



## **BRAMSHOTT & LIPHOOK PARISH COUNCIL**

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### **THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING FOR THE PARISH OF BRAMSHOTT & LIPHOOK TOOK PLACE AT 7.30PM IN THE LIPHOOK MILLENNIUM HALL, ONTARIO WAY, LIPHOOK, ON MONDAY 26 MARCH 2007**

**PRESENT WERE:** Mr B Hope (Chairman), Mr N Atherden, Mr M Croucher, Mr L Futcher, Mrs A C James, Mr A Jordan, Mr D Murray, Mr N Newman, Mr W Ratcliffe, Dr J Tough, (Parish Councillors). Mr S C James (District Councillor and County Councillor), Mrs E Hope (District Councillor), Mr A Groves (Parish Clerk), Mrs A Haussauer (Asst Clerk). Fourteen members of the public, and one member of the press were present.

### **MINUTES**

#### **71/07 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded them about mobile phones and fire exits. He advised everybody about how to ask questions during the meeting, that refreshments would be available after the meeting in the Canada Room, and that the Heritage Centre Lottery would be drawn at the end of the meeting. The Chairman said that Lawrence Giles and Andy Woodgate had passed away recently. Lawrence Giles had been a village historian and archivist, who had done much to keep the history of the village alive for future generations. Andy Woodage was a highly respected and a valuable member of the Liphook community, who devoted a considerable amount of his personal time to the Scouts and causes in the village. The Chairman said that Andy Woodage had been an example to all, and he was absolutely certain that he would have had a very positive impact on everyone he worked with and came into contact with over so many years. He would be a great loss to the community and will be sadly missed. Our sincere and heart-felt sympathies were with both families. The meeting observed a minute's silence as a mark of respect to them both.

#### **72/07 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr J Walters.

## 73/07 ANNUAL REPORTS – COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

### 73/07.1 Finance and Policy (F&P) Committee (Cllr M Croucher)

The Committee meets six times a year, on a bi-monthly basis and is responsible for Financial & Policy matters relating to the PC's business. This year the precept is £184,539, which equates to a 2.6% increase, which results in an additional charge of £1.30 for the year, on a band D property. This is lower than last year, and the inflationary increases the Council has been subjected to over the last financial year. We are pleased to note that we have one of the lowest Parish Council increases within the district, and are now 7th in the list of EHDC Parish Councils in terms of the annual council tax fee. Last year you may recall a councillor resigned, which caused an election to be held, and which in turn resulted in a one-off cost of some £4,000 and there was a further election this year. I can report we have a very clear monthly audit process, which includes an annual external audit. Members of the Parish are welcome to visit the Parish Office to discuss any financial matter, but are requested to give prior notice to the Parish Clerk of any questions to which you would like an answer either verbally or in writing. As part of the Council's policy framework we apply the principle of "Best Value" on all the work we undertake, both internally and externally. Internally it is checked by the external auditors, and externally through a quotation or tender process, together with scrutiny for our external auditors. The Parish Council has a number of "core clients" (S137, S101) who receive financial assistance during the course of the year and these are: - Bramshott & Liphook PCC, Liphook in Bloom, Liphook Marketing Panel, Liphook Carnival, Liphook Lightshow, St. John Ambulance, East Hampshire Victim Support Scheme, Canada Veterans Association (Canada Day), Bramshott & Liphook Preservation Society, Furniture Help Line, River Wey Trust, Community Magazine. We also budget for other charitable, or not for profit organisations within the Parish, who make one-off type applications to the Parish Council, which are considered on a by merit basis but guided by a set of rules/regulations.

### QUESTIONS

**Mr Gilbert.** What have the Scouts and Guides problems cost and what are they likely to cost in the future, and will the rates be increased to pay for it?

