

PARISH OF DUNSFOLD

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Annual Parish Meeting for the Parish of Dunsfold was held in the Winn Hall, Dunsfold on Monday 12th May 2015 at 7.30pm.

Present:

Cllr Alan Ground (Chairman)
Cllr Barrie Pople (Vice Chairman)
Cllr Martin Gardiner
Cllr Stephen Hayward
Cllr Roy Enticknap
Cllr Nick Shepherd

In attendance:

Mrs Celeste Lawrence (Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer)
Mrs Victoria Young (Surrey County Councillor)
Mr Steven Haines
Mr Rupert Jones
Mr John Gray
Mrs Jean Martin
And 50 parishioners

Apologies:

Cllr Rosie Brough

Alan Ground welcomed and thanked all for coming. He said:

This is a statutory meeting which requires the chairman of last year's Council, whose life expired last Thursday, to report on the Council's activities for the year ending 31st March 2015. The Parish Council at the moment has new elected members but they have not yet formally taken office, nor elected their officers. Having decided not to stand again after 12 years as chairman, I have no continuing role on the Council and the new Parish Council at the moment has no chairman. But fear not – there is no vacuum. The Clerk as the Council's chief and only executive officer remains as the only continuing feature of the Council at the moment. Celeste and I have agreed that it is left to me to make last year's report and chair this meeting, unless anyone dissents!

We have to deal with two formal matters :-

Item 1. To receive for confirmation the Report of the Last Annual Assembly held on 19th May 2014. Mr Larry West proposed and Mrs Lynne Enticknap seconded that the minutes be signed and the Chairman signed these as a correct record.

Item 4. To receive for confirmation the Statement of Accounts of Dunsfold Smiths Charity for the year ended 31st December 2014. The balance in hand as at 1st January 2014 was £839.79 plus the amount of the 2014 grantor £3600 making a total of £4439.79 available for distribution. Grocery vouchers to the value of £95 exchangeable at the Dunsfold Community Shop Assoc Ltd, Dunsfold had been issued to each of 42 villagers. A total of £3315.35 was distributed and £22.26 spent on postage leaving a balance in hand at 31 December 2014 of £1102.18. The adoption of the Statement of Accounts for Dunsfold Smiths Charity for the year ending 31 December 2014 was proposed by Mr Mence Wilkinson and seconded by Mrs Gillian Kirsch and carried unanimously. The Chairman signed the Statement of Accounts.

Now Item 2 - on to my Report

This is my last report for the Parish Council at the end of for some of us of our 12th year on this Council – the last year of our third four year term. It was also the last year for Barrie Pople and Rosie Brough who joined us 8 years ago.

Our activities during the year should be well known to all in Dunsfold: we have held 12 public meetings of the Council, six public meetings of the Commons Committee, and numerous ad hoc meetings. Minutes of all our public meetings have been published on the village website. We have sent round to the village a number of circulars about planning developments, our response to the Waverley Housing scenarios consultation, in addition to our Newsletters.

Planning matters - Waverley's plans for housing in the borough and its towns and villages in general and Dunsfold in particular - have been a major subject over the past year.

Main points:

- Waverley had to withdraw their last draft Core Strategy for the next Local Plan plan when it appeared that the so-called 'objectively assessed housing requirement' for the Borough was double the quantity in the proposed plan ie 470 houses per annum for the next 16 years instead of the planned 230. This new target of 8450 dwellings across the Borough up to 2031 is said to derive from national assessments of housing required for population flows from the capital to our counties to the south.
- In the last analysis Waverley do not have to adopt that target if they cannot cope with it, for example if it is unable to do so without serious damage to the Borough's protected country areas and infrastructure. But whilst for the time being they have not yet adopted it, they have recognised it as the current 'objectively assessed target'. Against that high target they have accepted that they do not have a five year housing supply, and as a result they accept that the current Local Plan of 2002 is deemed to be 'out of date' under the National Planning Policy Framework.(NPPF). The consequence of that is that until they do have a five year supply or a New Local Plan the NPPF framework applies to all development applications in the Borough , and that means that there is a presumption in favour of development unless the detriments outweigh the benefits.

NPPF has been applied to Dunsfold

- The NPPF has been described as a developer's charter but Dunsfold's experience of it to date has not been an unhappy one. The example is the Chennels Field application. The trustees of the JA McAllister Pension Fund own Chennels Field which is a small field outside the village settlement in the Dunsfold Green Area.
- The 2002 Plan for the village was broadly that outside the village settlement boundaries the land is Countryside to be protected for its own sake. The McAllister trustees of the Fund originally applied to erect 4 houses. This was opposed by Waverley and the Parish Council as being contrary to the 2002 Plan. The trustees appealed and by the time of the appeal it was agreed that the 2002 Plan was out of date and that the matter had to be decided under the NPPF presumption in favour of development unless the detriments outweighed the benefits. We attended and spoke at the appeal in support of Waverley's opposition to the appeal.

