

SHENLEY PARISH ANNUAL MEETING

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 16 MARCH 2016, AT
7.30PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL, 108 LONDON ROAD, SHENLEY.

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Nicky Beaton, Annette Edel, Wayne Grossman, Gavin O'Sullivan and Anthony Spencer.

Councillor William Susman, Chairman of the Parish Council formally opened the proceedings by welcoming everybody present. The Chairman took the opportunity to welcome County Councillor Morris Bright. Thirty local residents/electors were present. The Chair invited the Parish Clerk, Amanda Leboff, to record the Minutes with the agreement of the meeting.

Copies of the Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 19 March 2015 had been distributed together with copies of the audited accounts for the year 2014/15 and the Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2015. It was agreed by those present to accept the Minutes as read, and with the consent of the meeting, the Chairman signed the Minutes as a true record. There were no matters arising from the above Minutes.

The Chairman then proceeded to read a copy of his report on the activities of the Parish Council for the past year as follows:-

Ladies and gentlemen good evening and welcome to my fellow Parish Councillors, Borough Councillors and County Councillors.

Writing this report got me thinking about what made us as The Parish Council different. What do we do, what value do we add that makes us not just another local government expense?

Whilst we can influence and chase we are not responsible for the roads, schools, policing and social welfare etc. This means that we have a blank canvas to give what I would describe as "added value", the things that make Shenley the Village that people enjoy living in and others aspire to live in. We want to be able to enhance people's experience of living in Shenley and look at bringing together the community and improving the quality of the lives of residents.

Last year for the first time since 2002 there were more nominations for the nine positions on the Parish Council than there were seats available so local elections were held at the same time as the general election on Thursday 7th May.

I was elected as Chairman at the AGM that followed the elections and the committee structures were approved. Our Committees and working parties are Future Initiatives, Finance, Media, Allotments, Sir Richard Cox, Highways and Neighbourhood Planning.

The most emotive issue of the year was the debate over the establishment of a right of way between Grace Avenue and Permain Close. There were two or three packed meetings where the topic was discussed. It was great to see people standing up for issues that they felt so strongly about. Subsequent to this an application was been submitted to Herts County Council who will make a determination in due course.

This year under the leadership and initiative of Councillor Beaton we have formed Action for a Cleaner Shenley (ACS). They undertake various jobs within the village such as clearing pathways. There is a never ending list of jobs to be done to improve the village and as such more volunteers needed. Much thanks must go to Councillor Beaton and her team of volunteers.

Our biggest ongoing issue has been the inconsiderate parking at Shenley Primary School. We have been working with the School, who take the issue very seriously and the Police and am pleased to say that the Police are now patrolling more frequently and not only issuing tickets but undertaking home visits to the persistent offenders.

Ongoing projects that we are investigating include, purchase of outdoor gym equipment, feature lighting at the pond and cage, new pathway and seating at Harris Lane playing fields and replacement of pavilion building at Harris Lane. We are also working on a project to reduce speeding on Black Lion Hill, London Road and Porters Park Drive and lobbying for a bus shelter opposite Tesco's. We are doing our best to improve communication and as such are upgrading our website and we now have a Facebook page. I would like to thank Perry Newton for his continuing voluntary work on the website. Thanks to villagers Guy Beaton and Dee Nakrani we have been producing a fantastic seasonal publication "Shenley Village Matters" that is distributed throughout the village aimed at telling residents what's going on.

Some of our greater achievements that have improved the lives and lowered the stress level of residents are; the resurfacing of London Road, installation of a defibrillator at the hub thanks to donations from villagers, dropped kerbs for disabled access in various roads in Porters Park, laybys and roadworks to alleviate flooding and passing difficulties in Rectory Lane, the removal of a dumped caravan from Rectory Lane, and last but not least the clearing of the drains on Radlett Lane that had caused the flooding and appalling delays that we all experienced earlier in the year.

For the seniors of the Village we ran three trips; a cultural trip to Blenheim Palace, a summer trip to Broadstairs and a Christmas trip to Miss Saigon.

We arranged a number of Village events that included Halloween, Remembrance Sunday, Chanukah candle lighting, Santa Claus on his sleigh, Santa Claus at the Cage and a new initiative this year was our very own Christmas Light Switch-on thanks to our resident celebrity Ben Caplan from "Call the Midwife".

We have a number of upcoming events. We are participating in the Beacon Lighting initiative to celebrate the Queens 90th birthday on 21st April; this will be a joint event with Shenley Park Trust. The Right Honourable Oliver Dowden our MP has agreed to come and spend the evening with us on Saturday 21st May. We are also looking to encourage friends, neighbours and faith groups to hold street parties on 12th June as part of the national street party celebrations for the Queens 90th birthday.

We have a fantastic Village that we can all be proud of but none of this would not be possible without the hard work from Amanda our Clerk who works tirelessly to ensure that everything runs smoothly and is only too glad to run with the "mad" ideas and schemes that we come up with.

In addition, I must thank Mr & Mrs Gough for looking after our open spaces and hedges, my fellow Parish Councillors and all our residents who turnout for the events that we organise which makes our work so worthwhile.

The meeting received the Clerk's report on the Sir Richard Cox's charity.

The Chairman then went through the accounts, as well as the Parish Council's budget for 2016/17.

The Chairman then invited Councillor Gilligan to update the meeting regarding the Allotment Committee.

There were several questions asked under 'Questions and Matters of Local Interest', which were answered:-

1. New development - contractors mess

Complaints re: the mess on the pavement and obstruction of pavement by vans etc. by Griggs homes and other building contractors.

Solution- the Parish Council has offered parking in Pursley field to Griggs's contractors. Grigg's have undertaken to remake the grass verges.
Re: persistent obstructions of the pavement by contractors, residents must report this to planning enforcement at Hertsmere and they will take the appropriate enforcement action.

2. State of the roads

Roads are looked after by county council, but issues must be reported using the online reporting tool.

There unfortunately is a limited budget. All reports are triaged and then appropriate action is taken. Unfortunately, there is no effective way of communicating the results but this is an area that the Parish Council are looking at to see if it can be improved as in the long run this would save a lot of stress etc.

3. Increase in the parish council tax

Largely to take care of the reduction of grant received from Borough Council and also to allow us a greater budget to spend on landscaping and maintenance to make the village look better.

4. Replacement of village sign

After five years the village sign needed attention due to weathering. This was discussed at Parish Council meetings and it was decided to re-draw Phoebe's sign and place it by the seating area at the other end of the pond. Phoebe's parents were consulted and they were happy with the suggestion. The new sign will be our village logo, which if looked at is equally quirky and certainly non-conformist.

5. Good neighbour scheme

Details were given about a scheme run by another village whereby a rota of volunteers are available to take for calls from residents who may need assistance with shopping or transport to hospital appointments etc. The volunteers in turn then arrange for someone to provide the support required. It was agreed that we would look at implementing the scheme and would look at initially moving this forward with the support of the faith groups.

The Chairman thanked his fellow Councillors and everybody for attending.

The meeting ended at 8.30p.m.

March 2017

Chairman