

These are the unadopted Minutes of Crookham Village Annual Parish Meeting held at 7pm on Monday, 12 May 2022 in the WI Hall, The Street, Crookham Village. Please refer to the Minutes of the June Crookham Village Parish Council meeting for any amendments.

Present: Cllr. Julia Ambler (Chairman), County Cllr. Stephen Parker, HDC Ward Cllr. Tony Clarke and Parish Cllrs. Simon Ambler, Suzanne Barham, Andrew Friend and Dr. Indra Sinka. There were approximately 12 residents present and 2 police officers.

Apologies were received from Mrs. Wendy Makepeace- Brown and Cllr. David Jackson.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Welcome to the 2022 Annual Parish Meeting for Crookham Village Parish Council. For yet another year, life has been very different as we continued to feel the impact of the pandemic. After battling further lockdowns, there has been a slow recovery to some semblance of normality and our work this year as a parish council has reflected this.

First, I should like to extend my thanks to all my fellow councillors for their continued hard work over the last year; that we are still rather short on number of councillors has made this year more difficult than we had hoped. In addition to the formal business of the Council, our councillors do a huge amount of work to help with the various projects in which CVPC is engaged. Their time is given on a voluntary basis and is unpaid.

We have four members of staff: our clerk Carol, Angela our Responsible Financial Officer and our two centre Managers at the Zebon Community Centre, Tabby and Lucy. While all of them work incredibly hard, this year has, yet again, been very trying and we are very grateful for the dedication they have each shown in their respective roles. Our thanks also go to Andy Fisk, our parish Lengthsman who, over the last year, has continued to undertake essential maintenance in our parish with his customary efficiency as is ably demonstrated by the fulsome praise we receive regularly from members of the public for the work he does.

Planning

As in previous years, planning continues to dominate our work. Just after last year's APM, we were again faced by an attempt to defer the completion of the Redfields Lane / A287 roundabout associated with the **Watery Lane** development until after 50th occupation. This second such application was again refused by HDC and went to appeal. The appeal was rejected by the Planning Inspector and work has continued apace, we expect the roundabout to be completed by September this year.

Grove Farm, outline permission was granted on appeal for 423 houses on the site. Of this 217 have received reserved matters approval. Berkeley homes have now submitted a new application to take the total number of houses on the site up to 528. This will be considered by Hart Planning Committee on 15th June. Meanwhile, CVPC has continued to work with staff from Berkeleys on the design for the new community centre at the northern edge of the development.

Neighbourhood Plan.

You are probably fed up with hearing about it by now but work on the Crookham Village Parish Neighbourhood Plan has finally reached an end. We have been working on this for a number of years and it was submitted to Hart DC for final approval in March 2020. As a result of delays caused by the Covid pandemic, our Plan didn't go to referendum until 6th May 2021 where it was almost unanimously approved. It was formally adopted at a specially convened Hart Council meeting on 20 May 2021 and now forms part of Hart Planning policies.

Conservation Area

Now that the Neighbourhood Plan is finished, we have turned our attention to the re-designation of the Crookham Village Conservation Area. This was last done in 1994 and is now regarded as being rather out of date, despite the fact that little has changed. To this end, CVPC appointed a planning consultant to help us with this work and he has just prepared the initial draft for comment. The new document will have a slightly different format in that it will be purely a document for planning purposes and will be designed to ensure that HDC planners are aware of all the relevant matters that need to be taken into account when considering planning applications that might impact on our conservation area. Like the Neighbourhood Plan, the process will include a public consultation on the new planning document before adoption by Hart DC to form part of their planning policy.

Once adopted, the revised conservation area appraisal will be a material consideration in all planning decisions affecting our area on the basis of "does the proposal preserve or enhance the Conservation Area?"

Towpath

Throughout last winter we had periodic reports from members of the public that some parts of the canal towpath in our parish had suffered during the pandemic and required remedial action. As part of the towpath is an important route to school for some of our children, we felt that we should see what could be done and added it to our list of future projects. We have now allocated some money in our current budget with a view to working with the Canal Authority for the most badly damaged areas of the towpath within the Parish to be repaired and upgraded.

Village Telephone Box

In January, it was suggested that the telephone box on The Street in Crookham Village be modified for use as a book exchange. CVPC were pleased to support this initiative and we have commissioned the men's shed in Church Crookham to make and fit some shelves.

Crescent Green

We have been pressing Hampshire Highways to install an additional section of footpath along the edge of the Crescent for some time now. The new section of footway will provide an extension to the existing footway along Pilcot Hill which was installed a few years ago and will be designed to provide a continuous path from Crookham Village to help people walking to and from Dogmersfield, particularly those with children at Dogmersfield Primary. With help from our county councillor, we finally persuaded Hampshire Highways to see the force of our argument and in March, Hampshire finally revealed their designs for the new footway. Their design greatly exceeded our expectations so we are very pleased with outcome.