**The Clerk.** Currently the costs are in the order of £14,000 over the period leading up to the court case. The Scouts and Guides brought the case against the Parish Council. The case/hearing was meant to be last year but it was delayed for a number of reasons that only the Scouts and Guides can explain as they are responsible for bringing the case against the Council to court. As a result, that delay has caused an increase to the costs. The future costs are more difficult to determine because it depends what happens over the next few weeks. There is a hearing on 19 April at which the matter will be settled. Cllr Croucher gave you details of the precept for next year; that will not change. Legal costs were estimated in the budget but it depends on what happens; difficult question to answer. The question of future costs relates to the on-going court proceedings

concerning the terms by which the Scouts and Guides occupy part of the Liphook Millennium Centre. The Council is advised that it is not appropriate for questions on this issue to be put to or answered by the Council at this time. There is a final hearing on 19 April at which the matter will be resolved.

**73/07.2 Highways, Byways and Transport (H, B &T) Committee (Cllr J Tough)**

The H, B & T Committee meet four times a year and run forums. It has been active and busy year.

**Retention of the Village Bus Service**

The Parish Council agreed with the County Council that the Village Bus Service should not run on Saturdays when it was little used and to drop the last service on weekdays, which again was little used, to make the service viable. The Parish Council was then able to guarantee the estimated shortfall in running this service every weekday. AMK, a Liphook based company, was awarded the contract with an accessible vehicle and this is providing the Village Bus Service today. In the end, it was not found necessary to drop the last service of the day. The District Council has allowed the shortfall for the first year to be funded from Developers' Contributions.

**Canadian Memorial Underpass**

Work has begun on the Canadian Memorial Underpass under the A3 on Bramshott Common and construction will commence after Easter. The Underpass was an Alternative Scheme put forward by the Parish Council because the crossing facility for walkers and riders near The Spaniard was to be closed. During construction, the Memorial plaque itself will be lodged in St Mary's Church. Work on the underpass will finish in summer 2008, hopefully in time for Canada Day in June.

**Railway Footbridge**

The footbridge over the railway alongside Midhurst Road has been resurfaced by the County Council after concern by the Parish Council about its safety.

**Station Accessibility**

A feasibility study into how Liphook Railway Station can be made accessible is to be carried out in the near future. This feasibility Study will be funded from Developers' Contributions.

**Headley Road Zebra Crossing**

At long last a zebra crossing has been installed by the County Council on Headley Road, near the junction with The Avenue, to help children and parents cross the road and it is nearly completed. This is part of the Travel Plan prepared jointly by the Infant and Junior Schools, facilitated by the Parish Council. When this has been assessed the remainder of the Travel Plan, which includes a number of elements, will be addressed by the County Council.

**Exploring Liphook**

An illustrated leaflet of walks around Liphook has been produced jointly by the Parish Council and the County Council. This describes three walks, Waterside

and Conford, Waggoners Wells, and Folly Pond, The Deer's Hut and Foley Manor, and is available free of charge from the Parish Office and the Millennium Centre.

In closing, I would like to thank the Asst Clerk, Ann Haussauer, for all her help. She not only Clerks the H, B&T Committee meetings but handles all matters concerning transport and rights of way for the Parish.

### **QUESTIONS**

**Cllr Atherden** . Have seen a hoppa bus in Liphook, - do you know anything about it?

**Cllr Tough**. Sorry, don't know.

### **73/07.3 Liphook Millennium Centre (LMC) Management Committee (Cllr D Murray)**

The Committee meets bi-monthly and the Millennium Centre continues to be used for regular bookings with local organisations including U3A, Age Concern, St John Ambulance, and dance, and Pilates classes, making good use of the facilities. It is also becoming a popular venue for celebrations, such as wedding anniversaries and birthdays. A selection of publicity brochures has been produced, designed to present the facilities available to prospective users, emphasising the benefit of using the facilities for business and corporate events. Despite this, bookings at the Centre have been slightly down this year and the difference between the LMC income and expenditure is at present just £4,000. This does however enable us to make a provision for future maintenance and a small contribution to local organisations through the Community Chest. The Centre is therefore not a drain on the local Council Tax bill.

