

COMMUNITY CAMPAIGN (HART)

DRAFT MINUTES OF 4TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT WILLIS HALL, CHURCH CROOKHAM, ON THURSDAY 24TH JANUARY 2008, COMMENCING AT 7.30 P.M.

THERE WERE 36 PERSONS PRESENT INCLUDING:

Chairman:	James Radley
Treasurer:	Chris Axam
Secretary:	Fran Jones
Membership Secretary:	Gill Butler
Press Secretary:	Pat Lowe
Election Agent:	Ken Blockwell

In Attendance: WPC Caroline Webster.

There were 5 apologies for absence.

1. James Radley opened the meeting with a warm welcome to all attending this 4th Annual General Meeting of the Community Campaign (Hart) with an especial welcome once again to WPC Caroline Webster whose input to the meeting will be taken after the next item. The minutes of the 3rd AGM were considered for accuracy. There were no matters arising from the minutes which were not covered by later entries on the agenda, so it was proposed by Ken Blockwell and seconded by Gill Butler that these minutes be approved. This was carried unanimously.
2. WPC Webster gave out papers for those present to play a game of pretence. Firstly, pretend to be the Chief Constable of Hampshire and with the graphs before you decide where your limited resources of manpower would be best used. They all decided in favour of using the available resources in those areas of increased crime. Hart was the best area in the county for low crime rates. After some statistics concerning crimes in this area WPC Webster said that individuals could assist by making their property more secure and by reporting crime. There may not be an immediate response to 101 or 999 calls as this was dependent upon what is occurring at that time and staff resources.

WPC Webster warned that in the area was a Silver Audi car with 2 men in their late 20s aboard targeting luxury cars. There have been instances of vehicle damage and Sat-Navs, mobiles and laptops were prime targets for theft. These items are NOT safe in the boot of your car! Please take such valuable items with you when you leave the car.

A member asked about the 101 telephone number being phased out. WPC Webster suggested the following number to be used instead:
0845 045 4545.

In fact Hampshire Constabulary have since managed to find the funding to keep the 101 service going for the current year.

Another question was concerning the amount of drug related crime in the Hart area. Fleet was being targeted by dealers because it was in an affluent area with good proximity to London. The police have a special machine to identify the presence of drugs - it picks up on minute samples. After a question on the increase of reports of fire-arms, WPC Webster reassured those present that more crime was being reported and dealt with in this area.

James Radley thanked WPC Webster for giving the meeting her time and expertise. The audience showed their appreciation in the usual manner.

3. James Radley introduced the councillors for CC(H) present at the meeting and Gill Butler gave details of the last election whereby Jenny Radley was re-elected by taking 67% of the votes. Also Chris Axam was elected taking 48% of the votes in a 46% turnout.
4. Re the QEB Appeal, James Radley thanked Ken Blockwell and Andrew Macallan for their very good input at the recent appeal hearing. It was an interesting experience of 5 weeks listening to "experts" at the Princes Hall in Aldershot and became quite tedious at times. It was resumed for a further 3 weeks in November / December at the Civic Offices in Fleet. Thanks were due to those attending for their good turnout plus the decorum and dignity of their manner. The Planning Inspector cannot fail to have been impressed, as the strength of feeling was obvious. Re: the reduction of car parking spaces at Bourley Road Car Park; this had long and hostile cross-examinations by the QCs so we will have to wait and see the outcome. Thanks were extended to Pat Lowe who had promoted the evening meeting of the Public Inquiry to alert the users of Bourley Road car-park. The input from David Fearn and Colin Gray by Fleet and Crookham Civic Society (FCCS) and Geoff Marks of Farnborough Aerodrome Residents' Association (FARA) was very much appreciated.

At this point James reported on the recent death of Dr David Fearn, the Chairman of FCCS and said he was highly respected and would be sorely missed in the community.

