

CHANDLER'S FORD PARISH COUNCIL – ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

20 May 2013

Chandler's Ford Methodist Church, Winchester Road, Chandler's Ford

(7.30 pm – 9.08 pm)

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Atkinson (Chairman); Councillors Bicknell, Boyes, Davidovitz, Mrs Gault,, Ms Grajewski, Ms Hodgson, Hughes, Olson, Pragnell, Mrs Roberts and Streeter

APOLGIES: Cllrs Broadhurst, Bull, Cole, Hosegood and Luffman

In attendance: Sgt O'Hanlon, PCSO Strange, Stephen Mursell Parish Clerk and 19 members of public

382. CHAIRMANS REPORT

The Chairman provided to those present a summary of the Parish Council's activities over the last twelve months.

The report is attached to these minutes as Appendix A.

383. COMMUNITY SAFETY MATTERS

The Chairman introduced Sgt O Hanlon of the Eastleigh Safer Neighbourhood Team who updated those present with statistics on the incidence of crime across the Eastleigh area and in particular across Chandler's Ford. He advised residents that he lives locally and therefore understands the range of issues that concern residents and believes in the values of neighbourhood policing. Residents were advised that the incidents of recorded crime were decreasing across Chandler's Ford at a greater rate than the average for Hampshire. Sgt O Hanlon recognised that there was still room for improvement and would strive to make those improvements. He recognised the importance of youth provision and welcomed the construction of a MUGA at Hiltingbury Recreation Ground.

Sgt O Hanlon clarified the question of the legality of parking on grass verges and assured residents that he would support the Parish Council's initiatives to reduce the level of inconsiderate parking. He was also aware that residents were concerned with speeding in the parish and requested that those present advised him of incidents of persistent speeding and subject to an assessment of the practicalities of speed enforcement in those particular areas enforcement measures would be pursued.

Members of the public raised matters of individual concern, including obstruction of the highways with cars parked opposite each other; the speed of answering 101 number; the follow up of reported crimes; general verge parking issues and verge parking particularly at Velmore. It was agreed that details of police initiatives and contact details

would be posted to the Parish Council website.

The Chairman then introduced Janet Skiba, Division Commander Girl Guiding in Chandler's Ford who advised those present of the growth of Girl Guiding in Chandler's Ford. The membership was now 609 girls of all ages attending groups and 129 leaders together with a long waiting list of girls wishing to join the groups. Janet advised those present that the Guide building at Ramalley was suffering from major building defects with a resulting impact on groups having to find alternative accommodation. As a result Girl Guiding was currently undergoing a major fundraising campaign to rebuild the Guide hut. It was agreed that details of Girl Guiding in Chandler's Ford would be posted to the Parish Council website.

The Chairman then introduced Barry Chinchin of the Eastleigh and District Local History Society who wished to address the meeting on the future of the Society. There was only one member of the Society who was still active and that there an open meeting planned to discuss the future of the Society. Barry encouraged as many people as possible to attend the meeting and consider steps to ensure the Society continued to survive. Details of the meeting were to be posted on the Parish Council website.

384. RESIDENT QUESTIONS

Residents and members present were very concerned about the construction of the MUGA especially the size and siting of the facility. The Chairman advised those present that she had expressed the views of the Parish Council to the Local Area Committee and following that meeting the Parish Council were not made aware of the final design and layout of the facility.

It was suggested that the MUGA did not appear to be fit for its intended use and if that proved to be the case the Parish Council would make representations on these issues to Eastleigh Borough Council.

APPENDIX A - CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 20 MAY 2013

It seems incredible to think that a year ago we were about to start the celebrations of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee with many street parties being held in Chandler's Ford – and our Parish joined in those celebrations by lighting a Beacon at the Hiltingbury recreation grounds.

It was a splendid evening – the weather was kind to us and many picnicked in the grounds before all joining together in the Hilt to watch the Jubilee celebrations screened live – the atmosphere was amazing especially as we all watched our own Beacon being lit by the Mayor of Eastleigh – followed by singing the National Anthem - a very memorable occasion.

Not all the events in the Parish Council diary are so exciting – but the regular meetings of Council and our committees have achieved much this year.

Since being formed one of the main objectives of this Council has been to start taking over and managing the assets of the Parish, and we decided that our first requests for transfer to our ownership would be the recreation grounds at both Hiltingbury, Fryern and Pennine Way, together with their respective pavilions, and also all the children's play areas.