Precept

This year saw a small rise in our overall budget for the Parish with a 1.99% increase over last year to £78.82 for a Band D household.

Greening Campaign

Following the launch of our Greening Campaign last year under the guidance of Cllr. Friend, we have now started work on reducing the carbon footprint of our Community Centre at Zebon Copse. We have now allocated a budget for this work and are currently working on suitable designs with a local Greening expert. Ideally, we should like to make the building carbon neutral eventually if at all possible by installing solar panels on the roof as well as battery storage in one of the unused spaces in the sports pavilion. This will be a continuation of our plans to upgrade this building which was

started earlier in the year with the replacement of the CCTV system. The new system gives us better coverage and images to ensure the safety of our users who are now coming back to Zebon Community Centre. To the same end, we are also working with Berkeleys to ensure the new community centre which is planned for the eastern end of the Harehill development is also carbon neutral. Many thanks for all their help and co-operation in this.

Social Isolation & Shopping

Finally, I should like to use this opportunity to say a few words about a new scheme being proposed by HVA to safeguard our elderly and vulnerable residents. As some of you may be aware, CVPC acted as one of the co-ordinators for the Covid support network of volunteers during the pandemic. Although this has now ended, it highlighted a number of our residents who need ongoing help. CVPC has been working with HVA to find a solution which would provide a safety net for these residents those who are less mobile and need help with shopping and collecting prescriptions. HVA have now set up the scheme and trained the volunteers, all of whom are fully DBS checked. If any of you know anyone who might benefit from this new service, please could you contact either HVA direct or CVPC so that we can pass on your referrals. It is hoped that eventually, this will form part of a wider Village scheme to make sure that all the vulnerable residents in our parish are properly cared for.

SPEEDWATCH CAMPAIGN

M/s Sue Emery had initiated a new Speedwatch Campaign. PC Daniel Le Hec gave the background to the project and advised he has spent many years dealing with such campaigns. He listed the roads in Church Crookham and the parish of Crookham Village which had been assessed as being safe to set up the equipment and volunteers. In this parish Crondall Road, Hitches Lane and The Street had been deemed suitable but not Pilcot Road because of safety issues. However, if there is to be a pavement then this can be re-assessed. He mentioned that roads with a high level of traffic (such as Reading Road south) were not suitable for such schemes because the volume of traffic kept the speeds low. He does speed enforcement duties and 90% of those stopped are local and are the same people who complain about speed of traffic. It is hoped to start this scheme off next week and he or a colleague will be there initially to help the volunteers settle in. When the volunteers start, they have access to 101 if there are any issues. At the start it will be difficult to pick the right times and when it is the prime time. Once the data starts to come in, they will have a better idea of which times and days to target. If somewhere shows high and consistent speed levels, they can call in the speed camera van. He likes to attend Annual meetings and use a power point presentation to show how the Speedwatch campaign has made a difference. Make, colour, model and registration number of vehicles are important but in time it is a skill which the volunteers will gain. Mr. Whyatt spoke about Crondall Road and said speeds there are always high. In 2016 the 85% speed in Crondall Road was 38mph and HCC will do nothing about it. This statement was challenged in that HCC have done traffic calming in response to concerns. The Clerk to Church Crookham Parish Council (Claire) expressed her thanks to CVPC for coming together with CCPC – the volunteers who had initially signed up to the proposed trial for CC had fallen in number and when the scheme was able to start after Covid they amalgamated with CV volunteers. An explanation was given as to exactly how the equipment and scheme worked. You cannot be prosecuted but you do get two warnings then a Police Officer will pay you a visit. The data it provides is looked at by the police and if they deem it necessary they will target the area. PC Le Hec explained how it is done – you **must** get the vehicle registration number correct and recorded speed.

15 volunteers have signed up so far. Each session lasts an hour, and 3 volunteers are necessary to record the different pieces of information.

TRUSTEES & APPOINTEES REPORTS

Mrs. Makepeace-Brown had sent her apologies but had produced reports for the meeting.

- Crondall/Crookham/Fleet Welfare Trust (Post Meeting Report)

By way of a very brief description of the charity, for anyone new, this Trust was originally set up around 1830, to provide fuel for the poor, as it had become illegal for people to cut their own turf from waste land. The Trust has changed over time, and now helps by giving financial aid instead of actual fuel.

