

## COMMUNITY CAMPAIGN (HART) - CC(H)

### Draft minutes

Minutes of the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting held at the Crookham War Memorial Hall, Church Crookham, on Wednesday 29th January 2014, commencing at 7.30pm.

The executive committee members being present were:

Chairman	James Radley	JR
Vice Chairman	Simon Ambler	SA
Treasurer	Chris Axa	CA
Secretary	Jenny Radley	JRR
Membership Secretary	Gill Butler	GB
County Councillor	John Bennison	JB

There were 29 members present at the meeting.

1. The Chairman welcomed those present, to the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of CC(H). Thanks for turning out on a dark, wintery evening. Apologies, the chairman hoped people could hear him but he was a bit croaky this evening due to a sore throat. He will do his best to make himself clear.
2. Apologies for absence were received from David Cooper, Jill and Sandy Thomas, Mrs Enid Wollett, Elaine Fearn, Michael Hammett, Fran and Barrie Jones, Mr Hinton. Josie Dickenson would be arriving a little late.
3. The Minutes of the previous AGM held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2013 were recorded as a true and accurate record. The motion to accept the draft minutes was proposed by Pat Lowe and seconded by Jim Russell, and was accepted by majority vote. No objections.  
There were no matters arising that were not covered by later agenda items.
4. Topical Updates from the Chairman and executive members:

#### Hart Local Plan

The recent Hart Local Plan was turned down by the Government appointed Planning Inspector as it was found to be unsound on reasons of duty to co-operate and housing numbers. The Government had introduced new guidelines at a late stage in the process to demand that neighbouring authorities must demonstrate working together when they draw up their Local Plans. In fact there were 13 authorities at the Hart Local Plan Examination in Public (EiP), held in July 2013, who stated how closely and how well they worked with Hart District Council (HDC), including Rushmoor Borough Council. Despite this the Hart Local Plan was thrown out by the Planning Inspector, whereas some other authorities have managed to get their Local Plans agreed, but they tend to accept high housing numbers. The rejection of the proposed Hart Local Plan might have something to do with HDC's approach to protecting the Special Protection Area (SPA), although this specific topic was avoided in the Inspector's Report.

The key issue is clearly the demand to build more houses. The district needs more houses but we require a Local Plan to allow suitable developments in the most appropriate places, and to make sure there is the necessary infrastructure provided and avoid unnecessary damage to the environment.

With the proposed Hart Local Plan turned down there are now developers who are making applications for new development, claiming that the Government's NPPF( National Planning Policy Framework) assumes a presumption in favour of development. So, the developers think they can apply for sites that have not been agreed by the planning authority in Hart.

HDC hopes that the SPA (Special Protection Area) will act in favour of controlling unsuitable development, but this important detail may need to be tested in High Court.

Development applications coming forward in this local area includes: 100 more houses on the QEB (Crookham Park); up to 350 houses on Watery Lane; and 49 houses at The Gables on Ewshot Lane. It is also expected that an application at Grove Farm will come forward later this year, despite this not being included in the proposed Hart Local Plan.

Even if applications are turned down by Hart the developers are likely to appeal. The Planning Inspectorate who decides on appeals has been told by Government they must allow large developments unless there is a major factor, apparently this was admitted at a recent conference.

However, we will continue to challenge inappropriate development applications. There is a big question about whether SANGs (Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces) actually work to protect the SPA. Dog walkers in particular are still using the SPA. Dogs are known to disturb the rare ground nesting birds on the SPA. There is nothing in the Habitats Regulations to limit access to people on the SPA. The military landowners of much of the SPA may want to limit public access, but that is another matter.

According to the South-East Plan in 2006 the annual housing quota for Hart District was decided to be 220 per annum, which was based on the SANGs mitigating impact of new residents on the SPA. We would suggest that until there is proof that the SANGs work the district should not accept a much higher level of development.

If we accept the level of 220 houses per annum that would be 4,400 over the 20-year Local Plan period. With the number of developments already agreed or included in the recent draft Local Plan such as at Edenbrook, Hook and Hartley Wintney there remains about another 1200 houses to be agreed for major sites. This number of houses should not be too difficult to find suitable sites for, nor cause untoward concern for local residents.

