

Mytchett, Frimley Green & Deepcut Society

Provisional Copy

MINUTES of ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

19 April 2013

1. WELCOME

President Sue Cartwright welcomed the Guest Speaker, Local Officers and approx. 50 members and visitors. Copies of the minutes for the last half-yearly meeting, the treasurer's report and several handouts from the guest speaker were available on most chairs.

2. SPEAKER'S PRESENTATION

Jenny Rickard, Head of Regulatory Services at Surrey Heath Borough Council presented a talk entitled: *'Working in the present – Looking to the future'*.

Paul Deach recorded much of what Jenny Rickard said and has posted it on the internet at :

<http://surreyheath-residents.co.uk/2013/04/19/shbc-head-of-regulatory-services-gives-talk-at-public-meeting/>

Some of the main points are as follows:

- 2.1 I am in charge of Housing & Planning. I was last at a MFGD meeting in 2009 and a lot has changed since then. There are more requirements and everything needs to be done faster but within strict guidelines i.e. the law! The recession has made a big impact and any changes must be 'sustainable'. Of the 13 million pounds that the council has, I am responsible for 3 million, 1.6 million on cost of delivery and 1.4 million on staff. In 2009 I had 4 million pounds, but in real terms (inflation) I have had a 50% cut with which I need to do more! Although it would be easy to say 'we cannot do anything in a recession', we still have to do things, within budget, and make sure we are in a fit state to respond when (not if!) we come out of the recession.
- 2.2 Surrey Heath is actually a small council so we have to be 'smart' and go into 'partnerships' with other councils or private enterprises. When you go into the council offices, many of the personnel are not actual council workers! The space has been rented out to other people thereby giving income.
- 2.3 We do understand that we need a thriving town centre .. with this will come economic growth for the area. Land is a big capital asset and we are looking at ways to use this to our advantage, enable economic development and be proactive at bringing in new companies.
- 2.4 Helping 'troubled' families is very expensive (seventy thousand pounds per annum rather than seven thousand) so we are always looking at ways to stop them becoming 'troubled'. Housing is a huge issue with children remaining at home for longer. In my youth it was not uncommon to buy houses in the early twenties, now it might be mid-thirties! Social housing (buying or renting) is not just for the poor, but nowadays for the middle class as well. The Deepcut development will be a huge change to the area and as with other developments (Cobham and Windlesham) we need to sort out the infrastructure.
- 2.5 We are currently consulting the public on new housing and business sites in the area. Leaflets are available at this meeting. Please do go to your local exhibitions, running during April & May AND voice your opinion. (BEFORE 26th MAY!)
- 2.6 We are NOT the transport authority! But we do try to liaise with them (sometimes a very difficult job!) and have been involved with how to improve the M3 junction 3 and supporting road system
- 2.7 We have realised that we cannot do everything at the same time so we will be concentrating on one or two projects and lobbying heavily for them
- 2.8 Finally I might add that we do try to have a 'Make it Happen' approach.

3. QUESTION TIME WITH JENNY RICKARD.

3.1 Roy Kempston: who or why was 3500 units decided upon? Jenny replied that it originally came from the 'South East Plan' that was the basis of the 'Core Strategy'. We have government targets of new builds but whatever goes in the plan must be do-able. An average of 400 units per year was thought to be practicable; but for each and every new unit, some money is set aside for SANGS (Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space) for the protection of wildlife. If the Deepcut development is delayed, then the Local Authority must find somewhere else to build in the intervening years.

3.2 Sarah Kingsley: Although everyone says that 'infrastructure' is the key to a new large development, in actual fact it would be very difficult in this area to create new roads or to widen/improve existing road layout so what is to be done? Jenny replied that it was difficult and many studies had been done to 'mitigate' the problem. (I do not think the question was really answered before going on to ..)

3.3 Sarah Kingsley: the multitude of traffic lights along the A30 from Camberley to Bagshot is causing congestion, can something be done about sequencing. Jenny replied that a programme called SCOOT (Split Cycle Offset Optimisation Technique) is used but may not be optimum due to the pedestrian lights in the area. **Jenny said she would look into the matter.**

3.4 Jean Sayers: any chance of a new department store taking over the old ALDERS building in Camberley? Jenny did not really reply, but implied 'watch this space'.

3.5 Howard Hyde: In the Core Plan, Deepcut is defined as a 'local centre' implying there would be a group of retail and community outlets, but in reality it is not certain this will happen as if no-one takes up the space it can revert back to housing. Jenny said there was nothing they, the council, could do if there were no takers – this even included the proposed health centre as this would be up to the SHCGG (Surrey Heath Clinical Commissioning Group) over which they had no jurisdiction.