- The Trustees meet twice a year, in April and November, and we have a small board of 5 who work well as a team, which we feel is important for the Charity and for our recipients. We have Parish and Town Council representation from Crondall, Crookham Village and Fleet, and we are governed by the Charities Commission for compliance with the Trust constitution.
- Like most charities, we continue to find times getting tougher, and we have lost our main donor, that was hit by the effects of Covid, knocking on to their ability to raise funds. With the decrease in cash usage, we have also lost our in-store collection tin points, so we now focus on making sure our investments remain as strong as possible, in a charity fund account, and we continue to manage our money as tightly as we can, to make it work for the cause.
- Our recipient support, mostly comes at Christmas, when we give out, on average, £100 per person, as a small cash gift, for elderly and low income people in the Crookham, Fleet and Crondall area. Whilst £100 may not seem much, our recipients are always grateful for any help we can give. We do also make small ad-hoc grants from time to time. In 2021, we supported 15 local residents, as well as the Citizen's Advice Bureau, with whom we work for very specific grants, when they come up and match our giving criteria.
- We continue to look for local people who would benefit from our help, and we welcome any contact information for people whom members feel we could make a difference to. Many of us think that we live in an affluent area, but locally, we have a huge number of people being supported by the state and charities. These people are quite literally on the breadline. Through pride, or ignorance, they often don't come forward, so we need any help we can get to reach out. Whilst we still have funds, we want to direct them to where they are needed most, for as long as we can. It is somewhat ironic that the charity was set up, all those years ago, to help people in fuel poverty, and we are now, in this day and age, heading back to that exact issue, for what may turn out to be many people in our area over the coming year..

The Chairman read out the short note sent by the Treasurer supporting the retention of Mrs. Makepeace-Brown as the Council's representative on the Trust.

Cottrell's Alms-House Trust
Jill Butler, Chair, reported as follows:

The Crookham Almshouses (located next to the war memorial in Gally Hill Road) provide accommodation for poor persons of good character who are inhabitants of Hart but with preference for those living in the parishes of Church Crookham, Crookham Village and Ewshot. The almshouses consist of 16 units; 14 for single people and 2 for couples. We have no lower age limit and currently have residents ranging in age from 50's through to 80's.

With the continuation of the pandemic, things have remained busy but less frightening for all concerned. One resident is suffering from long covid and has lost his job as a result but as always the

clerk remains the main point of contact and goes over and above to reassure and help residents. She is in regular contact with Hart regarding housing and benefits.

Fleet Lions and the Welfare Trust kindly donated parcels of food to all residents at Christmastime, which was well received.

The charity continues to renew and refurbish units when they become vacant or in response to the changing needs of the residents.

Only one resident has moved out over the past 12 months. We have a dual approach: we accept that some residents will never move on, we encourage others, who are younger, fitter and more able to move on into more independent living.

With increases in the cost of food and energy, the charity has stepped forward to reassure residents that we can offer them some financial support. We are in the very fortunate position to be able to do this.

We are thankful for the input that representatives from the parish councils make to this charity. Although trustees only meet formally twice a year, it is there that key decisions are made and we appreciate the experience, knowledge and wisdom each individual brings to the table.

PUBLIC SPEAKING (any topic relating to parish affairs)

The Chairman invited those present to address the meeting.

A resident spoke about the refresh of the Conservation Area and asked if the rejigged conservation area will have an impact on planning. The Chairman went into detail explaining how the document would protect the existing village. The whole document will be out to consultation to the whole community, and it is hoped to have it adopted by Christmas. Unlike the Neighbourhood Plan it does not have to go to referendum. A resident mentioned that at the bottom of Hillyburrow there is a pond, and she is concerned about children falling into it. The Chairman said she believes that the pond is a balancing pond to prevent flooding. A resident asked about Hareshill and the new Community Centre and will the S106 contributions be coming to Crookham Village. He was invited to remain for the meeting immediately following this meeting for an answer to his questions. With the new application there will be a new S106 which will cover the whole of the site and supersede the existing one. It is very complex and taking a lot of time for legal to deal with. The resident said he had written to HDC asking for the extra dwellings to have individual charging points. He was advised by Cllr. Parker that he had raised this with Berkeley's who said they were providing the cabling to enable charging points if householders decide they want them. A resident cited development in London whereby the policies cover this issue and he said Hart could change their policies if they were so minded. He stated the developers round here get away with murder. Berkeley's developing in London have to comply with the planning policies there which favour sustainable development.

CONSIDER RESOLUTIONS OF WHICH WRITTEN NOTICE HAS BEEN RECEIVED AT LEAST 7 DAYS BEFORE THE MEETING

The Clerk confirmed that no resolutions had been received.

The meeting closed at 8.02pm.