5. The Parish Ballot is ongoing at present. The "Sense of Place" exercise was the first part of the process, now the ballot papers were being sent out for return by 30th January 2008. James gave a few details regarding the need for all parts of Hart to be properly parished. Attached is his letter to the local paper giving all relevant reasons for parishes to be established in un-parished areas. This ballot results will be informative rather than binding, the council will determine what they will recommend to the relevant government department (Department for Community and Local Government) by possibly the end of March.
6. Jenny Radley gave a report on the Quiet Flying Programme, which is being carried out by TAG at Farnborough Aerodrome.
This report is available on the web-site
There were a lot of comments from those present about the increase in noise disturbance, with some local residents being more affected than others. It has been stipulated that even with increased capacity the noise problem must be limited.
7. County Council Issues: Relationships between County Council and District Council are somewhat of a challenge. County Council officers do not seem to want to work with a District Council unless a County Councillor is involved. For example a proposed new zebra crossing on Reading Road South: if one is agreed then it has to be in the location decided upon by the County Council even though locals tell them it is in the wrong location. Their answer to that is that it is put there or not at all. The Fleet Town Access Plan (FTAP) is looking to provide better access in and around Fleet and that will include cycle paths into Fleet Town Centre. Funds from developments in Crondall, Ewshot, Church Crookham, etc. and Fleet go into this Fleet Town Access Plan but most of the proposed schemes seem to be aimed at north of the canal. Little political help is given from the local County Councillor on this issue and it seems as if this area is being deliberately frozen out. Next year the County Council elections will be held and so CC(H) needs to seriously consider whether or not to put up a candidate.
8. Flooding: Chris Axam said that after a flooding event in July he had taken lots of calls from residents, so he endeavoured to find out some facts. He started with Fleet, was referred to County and then referred to Thames Water and then on to the Environment Agency. In fact, getting nowhere. There were well known flood problem spots but the Environment Agency blamed individuals for not doing clearance in their gardens. Thames Water is responsible for drains in the road, the County Council responsible for the gullies from the roads into the drains. There has been a meeting between all agencies and a plan has been done to alleviate flood problems but this could take some time as there is not enough money to do it right away.
9. Allotments: Gill Butler reported that an Allotment Association had been set up and events were progressing but very slowly. A feasibility study has revealed the possibility of using some of the area at the playing fields in Azalea Gardens. This could provide possibly 60 plots but will not be universally popular and there are covenants. So these considerations are the early stages of the process but it is ongoing. The Hitches Lane development will allocate some land for allotments which would be fenced off. Events are looking more positive. The problem is open for consultation and one other possible site has come up. So all Gill could say at the present time was that there will be allotments but where and when is not yet known.
10. Hart District Council budget: James Radley reported on some of the reasons that would make a rise in rates inevitable. Things not under the District Council control were staff pay rises, which are negotiated at national level plus pension scheme liability. Also the Government has ruled that all pensioners get free bus passes but local councils have to pay for most of it. This cost was £167,000 last year and could be up to £450,000 if national travel is included. This is equivalent to a 5% increase in tax. The Basingstoke Canal is in serious disrepair - if councils don't pay for their section of canal then it will be closed through lack of maintenance. An extra £44,000 to £46,000 would equate to 1% increase in council tax. Savings are being made by cutting bureaucracy in the system but it will be a tough budget with a unconfirmed possibility of a 4%+ rise in council tax even after £1million savings in services. The Government grant to Hart has not increased which is equivalent to receiving less this year. Hart are doing their best to fund the Canal and if they can alleviate the bus pass liability and prove this system is unfair to District Councils then maybe the extra funding could be recouped.
11. Election Strategy: James Radley did not want to go into this in great detail at this time. It has been generally agreed that we defend seats we already hold; and representing the best interests of residents we would not stand against good councillors. It was envisaged that there would be a lot of energy put into future elections by opposing parties. It was also stated that we would put not put up any unsuitable candidates.
12. Accounts: These had been circulated throughout the room. They showed a good healthy balance due mainly to renewal of membership for which the treasurer thanked those present. There had been donations received to cover

some printing. The balance would be built up to cover the costs of future elections and costs, such as future campaigns. It was proposed by Ken Blockwell and seconded by David Beckett that the accounts be approved. This was carried unanimously.

13. Election of Officers:

Chairman	James Radley Proposed by Gill Butler Seconded by John Bennison
Secretary	Fran Jones Proposed by James Radley Seconded by Jenny Radley.
Treasurer	Chris Axam Proposed by James Radley Seconded by Barrie Jones
Membership Secretary	Gill Butler Proposed by John Bennison Seconded by Andrew Macallan
Election Agent	Julia Ambler Proposed by James Radley Seconded by Ken Blockwell
Press Officer	Pat Lowe Proposed by John Bennison Seconded by Chris Axam

All the above were duly elected unanimously.

14. Open Floor questions and answers:

On the possibility of the closure of Aldershot Road A287 junction it seemed a matter of the County Council being unwilling to foot the bill of £5million to make this junction safe. In all probability it may be that in future this junction would be considered for left hand turns only onto the A287 which would make motorists turn to other local roads to make the right turn towards the motorway, and the Basingstoke area.

There were comments about the above re-routing which would make Crookham Village busier, also the member was dubious about the meaning of the Fleet Town Access Plan.

Another member asked what the County Councillor for the area felt about this proposed closure.

A member asked about representation to Hart District Council to replace the 2 parking machines on Gurkha Square which were mostly out of order. James Radley said that these were soon to be replaced by state-of-the-art machines - this should be within the next few weeks.

Re: Allotments: mention was made of Hitches Lane development providing some, why not the QEB development? James Radley replied that he had asked the Allotment Association to appear at the appeal but nobody came forward to ask for allotments. Maybe an opportunity had been lost. There could be a possibility of asking for this provision if new plans were to be presented in the future.

Regarding QEB, if it were to go ahead then what do existing residents do then? The Planning Inspector's Report has been forwarded to the Secretary of State who makes the final decision. This can only be challenged if the decision is against the law. The expected date for this decision is 24th April but this date could be pushed back until after the Dilly Lane decision was made. The Inspector's report would be available after the Secretary of State's ruling was made when it would become a matter of public record.

It was anticipated that the TAG weekend flight increase planning decision might not be made until the decision on the QEB was determined.

The meeting was then closed with a Vote of Thanks from one of the members to James Radley and his colleagues at Hart District Council and the CC(H) Committee.