

PARISH OF DUNSFOLD

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Annual Parish Meeting for the Parish of Dunsfold was held in the Winn Hall, Dunsfold on Tuesday May 21st 2013 at 7.30pm.

Present:

Cllr Alan Ground (Chairman)
Cllr Barrie Pople (Vice Chairman)
Cllr Martin Gardiner
Cllr Stephen Hayward
Cllr Rosie Brough
Cllr Ian Jones

In attendance:

Mrs Victoria Young (Surrey County Councillor)
PC James Ansell
PCSO Emily Carr
Mrs Celeste Lawrence (Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer)
And 50 parishioners

Apologies:

None

Absent:

Cllr Roy Enticknap

The Chairman opened the meeting welcoming those attending. He said:-

This is the meeting we are required to hold every year under the Local Government Act 1972 and the formal agenda is to:

- Receive For Confirmation The Report Of The Last Annual Assembly Held On 21st May 2012
- To Receive for Confirmation The Statement Of Accounts Of Dunsfold Smiths Charity For The Year Ended 31st December 2012, and
- Report on Parish Council Activities During The Past Year;

In addition to that it's a good opportunity to:

- receive some short reports from our Surrey and Waverley Councilors', and if possible from our Neighbourhood Police;
- try to deal with any questions;
- then a few words from those running some of our village clubs and societies,
- and then end up with some drinks.

I deal with first three formal agenda items:-

1. To Receive For Confirmation The Report Of The Last Annual Assembly Held On 21st May 2012 of which you will find copies around the room. I think it is a good note and to cut a long story short I wonder if you would be prepared to receive it for confirmation. Mr Creighton Redman proposed and Mr Robin Gourlay seconded that the minutes be signed and the Chairman signed these as a correct record.
2. To Receive for Confirmation The Statement Of Accounts Of Dunsfold Smiths Charity For The Year Ended 31st December 2012. The Chairman reported that the balance in hand as at 1 January 2013 was £752.23 plus the amount of the 2013 grant of £3600 making a total of £4352.23 available for distribution. Grocery vouchers to the value of £95 exchangeable at Dunsfold Community Shop Assoc Ltd, Dunsfold had been issued to each of 40 villagers. A total of £3492.94 was distributed and £19.50 spent on postage leaving a balance in hand at 31 December 2013 of £839.79. The adoption of the Statement of Accounts for Dunsfold Smith Charity for the year ending 31 December 2013 was proposed by Mrs Gillain Kitsch and seconded by Mrs Liz Gardiner and carried unanimously. The Chairman signed the Statement of Accounts.

3. Alan Ground's Report as Chairman on the Parish Council's Activities during the past year.

This is my tenth report, my first having been the report in 2004 of the first year of the new Council in 2003.

As far as I recall all members of the Council then elected were new Councillors except for Roy Enticknap who had been a Councillor since 1972. That is a remarkable record – now over 40 years on this Council - and Roy is still with us and chairing the Commons Steering Group on the Parish Council.

We are also now half way through the current four year term of this Council – we have two years to go before the next Parish Council elections in May 2015. It is highly likely that a number of those currently serving will not be standing then for re-election. Two years from now is not very long. It is of the utmost importance that at least eight villagers put themselves up for election in 2015 to ensure that we will have a fully elected Council. That is a requirement of becoming a qualifying Council, which gives us certain advantage, the other requirement being that we have a qualified clerk. Celeste is pursuing that qualification with our support so she and we expect villagers to come forward to stand for election to the Council in 2015. We shall make this appeal even more urgently next year.

It is difficult to pick out topics for report on all the work of the Council and its subcommittees over the past year. All of our meetings are held in public, the minutes are reported on the village website, all of our letters and submissions on the many planning matters that come before us at Waverley and Surrey County Council level are publicly available, and we produce periodic Newsletters which are delivered to every household in the village.