3.6 Roy Kempston: Who actually needs this new housing, people already in the area or newcomers? Jenny said that it would be a mixture of both, but the council had to cater for young (or not so young!) adults still with their parents, split families people living longer and therefore holding on to their property (!) and for council property the much publicised problem of 'under occupancy'. Interestingly, she stated that the the population had not increased much between the last two censuses.

3.7 David Parsons: Are there any plans to attract industry or small businesses to the area? Otherwise all the new residents will be travelling (more use of the roads!) outside the area for work? Jenny said that there did not seem a need to create units especially for small businesses. Sue said that she had heard of several complaints on that subject and advised Jenny to put something on their website asking for specific feedback on this subject.

3.8 Jean Carpenter: could something be done about all the large waste trucks criss-crossing the area, perhaps have a few central areas where waste is collected and from there large transportation to wherever it needs to go? Jenny said that it was not a council issue as it had been 'out-sourced' and she was sure that the private companies would do what was best (in a monetary sense!).

3.9 Sarah Kingsley: There are many empty houses in the area, some have become derelict because of the time they have been left – could this help the housing shortage? Jenny said that it was difficult if they are privately owned but that changes in taxing may help force the issue. This problem will be a specific task for the housing team.

3.10 David Parsons: Property in the Frimhurst farm area is specifically there to help 'troubled families' but it is virtually empty ... why is Jenny not making use of it? **Jenny was unaware of this place and would get together with David during the interval to learn more.**

4. TEA & COFFEE BREAK

5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FROM KEVIN DALEY.

Some of the issues the society has worked on, on behalf of the community were:

5.1 Keeping abreast of the Princess Royal Barracks (PRB) development in Deepcut, responding where necessary and especially being involved in traffic discussions for the Frimley Green area.

5.2 Involved with the Farnborough Aerodrome Consultative Committee (FACC), and in recent months has lobbied the aviation group about the impending movement of air traffic from Northolt to Farnborough and how it might impact the existing agreed increase in air movement.

5.3 Lobbied Michael Gove on how some NHS practices will be put out to private tender.

5.4 Lobbied Michael Gove on how some fire department practices might be put out to private tender. (Eric Pickles has since, but only verbally, agreed that this will not happen)

5.5 Objected to a number of planning applications and was part of a group that successfully defeated TESCO's plan to open up another store in Mytchett.

5.6 Involved in the plans for a garden designed for elderly and/or handicapped people at the Mytchett Community Centre (MCC).

5.7 Involved in bringing attention to the Highways Department of the poor state of the raised bed outside of Hamiltons in Frimley Green. (it will be fixed, and was on Saturday, 20th April)

5.8 Involved in getting information about public access to Frimley Lakes .. The land now known as Frimley Pits Fishery is private land. The only access is by a key. However they will be issuing dog walker permits at £10.00 per year from June for that lake only. There is no public access as such and this also extends to the other lakes which will be fenced and gated in the near future. They are working in partnership with the Blackwater Trust people on projects and that includes working on a car park and access via the Quays to alleviate parking issues in The Hatches.

Lastly there is a plea for more committee members.

6. TREASURER'S REPORT FROM CAROL DREW.

6.1 Most of you will have been able to look at the accounts, which are amongst the paperwork on your chairs. I think they're self-explanatory, but for the eagle-eyed amongst you, I should point out that, under Expenditure, - Entry into the Parish Magazine, this annual payment is made in March or April each year. Last year it was paid in March and this year in April – hence the apparent non-payment this year.

6.2 Each year our funds diminish by about £100, because costs go up. This is despite our valiant efforts to collect subs, and persuade people to pay by standing order. As you will see, the majority of our income is from members subscriptions. More and more people are paying by this method (thank you), and if you do not I would encourage you to do so. This guarantees your payment each year, and can be stopped by you at any time. Unlike a direct debit, a standing order is

totally controllable by you. There are forms on your seats, along with requests for your email address – please complete them before you leave!

6.3 In order to publicise the existence of the Society we are in the process of producing a coloured publicity leaflet with 3 vertical folds. This will be available to be picked up in the library and public places but the cost of producing such a leaflet in large quantities is not cheap and will make a large dent in our funds. So – you may know what's coming next. We've already asked you to buy raffle tickets but if you have any loose change left at all, we would be extremely grateful if you would throw it in either of the round wooden bowls by the doors as you go out. Many thanks!

Chris Pitt from the top table wanted the meeting to commend Carol on how well she had handled the treasurer's job since she took it over.

7. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE.

Kevin was re-elected as chairman.

