



BRAMLEY PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of Annual Assembly meeting 25th April 2019

Apologies were received from Mr Martin Foley and Mr Maurice Byham. 7 members of the public attended the meeting.

1. The minutes of the meeting held on 19th April 2018 were approved and signed by Mrs Stern.
2. There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of 19th April 2018.
3. Mrs Stern, Chairman of Bramley Parish Council, then presented her report for the year as follows:

April 2019 Chairman's Report

Good evening and welcome everybody. Thank you for turning out for our Annual Assembly.

I would like to start as I did last year by thanking Kathy Victor, our Parish Clerk for her untiring efforts in assisting the Parish Council to run smoothly. Amongst her multiple duties she organises meetings, takes minutes, keeps us informed, responds to resident enquiries and complaints, applies for funding for various projects, prepares the annual budget and financial reports, organises the groundsmen, negotiating insurance renewal, conducting the health and safety assessment, organises essential village hall maintenance, negotiates power contracts for village hall and village lighting, garbage collection, cricket pavilion repairs and on top of this, Kathy also produces the Bramley Update.

Also, my thanks to my fellow Parish Councillors for their support and hard work over the past year. Everybody on the committee has a role. Patrick Molineux – Planning committee and Neighbourhood Plan team, Richard Seaborne - Vice Chair, Borough Councillor, Highways committee and Neighbourhood Plan team, Maurice Byham - Borough Councillor and Neighbourhood Plan team, Patrick Leung – link to local businesses, Sue O'Connell - Library, Tony Coleman – Resilience group, Martin Foley - Downs Link and Tom Hughes – Neighbourhood Plan team and Stone Barn project.

Sadly, Sue O'Connell, who has served on the Parish Council for 15 years has decided not to stand again. She will be hanging up her parish council hat at the end of this month. Sue, on behalf of the Parish and the Council, I thank you for your outstanding contribution to the community and wish you all the best in your future activities.

Also, I would like to mention Maurice Byham. The Parish has been fortunate to have been represented on Waverley Borough Council by 2 of our Parish Councillors for many years, one of those being Maurice Byham. Maurice will continue to serve on the Parish Council but is standing down from Waverley. I would like to thank Maurice for his dedicated service to our community.

Everything we do is published in the minutes and summarised in the Bramley Update so, if you have been diligently reading these, you should be well informed about what has gone on in the past year. In addition, we now have a Bramley Update Facebook group so events such as roadworks, traffic incidents, traveller incursions, election reminders, consultations, etc can be reported immediately to and by our community.

To avoid duplication, I am not going to say anything about the Neighbourhood Plan in my report as this will be covered separately in item 4 of the agenda. However, it has been a major activity over the past year and the sub-committee, chaired by Dr Robert Stern, deserves a huge amount of recognition and thanks for the effort they have put into it.



A major event last year was the incursion onto Gosden Common by a group of travellers. These unwelcome visitors vandalised the cricket club's sprinkler system, started a fire, left behind a huge amount of trash and deposited the most disgusting souvenirs of their stay behind the cricket pavilion. Kathy Victor was outstanding in her handling of the situation and co-ordinating with Guildford Borough Council, Waverley Borough Council and the Police. To prevent such unauthorised access being repeated, the Parish Council has installed posts around the common and 2 locked access gates.

Gosden Common lies in Waverley but is owned by Guildford Borough Council and rented by Bramley Parish Council in perpetuity for a peppercorn rent. When the travellers arrived, there was a minor delay in starting eviction proceedings because legally, it was Guildford Borough Council's responsibility as landlord to organise this but they handed responsibility to Waverley Borough Council as the land is in Waverley. The Parish Council is therefore exploring whether it may be worth taking ownership of the land from Guildford if they are willing to sell it on. There will be costs involved which will be payable by Bramley Parish Council: a surveyor's fee, a valuation fee and legal transfer fees. As a first step, the Council has agreed to pay for a valuation of the land.

Last year, I reported that Surrey Council Council volunteers had cleared vegetation from the Downs Link and a sub-contractor then came in and mechanically cleaned the path. I am pleased to report that Bramley Parish Council has now purchased our own mechanical path sweeper for future path cleaning.

Stone Barn: It was agreed last year that the Stone Barn next to the Village Hall would be converted into commercial premises which would generate an income. A preliminary survey late last year revealed evidence of bats in the barn. A full bat survey over 8 weeks between May and August is therefore necessary and will delay the project.