I will focus on this report on a just a few topics of general interest as follows:-

- The planning regime covering the village and future developments here;
- The planning status and future of Dunsfold Park;
- The upkeep of the Commons, Ponds and Woodlands;
- The financial position of the Council, its responsibilities, accounts and precepts;
- The issue of the vital need for volunteers to help keep all the Village services going;
- As a separate matter I will deal with the latest position concerning the future of Dunsfold School. From 2004 to 2011 this was a matter in which the Parish Council took a leading role in challenging the closure of the school and resistance to the various attempts over that period to remove the educational trust purposes of the school. I say that I will now deal with this as a separate matter simply because as soon as the Charity Commission Scheme was eventually made in 2011 after 7 years of vacuum in decision making the challenge to that scheme could only be carried forward by individuals who could bear the costs of the legal challenge in the Charity Tribunal with the support of other villagers. Thus just as the shop project had to be driven forward by a company limited by guarantee formed in the first instance by individual Council members and coopted villagers to negotiate a deal for the shop which then had to put to villagers to support, so the Dunsfold Village School Trust has been formed by those individual Council members with villagers' support to negotiate a transaction with the Freeholders to take over and restore the school buildings to use for the education of village children.

So taking these topics in turn:

The planning regime covering the village and future developments here

The points to make on this are:-

- The National Planning Policy Framework of the Government with its various presumptions in favour of development has been in force for a year.
- During the last year Waverley agreed and submitted in January their Core Policies to the Secretary of State;
- The Parish Council had supported the Core Policies;
- The Policies are now going through examination by the Inspector who will be holding hearings beginning in Waverley Council chamber on 5th June;
- The Policies do not indicate any great change for the planning regime in this village. The basic regime is that within the village settlement boundaries limited development can take place, outside the rural settlement areas the land is countryside beyond the Green Belt to be protected for its own sake where development is strictly controlled. Small affordable housing developments are possible, with if necessary some private housing, provided there is shown to be a need from people with local connection to the village.

- Whilst under the NPPF Waverley should have had in place their new Local Plan by April of this year their saved policies under the 2002 plan remain in place until adoption of the new Plan.
- Under the new regime local areas can produce their own Neighbourhood Plan and this will be particularly appropriate for the larger settlements in Waverley of Cranleigh, Farnham, Godalming and Haslemere. However such plans must comply with the Local Plan. For our small village, and certainly until Waverley's new Plan is adopted, it is not apparent what the content of a village neighbourhood plan for us could be or whether it is needed or desired by the village. One possibility for the village could be to revisit the rural settlement boundaries and see whether there is a need or support for these to be redrawn or enlarged. I imagine that would be quite a controversial topic. In general over the past ten years there has been a gentle growth in the number of dwellings in the village and such growth has benefits for the viability of services within the village.
- A proposal is currently being put forward by a developer to extend Nugent Close by the creation of some 11 new affordable homes and three private dwellings and this will require a new needs survey. The Parish Council has agreed with Surrey Community Action for them to carry out a needs survey for the village this summer – the last one having been carried out for the Arnold Close development.

