

COMMUNITY CAMPAIGN (HART), (CCH).

Draft minutes

Minutes of the 14th Annual General Meeting held at the Crookham War Memorial Hall, Church Crookham, on Wednesday 21st March 2018, commencing at 7.30pm.

The executive committee members being present were:

Chairman and Group Leader	James Radley	JR
Vice Chairman	Simon Ambler	SA
Secretary	Jenny Radley	JRR
Membership Secretary	Gill Butler	GB
Deputy Group Leader	Alan Oliver	AO
County Councillor	John Bennison	JB

There were 26 members present at the meeting, including district councillors: Tony Clarke (TC); Sara Kinnell (SK); and Wendy Makepeace-Browne (WMB). Two of our future candidates: Angela Delaney (AD) and Peter Collings (PC) also attended.

1. Introduction:

The Chairman welcomed those present to the 14th Annual General Meeting of CCH. He thanked everyone for coming out this evening. These meetings in March seemed to make it easier for people to attend rather than earlier in the year.

He made a quick introduction of the team to the members at the meeting and decided to progress with the order of the meeting as shown on the agenda.

If members were happy the committee and councillors would answer most questions at the end of the meeting.

2. Apologies:

Apologies have been received from Michael Hince, Bill Shambrook, Mr and Mrs Kinghorn and Chris Axam (Treasurer), who is on holiday, and Julia Ambler (Election Agent), who has been very delayed on the journey home by train this evening. She hoped to arrive before the end of the meeting.

3. Minutes of the last meeting:

The minutes of the previous AGM, held on 23rd March 2017 were recorded as a true and accurate record. There were no questions or matters arising from the previous minutes.

The motion to accept the draft minutes was proposed by Gill Butler and seconded by Simon Ambler.

The minutes were accepted by majority vote. There were no objections. Brief comment was made about the length and detail of the minutes.

4. Topical Updates from the Chairman and Executive Members.

The Chairman explained that this time last year we were planning to get John Bennison re-elected to Hampshire County Council for Church Crookham and Ewshot division, and Alan Oliver was our candidate for Fleet. Thankfully John was successful, but sadly Alan missed out by just 508 votes, which was close. Sharyn Wheale, the former county councillor for Fleet, had manned the polling station at Fleet Pondtail, which seemed to swing the vote on the day.

4.1 Local Development Plan:

At Hart District level, the Hart Local Plan process continues. The final Regulation 19 public consultation is taking place. Any necessary alterations that need to be made will be done before the Local Plan is then submitted to the Department of Local Government. This will involve an Examination in Public in front

of an appointed Planning Inspector. All being well the Inspector will agree that the Plan is robust and it can finally be adopted by Hart District Council.

Just to add that there is still threat of over-development in this area from the Pale Lane (Elvetham Chase) application, which was recently rejected by HDC. That may well be taken to appeal by the developer, so all the more reason to have made real progress with the Hart Local Plan.

4.2 Waste collection service:

Elsewhere in the district council, there is to be a new waste collection contract. The Chairman handed over to AO who explained that he wanted to 'talk rubbish'... They had been successful negotiating a new waste collection contract with SERCO, which would start in October this coming year, 2018. It would be an 8 year contract, with an option to extend for a further 8 years. SERCO have a base in Hook, so it is local, in fact he understood that the MD lived in Fleet, so he expected them to do an excellent job. There would be no change to the structure of the waste collection service, but they had arranged for additional collections such as textile collection, alongside the blue bin collection, and a pick up for used batteries. There would be no 'bring-to sites' in Church Crookham or Elvetham Heath. The bring site for cardboard and glass in Elvetham Heath had become quite a problem with fly-tippers, which meant the council were having to spend more on clearance and spillages. Most people would not notice much difference to what they have today. The new system is able to track all the waste collection vehicles, with a real time system carried on each of the vehicles. If anyone has any problems, such as missed bins, they can report them on-line. The new system can even indicate whether residents have been too slow to put their bins out on time. Residents will be able to renew their bins on-line, as some are reaching the end of their working life. There have been a few problems across the district with bin fires being set, particularly in Church Crookham. Details of the improved service contract would be sent out to every household in September.

Question: Why is it necessary to change this public contract?

Answer: The tender for waste collection was due for renewal. In fact the existing people, Veolia, did make a tender but they failed at the first pass of checks. All staff who want to will be 'TUPED' across, which is their right to transfer to the new operator. Tendering in the public sector is an open process. They were not challenged with the contract, which is unusual. There was a 9 month process, and the officers did a good job. They will be able to save £250,000 per year, and the price is committed. At the moment they pay £1.6million a year for the bin collection service. Bulky waste is an issue, most goes to landfill. With the new contract 60% should be re-used, which is much better than sending it to landfill, which will be an environmental improvement.