To commemorate the end of the Great War, 3 Silent Soldiers were purchased, one by the Parish Council and 2 by Bramley Village Society and Bramley History Society. These were sited one at each end and one in the centre of the Village. Sadly, two of these were stolen. It is a sad reflection of the times we live in and the Council has noted an increase in crime in our area as apparent police presence has fallen. I will read a report from our Neighbourhood Police team at item 5 of the agenda.

The Library continues to thrive and the Parish Council is extremely grateful to all the volunteers and particularly the team managing day-to-day library operations. New volunteers are always extremely welcome. The library committee, in addition to the day-to-day-running of the library, organises a wide variety of interesting, creative and active events for junior readers including storytelling sessions, summer reading challenge, rhyme time, etc. The lease of the library has been renewed for another year, and Surrey County Council has given permission for a Citizens Advice terminal to be placed in the library.

As usual, I would also like to thank Bramley Village Society, the Bonfire Committee, the Bramley Fete Committee, Bramley History Society and all the other local organisations who contribute so much to life in our village. Without these organisations and their volunteers, Bramley would not be the splendid community that it is.

I am disappointed that because only 9 candidates submitted nomination papers to Waverley and we have 9 seats on council, there will be no election contest for Bramley Parish Council. Therefore, the composition of the council will remain mainly unchanged with Sue O'Connell leaving to be replaced by Bob Stern. I hope that more candidates will stand in future.

Going forward, your Parish Council will do its best to continue to maintain and further the interests, needs and wellbeing of our residents.



And that it is from me. This has been my third and last year as Chairman of the Parish Council and it has been an honour to serve as such.

Thank you.

Francesca Stern, Chairman, Bramley Parish Council

4. Report on the Bramley Neighbourhood Plan

Mrs Stern reported that the Neighbourhood Plan sub-committee is chaired by Bob Stern and includes Richard Seaborne, Maurice Byham, Tom Hughes and Richard Farr (Bramley Village Society) with support from Kathy Victor and the occasional support / interface from myself.

The Neighbourhood Plan is Bramley's statement of how it wishes to develop residentially, commercially, environmentally and from the perspective of its infrastructure over the period to 2032 and will also act as a guide for homeowners and developers for what will be acceptable and unacceptable in Bramley.

Waverley Borough Council in its Local Plan Part 1 sets out a housing target for Bramley of a minimum of 90 units over the stated period. 87 units have already been built. The Parish Council carried out a housing needs survey in 2017 and estimated a higher demand in line with projected population growth over the period. To that end, the Neighbourhood Plan identifies sites where housing units can be built and seeks to provide a higher proportion of affordable and 2 or 3 bedroom units as identified by the housing survey. This could take the total to more than 126 units.

The draft plan became ready for the formal consultation period by the end of 2018 and the six week consultation period started on 19th January with six drop-in sessions held over the period. We had over 50 residents attend the drop-in sessions and received feedback from these as well as many who were unable to attend, alongside formal comments from organisations such as Waverley Borough Council, Wey & Arun Canal Trust and Natural England.

The sub-committee are now working on responding to the feedback received and amending the draft plan where considered appropriate. This is still ongoing and will take some time to complete.

Two key issues arose from the consultation. Firstly, land at Smithbrook Kilns had been identified as suitable for development of up to 24 one- and two-bedroom homes for rent. We have since been informed by Waverley Borough Council that, in a change from their position in November 2018, there remains sufficient doubt over the land's status as a brownfield site within the Green Belt, that unless the owners can obtain a Certificate of Lawfulness stating it is Brownfield, it is possible that development would not be allowed on the site.

Secondly, the draft plan had a policy BNP-I6 which retained the Downs Link through the village as a sustainable transport corridor and did not support use of the Downs Link for creation of a section of the Wey & Arun Canal. There were objections from Waverley Borough Council on the negativity of this policy and from the Wey & Arun Canal Trust. After further consideration with Waverley, policy BNP-I6 has been deleted and use of the Downs Link is referred to under Waverley Borough Council's Local Plan Part 1 Policy M8.

Waverley Borough Council Local Plan Part 1 Policy M8 is a retained policy from the Local Plan 2002 for the Downs Link. A new policy on the Downs Link is coming forward in the emerging Local Plan Part 2 which will replace policy M8 once Local Plan Part 2 is adopted. M8 states:



“The route of the former Guildford to Cranleigh railway line will be safeguarded as an important sustainable movement corridor. Development in safeguarded areas which would prejudice the future implementation of transport schemes will not be permitted.”

