

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING  
HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON THURSDAY 09 MARCH 2023 at 7.00PM**

**PRESENT**

Chairman: Cllr M Scully.

Clerk: Parish Clerk B Bell FSLCC and Senior Admin Clerk L Glazier.

There were 31 members of the public at the meeting including Parish Councillors: M Scully (Chairman), R Burbridge, C Gould, E Townsend, C Walker, G Worthington, Surrey Wildlife Trust Ecology Services Senior Ecologist Louise Ryan and 4 members of the Youth Council

Apologies: Cllrs P Chapman, S Jeacock, D Nicholas, N Sanctuary

The Council Chairman welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting and introduced the Councillors present, Surrey Wildlife Trust and the Youth Council.

The Chairman welcomed comments, questions and discussions from residents and to raise any issues that are of concern to them.

**MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING ON 10 MARCH 2022**

The minutes were AGREED as a correct record.

**MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

**PRESENTATION BY SURREY WILDLIFE TRUST**

Senior Ecologist Louise introduced herself and explained her role within the Ecology Services of the Surrey Wildlife Trust. The aim of the Trust is to reverse the rapid decline in wildlife and nature, with climate change being prevalent currently.

Surrey has suffered a loss of around a third of its species or they are in decline. Through habitats, reserves and nature corridors it is hoped to reduce the decline.

Ecology Services work with developers, planning departments, Borough Councils and Parish Councils to provide support to assess the effect development would have on the habitats and to give advice on relocation pre-development and ensure the advice has been followed post-development.

The importance of trees, bats and birds to our environment and their role in insect control, soil nutrition, oxygen and carbon was explained. It was highlighted that we have a nice amount of Great Crested Newts in Surrey, along with badgers and bats who help agriculture through insect control.

It was explained that Cranleigh Community Rivers projects started 3 years ago to restore the river network, with monitoring and restoration days that the public can take part in. There has been a focus around river flies, who are the canaries of the water and very sensitive to pollution. The main threats to our rivers are: sewage, agricultural run-off, climate change and dredging. Local residents can get involved through educational workshops and volunteer days, details of which can be found on the Surrey Wildlife website.

Invitation for questions.

**Is there a map of the rivers that can be provided?**

Yes, a map and training day details will be provided to the Clerk.

**Do farmers have standards to look after their ditches, as sometimes water flows and other times not, how are they managed?**

Farmers have a due diligence towards surface water runoff and ground level water, many ditches help with flood management and due to this it could be dry at certain times of the years, but they are also seasonably wet. The ditches also provide a buffer for wildlife.

**Thanked for the presentation, but asked if more information could be given on the trust.**

Surrey Wildlife Trust was founded 100 years ago and is a non-profit charity, where members contribute through monthly fees, there are also training and open days.

The Ecology Service is not part of the charity as it is a business and charges for its services, but they work with the charity feeding back profits to the trust to help with the trusts overall objectives.

**Ash die back felling is being carried out along the Downslink, with the removal of 25 trees.**

Unfortunately this is a catch 22 situation as ash die back has to be controlled. The trees would have been surveyed for their importance and the impact they have. As the Downslink is a disused rail track the banks would not have been built to accommodate the trees where they are now, so there has to be careful management and replacement of the trees. Although they are not native trees sycamore and conifers are the most likely replacements. There will be a plan in place, it will be a short term plan for the removal and a long term plan for replanting and maintenance. Whilst it will be a loss in the short term there will be gains in the long term.

The Chairman thanked Louise Ryan for her presentation.

**REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

The Chairman gave a presentation detailing the work of the Council since the last Annual Parish Meeting in 2022.

**QUESTIONS FROM ELECTORS**

**What are the implications for the Neighbourhood Plan, it is understood it is for housing, does Cranleigh not have a housing target?**

Cllr E Townsend explained that the targets come down from central government and are allocated down via various calculations. Cranleigh has an allocation of 1,700 houses, most of these will be allocated through the Borough and the Neighbourhood Plan will allocate the rest.

As the Neighbourhood Plan has not yet been adopted it has less weight. Although there are identified sites, it does not mean that sites for housing that have not been allocated can be prevented. The Borough is tested on what has been built in the year and not what applications have been approved, this approach does tilt the balance in the favour of developers. There can be development approved but it does not stop speculative development. Once the Neighbourhood Plan is adopted there will be 2 years of protection against speculative development when Waverley Borough Council has not met their target of built houses. The number of years for protection against speculative development could increase to 5 years if Waverley Borough Council meet their requirement.