It seems that developers are in a rush to get applications in on sites they have acquired, and unless there are significant issues the first ones to reach this number are likely to get permission. There may be legal issues for applications that come through later.

Application for 100 more houses on the QEB:

At the Public Enquiry for the Local Development Plan in 2006 the appointed Planning Inspector agreed that there was need for local employment sites. This was even supported by the Inspector at the appeal for the original QEB application. The developer tried to say that employment could be provided within houses, with a room for an office or study. But it was agreed that a specific employment area should be provided on the development site to help reduce the amount of commuting and enable people to walk or cycle to work and reduce road traffic. So when the developer made an application for 100 houses, on the site that has been identified for employment, HDC refused the application due to the need for more employment sites. The developer has appealed and HDC have decided not to contest the appeal. So, James himself will be making the case to retain the site for employment, when the case is heard at appeal in February, just a few weeks away.

## Q&A

Q1. When will the new Hart Local Plan be agreed?

A1. It is necessary to re-write the whole Local Plan, which is a painstaking process. The first thing that must be done is the strategic assessment of housing need, which must be done in conjunction with Rushmoor Borough Council and Surrey Heath Borough Council, as we all work together as a 'strategic housing market area'.

This will take time because there is so much work involving other authorities, and the need for public consultations before the final plan is agreed to be sent to the Planning Inspector and an Examination in Public is held once again, so it will take at least another year, or so.

Q2. Why are we not working with Basingstoke?

A2. Basingstoke is a separate 'housing market area', in fact it is a self-contained market, quite a large borough. As part of the duty to co-operate it makes sense for us to work with Rushmoor and Surrey Heath, especially as they also have association with the military and SPA. People tend to move within Hart, Rushmoor and Surrey Heath, so it can be demonstrated that they are a similar housing market area. These authorities will work out a housing number that they need to provide between them. They are all affected by the SPA constraints.

Without the SPA constraint the housing number could be up to 10,000 dwellings, which is the same as 5 Elvetham Heaths or 12 QEBs...!

Q3. Where can the developers build? Could they put development on Tweseldown?

A3. The developers cannot build near Tweseldown, because it is part of the SPA. The areas that developers are currently looking at are to the south of Church Crookham, west of Fleet, and around Hook and Hartley Wintney. The other option would be a new settlement, but that would be controversial. We have to hope the SPA argument works for the Church Crookham and Fleet areas.

Q4. Taking the history of local development into account, this area has seen huge expansion over the past 20 years, which has seen significant growth. But there has not been the concomitant improvement for infra-structure, such as schools and roads. Is there concern for the adequacy of local infra-structure as the area is overloaded? Just look at the impact of the QEB already.

A4. This is certainly a concern. We do not have enough infra-structure to support what development we have already. The problem is that existing problems cannot be solved by new development. There is something known as the viability test: the local planning authority will ask for infra-structure to support the new development but we have been told quite clearly that we cannot ask for more than would allow the development to be viable. Alarmingly it seems that people are supposed to live without the extra infra-structure if the new developers are able to persuade the authority or Planning Inspector at appeal that they cannot make a profit. We will be arguing strongly that this should be a constraint on new development not a reason for developers to avoid providing what is necessary

Q5. There are thousands of constraints. What if it is found that the M3 is at full capacity at peak traffic times can't we argue that residents from a new development in Church Crookham won't be able to drive on the motorway to get to work?

A5. Unfortunately the developer will argue otherwise, as the cost to increase capacity of the M3 would be excessive for them to cover too. They would not be able to make any profit from their development, so this would fall into the 'viability test' bracket. The Highways Agency who are responsible for the motorways and major roads also have a part to play in raising concerns to excessive development.

Q6. Don't HDC use models to help predict need for infrastructure into the future?

A6. The HDC model from 20 years ago would be substantially different to what we actually need now. More research and surveys and assessments are carried out for each Local Plan proposal. In the proposed Local Plan there was a breakdown of where houses could go. HDC engaged Surrey County Council to model the impact on traffic which identified some junctions as being badly affected. A further

assessment will be carried out when the new proposed Local Plan option is decided. This all takes time, but we agree that HDC need to get on with such work.

Q7. Some people agree to business units being used for housing. Is this a problem?