- The Inspector rejected the appeal and what she said is very important for the protection of Dunsfold until the new Local Plan comes into effect. She said:

“The National Planning Framework makes it clear that pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment. Given my concerns due to the significant identified harm to the character and appearance of Dunsfold and the setting of the listed building Chennels Cottage I conclude that the adverse impacts of the proposed development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies of the Framework as a whole”.
- That decision is encouraging and satisfactory. I learned last week at Waverley that Mr McAllister’s trustees are applying to the High Court to judicially review the Inspector’s decision. That will take time and if it is successful the effect will be that the matter will have to be reconsidered afresh. It does not prejudge the outcome second time around. By the time that is heard the new Local Plan may have become effective.

Waverley’s call for sites

- Prior to the start of our last year in April 2014 Waverley had asked all Parish Councils to inform them of known available sites for housing, to say whether Parish Councils could consider enlarging the village settlement boundaries to include adjacent land suitable for development. We responded by saying yes in principle subject to the suitability of a site and village consultation, and informed them in January 2014 of the 6 acre field immediately to the north of Nugent Close which the owner had said was available for development.
- Subsequently the developer of that site – Kitewood – made a pre-application approach to Waverley last autumn, and has recently arranged an open day in the Winn Hall to present its plans for 29 market houses and 13 affordable houses. It is likely that a planning application will be submitted later this year on which all will be able to comment.
- The Parish Council has supported this application in principle subject to the more detailed planning assessment and village consultation because it has seemed a suitable site for the village to make its contribution to Waverley’s housing needs. If we say that new housing should be placed in or around existing settlements rather than in the middle of nowhere on Dunsfold Aerodrome we have to be willing for our own settlement to make its contribution. The village also needs to have gentle growth to support and develop the services the village needs, like the shop and hopefully the school.

A word about Neighbourhood Plans

You will have heard about a number of Councils are going for a Neighbourhood Plan. This may make sense for the Towns and larger Councils but perhaps less sense or need for smaller Parish Councils. We have been sceptical about the need or the feasibility of this. Neighbourhood Plans have to be consistent with Local Plans. Currently we do not have a Local Plan. When we do can revisit the topic. If as we anticipate the new Local Plan will like the last one protect from development the village countryside areas outside the village settlements, there may be no need for a Neighbourhood Plan. It may be possible in the new Local Plan to agree with Waverley how the settlement boundaries could be enlarged to bring in adjacent land suitable for development, but we do not think any such sites will be imposed on us. In general therefore we have not

thought it necessary to go for a Neighbourhood Plan. It will however be necessary in due course to update the Village Design Statement of 2001 if only to ensure that it is consistent with the New Local Plan when it emerges.

Village Sites and exception sites for affordable housing

- Waverley asked us for our views on other sites which were put to them by owners in response to Waverley's call for sites. These were contained in the published SHLAA – Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. We understand that a new LAA – Land Availability Assessment - will be published soon with a rating for all sites which have been considered.
- We have not indicated support for any other site apart from a possible site for a small affordable housing development – 10 to 12 dwellings -proposed by English Rural Housing Association on a special exception site of an acre of land along the Alfold Road called Springfield. This would fulfil the findings of the Housing Needs Survey we carried out in 2013. This proposal is at an early stage and details will emerge later this year.
- In principle the Parish Council has supported this site as being suitable and sufficiently close to and screened from the settlement and fulfilling the wish not to put all our needed affordable sites in the same place.

Waverley's consultation on housing scenarios

- In August/September last year Waverley consulted widely across the Borough on 4 housing scenarios (not proposals) three of which featured housing on the aerodrome of between 1800 to 3400 houses, and one of which featured no housing on the aerodrome but significant housing elsewhere principally affecting Farnham.
- We produced a response pointing out the flaws in the consultation (notably that all existing settlements and the people in them) would respond preferring the maximum amount of housing on the aerodrome to relieve the burden on their own settlement. We said that none of the scenarios was feasible – Farnham could not take the suggested numbers, and a new settlement on the aerodrome had been rejected as unsustainable on traffic and infrastructure grounds by the Inspector and the Secretary of State in 2009.
- In support of the Aerodrome housing scenario numbers Dunsfold Airport Limited (newly owned by Trinity College Cambridge) presented voluminous traffic Consultant reports by Vectos which appeared to 'airbrush away' the traffic problems.
- We commissioned with 7 other Parish Councils (Alfold, Bramley, Busbridge, Chiddingfold, Hascombe, Hambledon and Wonersh) a report from Motion Transport which is a critique of these reports and points out the flaws and understatement of the traffic and infrastructure problems for the entire area.
- Waverley expressed thanks for this report, delayed publication in March of the Local Plan, and commissioned their own consultants to report by June of this year.
- This matter will become live again later this summer and the new Local Plan publication will come probably later this year.