**Who decides the targets?**

Cllr E Townsend explained the Government have a formula to calculate the housing targets, they increase supply to reduce the housing prices. Woking proved that they could not meet their allocation and their numbers have been added to Waverley's. Waverley currently has a figure of 590 houses per year, this is due to increase to 742 per year.

There is due to be a new Government calculation for the housing targets. Waverley Borough Council has had 90% of its housing target added, the aim is to lower the house prices in the area.

There are some protected areas in Waverley, but Cranleigh has a lack of AONB as it is land outside of the Greenbelt. Waverley would need to prove that it could not meet its targets in order to not gain more housing allocation.

**Roads are one of the main challenges in this area, there is also no train station, it is not commuter friendly, this is not often explained to those buying the houses.**

**Is Godalming and Haslemere more protected because they are Town Councils?**

Cllr E Townsend highlighted there is nothing to stop speculative development. Public transport in Cranleigh is also at risk, but the usage of the Hoppa service is growing.

The Clerk clarified this is not the case, the Council may style itself Community, Parish, Town or Village Council, this has no bearing on the amount of development in an area.

**Is the electricity supply being looked at, with consideration of Health provision?**

Cllr E Townsend that as her role as a Waverley Borough Councillor she is aware that Waverley Borough Council are looking at the electricity supply through consultants and will liaise with the League of Friends on the consultants findings. The hospital cannot install an MRI scanner due to insufficient electrical supply.

**The Longfield site is seen as a community asset, but it is sitting unused.**

Cllr E Townsend explained that in her role as a Surrey County Councillor she has raised this with the Surrey County Council Portfolio Holder. Due to targets the housing proposals would have resulted in a loss, 58 beds for 28 houses, but the core idea has changed back to residential as the site is not big enough for the 58 beds.

**Is there a penalty to the Council in not achieving its housing targets?**

Cllr E Townsend explained that Waverley Borough Council have to meet the allocation targets and if they do not, they are required to include an extra buffer allocation.

**You cannot keep building more without the infrastructure.**

Cllr E Townsend explained that new developments pay CIL and Surrey County Council has to bid for it for road improvements. The CIL money cannot be spent on water or potholes.

**Can it be explained why residents who use the Hoppa bus in Farnham that have a bus pass get free transport, but in Cranleigh you have to pay £3?**

Cllr E Townsend said that she would look into this, but explained that it may be because they have received a grant. However Cranleigh is in the £2 per trip bus fare area, so there should not be a charge of more than £2 per trip.

**Is there any progress on the AONB extension for Canfold Woods and the showgrounds?**

Cllr E Townsend said that she is currently watching, monitoring and reading the documentation and progress. Cranleigh Parish Council submitted a response to the original call for evidence. Waverley Borough Council have assessed the areas and none have been included, in Waverley only Sayers Croft and land to the east of Ewhurst have been included. The information for the proposed Cranleigh extensions can be re-submitted, with additional information. The Surrey Hills AONB consultation is currently open.

**The ZigZag line markings outside St Cuthbert Mayne School have been moved creating two sets, but only one is official. The road is heavily used during school times, but not at other times. The replacement of the ZigZag markings has meant that it is now even harder for cars to pull in to let buses and other cars through. How did this change get approved?**

Cllr E Townsend explained that in her role as a Surrey County Councillor she is aware that the Police were consulted and that the change was not seen as detrimental and offered to speak with the resident after the meeting.

**Following discussions with Cranleigh Parish Council some years ago regarding the street light in the cemetery it was agreed it would be switched off when not in use, as the streetlight is not in use can it be requested that it is removed?**

The Chairman Cllr M Scully agreed to make a visit to the cemetery to look at the street light that is proposed to be removed.

**There has been a consultation on the High Street improvements, but has there been a consultation on the leisure centre, was it public and were the Parish Council involved? What will happen to Snoxhall as it has a covenant.**

Chairman Cllr M Scully confirmed there are no proposed changes to the usage of Snoxhall.

Cllr E Townsend said the Parish Council has been consulted. In her role as Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development at Waverley Borough Council Cllr E Townsend explained that the proposals are now for the new leisure centre to be built alongside the existing one, so that is not close to the housing. The leisure centre will remain open during the construction of the new leisure centre to maintain the services for the village during the predicted 2 year construction period. The plan is to make an energy efficient building, that will be a similar design as the one at Broadwater. There will be disruption to parking to begin with but at the conclusion of the project there will not be any parking lost. The appointed consultants will review and mitigate any disruptions as part of the process. The market is looking at being moved to Stocklund Square carpark during the construction period. It is hoped to create a nice area and to enhance the views of Little Mead Brook.