A7. Empty business units in Hart are mainly office blocks and these are being considered for conversion or re-building for housing. But there is still a need for more light industrial units. Small industries are underpinning the current economic recovery. There are people with technical and engineering skill set in this area who need to work in suitable industrial workshops and units. There are 5,000 soldiers who may be made redundant and they will need somewhere to work. The QEB employment site would be a perfect location for small industrial units with a realistic chance to reduce journeys to and from work. The Planning Inspectorate agreed with the site for employment on the QEB. Now Taylor Wimpey are trying to avoid giving land away for free for employment, but it should be part of the development just as the school site was needed. This is an ideal opportunity to ensure the development is sustainable.

Q8. Why did HDC change their minds about opposing the application for housing development on the employment land at QEB?

A8. The Planning Committee were told of the risks and costs of losing at appeal, so they made a decision to retract their objection.

Q9. Was the decision made by the Planning Inspector to reject the proposed Local Plan flawed? How could he turn it down when there was evidence that the neighbouring authorities were working together?

A9. Hart did consider challenging the Planning Inspector decision but that would mean taking it to Judicial Review, over a subjective assessment. There is no definition of the duty to co-operate. In order to question the Inspector's opinion it would be necessary to show that he was being unreasonable, but there is no clear evidence base and it would be very difficult to prove.

Q10. Have all the other local authorities been given approval for their Local Plans?

A10. No, there are others who have failed with their proposed Local Plans too. It does seem that those who resist taking higher housing development numbers are finding it more difficult. Hart are trying to control the housing numbers due to their understanding about the impact on the SPA. It may well be that there will be a Judicial Review to address the SPA obligations, which should make it much clearer, but would probably be a costly process so it should not be done lightly.

Q11. How will Hart decide on the number of houses required each year for the new Local Plan?

A11. The South-East Plan was a regional plan which identified the number of houses for each local planning authority. It came up with a quota of 220 houses per year for Hart District. The recent proposed Local Plan followed this approach and came up with 236 houses per year, but that was rejected. Meanwhile, consultants were engaged by HDC to conduct a market needs assessment which now recommends up to 430 houses per year, which is the number of houses that are likely to sell if they were built in this area, so this is one of the aspects that has to be taken into consideration when preparing the new draft Local Plan. But, we also need to take into account many other aspects such as capacity of infra-structure: schools roads, health provision, leisure, etc. That is why HDC are currently considering a quota of about 340 dwellings per year, but it will not be easy to agree on the location of the major development sites.

Q12. Church Crookham Parish Council also wrote in to object to the 100 extra houses on the QEB development. Should they also speak at the appeal?

A12. By all means do go to the appeal anyway to show public support but there is no need to say anything that has already been sent in. However, the Planning Inspector will probably allow people to make a statement if they feel strongly about the matter. It is not acceptable to raise any new issues at the appeal hearing without the appellant being prepared, as that is not considered to be fair. The Inspector will not allow any new issues to be taken into consideration.

### County Matters

John Bennison also apologised for having a croaky voice. He has a sore throat. He started by explaining the result of the May 2012 county council election, when he took over the Church Crookham and Ewshot seat from Jenny Radley. In fact there was a bit of a shake-up at county with some new kids on the block. There are 78 county councillors in Hampshire, there are now: 45 Conservatives; 17 Lib. Dems; 10 new UKIP, 4 Labour and 2 Independent members. Of the 2 Independent members John Bennison stands for the CCH in Church Crookham and a lady, Jackie England, is the Independent member in Lymington. In fact, John and Jackie have agreed to work together to form a group which entitles them to have group representation on the various county council committees, it also entitles them to have their own group room and computer which makes it much easier to work in Winchester. They have been given seats on various committees: John was appointed to Audit Committee and to the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority, and Jackie was appointed to Children and Young People Select Committee. Since the county council election in May 2013 there have been further changes. One of the Lib Dems changed party to become a Conservative member, which altered the allocation of seats on the Fire and Rescue Authority and as a consequence John lost his seat on that authority, which seemed very unfortunate. One of the Conservative members in mid-Hampshire died and so a new member has been elected.

He explained that he doesn't need to explain that Central Government is cutting the budget provided to local authorities. Staff costs are a big strain on the council budgets and staffing levels at HCC are going to be cut back yet again. They had to reduce staff numbers by 1500 in the recent past and are looking to cut back another 1000, about 12% of staff. HCC provide a range of statutory and non-statutory services, so the cuts so far have been focussed on non-statutory services but these are still hard decisions to make. The mobile library service is cutting back on the number of stops, there is a consultation in progress and the cuts will come into force in 2015.