- The problems for Waverley are:-
 - o that the transport infrastructure and services deficiencies of the local road systems north and west of the aerodrome to Guildford, Godalming and the A3 are too great and costly for solution however many houses are to be built on the aerodrome whether 3400, or 5000 or more;
 - o that only a few houses on the aerodrome are no use because in planning terms the aerodrome is in the middle of nowhere without access to the services and support the dwellings require on site.
 - o It is questionable whether Waverley can finally adopt the 8450 target to accommodate the alleged outflow of population from London to this area. That target is not set in stone and they may reasonably conclude that it is unsustainable for this area without doing huge damage.
- Waverley's preference to date has always been not to regard the aerodrome as suitable for new housing or major aviation but as an employment centre and business park. The only significant planning application from Dunsfold Park is the current business Park expansion application. If this is approved with its own traffic and infrastructure consequences it would make any subsequent housing settlement more difficult to justify.
- Currently all the permissions on the site are temporary until 2018, a date fixed to accommodate the timetable for the new Local Plan coming into force.

The Aerodrome again

Noisy events continue under temporary permissions and continue to take up a lot of time in submissions to Waverley.

The use of the Aerodrome for noisy motor car events continues to plague residents, and to take up time in discussing these matters with Waverley officers. In our view and that of affected residents Waverley continue to fail to monitor and control the number of Permitted Development Right events or the noise produced by permitted and unauthorised events. The prospect of these events continuing until 2018 until an overall Plan for the site is in place is intolerable for residents. Our complaints fall on deaf ears.

Commons and ponds, ditches and verges

- The upkeep of the 80 acres of Commons is a major activity and expense for the Parish Council. The Waverley grant and support has all but disappeared. We are heartened by the support from the West Weald project and their assistance in our qualifying for grant support after completing registration of the common with the Rural Payments Agency.
- Also useful has been the grant from SCC for the localism initiative (£8000 this year and £5000 next) which can be applied to highways related work and footpaths.
- Also welcome is the continued support of the Friends of Dunsfold Common who gave us £2000 last year and whose officers sit on our commons committee.

A word now about KGV

This King Georges Field was transferred to the Parish Council in 1972 to be a recreational space under the Open Spaces Act of 1905 and under the aegis of the 1935 King George V Foundation.

Its current users comprise the Tennis Club, The Football Club, and the Sports & Social Club. It also houses temporarily the Nursery School licensed by the Parish Council to use the Pavilion for a certain number of hours on term days until the school site become available again.

The Tennis Club is successful and has recently received approval for tennis lights during the winter months. The Football club has been successful in the League but is less secure financially and the lack of Dunsfold players is a matter of concern.

The Parish Council bears the capital costs and the costs of a caretaker and cleaner.

The Social Club is seeking more support but has been unable to pay its full user group fee for the last year.

There was a time when KGV with the help of user group income 'washed its face', but not now. It is an important village resource but it needs revitalising perhaps with the help of advice from the trustees of the KGV Foundation called Fields in Trust.

A word now about Dunsfold School

For a large part of the past 12 years from 2003 to April 2011 the Parish Council led the way in seeking the recovery of the school site for village education. April 2011 saw the end of the attempts by the Diocese to remove the educational trusts which they were not performing. With the village shop when a body was needed to be formed to carry out the Parish Council's preemption rights in favour of a village body approved by the Parish Council the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Stephen Hayward caused the formation of the Dunsfold Community Shop Association to exercise those rights. The Company was supported by 230 village shareholders who put up £230k towards the acquisition. As with the shop so with the school: the chairman, deputy chairman, Stephen Hayward and Clare Gray secured the changes needed to the Charity Commission Scheme with villager support and then formed the Dunsfold Village School Trust as a charitable educational company limited by guarantee and registered it with the Charity Commission. DVST with the help of grant aid has commissioned QS and other surveyor reports, an independent valuation, and negotiation with the freeholders on the terms of the transfer. Negotiation with the Diocese and SCC is slow but we are assured they want to complete the transaction.

Finally thanks.

- to all colleagues – Barrie, Roy, Martin, Rosie, Nick and Stephen - for their work and support over the years.
- Especial thanks to Barrie - a tremendous supporting Deputy chairman;
- also to Stephen for his great support in many ways and notably to Barrie and me in relation to the shop and the school;
- to Roy who is embarking on his 43rd year on the Council – an amazing record and a great resource in relation to commons matters.
- To Celeste – thanks to our Clerk who has served us so well and enabled us to survive all our audits.

The New Councillors – congratulations to all candidates for standing and ensuring we have an election. We wish the new Councillors well - Jean Martin; John Gray, who has also been elected as one of our two Waverley Ward Councillors with Simon Inchbald; Rupert Jones, whose legal skills will be invaluable and Steven Haines who chaired Go-Godalming, set up Go-Lo which raised large sums for Godalming; maybe he could set up Go-Dunsfold!

(New Councillors stood up and were introduced and said a few words)

QUESTIONS:

Lack of mobile reception.

It had been investigated however Dunsfold was considered to have "sufficient" coverage. All were encouraged to report black spots via the website.

Work on Grattons Pond.

It was reported that works were scheduled however due to the cygnets, work could not proceed.

Barrie Pople presented to Alan Ground two paintings by Anne Evans of two areas of the common as a retiring and thank you gift from the Parish Councillors for his work over the years. Alan Ground said the gift was perfect and much appreciated. It had been a great privilege to serve the Village. It was a beautiful village and the paintings captured that so well.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.45pm.

Chairman.....

Date.....