Question: How much of the waste collection is used for recycling?

Answer: Black bin waste goes to the ERF (Energy Recycling Facility) at Chineham, near Basingstoke. Blue bin matter goes to Alton to be recycled and sold on. Only about 3% goes to landfill. Bulky waste can't be put into the ERF, but in future much will be sent to charity. In Hart many people replace items which can be reused.

Question from WMB: Is it just inflammable furniture that can be recycled?

Answer: It is not possible to recycle flammable items, they can be shredded, and they should burn well in the ERF incinerator. Any that could be sold on would need a fire certificate.

AO went on to say that the new contractor SERCO have a good track record, they do as they say they will do. They are a major player, they are not a new set-up, and they are not likely to go 'belly-up'. They had a blip 4 years ago, but they are now on a much more stable footing. The current contractor, Veolia do not appear to be so financially secure. They were knocked out in the first phase of the assessment process for applicants. HDC have chosen the best from this process, so this should be a good move.

4.3 Fencing of the Bourley and Long Valley military training area:

The Chairman up-dated the meeting about the proposals to fence part of the Bourley and Long Valley military training areas. This is a topic of high local interest. We are hoping to attend a long awaited meeting with the MoD on the site to discuss the concerns being raised. We are aware that the MoD has decided to fence off parts of their training estate, for safety reasons. Work has already started to fence in areas to the north of Bourley Road. When we know more details we will let people know. Hopefully they will continue to allow public access when training exercises are not taking place. There had been reports of a deer being caught on the barbed wire strand across the top of the new fence, but the MoD

wardens had not been able to find any trace, so if anyone has any evidence please let us or the MoD know, so they can take appropriate action. Up until now they were not aware of the fence causing any problem for deer, it is not something they would wish to happen but they need evidence of what really happened.

There will be no fencing to the south side of Bourley Road, which includes the area around Caesar's Camp, or around Velmead Common. The fence is being installed to the north side of Bourley Road and includes the camping grounds car park and the high speed test track in Long Valley. It will not include Tweseldown Racecourse. We have been sent a map by the MoD to show where the access point gateways will be. We will put this up on our web-site.

4.4 Fleet Town Council Update:

Alan Oliver (AO) explained that he had 3 items worthy of note.

a) Fleet Town Council are working with the Fleet BID (Business Improvement District) group to raise money to help businesses in Fleet. They are asking for a levy from about 300 businesses in the Fleet area, mainly retailers and some hotels, so that Fleet BID can improve the footfall coming into the town and improve the visitor experience. They want to organise a variety of events to attract people to come to Fleet. They expect to raise about £200,000 per year.

They want to hold a Fleet Food Festival on the 23/24 June. This event will be open to all people in the area... even people from Church Crookham.

They want to extend the decorative lights and flower planter display all along Fleet Road to the Waterfront Business Park.

They also want to take over some other regular activities, such as the Christmas Market event, where the current volunteer group are unable to continue to run it themselves.

They also want to set up an Arts Festival. Most people will have seen the Nutcracker Trail with 12 large Nutcracker figures located at various places throughout the town centre during the Christmas season.

They want to provide more signage to show where places of interest are in the town, as well as set up a web-site that will help to advertise local businesses.

This is the first year that Fleet BID has been operating and is being run by a group of 11 directors who are local business people, and representatives from Fleet Town Council and Hart District Council. They also have a BID Manager who works to improve the Fleet experience for visitors and businesses. They all meet on a weekly basis.

They are making improvements to the high street and have a good reputation for a small market town.

They are even negotiating with the owner of the Hart Shopping Centre to help retailers who occupy units to have acceptable rents. Successful businesses help to bring success to the town. They are keen to support local independent businesses rather than to allow it to decline.

b) Fleet Town Council will be holding their Annual General Meeting on Sunday afternoon, 25th March. One of the main topics of interest is the Fleet Neighbourhood Plan. It has been held back, as they did not want to confuse people with the consultation on the Hart Local Plan and they have to avoid the forthcoming election period of purdah, which will start on the 26th March. So, they will start the Neighbourhood Plan public consultation as soon as the local elections are over on the 5th May.