HCC are proposing to keep council tax at the same level, Hart District are planning to keep the council tax level the same too, but the Police are asking for a 3% rise. However, the county are proposing to cut the auxiliary community safety officer service which was started by HCC and funded by them. The role overlaps with the Police Community Support Officer's (PCSO) role.

HCC are trying to avoid imposing compulsory redundancies whenever they can, as they have about 500 people turnover each year, but it is not always possible to fit the cutting back of staff for various departments with natural outage.

With regard to Church Crookham HCC are seeking to fill vacant school governor positions. John has been invited to citizenship ceremonies which are held locally in Aldershot. There are a good number of Gurkhas who are becoming British citizens. There are about 2 ceremonies each week and the whole family is invited to the ceremony. At present there is no test of use of English as part of the qualification but that will be introduced in March 2014.

Q1. What happens at the Citizenship Ceremonies and what do people have to do to achieve Citizenship?

A1. The applicants need to complete the tests that are provided by the Home Office. Soldiers from the Commonwealth can apply for Citizenship after 6 years of service. Some applicants have worked as soldiers for more than 18 years. The process takes about 3 months to complete. At the ceremony the applicants need to pledge their allegiance to the Queen and Country and sing the National Anthem, which can be quite difficult for those who are not so familiar with English language. The ceremonies are held locally at either Aldershot or Basingstoke and the registrar is the official to represent the Queen.

The Chairman introduced Alan Oliver who has recently joined the CCH. He was elected 2 years ago to represent Fleet West ward on Hart District Council as an Independent Councillor. He is a hard-working and active Independent member of council, who has decided to join the CCH group at the next election, and we are honoured to have him on the team. He will be representing the CCH in Fleet at the all-out elections in May, when the new district ward boundaries will come into force.

Alan is also a member of Fleet Town Council.

#### Fleet Town Council Report

Alan Oliver is a member of Fleet Town Council.

This is his first AGM with the CCH.

He could describe himself as Mr Angry of Fleet. He complained a lot and got very irritable.

He first moved to Church Crookham 30 years ago and now lives in Fleet. He is involved with the Holy Trinity Church. He became more involved with the local council 3 years ago when he was disenchanted with the changes in and around the town. He became involved with The Friends Group for local parks and volunteered for the Friends of Calthorpe Park group trying to get improvements for the facilities there. He then decided to apply to join Fleet Town Council in order to start to help instead of just complaining. He soon discovered that the only way to influence major 'stuff' was to become involved with the district council and he stood as an Independent candidate and was elected in May 2012. He was particularly outraged by the Local Development Plan which was focussing more development on Fleet and Church Crookham and not looking at the options for other parts of the area. He is dedicated to protect the district but not at the expense of Fleet and Church Crookham.

With regard to Fleet Town Council (FTC), Alan wanted to improve the local environment, the town centre and parks and control the expenses. The Harlington required attention and improved management to turn the tide on it being a drain on Fleet Town expenses. His highlight of Fleet Town Council which would probably ring true with Crookham Village and Church Crookham Parish Councils was the opportunity and achievement to improve the environment, through active maintenance and signage in the local parks, and tree management which had been neglected for so long. Until the town council took over there was little or no maintenance agreement for the parks and The Harlington, so this was one of the main focusses for attention from the town council. It was a real success by setting up the Friends of the various park groups at: Basingbourne, Calthorpe and Ancells Farm. With good local support they were able to help improve signs, and refurbish the pavilion and play areas and maintain fences, and replant or create new flower beds with no extra funds from the Town Council but ability to apply for various available grants. He hopes that people have noticed a marked improvement. He is aware of plaudits for these efforts to help to brighten up the town.

As for The Harlington, when FTC took over it was a serious drain on their budget. Since then the level of subsidy has been drastically reduced but as the facility is managed to recover costs this helps to make money available for maintaining and improving the facility, so it is much better used as a venue and is clearly very popular. This is good for all involved, especially the clients and customers for the many regular clubs and activities.

