playground, be less risk of vandalism and less chance of being attacked by the Harry's Meadow dogs!

Answer: The Recreation Ground is registered common land with no parking facility. If equipment were to be placed here (assuming the neighbours don't object) we would have to apply to the Secretary of State (s38 – Common Act 2006) for consent. At Harry's Meadow there is pre-existing parking at the village hall. Additionally, a couple of years ago, the JWRA asked the Parish Council to provide additional facilities in Harry's Meadow, which is currently used predominantly for dog walking purposes. It is a criminal offence not to keep dogs under control in a public space.

- (2) Can a bench (with plaque) be installed in Harry's Meadow, in memory of Derek Slaymaker?

Answer: An order for a bench with a plaque has already been placed. The bench will be installed in Harry's Meadow within the next few weeks.

The following subjects were raised by residents present during the Open Forum session:

- Car parking charges on Whitmoor Common – The Clerk to the Council and Cllr K Witham gave an explanation about the introduction of the charges and how the countryside estate is managed.
- When austerity measures will end - Cllr Witham advised that he is unaware of any proposals to end austerity measures.
- The potential development of Blackwell Farm – The Parish Council had objected strenuously to this proposal over a number of years, as had Cllr K Witham and Cllr R McShee.

Statement by a resident: May I record a vote of thanks to the Parish Council. We are very lucky to have an exceptional Parish Council. You do an excellent job. Thank you.

The Chairman thanked Cllr O'Toole, Mr E Marks-Oldham and Mr C Ewbank for their presentations.

Meeting closed 9.20pm.

Signed:

Chairman of the Parish Council

Date: 16 May 2019