



Compton and Shawford Parish Council

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Record of the Annual Parish meeting: 7.45pm Wednesday 28 April 2010, Shawford Parish Hall

Present: Councillors N Campbell-White (chairman), G Beckett, M Bell, J Millar, U Stevens, M Southgate, A Walmsley and Mr D Drake (Clerk).

In attendance: Police Sergeant C Hills, PC M Smith, Mr J Lancaster, Mr P Betts, Ms J Sansome, Mrs P Caffyn, Mr J Griffith and 38 members of the public.

Apologies for absence: Councillor J Evans, Mrs N Emmerson.

Introduction

Councillor Campbell-White welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that it would be conducted in two parts. The first would concentrate on community issues, which would be followed by a question and answer session at 8.10pm. In the second part, councillors would report on their individual portfolios. This too would be followed by a question and answer session. The meeting was scheduled to end at 9.30pm, when coffee and biscuits would be served.

Police Report

Sergeant Chris Hills explained that as a member of the Southgate Team, based in Twyford, he was keen to see improvements in the quality of life within the parish. He was keen to know what issues affect the community and encouraged parishioners to visit the police web site to complete the 'Your Voice Counts' forms. Anyone wishing to contact the police should use the telephone number 101 but, in an emergency, i.e. when a crime is actually taking place, then it would be appropriate to use 999.

PC Smith, who is responsible for Compton and Shawford, added that the quality of the police response would depend upon the nature of the incident. If currently happening, it will be quick, if 'historical' then it will be slower. He advised parishioners that all police constables have been trained in the use of speed guns and these will shortly be deployed on local roads. Anyone exceeding the speed limit can expect to receive a ticket. Inconsiderate parking was of particular concern in the area around Shawford railway station and Compton Street. Owners of vehicles causing an obstruction will be dealt with 'robustly' i.e. tickets will be issued. Crime within the parish is relatively static. There were 30 reported crimes in 2008/9 (including 3 house burglaries) and 32 in 2009/10 (including two house burglaries).

Community Action Hampshire (CAH)

John Lancaster, CAH, explained that the rise in house prices in rural areas had resulted in many young people being unable to purchase their own homes in their local villages. In Compton & Shawford there were 22 potential householders on the housing register. Following a request from the Parish Council, he had visited the parish in February to inspect potential sites for the development of 'affordable housing'. He had identified

several, including “exceptions sites”, and had submitted his suggestions to WCC planning officers for consideration. Once he had received their comments, his report would be made available to the council for comment.

Parish Plan & Village Design Statement (VDS)

Councillor Stevens noted that there were 30 action points within the Parish Plan of which 13 had been resolved and 11 were in progress. But, some e.g. the siting of a bottle bank and village shop were not easily resolved. She had been in regular contact with the Highways Agency about resurfacing the M3 with noise reducing tarmac and intended to keep up the pressure until a satisfactory result was obtained.

Peter Betts announced that a draft copy of the VDS was available on the Compton & Shawford Parish Council web site. When finalised, it would be used as an addition to other related documents to enable planning officers to evaluate plans for further development within the parish.

Shepherds Down School

Jane Sansome, headmistress, explained that pupils came to the special needs school from a range of villages within Hampshire. 100 children, with a range of complex needs are currently being educated at the school, where class sizes vary from ten to five. Some of the children have very severe difficulties and consequently there is a high ratio of staff (85) to pupils. Because of the need for specialist equipment, fund raising is a major issue and she hoped that parishioners would support the school fete on 19 June, when there will be, amongst many other attractions, an exhibition of Harley Davison motor bikes.

Q&A

Most questions concerned policing within the parish. Sgt Hills indicated that he was looking for volunteers to join the Independent Police Group, which required citizens who had no regular contact with the police nor worked in local government. PC Smith added that Twyford Police Station could be open for longer hours if parishioners were prepared to volunteer their services for administration duties for just an hour or two each day. This would allow police officers to spend more time on the beat. Both officers supported neighbourhood watch schemes.

Review of the Year

Councillor Campbell-White began the second session with a review of the past year. He noted that the council had a complement of nine councillors but there was currently a vacancy caused by the resignation of Mrs Caffyn, who had resigned on health grounds. He thanked her for her efforts and, on behalf of the council, presented her a water colour depicting scenes within the parish. He was very grateful to John Wilkinson for volunteering to become the footpaths representative and was optimistic that the new local Sports Club committee would enable that organisation to progress. He also thanked the County and District councillors for their support and, specifically mentioned Councillor Eleanor Bell’s work on planning matters. Two issues concerning inconsiderate parking had yet to be resolved: Compton Street and Shawford. A public meeting would be held shortly [*now set for 17 June*] to try to overcome the problems in Compton Street, particularly at the beginning and end of the school day. Councillor Southgate was in discussions with Network Rail in an attempt to find an amicable solution to the congestion around

Shawford station. Finally Councillor Campbell-White announced that he would be resigning as chairman with effect from 4 May 2010.

Councillor Walmsley advised that the council's finances were in good shape. Money had been set aside for future provisions, such as improvements to the caretaker's cottage, sports pavilion and bus shelters. In addition to these provisions, and in accordance with NALC guidance, the council maintained a working reserve equivalent to six months annual expenditure.

Councillor Millar announced that while work had still to be finalised at the MPF play area, the recently installed equipment appeared to be very popular. Work was also in hand to repair the fencing around the Compton Street play area and discussions were taking place with the Sports Club over the provision of an all weather surface.

Councillor Martin Bell applauded the work of the VDS committee and invited anyone with concerns about developments within the parish to contact him.

Mrs Caffyn noted that parking around Shawford station was marginally better, possibly because of opening of the park and ride facility and the re-opening of St Cross Road. Flashing speed lights should appear within the parish shortly and traffic speed information, pertaining to Otterbourne Road, was currently being evaluated by traffic engineers. She reminded householders that it was their responsibility to ensure that hedges do not encroach on to public pavements.

Councillor Southgate noted that as a member of the Shawford Railway Users Group he had worked closely with Mrs Caffyn. The station was a great asset to the community and he would work hard to ensure that its facilities, especially with regard to parking, are improved.

Mr Griffith announced that CASCA's finances were in good shape. The village hall was in constant demand and he was grateful for Frank Smith's efforts in ensuring that the building was kept in good order. He announced that the hall would be closed during the month of August for the usual annual maintenance, repairs to the flat roof and external redecoration.

Q & A

Mr Richardson expressed concern about the stretch of land opposite the church, which he felt was in need of care. Mr Ashcroft requested clarification of the procedures for notifying parishioners about the felling of trees. Councillors Beckett and Bell explained that planning permission was needed before any trees, especially those with TPOs, could be felled. WCC had a 24 hour number through which enquiries could be made. Mrs Soresby wondered whether a dog bin could be installed in Park View near the tow path. Councillors Campbell-White and Millar agreed to investigate. Mr Caffyn wondered whether SW Trains pricing structure was likely to change. Councillor Southgate explained that, during peak time, the price of a ticket to Waterloo was slightly higher from Shawford than Winchester. Finally Mr Griffith thanked the council for its efforts over the past year.

David Drake
Clerk