Other major issues that FTC have been involved with include the setting up of the Fleet Future group which includes the matters concerning residents of Fleet and Church Crookham. They support initiatives to improve issues relating to parking, business rates, the re-vamp of Gurkha Square and markets in Fleet. This area is placed first by the Halifax Building Society survey as the best place in the country to live. But it is a hidden area, most people do not know where Fleet really is.

Alan is pleased to be part of CCH. So far he is one person north of the canal and hopes there will be 12,000 more supporters soon.

Q1. What can Fleet do to help, as there is nothing much for children aged 9-10 to do in Church Crookham as there are no parks, so most of them need to travel to Fleet but it is not safe to send them on their bikes.

A1. In fact there are some parks in Church Crookham, Azalea Park has just been re-built by the parish council for younger children and there are the improved facilities the Peter Driver Recreation grounds and in due course there will be facilities at Crookham Park. Cycle routes need to be planned which do not have to follow the busy road routes to help link Church Crookham with Fleet.

Q2. There are complaints about the prices at the market stalls in Fleet, wouldn't it be better if the rents were lower?

A1. We can't really influence the prices at stalls in the market, We can only have some influence on the rates for the car-park. If people don't pay the prices the trader will lose out, so that is up to them. The car-park is owned by Hart District Council which has to be cleared for the market events. The revenue from the loss in car-park revenue needs to be recouped so HDC issue leases for stalls on the car-park. There is the allegation that the rental for the market stall pitches is too high but the charge is set based on the loss of car-park revenue and spread between the 15 – 20 stallholders. The council have a responsibility to support events in the town where they can but not be the ones to subsidise all costs for activities in their car-parks. This is an action that can only be provided for special events.

Q3. Hart Shopping Centre is privately owned but the largest problem is the boarded up shop-fronts which does not help to attract people to the town. Word has it that the Centre is up for sale. Will it be improved to help it thrive?

A3. The Centre is up for sale apparently for around £28 million, but it seems that at present there has not been much interest. It seems that rents in the centre are higher than rents in the high street, which will explain why these are the shops that are closed.

Even national retailers cannot afford the rents being asked for. It has been up for sale for 6 months. There are a range of different stores but we will have to see if the new owner will do any deals on the rents. There is rumour about internet shopping having an impact on local stores and it may be that retailers question why they would want to rent a shop that is costly when they can operate without needing to have shops. The Hart Centre was built about 30 years ago, We shall have to see what the new owners will do to help local business. It may be that the district council could help advise them if they are able to talk to the new owners.

Simon Ambler is Chairman of Crookham Village Parish Council.  
No formal report.

#### Church Crookham Parish Council Update

Jenny was co-opted to Church Crookham Parish Council in April 2013, shortly before the end of her term as county councillor. (Effectively she took over the vacant seat on Church Crookham Parish Council at the time when John Bennison stepped back from the parish council when he successfully stood for election as the new county councillor for Church Crookham and Ewshot).

The parish council are responsible for several local facilities:

Peter Driver Recreation ground now has 2 good quality grass football pitches, an all-weather 5-a-side pitch, a Football Snooker game and there is the possibility for further improvement. There are ongoing repairs being done at the Pavilion. These grounds are very popular. Members may be interested to know that the adjacent 60 bed nursing home for frail and elderly people is expected to be finished in April, and there are currently many deliveries being made to the site as the internal parts of the building are being completed.

Azalea Gardens is another recreation area that is the responsibility of the parish council. The playground has been completely refurbished and is very popular with local families. Thanks are also due to the Friends of Azalea Park (FOAP) for all their hard work and support.

Update on Crookham Park: Crookham Park development is close to the completion of 200 of the 872 dwellings that were originally permitted on the site. As you have heard already there is to be a planning appeal hearing shortly with regard to the further 100 house application for the area that was supposed to be an employment area.

The parish council held an exhibition on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> January to display the 2 options for the new Community Centre which will be built on the Crookham Park site, one option is the design that Taylor Wimpey can build and the other option is the design selected by the parish council if they decide to take on the responsibility using money provided by the developer to build themselves. The developer will provide a fairly basic design building and the parish council have come up with a more modern design that is likely to have more potential for a wider range of community use, but this option will require the parish council to take on responsibility for the construction of the building, so this is a major task. The new Community Centre whether built by the developer or by the parish council will be handed over to the parish council to manage as they see best on behalf of the local community. Planning permission has already been granted for either plan and it is for the parish council to decide in the summer which option to take and it is hoped that construction will start by the end of this year.