It has been a long process working with Eastleigh Borough Council negotiating a satisfactory arrangement which ensures that the Parish's assets are handed over in good repair, and also for us to understand the management processes so we are able to monitor their maintenance.

We have now completed those negotiations with the result that we will be monitoring the maintenance of these assets over the coming year, and we will be assuming full ownership and responsibility for them from 1 April 2014.

Once we have ownership the associated costs currently charged by EBC for the maintenance of these assets will be transferred from their Special Expenses budget to the Parish Council precept, so, although our precept will increase next year to accommodate these charges there will be an equal reduction in the Special Expenses charge made by EBC. Thus, all other things being equal the overall Council Tax charge to you will be the same.

Taking ownership of these assets will be an immense achievement for our Council, which is still only 3 years old! It will also enable us to consider improvements to these assets by working with the community to obtain grant funding for suitable projects.

We have taken special interest in the planned new Hampshire Waste Recycling Centre to be sited on land at Stoneycroft Rise (off Chestnut Avenue) as this site is adjacent to Freespace, which has a BMX track and is frequented by many of our youth.

We had serious concerns that the new HWRC may affect the safety of the children due to increased traffic movements – this would also impact on local residents.

As a result of our representations the plans now include a shared cycle/footpath to the approach to Freespace; extra lighting and additional signage. Our representations can make a difference.

We published our first Newsletter this year – the first of regular communications with you – and it has been very well received in the Parish. We have particularly welcomed the feedback you have given us.

Many residents have raised concerns about damaged verges and inconsiderate parking.

We are continuing to work with the Police to try to identify the culprits but it is not an easy task. We are also taking forward a motion addressed to EBC in which we will be asking that before planning permission is granted for any development/house improvement that the applicant must place a deposit with EBC which will only be returned once verges in the development area are restored to an acceptable condition.

This will not resolve all the issues but maybe it will be a start, as we are proud of Chandler's Ford and do not want to see the appearance marred by damaged verges.

We are pleased that we have been able to continue our support for the police in Chandler's Ford by part funding two of the PCSO's in our Parish – they perform an amazing service for us and we really appreciate their presence in the Parish.

I was particularly privileged this year to be asked to present the certificates at the PCSO's 'passing out' ceremony and delighted to learn that one of those passing out would be joining the team here.

We have worked well with the Police over the last few years, and thus we were sorry to learn that Sgt Shaun Welsh was moving away – but equally delighted to welcome Sgt Mark O'Hanlon who is taking Shaun's place - and I am sure the good relationship we have established will continue.

We have on-going concerns in the Parish regarding vandalism – particularly at the Hiltingbury recreation grounds, and we are very grateful for the presence of the Street Pastors in the Parish who work tirelessly every Friday evening talking to the young people in the area – and providing them with the much loved lollipops!

We are working with both the Street Pastors and the police to develop youth initiatives which we hope will provide some alternative activities for our young people.

We also spend time talking to the junior schools telling them about the work of the Parish Council and also asking them what other facilities they would like to see in Chandler's Ford – always a very interesting conversation, and some of their ideas have much merit.

The children are always very keen on improving the environment, and we feel we have gone some way to accommodate this by introducing the Chandler's Ford's in Bloom competition.

The event was held for the first time last year, and we are running it again this year – the entries are of a very high standard – even last year when the weather was so wet and cold! So this year we are looking forward to seeing some wonderful garden displays.

Ensuring the character of Chandler's Ford does not change – except of course for the better! – is part of our monitoring role, and it was with this in mind that we are progressing the adoption of a Neighbourhood Plan for our Parish.

Neighbourhood planning means that the Parish Council can develop policy documents, but only after consultation with the community. Through consultation residents will be able to say where they would like development to take place and also where they would like development not to take place. It is therefore about shaping future development and not stopping future development.

The advantage of a Neighbourhood Plan rather than a Community Plan being that a Neighbourhood Plan will carry statutory weight in its decisions.

Last year we promoted the Fryern Funtasia and despite the weather we had unbelievable support from the Community – so much so we decided to promote it again this year.

The Mayor of Eastleigh opened the Funtasia on May Bank holiday and the children of Fryern Junior School started the afternoon's events with wonderful displays of singing and dancing. It's a Knockout took centre stage, but all the events were a 'knock-out' and we were very grateful for all the support we received from the community.

The numbers attending were even higher than last year – well over 4,000, making the Fryern Funtasia a day to remember – even the weather was in our favour!

Finally I would like to thank my fellow Councillors for all their hard work during the year and particularly our Parish Clerk for his ongoing support at all our events.