We have launched a cinema which presents popular films on a Friday evening each month. There were two hundred people at the last showing "The Queen". The numbers attending have increased since we started last year. I would like at this stage to thank Councillor John Tough and Parish Clerk Tony Groves for their hard work in making these evenings such a success. It is pleasing to see the Centre used as a meeting place for so many local people who enjoy an evening at the pictures. The films increase the use made of the facilities we are so fortunate to have. We still have work to do to increase the awareness of our cinema and to increase the numbers who attend, and this is in hand. We look forward to real progress with plans for the development of the Heritage Centre to see the first floor area equipped, again for the benefit of the local community.

I would like to mention the staff of the Millennium Centre who do such a good job in the day-to-day running and care of the buildings. I would thank Donald, Caroline, Wendy and Pat as well as Angela, our caterer, for their work and commitment towards the success of the Millennium Centre.

Finally, part of the Millennium Centre Management Committee is formed of co-opted members and I would thank them for their support. We were sorry to lose

the help of Nigel Marr and Felicity Groves during the past year. We do therefore have some vacancies for co-opted members and I invite nominations from people willing to give some of their time and talents in helping to run what is a community resource. People interested are asked to submit their nominations to the Parish Office by 12<sup>th</sup> April.

**73/07.4 Planning Committee (Cllr Mrs A C James)**

Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen. Firstly, my thanks go to Gina Spencer who arranges all the Planning Meetings; and handles all the planning enquiries during the day - and, as you can imagine, there are many. I know that the residents of Liphook are very grateful for the cheerful and patient manner in which she responds to all their requests.

Planning becomes more and more complicated each year, and during the meetings the Committee members endeavour to explain all the processes and planning policies as we go through each application.

We have, again, had over 120 applications during the past year plus many tree applications. The Meetings have been well attended by applicants and neighbours not always with the same desire of outcome, but the meetings have been friendly and polite. The Planning Committee do listen to all comments made and take these into consideration when coming to their final recommendation.

We have had a number of appeals this year: 33 flats on the corner of Tower Road and London Road; 3 dwellings in Erles Road and developments in Chiltley Lane. All these were dismissed and it is encouraging to see that the involvement and comments of our residents can make a difference to planning decisions.

During the year, Christine Darter retired after many years as our volunteer Parish Tree Warden. Our grateful thanks go to Christine for the enormous amount of work she has done, it is very much appreciated. However we have been very lucky to find another volunteer in Dr Evans from Passfield, who is a very knowledgeable and qualified member of our community. So welcome to Dr Evans and many thanks for coming forward to be our new Tree Warden.

I would like to thank all the Councillors on the Planning Committee who put in so much time to help the residents of Liphook to get involved with the applications that most concern them. Liphook is very lucky to have such enthusiastic and well informed councillors to act on your behalf.

Finally, last year I finished my comments by mentioning new outline applications for the former King George Hospital Site; one for a retirement village and one for market dwellings. The market dwellings one has been withdrawn and the reserved matters application for the retirement village will be coming before our Planning Committee at our next meeting in April, so please come along if you are interested. Thank you Mr Chairman.

## **QUESTIONS.**

**Mr Gilbert.** The system is not working at present, it is totally unsatisfactory. Press article comes out after Parish meeting. If I put in an application all Hewshott Lane would be notified. Would like assurance that present system not working, as there is not enough time to put in comments in a fair and democratic way?

**The Chairman.** Will be put as point to next planning meeting. Not entirely in command of the system, not just Parish Council but also EHDC who dictate the timescales.

**Mr Gilbert.** Understand not Parish Council problem – system does not work and there is simply not enough time. Want assurance that EHDC will address the matter.

**The Chairman.** Not responsible for District Council; Mrs James is a District Councillor and will make sure EHDC are made aware of your comments.

**Cllr Mrs James.** Will make sure District Council aware of your comments. You can put motions to EHDC at any time.

### **73/07.5 Recreation Committee (Cllr L Futcher)**

The Committee meet four times during the year, plus annual visits to the Recreation Ground, Radford Park and the Allotments. My thanks to all the Councillors on the Committee for their attendance and hard work.