Another important responsibility for the parish council to take on at Crookham Park are the allotments. This is also a significant amount of work. Initially the developer was expected to hand the allotments over to the parish council to run in phases but they have decided to complete it all at once. The main allotment shed is expected to be constructed shortly and the parish council are making sure that the necessary services are installed and connected. They hope that the allotments will be ready and completed later in the summer, but the wet weather has not helped so far.

There is also to be a work of art provided on the site. The developer has agreed to provide a sum of money and the parish council will decide how best to use it to provide suitable art work on site. It is expected to position a sculpture near the Local Centre. The current idea is to have a bust or a figure of a Gurkha Soldier, as this is the most prominent memory of most people of the QEB site. The Local Centre on Crookham Park is the large building near the main roundabout on Sandy Lane. It will contain 60 flats with 3 retail units on the ground floor and it is expected that a 'Sainsbury's Local' shop will be opening in one of these units, in the near future.

The parish council will be holding their Annual Parish Council meeting in April and hope to invite TAG to speak about their Airspace Change Proposal. Members of the public are welcome to attend. There will be elections in May for Church Crookham Parish Council. How quickly 4 years has gone by and how much the parish council have done since it was set up, thanks to the hard work of the members and officers. If anyone is interested in standing for the parish council please let the parish council clerk know and she would be happy to provide all the necessary information.

Q1. A member of the public reported that he was very impressed with the Church Crookham Parish Council newsletter.

A1. Credit to the staff and parish councillors who work hard to keep the residents well informed.

Q2. Concern was expressed about the roundabout on Beacon Hill Road with Leipzig Road, the junction of Sandy Lane with Aldershot Road and other changes.

A2. These works were all part of the highways agreement that was made between the developer of Crookham Park and Hampshire County Council Highways Development Control. The developer is responsible for installing the agreed works and there is a settling in time after works are completed before they are checked again before HCC take them over responsibility for these parts of the highway again. The parish council are not responsible for any of these works so people should raise any concerns about these matters to HCC.

The roundabout on Beacon Hill Road was completed some time ago, so this may have returned to the responsibility of HCC. The parish council has already alerted them to concerns about the roundabout. The work to improve Sandy Lane/Aldershot Road junction is expected to start shortly. There is a temporary road closure notice that allows the road to be closed for up to 5 weeks, so this will be very disruptive. There seems to be some delay, work was due to start early this January.

Most of the other agreed highway improvement works have been carried out, such as the new pedestrian crossings, roundabouts and cycle route along Sandy Lane, traffic calming on Tweseldown Road. There are some further improvements at Crookham Crossroads which are expected to be done later this year.

Q3. A member of the public commended the improvements to Azalea Park.

A3. Thanks to the welcome support and help from the Friends of Azalea Park along with finding enough funding the parish council have been able to make real improvements to Azalea Park, including a complete re-fit of the children's play park. This has proven to be very popular and is very well used by families with young children. Again this has come about from a great deal of hard work by the staff and members of the parish council and impressive support from local people and groups, despite challenges due to unexpected ground conditions.

#### Rural Villages Report

Tony Clarke apologised for his husky voice, due to having a sore throat.

His report is provided as **Appendix A**.

#### 5. Elections 2014 strategy – new boundaries:

Elections are coming up in May (2014) and will be very decisive. The Boundary Commission have changed the way Hart is divided up into district wards. The current 18 district wards will be reduced to 11 wards and the number of district councillors will reduce slightly from 35 to 33 members. There will be 3 district ward members in each district ward.

There will be council elections held every year, as district and county councillors are appointed for 4-year terms, so there will be county council elections once every 4 years and district elections during the remaining 3 years.

The new boundaries will be kicked off with All Up elections for the district this year in May (2014). Every district council seat will be up for election, so people will have 3 votes each to elect 3 different candidates. The top 3 voted candidates will be elected, the person who has the highest number of votes will be elected for 4 years, the next for 2 years and the third candidate for one year. So, elections will be held for one district councillor as usual starting next year.

The county council elections will be held in 3 years' time, as normal, they have not changed those boundaries, yet.