The planning status and future of Dunsfold Park

- Waverley's outline policy for Dunsfold Park in the Core Policies currently being examined by the Inspector is that Dunsfold Park should be an employment development site which is not regarded by Waverley as appropriate for significant housing or aviation development. Waverley propose to develop a Master Plan for the site when their local plan is adopted.
- The current temporary permissions run to 2018 by which time the Master Plan should be in place.
- Dunsfold Park's position has been to favour through Lord Taylor's report last year a housing development of some 1200 dwellings (smaller than the 2600 rejected by the Inspectors some few years ago); and that failing they continue to assert as a threatened fall back that the site benefits from a permanent permission which allows unrestricted and unconditional aviation, both now and in any event from 2018.
- The assertion of unrestricted and unconditional aviation rights was first asserted by Dunsfold Park in an application to Waverley for a certificate to that effect on 31st March 2011. Two years later we have seen that rejected by Waverley, and by the Planning Inspector on Dunsfold Park's appeal and we now await the result of Dunsfold Park's High Court appeal against the Inspector's ruling which was heard on 23rd and 24th April. The Parish Council maintained from the outset that there was no basis for the assertion of unrestricted and unconditional aviation rights and provided a Planning QC's Opinion to that effect jointly commissioned by the Parish Councils of Dunsfold Alfold and Hascombe with financial contributions from some villagers. The arguments used by Dunsfold Park before the High Court in April no longer assert that the aviation rights stem from the use of Dunsfold Aerodrome by Skyways in 1948, but derive from the permanent permission to erect, repair and flight test aircraft granted to Hawker Siddeley in 1951. This was disputed by Counsel for the Secretary of State who said that the permission could not bear that construction, and that a permission to carry out flight testing to an aircraft manufacturer was not the same as one allowing flights for other purposes. Put another way a permission to flight test cannot lead to the site becoming an airport.

The upkeep of the Commons, Ponds and Woodlands

- These cover some 80 acres of Dunsfold and are leased by Waverley Boorough Council to the Parish Council. They are an important resource for all villagers.
- The maintenance is carried out in consultation with Waverley and its Ranger but the Ranger no longer provides the practical support which we have enjoyed in the past. We are looking at ways to manage the work and find additional assistance in so doing.
- Last year has seen periods of persistent rain and flooding which has caused us to investigate with Waverley the operation of the drains and culverts and see what is required to be done. Roy Enticknap's long experience is valuable in all this – he knows where all the drains and culverts are and how they should work.
- A related problem has been the damage caused to verges – notably for example at Shoppe Hill – which was partly due to the wet weather but principally due the effect of the road resurfacing last year which caused diversions to lanes not equipped to carry HGV's. We discussed this problem in January with Surrey CC and

Waverley to establish what needed to be done and how it should be paid for. Needless to say there is not always agreement on when a verge is highway and hence an SCC responsibility or is part of the common which is a Waverley/Parish Council responsibility. We will find a solution to these problems.

- final point on this topic - the Commons Cut regime this year will be the same as last.

The financial position of the Council, its responsibilities, accounts and precepts

- We no longer get any Waverley contribution to cutting the common, or the previous labour support provided by the Ranger, and the Waverley compensatory grant has been cut. This has no doubt been due to the Government squeeze on Waverley who have had a zero Council tax increase. We are looking at other ways to help fund our expenditure.
- The contribution of the Friends of Dunsfold Common to our commons expenses is extremely important and welcome.
- The Council decided that we needed to increase our precept this year by 3.5% which we thought was reasonable and justifiable. It appeared from Council tax demands that we had increased our precept by 9.77% but this is not the increase in money we have actually received but is based on a formula by which Band D increases are calculated which includes a tax base affected by the localisation of Council Tax.
- finally on this topic - our accounts have been publicly available and the internal audit for last year completed satisfactorily.

The issue of the vital need for volunteers to help keep all the Village services going

- The point I wish to underline here is the importance of villagers volunteering to help keep village services and interests going.
- Paul Farrant will speak in a moment about the Shop which wholly depends on volunteers to run its management and operate behind the counter, just as it needed volunteers to put up the money.
- Alastair Bentall for the Friends of Dunsfold Common will speak in a moment about the need for new members.
- Last year we were grateful for volunteers to help clear up the vegetation which was taking over the school site which we did with the grateful approval of the freeholders.
- So in summary - volunteers are vital, but Dunsfold does respond when asked and long may this continue.

Finally I will deal with the latest position concerning the future of Dunsfold School

As explained in the Newsletter and thanks to the decision of the Charity Tribunal we now have an opportunity to recover the school site for village education, something which should not have ended in the village in 2004. It is not appropriate to go into the history here. The new opportunity is based on the fact that the Tribunal agreed with our submission that far from abandoning the educational trust purposes which date back to 1839, and more recently to 1957, the preferred alternative use of the premises was still for the education of village children, and that therefore a proposal for that should be considered in preference to other uses.