#### **Parish Work**

This was carried out by our own dedicated staff under the control of the Parish Clerk, Tony Groves. As always a busy year, not helped by unpredictably bad weather and storms which brought down trees in Radford Park. At the Recreation Ground the formal area is holding up well despite the wet weather. We have had thanks from the Tennis Club and the Football Club for the ground staffs' efforts and we hope that adult cricket will be back at the Recreation Ground this summer.

The litter problem is a continuing one at the Recreation Ground, and regular weekend cover is planned for this summer. This would include the skateboard area. A shelter is being looked at as an extra facility, also practice goal posts. At Radford Park work continues on a year long basis. Bird boxes and sign posts to assist visitors could be installed shortly, thanks to an initiative led by Liphook in Bloom, with whom we work very closely.

The ground staff continue with their grass cutting cycle for the year. 10 cuts per year is usually enough. Many thanks to Peter Terry and his team for all their efforts.

### **Gunns Farm Play Area**

A public meeting was held on 13 June last year, which was very well attended by villagers. A representative from East Hants District Council noted that everyone wanted the play area to remain. Work needed to be done was agreed upon, which has now been done, to include new goal post, repair of ground surface and fence repair. Play area now in use.

### **Allotments**

The allotments are thriving, with about 28 plot holders at present and a number on the waiting list. The allotments are looked after by a sub-committee chaired by Councillor Bill Ratcliffe, with Assistant Clerk Ann Haussauer dealing with the paperwork. An annual allotment visit is arranged every June so that all members of the Recreation Committee can inspect the site and discuss any problems with the plot holders. An allotment forum is also arranged during the visit, chaired by Bill Ratcliffe to talk with plot holders.

### **Village Green**

Our village green has been used on a regular basis throughout the year. Fairs, car boot sales and the busiest night of the year on Carnival Night, as well as a local kick-about area. It will continue to be used regularly in the future.

### **Parish Council Sports Representative**

The Council is lucky enough to have ex-District & Parish Councillor Tony Rudgard to fill this post, keeping us updated on the latest news from Bordon & Whitehill Sports Council. At the moment he is keeping an eye on the open Space, Sport and Recreation study being organised by East Hampshire District Council.

### **Recreation Needs**

The local plan states that the village needs more playing fields. To that end, our District Councillor Mrs James has been having informal talks with the District Council's Planning Dept in an attempt to find substitute areas which are available. This could be a long term project, but the Council will be trying to push this project ahead sooner rather than later.

### **Recreation Committee Budget**

Budget for 2007/2008 will increase by £1,000 next year. Costs this year include: a new Four Wheel drive vehicle as the old one was un-repairable and a new grass cutting machine, and a training course for the ground staff.

## **73/07.6 Parish Council (Cllr B Hope, Chairman)**

Liphook is very much a vibrant and active community. There are a wealth of local organisations that underpin the community, made up of many and varied volunteers who make such a huge and significant contribution to the life of the local area. I would like to offer my sincere thanks and gratitude to all who play such an important role in our society and who make such a big difference to all our daily lives. Liphook remains an excellent place to live.

It is an environment which is tidy, attractive and still maintains a village feel. We owe so much to the many people who keep the village alive and I would like to thank especially all those who work so tirelessly, and give up so much of their personal time to enable us to have such pride in the village. Liphook in Bloom are one group in particular who, despite varying weather conditions, repeatedly turn out to keep the village looking so attractive. Also, the Carnival Committee who continue year after year to keep the carnival running. It is no easy task when so much depends on so many giving up time to make it work. It is certainly one of the best Carnivals in the area and we should all be very proud of their efforts. Of course there are many others, too numerous to mention, some of whom have been mentioned by my colleagues.

For your information, the Parish Office is used by 8,500 people each year and its use is increasing. It is valued by community and its usefulness is only possible as a result of the tremendous efforts by the staff who have to deal daily with a myriad of issues, enquiries and a mountain of paperwork. I would therefore like to offer my thanks to the office staff and all other council employees who play such an important role in keeping things moving.

The Council have kept the costs of running the Parish within inflation, despite a number of challenges, by remaining efficient and effective and making best use of resources. Hiring out of facilities such as the pavilion for the Willows Nursery, monthly cinema at LMH, and the grass cutting contract with Bohunt School, all help to provide income to offset the precept.