The Boundary Commission have re-drawn the district wards including:

Crookham East, which has enlarged to include some parts of the former Fleet Courtmoor area

Crookham West and Ewshot, which includes Crookham Village, Gally Hill area, Zebon Copse, Crookham Park, Quetta and Humphrey Park and Ewshot.

Fleet Central, which includes parts of Fleet Courtmoor.

Fleet West, which covers the west and northern parts of Fleet including Elvetham Heath.

We are planning to put up candidates for the 2 Crookham district wards, but also hoping to push into Fleet Central. We currently have 7 district councillors representing CCH, on Hart District Council and now Alan, who was elected as an Independent. We also have another person who is willing to stand, Wendy Makepeace-Browne, so we expect to provide 3 candidates for the 3 district wards.

We may also have candidates willing to stand in Fleet West.

During the run-up to the election we will be concentrating on introducing ourselves to residents in Fleet Central.

As you may know there is no overall party control of Hart District Council, and this has made a difference by helping to take out the 'politics'. In order to introduce policies there needs to be consensus between the various parties or groups, so not one party can do this alone, not without the agreement of the other 2 main groups. We aim to maintain the balance of power to make sure this co-operative approach continues. It will be important to retain our representation in Church Crookham and win seats in Fleet Central.

As for policies we want to bring about, we want to get flagship stores coming to Fleet which should enhance the retail attraction for the town. In order to do this we want to explore the opportunity for free parking for the town, not just a token 30 minutes in a few spaces. Hart District Council has come to rely on the revenue from parking in their car-parks. We want to explore what cost it will take to subsidise the loss of revenue for up to 2 hours free parking through council tax. Free parking to this length of time would draw more people into the town and help rejuvenate business. We think this might cost somewhere around £10 or £15 per year extra on council tax, about £1 a month per household. This idea seems to interest many people.

Some of the concerns raised are that many residents in Fleet can walk to and from the shops, they do not need to drive and park, so how does this help? The subsidy is not just to help people to park in the town it is about rejuvenating the retail businesses and bring more vitality to the area. Is this important to people?

If so, how much would people be prepared to pay? Would £1 per month extra council tax be acceptable or would it be better to work out a way to phase it in over a few years?

Is this an attractive policy that would help benefit the town? We believe that a higher footfall would attract the larger retail companies to take over empty shops in the town and help regenerate the area. This should help those businesses who are struggling to survive in a difficult market. More customers coming to town should help.

Q1. If the HDC car-parks bring in a 2 hours free parking will this conflict with the interests of the Hart Shopping Centre?

A1. It is hard to know until we have a chance to talk to the new owners. They may see the benefit of bringing in more customers by such an approach, or they may see it may be a serious problem for them. We would welcome any feedback.

Q2. What sort of shops might this idea attract to the town?

A2. We hope that a range of new outlets would be attracted to the town. Fleet cannot compete with larger towns such as Basingstoke, Camberley or Reading but it should be helpful to bring back more opportunity and choice for local shoppers. We cannot actually mandate who is able to take over the empty units. What we can do is improve the retail experience. It has been shown that successful market towns have free parking, which is something we would like to do.

Q3. What about parking in the Hart Shopping Centre?

A3. Hart has no influence on the parking in Hart Shopping Centre, we need to make that clear. It is privately owned. Some people will be willing to pay for the convenience of parking at the Shopping Centre, that would be their choice. It is important that people will not be displaced to park on local residential roads. The aim is to encourage more people to come to the town to increase 'footfall'.

Q4. People can already park along Victoria Road and Branksomewood Road for up to 2 hours, what is the signal by providing free parking in the car-parks?

A4. The aim is to encourage more people to use the town, a higher footfall will attract more retailers and improve the range of shops and that will attract more businesses to the area. It should improve the vitality of the town.

Q5. Some people felt that 3 hours free parking would be better than 2.

A5. We would need to look at the costs and carefully judge what council tax payers would be willing to provide. We need to remember the cap on council tax. If more is required we might be able to ask the parish and town councils: Fleet, Elvetham Heath, Church Crookham and Crookham Village to help if need be. A reduction in parking charges is another option but probably does not provide the critical draw. It is important to sell the town to retailers, an 'all or nothing approach'. It will not be possible to introduce free parking overall, only the first 2 or 3 hours, due to the cost.

Our proposal is to make this an election issue, but we must explain to the electorate where the money to fund it will come from.

