



Compton and Shawford Parish Council

PO Box 565, Winchester,
Hampshire SO23 3HG

Phone: 01962 600198

email: clerk@compton.pariah.hants.gov.uk

Record of the Annual Parish Meeting: 7.30pm Thursday 16 April 2015, Shawford Parish Hall

Present: Councillors A Walmsley, (chairman), A Cordery, M Goulding, A Jeffrey, N Sadler, M Southgate, M Wilkinson and Mr D Drake (Clerk).

In attendance: PCSO Wilkinson (until 7.45) and 39 members of the public.

Apologies for absence: Councillors U Stevens and M Townell, County Councillor P Bailey, Mr N Caffyn, Mr W Millar, and Mrs J Shipster.

Introduction

1. The chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited PCSO Wilkinson to deliver the police report.

Police Report

2. PCSO Wilkinson advised that there had been 46 incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour reported to the police in the past year. (The figure for the previous year was 41.) These included 14 burglaries, of which 7 had been 'non-dwelling', 11 incidents of theft and 16 of anti-social behaviour/noise nuisance.

3. She noted that there had been a recent incident where several lambs had been attacked by a dog and she urged all dog walkers to keep their dogs on the lead, when walking through fields in which sheep were grazing. She also advised parishioners to be aware of a potential telephone scam, where bogus police officials were asking for personal financial details. The police would never ask for such details over the telephone. Should such a call be received, parishioners were advised to call 101 or Action Fraud (0300 123 2040 or online: www.actionfraud.police.uk).

Review of the Year

4. The chairman briefed parishioners on the council's activities over the past year. These included the cleaning of the two war memorials; resolving problems with the new street lights; a successful outcome to the campaign (begun in 20001) to obtain a quiet surface on the M3; the installation of an outdoor gymnasium at the Memorial Playing Fields; co-operation with Sparsholt College on the repair of a parish footpath and agreement with the rector under which the Parochial Church Council will take over responsibility for the Civic Service. He asked the clerk to record a vote of thanks to Councillor Stevens, who had campaigned actively for the quiet surface on the M3. He was also delighted to announce that Sue Down and Mike Allerton had recently received the Mayor's Award for services to the community.

5. Looking to the future, he hoped that the council would be able to communicate more easily with parishioners via the web site and the council's Facebook page. He thanked Councillor Goulding for his work on the latter. He also thanked all councillors and the clerk for their efforts over the past year and noted that the council had also received considerable assistance from John Wilkinson, Bill Goodyear, Jan Russell, Frank Smith and John Griffith. They too deserved his, and the council's, thanks.

Finance and Administration

6. Councillor Jeffrey outlined the role of the Finance and Administration Committee whose purpose is to administer all financial, governance, estates and personnel matters arising within the council. She advised that the budget for 2015/16 had been set at £32,827 and that the council's reserves amounted to £59,227. The latter included the sinking funds for the Parish Hall and Sports Pavilion. The council's working reserve was £23,977 or 71% of the budget. [The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) recommends that working reserves should be maintained at a minimum level of 50%.]

7. Over the past year she had been paying specific attention to the maintenance and insurance of the Sports Pavilion, Parish Hall and Caretaker's Cottage. In agreement with the Compton and Shawford Community Association (CASCA), which is responsible for the management of the Parish Hall, she had commissioned a survey of the Caretaker's Cottage. A programme of works would soon be implemented.

Planning

8. Since Councillor Stevens was unable to attend the meeting, Councillor Cordery presented the planning report on her behalf. The report noted that, while the council accepts the inevitability of modest development in the parish it aims to counter any development that it considers to represent a threat to its character and conservation. Although 'character and conservation' can occasionally give rise to disagreements, the planning committee endeavours to strike a balance between the impulse to preserve the parish exactly as it is and the need to recognise that some change is inevitable and/or desirable.

In the past year Winchester City Council had received 62 planning applications, of which approximately 20% related to garage/car ports, 45% to building extensions and 25% to tree work. Only 2 or 3 per cent of applications were refused. Of the five applications for new houses, as distinct from replacements of existing houses, three were permitted, one is still pending and one was refused.

Playing Fields

9. Councillor Wilkinson noted that new facilities at the Memorial Playing Field (MPF) (the MeGA and outdoor gymnasium) were being well used. However during the past year, the council had recognised that, in addition to providing excellent facilities for sport, the MPF provided a much appreciated open space. It had therefore been agreed that there would be no further development on the MPF, unless it could be shown that there was significant support throughout the parish for another facility. A multi-play unit had been ordered for the play area at the QEII Field but, parishioners should be aware that, until it was clear how much funding the council would be receiving from the newly implemented Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), no further improvements to sport and play equipment could be expected.

Open Session

10. Concern was expressed that, contrary to the council's assertions, the MeGA and outdoor gymnasium were not being 'well used'. The latter was an 'eyesore' and neither complimented the area. There needed to be greater consultation with the public on the desirability of such facilities on the MPF. But a resident living close to the MPF noted that the gymnasium equipment was being used in the mornings. Concern was also expressed about the proximity of the outdoor gymnasium to the children's play area. Did the council have a child protection policy? The clerk advised that any potential liability should be covered under the council's public liability insurance but he would, nevertheless, check with the council's insurers. With regard to future developments on the MPF, it was explained that 'significant support' had been set at 50% on 5 January but this level was likely to be reviewed by the council when it meets on 7 July 2015. The council's standing orders, which are based upon those recommended by NALC, state that, unless there are exceptional circumstances, decisions taken by the council can only be reviewed after a period of six months.

11. Concern was expressed that cyclists continue to ignore the 'no-cycling signs' on the tow path. It was suggested that the sign, which used to be sited on Environment Agency land adjacent to the Bridge Inn, should be replaced.

12. The problem of commuter parking continues to exercise residents of Shawford. Councillor Southgate acknowledged the problem but advised that there was not a simple solution. Most of the community accepts that the railway station is an asset and the residents were split 50/50 over the installation of double yellow lines. The chairman of the Shawford Residents' Association concurred. It was hoped that, following discussions with representatives of Winchester City Council, some action would be taken to alleviate the problems in Shawford Road in the not too distant future.

13. In response to question about the M3 resurfacing, Councillor Southgate was able to confirm that, although the work was behind schedule, it should be finished by the end of April. He also agreed to contact Brendoncare to see whether the sign describing the development of the Captain Barnard site could be replaced by one more in keeping with the local environment.

14. Finally Jean Millar briefed the meeting on the activities of the Twyford Patient Participation Group.

15. There being no further business, the chairman brought the meeting to a close and invited everyone to join him for coffee and biscuits, which had been kindly provided by the Compton and Shawford WI.

David Drake
Clerk