Daphne, Howard, Chris and Jan were willing to continue for another year; Sue said that Cathie Whitcroft had resigned and after asking for volunteers to replace her, Sarah Kingsley offered to stand, All five were then proposed, seconded and voted for en bloc.

8. POLICE REPORT FROM JON CASTELL, SURREY HEATH NEIGHBOURHOOD SERGEANT.

8.1 Jon asked for a show of hands of who had been a 'victim of crime' recently ... only one, a shed burglary. Essentially crime is quite low in Surrey Heath.

8.2 Jon asked if anyone knew the local neighbourhood team ... a few hands; Jon was disappointed that PC Gary Martin and PCSO Samantha Porter were not better known. He mentioned that funding for printing leaflets had been withdrawn. There was some discussion about what local meetings the team usually attended. The best way is to take a look at their website (<http://www.surrey.police.uk/my-neighbourhood/surrey-heath/shmd/meeting-points>).

8.3 The new Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) has indicated that in the future there will be more engagement with the public in order to provide information about what they are doing and to get feedback.

8.4 From the floor, David Parsons asked if anything could be done about the motorbike racing between Pirbright and Deepcut (happens every year during summer) ... Jon said that it was difficult to police because no-one knows when it will happen, BUT the main road used is actually outside his jurisdiction and also, although annoying, there have not been any/many accidents arising from it.

8.5 From the floor, someone asked about the parking outside of the Frimley CofE School, parking on yellow lines, grass verges and sometimes damage to walls by careless manoeuvring ... Jon said that parking offences was not actually under the police force, but the local authority.

9. QUESTION TIME WITH LOCAL OFFICERS, Chris Pitt, Alan Whittart & Paul Deach.

9.1 Sue Cartwright: From the last half-yearly meeting concerning published minutes from council meetings; there was a complaint from the floor that 50% of items discussed at meetings were determined as confidential and so no information was released to the public. The panel disagreed with this percentage, but did say that they did not attend every meeting. *An action item was for Paul Deach to investigate.*

More discussion from the panel and Glyn Carpenter, a councillor from Bagshot who was in the audience; still argued that the number of items not published (or 'exempt') was minuscule and that percentage figures might be skewed by the time lapse between meetings and the actual publication of the minutes. For example, reasons for exemption might be financial, specific names used or about contracts not already awarded.

9.2 Jeff Williams: problem with parking at Cedar Lane in Frimley, now only accepts 'phone and pay' method . Not really acceptable. All councillors advised to boycott the car park and use Waitrose (after buying something e.g. a paper) or the car park at Burrell Road (see <http://surreyheath-residents.co.uk/2013/02/22/cedar-lane-carpark-in-frimley-to-begin-new-enforcement-regime-from-1st-march-2013/>)

9.3 Sarah Kingsley: any plans to demolish the parade of shops (currently boarded up) on the A30 by Camberley? Councillors said there were no plans for demolition, but that there was always hope that some retail outfit might become interested.

9.4 Howard Hyde: who is responsible for clearing litter and general condition around the SPAR shop in Deepcut? Paul said that he had complained to the SPAR manager before and asked Howard (and anyone else) to e-mail him (Paul) with a complaint and then he would see the manager again. The main residential part of Deepcut is under the control of the Borough Council. But arguably around SPAR may still fall under MOD responsibility.

9.5 David Parsons: What is happening with Canon Copiers in Frimley Green? Sue replied that according to the notice in the window, HQ hairdressers was taking over. HQ already have 2 outlets in Frimley.

9.6 John Knowles joked that with the high density of hairdressers in the area, he hoped it was not a 'front' for some clandestine business. Jon Castille mentioned that in the past, a nail bar in Camberley had been a front, 'laundering' money from an illegal drug trade.

9.7 David Parsons: new double yellow lines in Frimley Green were being ignored. Hopefully offenders would eventually be caught.

Paul said that the Surrey Heath Show would be on Saturday May 4th at Frimley Lodge Park and that volunteers were required to pick up any litter after the show. Anyone interested should contact Tony Moore (anthony.moore@btinternet.com).

10. RAFFLE and MEETING CLOSE.

Local Officers Present

Councillor Alan Whittart	Surrey Heath B.C. Frimley Green Ward
Councillor Chris Pitt	Surrey C.C. Frimley Green & Mytchett & Surrey Heath B.C. Frimley Green Ward
Councillor Paul Deach	Surrey Heath B.C.

MFGD Committee Members Present

Sue Cartwright (President)	Kevin Daley (Chairman)	Carol Drew (Treasurer)
Chris Main	Daphne Knowles	Howard Hyde
Rod Carroll (Website Administrator)		David Brown (Minutes Secretary)