Our first approach last year was to investigate applying by January this year to set up a Free School infant school to open in September 2014. We pursued this with the New Schools Network in detail last year and carried out surveys around the area. The problem was that some half of our likely children for the first two years from 2014 had siblings at other local schools whom they would have a right to follow. Parents cannot commit that far ahead. We concluded that the Free School Model was not appropriate for us for 2014, and that we would proceed to set up our own educational trust which would start from a lower nursery school base, would add pre school and post school services and build up from that base to move into infant education, and a possible Free School application post 2014. We had already produced a Business Plan for this in 2010 during the meetings with the freeholders under the chairmanship of the Waverley Chief Executive. Then the freeholders were not interested because they were awaiting removal of the educational trusts. The position now is different. It is a great advantage to us that the Parish Council set up a

successful Nursery School in the KGV pavilion in 2005 under a Licence which was stated to be a stepping stone to achieving a permanent base in the school buildings when this became possible.

The new position is that Dunsfold Village School Trust has been formed as a company limited by guarantee dedicated to education in Dunsfold and has been granted charity status by the Charity Commission on MAY 2nd. The tasks ahead include:-

- completing the DVST team;
- producing a proposal to the freeholders to grant, as the new Scheme allows, a 125 year lease of the buildings and site, reflecting the experience of the Educational Funding Authority of the Department of Education, with a view to carrying the DVST trust purposes;
- To investigate the funding of the renovation work required on the listed building, approaching this as would a building preservation trust, and taking account of the building surveys we have carried out;
- reporting to villagers and inviting all villagers who support the aims to become members of the company, the liability of members being limited to £1 each.

Finally I would like to thank all my colleagues on the Council for their work and help during the year and also thank our Clerk Celeste who has served us so well.

4. Village Matters including contributions from various speakers

Revd Dr Stephen White

Revd White reported that the church cost some £56k to run last year and did so with a loss of £15k. He said that it was being financially supported by approx.. 40 families and made a request for more volunteers to help financially.

Paul Farrant – Dunsfold Village Shop

Mr Farrant reported that the Post Office refurbishment was complete. The shop have received £25k from SCC for improvements and capital projects. The improvements would include:

- Replacing the ceiling and lighting
- Replacing the counter, floor and fittings
- Installing a vegetable stall outside the shop
- Installation of a new awning

Mr Farrant also made a request for paper delivery volunteers. He further reported that the Christmas Fayre had been a great success. The end of year figures were as follows:

	EoY January 2012	EoY 2013
	281k	316k
Cost of stock	214k	238k

Alistair Bentall – Friends of Dunsfold Common

Mr Bentall made a request for more financial support for FoDC.

Victoria Young – Surrey County Councillor

Cllr Young introduced herself as the new Surrey County Councillor and spoke on local issues including the planned improvements on roads and potholes.

PC James Ansell - Police

PC Ansell reported that Dunsfold has the lowest level of crime in the County. He also reminded everyone to keep outbuildings locked to help prevent any thefts.

5. Questions

- What further progress has been made at Nugents Close?
The Chairman said that the tripartite agreement needs to be enforced and that L&Q had allowed the 2 swaps to take place. He also reminded the assembled crowd that the non-emergency number to be called was 101. He also reported that Cllr Brough was refreshing the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme

- What pattern does the speed watch take?
There was no set pattern and a report was due from the VAS signs installed.
- Is Country Watch/Farm Watch still used?
Yes
- Is permission needed for cycle and running races?
The dates for the races could be found at the Surrey Cycle Racing League web page.
- It was suggested that a mobile phone mast be installed to improve reception in the village.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.50pm.

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....