A third consideration is the fear by some residents that listing all the sites with potential for development would attract developers even if they had been rejected by the sub-committee’s analysis as being unsuitable. However, the evidence is that, if a site is not included in a Neighbourhood Plan as suitable, then any application to develop it will automatically be rejected at Waverley Borough Council level.

When the amendments and responses are complete, the committee hopes that the amended draft Neighbourhood Plan will be ready to be submitted to Waverley for their 6 week consultation period in June or July.

5. Report from Surrey Police on Policing in Bramley

A report was received from PCSO Snow as follows:

Bramley Specialised Neighbourhood Team comprises Sergeant Claire Sutherland, PC Barry Baldwin and PCSO Rural Crimes Officer Phil Snow. Bramley is grouped with other natural neighbourhoods including Shamley Green, Blackheath, Wonerish, Hascombe and Winterfold for crime reporting and analysis.

Police.uk managed by the Home Office provides detailed statistics on crime in the neighbourhood – <https://www.police.uk>. Use the Find Your Neighbourhood field. Local officers will only report crimes of public interest in neighbourhood policing reports.

In the year ending September 2018, the crime rate in Waverley was lower than the average crime rate across similar areas in the UK. Waverley is fourth lowest with Vale of White Horse, Horsham and Chiltern reporting less.

In the year ending September 2018 the crime rate in Waverley was lower than the average for the whole of the Surrey force area. Of the 11 boroughs, Waverley recorded the lowest crime just over 40 per 1,000 population compared with the highest, Spelthorne just over 70/1,000. The force average is 61.46/1,000.

Bramley crimes reported 1st January 2019 to 25th April 2019. Crimes of public interest: started the year with reports of criminal damage to vehicles caused by projectiles. These coincide with poaching and the end of the open season (1st February) for game birds. Arrests had been made. Other crimes include:

- X 3 shed break-ins (non-dwelling burglary) in the Linersh Wood area
- x 2 business burglaries involving the theft of two dumper trucks. This is a theme across Waverley where further dumper trucks had been stolen in the Shamley Green area
- x 1 residential burglary in February where cash and jewellery had been taken
- criminal damage involving a resident’s front door being smashed and a shop window
- theft of items from a store and attempted theft of items from a shop
- taking a motor vehicle without consent.

Police dealt with a number of road related offences for speeding in the High Street, Birtley and Grafham areas. There was one arrest for a drink driver who was later charged.

Other crimes reported were typically related to fraud and vulnerability. These were generally scams involving identity fraud, scam mail, dating scams, internet scams, banking and mobile. Contact having been made via phone, mail and the internet. Police advise to Keep Calm and Hang Up. Advice leaflets are available from the Police, Waverley Borough Council and Citizens Advice Bureau.



6. The Clerk then updated the meeting on Bramley Parish Council financial matters.
 - a. The balance of BPC audited accounts at 31st March 2018 stood at £78,440 which included earmarked reserves of £60,000. The Parish Council employed an experienced consultant who thoroughly carried out an internal audit of the accounts, prior to submission for external audit. The accounts were fully approved by the internal auditor. The external audit incurred one minor qualification for the inclusion of a direct debit for £214 in the 2017/18 accounts that were not in fact paid until the 2018/19 financial year. The Clerk amended the finance records accordingly.
 - b. The early indication for BPC accounts to 31st March 2019 is that there is a cash balance of £73,165, with same amount of cash reserves.

Receipts:

The Parish Council received a Precept of £40,861, a Council Tax Support Grant of £595 and a Compensatory Grant to help fund the maintenance of recreational facilities of £2,395. These grants have been decreasing year on year for some years. We expect this trend to continue for the Compensatory Grant in future years. Waverley Borough Council has informed us that there will be no Council Tax Support Grant in 2020/21.

A grant of £3,000 was received from our Surrey County Councillor for works on the Downs Link in Bramley. Some of this grant has been used to cut back and clean the path in 2018, repairs to the station platform where tree roots were growing through the surface and the purchase of a sweeping machine that will be used to clean the Downs Link and other footpaths.

Another grant of just over £3,400 was received from Surrey Highways to pay predominantly for vegetation clearance works alongside the A281.

£19,551 was received on hiring the Village Hall, a small increase of £545 on the previous year.