**Will there be a consultation on the location of the new leisure centre?**

Cllr E Townsend said once a consultant has been formerly appointed there will be more information available and a full consultation on its final location.

**How much useable parking will be available during construction, will this only leave Snoxhall and Stocklund Square for parking?**

Cllr E Townsend explained that there would be disruption, but about half of the car park should still be useable. Residents highlighted that although market day is busier than other days, during the evening the car park is very well used, due to various activities after school.

**Where are we with the High Street improvements, how can we impact the changes, will there be a further consultation and not everyone was aware of the consultation.**

Cllr E Townsend explained that this is a Surrey County Council project that has been instigated by a section 106 payment to widen the pavement on the south side of the High Street and improvements to the High Street areas by St James Place and Horseshoe Lane. There were also the proposals by the Chamber of Commerce for Fountain Square. The High Street improvements are to bring all the proposals together as one project. The Lions, Cranleigh in Bloom and the Smart Cranleigh have been and will be consulted.

From the data collected so far from the consultation the under 40's responses are very low, Surrey County Council are looking at engaging with Glebelands School to address this.

The proposals Surrey County Council have put forward are not the finished article, they were suggestions and ideas to make the area look nicer, particularly the area outside the Post Office. The proposed platforms are the soft decline type, there will be further consideration on the bus laybys and the three separate paths outside the Post Office.

Surrey County Council have £4million to spend on the High Street Improvements.

There will be a further consultation on the next set of plans, collecting the data from the responses has taken a bit longer than first thought, so it is estimated that the next consultation will be in approximately 2 months.

The improvements have to work for everyone in the community, every age and ability.

Cllr E Townsend encouraged residents to comment on the consultation that will be available on the Surrey County Council website.

A comment was made in regard to spending the money right and not be railroaded down a route or controlled by stats.

**There was no fore warning of the 20mph speed limit change, the signs are not clear or large enough.**

Cllr E Townsend explained that the Surrey Highways signage is of the approved size and has been agreed with the police. The High Street improvements will supplement the 20mph speed limit.

**Did Surrey County Council just decide the speed limit or was there a consultation?**

Cllr E Townsend explained that there are processes to follow and was followed, the consultation would have been a few years ago. Cllr C Gould encouraged the residents to read the Parish Council agenda, attend the meetings as there is a public session item for questions and to read the Parish Council minutes.

**There is very little signage in the village to notify people that photo ID is needed for the elections.**

Cllr E Townsend informed the residents that there is a scam currently circulating asking to pay for the ID, the photo ID is free, the correct links and information can be found on the Waverley Borough Council website.

**Can a summary of Parish Council meeting minutes be provided for social media?**

Chairman Cllr M Scully said that this can be looked into as we are keen to expand the Parish Council's activities to residents.

**We have the Youth Council here can they give an overview of what they do?**

Members of the Youth Council explained that they meet once a month and with the help of the Clerk they are able to complete the Duke of Cornwall Community Safety Award. They are able to say what they want for the community and this has enabled them to create the Music Club and the Friday Night Project.

There is a different topic covered each month and they have the opportunity to go on visits and have presentations on what is happening in the community. There was a visit and demonstration by police dogs in the Village Hall and a back stage visit at the Arts Centre most recently.

**The railway bridge at Elmbridge Road that appears to be collapsing since the works stated, as the potholes have dropped further, is there an update on the progress?**

Cllr E Townsend explained that Surrey County Council are currently monitoring the movement. The recent work on the bridge has been to stabilise/rebuild the buttresses and then to monitor the movement for several months. The work will be carried out in phases, first to monitor the movement, second to repair the buttresses and then the further stages will be dependent on the movement after the repair. To replace the road surface the bridge will need to be closed at night.

**Will Surrey County Council resurface the bridge and not keep filling in the potholes?**

Cllr E Townsend explained that currently they will only fill the potholes in due to the movement, once this is under control the final stage will be to resurface the bridge.

Chairman Cllr M Scully thanked the residents for their question and thanked the Councillors for all their hard work that can go unseen and un-thanked.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.58pm.

Signed.....

Date.....