The Planning Committee continues to keep local development to a sensible and sustainable level and this helps to retain the feel and character of the village. The council also consider it important to continue providing recreational facilities for the enjoyment of the community and does as much as it can to support this. The Heritage Centre project continues to take shape and once again is made possible by the many contributions from members of the public and those who are working hard to develop it. We are, of course, pleased that the A3 Tunnel is now in progress which will help to maintain, sensible traffic levels in the area and may also help to address some of the problems of rat-running.

After the May elections, the new council will continue to have their work cut out in future months and issues such as the OSU site, Playing Field provisions and Vandalism and Anti-Social Behaviour, will need to be monitored and addressed as they occur, as they have and will always be.

Finally, I would like to thank all the councillors who give up their time freely and voluntarily on a regular basis and who, I know, all have a common purpose, that is of maintaining Liphook as a desirable, safe and pleasant place to live in. That concludes my report, thank you all for taking the time tonight to attend and taking an interest in what we do.



**74/07 ANNUAL REPORT – DISTRICT COUNCILLOR (CLLR MRS E HOPE)**

EHDC have had a busy four years leading up to the local elections on 3 May. We have been supported by the officers at EHDC who have worked tirelessly in the last four years with us to provide some of the successes that you hear. One of most important things at the moment is recycling. We have really moved forward in recycling and have won a government award for that. There is an increase going on now to kerbside glass collection which is being rolled out now to the whole district and EHDC will recycle 40% of waste in the future. The aim is to make the Council carbon neutral by 2011. EHDC has granted more than £1million to local voluntary bodies over the last four years. Liphook voluntary bodies have benefited from these grants. We have won awards for the Rural Play Concept and the general Citizen's programme is continuing well. Working together with the Police to introduce safer neighbourhoods and police teams are very important, and there are huge changes in the way they are operating. This very new to Hampshire, and in Surrey who are a few years ahead with Neighbourhood policing. It is working very well and I am looking forward to seeing it work in Hampshire. We now have police CSOs and working together with the Police is very important to try and address issues going on such as vandalism. We have held Council Tax rises to less than the rate of inflation for the past 4 years, and have exceeded on Affordable Housing building targets every year since 2004 and again have won a government award for that. A Council Justice board has been set up to tackle deprivation across the District. People will say the area where is the deprivation; there is deprivation in every area we live in England. The Hindhead Tunnel is underway, which is a very exciting project. The A3 was an exciting project and there were action groups all over the place which Cllr Tough will recall. The regeneration project at Gales Brewery is taking place and the brewery is closed and the area is being regenerated. There is also the Whitehill and Bordon Opportunity Group and a leaflet is available; these are both exciting projects. A panel meeting was held on 7 February which was about our climate, our Council and our actions. This was about climate change and there were a lot of suggestions made at the meeting and I felt people were on board with change and there was quite a lot of interest. I would like to thank the all the officers employed by EHDC that have worked with us and enabled us to make positive changes to take place in the area, without that we would have been unable to do it. There is always work to do but to work with such a really good team at EHDC and other members who are colleagues is very positive. Thank you.

**QUESTIONS**

**Cllr Tough**. I referred to the village bus service and how the Parish Council had guaranteed to cover the shortfall. Why did EHDC only agree to funding for one year when there were Developer's Contributions available for alternative transport?

**Cllr James** Temporary glitch which is being sorted out.

**75/07 ANNUAL REPORT – COUNTY COUNCILLOR (CLLR S C JAMES)**

Thank you Mr Chairman and good evening Councillors, Ladies and Gentlemen. In talking with fellow councillors around Hampshire about their workload, I have become increasingly aware of and grateful for the fact that this parish is so well served by the Parish Office staff and councilors such that many issues never reach me, as they have been efficiently handled by Tony Groves, Ann Haussauer and Gina Spencer. It is a joy to work with them and my thanks to them for all they do.

