

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING FOR OAKLEY, 26TH APRIL 2017

Present: Mrs. Blackman (Chairman), Mrs. Bettridge, Mr. Bullions, Mr. Ellison, Mrs. Foster-Key, Mr. Hewitt, Mr. Hooker, Mr. Parry, Mr. Startin, Ms. Tofts. Borough Councillors: Mr. Frost, Mr. Golding and Mrs. Taylor, and County Councillor: Mrs. McNair-Scott all attended, as well as approximately 50 members of the public.

- 1. Welcome:** Mrs. Blackman welcomed residents and speakers to the meeting.
- 2. Apologies for Absence** were received from Mrs. Gavin, Dr. Johnstone and Mr. Law.
- 3. Andy Jones PCSO:** Andy confirmed that there had been five non-dwelling and thirteen dwelling burglaries in Oakley over the year. Farming machinery was often the target of the perpetrators, and there is also a rise in dwelling burglaries where car keys (and the car) are stolen. There was a recent burglary in Wither Rise, where a car was taken, which has resulted in two arrests and there could be other related incidents attributable to these individuals.
In terms of criminal damage, the doctors' surgery was closed for a week after several incidents, and St. Leonard's Church had a stained-glass window smashed. Three of the Parish Council notice boards were vandalised (twice) and £100's of costs incurred by the dairy in relation to thefts of milk.
Rogue traders are still an issue and do target older people, so it is important that elderly residents are aware of the problem and do not agree to buy goods or services at the door.
A resident asked Andy about the proposed travellers' pitches at the Manydown development but the police have no opinion on such matters.
- 4. Robert Chapman, Age Concern:** Mr. Chapman is the Information and Advice Co-ordinator for Age Concern here in Hampshire. The organisation is funded jointly by Hampshire County Council and Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council. There are day care centres (thirteen across Hampshire) that offer respite care, with activities such as outings, quizzes and entertainment days. The nearest such centres are Odiham and Alresford.
There are seven activity centres in the area, for the less physically challenged, and these run weekly. There are footcare treatment centres, IT centres for older people to update their IT skills, and also the service supports the Village Agent scheme, which helps to give extra support in the home (there are 46 agents in the Hampshire County Council area).
The OPAL scheme is also run by Help the Aged, and steps in when an older person has become isolated, perhaps for health reasons, and this scheme is facing increased demand as cuts to adult social services are made. They offer transport, and also a befriender service if the person does not want to (or is unable) to go out.
The Information and Advice Centre in Winchester is open every day from 10am to 3pm and the staff there will answer questions from older people and from carers/relatives or friends.
Much of Mr. Chapman's time is spent on home visits, and includes helping people to claim allowances due to them – over £150,000 of income for older people has been generated by claiming allowances, which in turn helps these residents stay in their homes.
- 5. Michael Kenning:** Mr. Kenning spoke about the bi-centenary of Jane Austen's death (in July 2017). Mr. Kenning was formerly the rector of Steventon, where

Jane spent her formative years and wrote some of her books, and he is now a member of the Jane Austen Society.

There are events taking place all across Hampshire, organised by Hampshire Cultural Trust and Destination Basingstoke. A list of the local events planned will be posted on Spotted Oakley and displayed on the Parish Noticeboards.

6. Chairman's report: Mrs Blackman gave a full report of the Council's work during the past year and their plans for 2017. (See separate section)

7. Borough Councillor's report: Mrs. Taylor explained that once again the overall budget for Basingstoke and Deane had been cut, but that Council tax for an average Band D property is the lowest in Hampshire (and the 6th lowest in England) but that spend per capita is the highest in Hampshire.

The Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan was formally adopted on May 26th 2016 and along with the Oakley and Deane (and other) Neighbourhood Plans will help to determine planning applications that come to the Borough until 2029.

There is no update on the Critical Care Hospital. The Manydown Company have submitted an Outline Planning Application concerned with establishing road accesses. There has been some success in keeping the area around Pack Lane excluded from the development plans, and also the current plans do not encroach too far towards Oakley, and the closest to us is shown as being sports field and other less intrusive forms of development.

There are plans to improve Basing View which has recently been designated as an Enterprise Zone.

There has been positive progress in relation to homeless persons/rough sleepers – the first local 'pop up' shelter was set up last year and over November, December and January the churches in Basingstoke town centre have taken turns in opening up so that homeless people can have somewhere warm and safe to sleep as well as providing a hot meal during the coldest months.

8. Matthew Evans, Head of Planning and Infrastructure, BDBC: Mr. Evans spoke about the importance of the Neighbourhood Plan in determining applications and explained that it carries as much 'weight' as the BDBC Local Plan. There are approximately 1,600 applications received by the Borough each year and they regard all of them as equally important. There are also applications relating to tree works, and Listed Buildings. Permitted development allows small extensions and, for example, the erection of sheds in gardens etc, to be done without formal applications. Approximately 90% of the applications are decided by Planning Officers, with the remaining 10% going to Development Control Committee (DCC) where Ward Councillors review the applications and make the decisions. Also if there are a particular number of objections to an application it will be referred to DCC, which meets monthly and is open to the public.

Mr. Evans explained that the policies (for example the Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan) help to determine what development the Borough needs over the period – not just for housing but also for growth, and for example the regeneration of the Basing View area.

If an application is refused the applicant has the right of appeal but decisions are made to be ensure that they are robust enough to resist being overturned at appeal.

Planning Enforcement is part of the system, and the emphasis of that team is to work with the applicant to encourage them to submit a retrospective

application, to give neighbours (and the Parish Council) the opportunity to look at the plans and make comments.

One resident asked if a shipping container being used for storage would require a planning application, but Mr. Evans explained that it is not a black or white decision and that each individual case would need to be examined to determine the correct requirements. He also informed residents that there is a pre-application advice service that the Borough offers (which is chargeable) to help applicants before they commit to making a formal application.

A resident asked about a situation where a householder had made three applications for the same work at the same property and had all of them refused; Mr. Evans explained that the applicant could appeal if they felt that their application was not being treated fairly.

Another resident asked about right to light, and that a former bungalow next to his home had been converted to a two storey house, which took light from half his garden and now affected the use of his garden. Mr Evans explained that while the right to light is a consideration it is not likely that this situation would result in an application being refused, but if, for example, it meant that a room in a dwelling had no natural light coming in as a result of an extension, that could be a reason to refuse. Another resident commented on the volume of construction traffic related to the Beech Tree Close development but Mr. Evans explained that as this is a temporary issue it could not cause any application to be refused.

A member of the public asked about foul water services at the Beech Tree Close development and Mr. Evans agreed to investigate and respond via the clerk. Another member of the public asked about the proposed traveller's site, and asked if travellers had to pay council tax. There is a government requirement to provide such sites on large developments and other sites will also have such provision. There is no opportunity to re- open the previous site at Dummer and indeed there are pitches included on the Hounsome Fields development plans. A further question about pressure of water declining due to the increased number of dwellings was raised but Mr. Evans informed the resident that water pressure issues were something that the utility company needed to ensure were adequate.

- 9. General Questions:** A resident asked about play equipment provision not only in the Parish controlled play areas, but those run by the Borough as well, and particularly Kennet Way park. A FaceBook Page has been set up to gather suggestions for what is wanted and representatives will attend a future Parish Council meeting as well as discussing directly with Borough Councillors.
- 10. Conclusion:** Mrs. Blackman thanked the speakers and the residents who had come to the meeting and the meeting concluded at 9. 40pm.