General comments:

Several people were very supportive of this proposal, it would reduce hassle for motorists, drivers wouldn't need to fuss about getting change for the ticket machines, it should be much more convenient. This will be a useful debate to have.

Some people will not pay for parking, people do like free parking, and they will find free places to park. Some people currently use the canal wharf car-park but the Canal Authority, who own the car-park, are bringing in a pay-to-park scheme. This was decided by the Canal Authority but they have asked HDC to help them to set this up for them.

Now to the formal business of the meeting:

#### 6. Annual Report and Statement of Accounts

Chris Axam as Treasurer of the CC(H) presented his annual report and statement of accounts.

Please find the Treasurer Report and Annual Report and Statement of Accounts 1<sup>st</sup> Jan 2013- 30<sup>th</sup> Dec 2013 as attached as **Appendix B**.

Membership report: The membership has reduced slightly from 115 members at the end of December 2012 to 107 members at the end of December 2013.

The accounts have been maintained at a steady level of funding that has allowed us to operate effectively and efficiently. Income exceeded expenditure by £1.36. This is in part due to the donations from elected members. There has been no major expenditure that required concerted fund-raising but such events may be considered in future if greater levels of funding are required for any reason.

The statement of accounts was put to the membership for acceptance. The motion was proposed by Chris Dickenson and seconded by Mark Cross. The vote was taken and accepted. No objections.

#### 7. Election of Officers:

Chairman:	<b>James Radley</b> proposed by John Bennison and seconded by Pat Lowe.
Vice Chairman:	<b>Simon Ambler</b> proposed by JR and seconded by CA.
Secretary:	<b>Jenny Radley</b> proposed by CA and seconded by JR.
Treasurer:	<b>Chris Axam</b> proposed by JB and seconded by Tony Clarke.
Membership Secretary:	<b>Gill Butler</b> proposed by Pat Lowe and seconded by JB
Election Agent:	<b>Julia Ambler</b> proposed by CA and seconded by JR.

Officers were elected unanimously as proposed.

#### 8. Open Floor Session –Members' question and answer session:

Q1. TAG Farnborough proposes to expand their airspace. What can we expect from the change?

A1. The air traffic controlled zone at Farnborough Airport extends around the airport to a distance of 2 ½ nautical miles. Any other aircraft that wishes to fly through their space needs to radio through to Air Traffic Control to get permission. Outside this airspace there is no control, it is Class G airspace for use by general aviation. This causes TAG difficulty. TAG have agreed to abide by noise abatement procedures but other airspace users in the class G airspace, outside TAG's controlled zone, cause them difficulty. They often blame gliders which operate from Odiham and Lasham for crossing their normal aircraft departure routes.

We should not that James enjoys gliding at Lasham himself, so he does understand many of the issues and level of wider concern.

By having more controlled airspace TAG would expect to keep general aviation further away and be able to direct their own aircraft along more reliable routes or vectors. However, there are some serious issues to solve. There is congestion of airspace from aircraft using other airports in the south-east, such as Heathrow, Gatwick, Southampton and Eastleigh. There is a major revision of airspace procedures in and out of Heathrow. Airport technology to connect with aircraft is being developed which should help to control the time of landing and avoid so much need for holding patterns, which should help to reduce noise impact and fuel consumption.

Church Crookham and Fleet are within the contingency airspace and this is due to change. Heathrow allow aircraft to climb to 20,000' which is a problem for TAG. What do we have to expect, we will have to wait to see their proposals. The Airspace Change Proposal (ACP) is about to go out to public consultation

Q2. The new nursing home on Bourley Road is soon to be opened but they are under the flight-path. How will the frail and elderly residents be protected?

A2. The home has had to be built to protect resident from aircraft noise. The builders have had to install triple glazing and other building improvements. However, it is not possible to protect residents in their garden area.

The Chairman thanked everyone for the wide range of questions and topics discussed and drew the meeting to a close. He thanked everyone for all their valuable support. We appreciate them all coming out this evening and engaging with discussions on the wide range of topics. We hope to see everyone again next year.

9. Close:

The meeting was closed at 9.35 pm.

Please note:

Next CC(H) AGM meeting to be held at:

The Willis Hall, Sandy Lane, Church Crookham,  
at 7.30pm on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2015.