Firstly, may I just update you on your local member's responsibilities at the County Council, as there have been some changes since last year. I am a member of the Regulatory Committee which handles all county planning matters; sit on the South East Adoption Panel; I am Chairman of the East Central HAT (more of which later) and a member of The Committee for Rural Hampshire, The Bohunt Centre Management Committee, The River Wey Trust and the Bramshott Educational Trust. I have also sat on two Appeals Panels; one relating to an unfair dismissal claim and the other regarding pension underpayment. Both were illuminating experiences.

Perhaps I could explain a little bit more about the HAT mentioned earlier. This stands for Hampshire Action Team and is an initiative to improve a) the Council's (both Councillors and Officers) engagement with residents b) residents' understanding of the Council's activities and c) Councillors understanding of the issues which are exercising residents' minds. The East Central HAT comprises East Hampshire, Havant and Winchester but the majority of our meetings are held as three mini-Hats. So the East Hampshire Min-Hat has held three listening events in the past months; one with District Councillors, one with Parish and Town councillors and one with representatives of community and voluntary groups and other partner organisations. These have been valuable sessions which have thrown up a number of issues and based on this input the HAT will be setting its work programme later this year. I can tell you that one of the recurring issues that arose was highways maintenance.

During 2007/8, the County Council is planning to spend £1.57 billion on services for the over 1.25 million Hampshire residents. The main areas of expenditure are Education (£721 million), Adult Social Care (£219 million), Children's Services (£138 million) and Highways, Planning & Transport (£61 million). This requires a 4.9% increase in HCC council tax. The principal reasons for this increase are the very low level of Government grant received by HCC. To illustrate this, HCC, excluding education, receives £96 per head of population whereas Durham County Council receives £285 and Kingston upon Hull receives £459 per head., and Fife Council £635 per head. The other reason is severe financial pressures on adult social care provision. Over the next five years it is predicted that those over 85 years old in Hampshire will increase by 20% and it costs approximately £23,000 per annum to provide an individual nursing home place. Around 13,000 residents are currently receiving adult care each day of the year.

Nevertheless, HCC remains rated an excellent Council by the Audit Commission and that is not an easy achievement. I have experience of dealing with the Audit Commission. I would

like to close by offering my apologies to the Parish for the appalling delay in getting the Headley Road Zebra Crossing. I have been looking at the comments on the local website and I agree with most of them. I am sorry it has taken so long and I have been trying hard. Electricity will be supplied at the end of the month and then we will be moving on to looking at ways of getting to and from school as safe as possible. That concludes my report Mr Chairman and thank you for allowing me to address your Annual Parish Meeting.

**QUESTIONS**

**Mr Gilbert.** When is money going to be spent along Hewshott Lane? The top priorities are hedge cutting, drainage, potholes, and kerbside weeds. There has been no maintenance for 10 years, which is becoming more dangerous and work is not being carried out.

**Cllr James.** Will find out the answer and get back to you as soon as possible.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting for a two minute break.

**76/07 THE PLANING PROCESS - MR CHRIS MURRAY/MS JULIA MANSI.**

Chris Murray and Julia Mansi form EHDC gave a presentation entitled “Introduction to Planning” (presentation notes attached at Appendix 1). This was followed by a question and answer session.

**EHDC Planning Presentation - Summary of Questions/Answers.**

Queries were raised about the deadlines for considering applications, and public attending and speaking at District Council planning meetings, representations, and the process of delegated decisions. Officers explained the processes, the timeframes and the flexibility with large applications when this is discussed in advance with officers. Chris Murray explained that the eight week deadline is set in stone and the District Council is measured on this target. Concern was expressed about the problems of dealing with applications in digital format and how this would be addressed. Would notebook computers be provided for visits to neighbours? Paper copy could continue to be sent to Parish Office, and plans could be inspected at EHDC or online, though this may not help people who cannot use digital equipment. A question was asked regarding the date of effect of the Turner report; Chris Murray said he was not familiar with the situation over the report.

**CONCLUSION** - This concluded the business of the meeting at 9.15 pm.

Confirmed at the meeting held on 10 April 2007

Signed .....

Chairman