£2,780 was received from hire of the meeting room at the Library. An increase of £780 on the previous year.

The Library received additional income of £2,717 for the year. This is made up of a grant of £500 from the Village Fete committee, a grant of £736 from Surrey Libraries to purchase new furniture for the Library, small financial donations from members of the public and reading groups and sales of jute bags, coffee & tea, printing, photocopying and book donations from the public.

The Parish Council received a rental income of £1,700 for the barns and sheds located at the Village Hall.

Payments:

The Parish Council undertook a number of major projects over the last 12 months, as follows:

- Purchase and installation of new security gates at Gosden Common at a cost of just over £2,000. Around £1,200 was spent following the traveller incursion on Gosden Common during the summer of 2018 including purchase and installation of new posts to replace rotting posts and to fill any gaps. Whilst Waverley Borough Council funded the majority of the costs associated with the incident, the Parish Council paid for the legal fees of just over £200.
- Purchase of a new and improved cooker for the Village Hall at a cost of £1,140.
- Other minor Village Hall repairs throughout the year at a total cost of £780.



- Preparation works for the future planned conversion of the stone barn at the Village Hall to office space. Plans and a detailed design specification have been drawn up and an initial bat survey at the barn at a total cost of £2,375.
- A grant of £2,000 was given to Citizens Advice Waverley to help fund the vital work of this organisation. The service is used often by some residents of Bramley.
- As last year, the annual bill for grounds work in the Parish continued to increase. £11,271 was spent on this in 2018/19. This increase is due to additional grounds work was carried out in the Parish that would have previously been carried out by our County Council but have reduced due to budget cuts. This bill was offset slightly by the £3,400 Highways Localism grant that we received from Surrey Highways.

In 2017/18, the Parish Council invested £50,000 of its earmarked reserves in a 1-year fixed term deposit account. We received interest of £750 from this investment. The £50,000 balance was reinvested in a further 1-year deposit account for the coming year.

The Clerk asked those present to note these figures were still subject to both internal and external audit. All accounts are available to view at the Parish Council offices, by appointment.

7. There followed any other business and questions from the floor:

- a. Members were asked for what the reserves of £60,000 are kept for. Mr Molineux explained that following advice from the auditor, levels of 5-6% of the value of assets should be reserved. The Parish Council assets are valued at circa £1.1m.
- b. Members were asked why the Parish Council feels that a higher number of housing is required in Bramley than the 90 identified in the Waverley Local Plan Part 1. Mrs Stern explained that the higher figure was derived from the number of sites that were put forward from land owners, levels of population growth identified by the Office for National Statistics and the Housing Needs Survey that was carried out in Bramley in 2017. Of the 90 homes identified by Waverley, 87 of these have already been built. In the Housing Need Survey, it was reported that there is a large number of 4-5 bedroom homes in Bramley. It was identified that a broader mix of houses are required, to provide 1-2 bedroom homes for new starters or those wishing to downsize. The larger number is to contribute to this more varied housing mix. Only 3 significant sites have been identified in Bramley – Coleman’s Yard, the Triumph motorcycle garage site and Smithbrook Kilns.
- c. Questions were raised about what the Parish Council is doing to lower the speed of traffic on the A281. Mr Molineux reported that, despite constant pressure from the Parish Council, Surrey Highways will not agree to any changes to the road. The new development at Dunsfold Park will bring changes to the main intersection in the centre of Bramley – traffic lights will be installed once the 500th home has been built at the development.

Bramley Parish Council keep lobbying Surrey Highways and Waverley Borough Council to help alleviate the traffic issues and parking facilities in the village. The A281 is at capacity – running at 1,000 vehicles per hour in peak periods. There is little that can be done to mitigate the issues that we face, but Members agree it is the most important issue for Bramley.

- d. A question was raised about the current situation of the proposed mobile phone mast in the centre of the village. Members reported that the planning application was rejected by Waverley Borough Council but has gone to appeal. The Parish Council objected to the position of the proposed mast and suggested alternative locations to the applicant. The applicant believes that all the alternatives were unsuitable for various reasons.



- e. Mrs Stern took the opportunity to thank Mrs O'Connell once again for her service.
Mr Seaborne thanked Mrs Stern for her leadership for the last 3 years.

Mrs Stern thanked those who had attended. The meeting closed at 8:20pm followed by refreshments and informal discussion.

Agreed and signed..... ** April 2020