The Neighbourhood Plan is about land use, but not about schools, buses, etc. They want to have planning conditions such as conservation area protection, and improve on details for housing allocations. They are not happy to identify large tracts of land for more housing, given that they already have the Pyestock site that has been permitted for 1500 houses.

c) The other main topic is to do with The Harlington. In the Neighbourhood Plan they have identified the Civic Quarter, to include the Civic Offices, The Views car-park, Gurkha Square car-park, and The Harlington, and some of the offices nearby. They need to look at the options for redevelopment, as some of the buildings are no longer fit for use as intended, including The Harlington. This should be part of a major development opportunity, meanwhile Fleet Town Council are having to look at refurbishing or replacing The Harlington as a civic centre, the structure, electrics and heating systems all need replacing. There is an option to build a new Harlington on part of the Gurkha Square, but it will be up to the residents to decide. If they were to refurbish the building as it is they would have to close it for up to 2 years. Last year they held 30,000 paid for events in The Harlington and most of the events were sold out. If the building was to close for 2 years it would be very difficult for many of the various groups to find alternative venues and they would risk losing many of these local businesses and groups who use

the centre. It may also be hard to persuade them back after they find other venues elsewhere for 2 years. So, FTC has put in a planning application for a new Harlington, and they expect a decision in the summer. FTC would then consult with their residents. In fact over the last few years they have already consulted their residents over the 3 options: repair, refurbish or replace. They are not committing to the build until they have planning permission and a full breakdown of the costs. The next consultation to residents will be along the lines of: Are people happy or not with the plans?

Meanwhile there is 'false news' being spread around, such as this being a 'prestige project'. We need to go back to the real reasons for this project. The Harlington is in serious need of repair and any of the 3 original options will cost many millions. Either of the repair or refurbishment options on site will cause major closures for up to 2 years. The cost of a new build will be in the region of £9-10 million and will require using about a third of the Gurkha Square car park, certainly less than half of it. If not we could wait for a major developer to come in to do a new plan with the whole site, but at present there are no takers. If you remember over 5 years ago Sainsburys were making a plan for a new hub in Fleet in this area. You may remember that there was a campaign at the time to 'Save Bakers'. But Sainsburys pulled out and no-one has come forward since then. Something has to be done and soon, otherwise the Harlington will no longer be safe to continue and would have to close anyway.

FTC has tried to get a Masterplan for this area, talking to HDC, who is the main landowner. But they have not been able to come up with a clear Masterplan. So, FTC has worked hard to come up with a way to enable the Harlington to continue. That is the part they feel responsible for and they feel it would be a derogation of duty to give up. They feel that the Harlington is such an important part of Fleet town, a huge number of people use the current facilities and they want to help continue to provide a community hub for local people. There are no other venues in this area able to take a large number of people, the community centres at Zebon Copse and Crookham Park can't take 600 people at any one event. We know the U3A and the Blood Transfusion team need a large hall for their important functions. (The Chairman pointed out that the Crookham Memorial Hall was able to take 400 people, at a pinch, as we had seen at one of our own public meetings).

The town council will discuss progress at their Annual Resident Meeting on Sunday 25th March. If residents of Fleet tell the town council that they want to stop and they want the Harlington to close then that is what they will have to do. The town council will not be able to dictate what will happen.

AO explained that the plan so far will be going out for consultation, so the public will have a say. The outline planning application will consider the scale, mass, access, car-parking, etc. but not the final design. If no-one is happy with the application the town council will not be spending any money on further design work.

A member of the audience asked if residents in Church Crookham had any say. The reply was that this is really a matter for FTC, as it is their residents who are the ones who are expected to pay for most of the work. But Church Crookham residents will have a chance to have a say on the planning application. In fact their data shows that 25% of ticket sales for events at the Harlington are from residents in the Church Crookham area. AO attended a residents meeting at Church Crookham Parish Council last year to ask if they would be prepared to contribute towards the improvements to the Harlington, but the response was not positive. FTC will not 'build a wall' between Fleet and Church Crookham. But they have to plan ahead to set a realistic parish precept to allow them to take on this work. They have to be prepared, even if there is no support from other local parishes, and FTC have to do this themselves. Some people think that the district council should also be asked to contribute and/or help, because they are the landowners, but sadly there are some district council members who disagree. Remember that in the past the district council ran The Harlington Centre and it cost them well over £500,000 a year to keep it open and when it came to it they were prepared to close the facility. Now that Fleet Town Council has taken over running The Harlington, they have been able to improve the operations and make it much more cost effective, and consequently they have been able to cut the losses considerably. But we do need to accept that such facilities will be a cost to the public, and now there is the need to cover the cost of repairing, refurbishing or rebuilding the facility, if The Harlington is to continue.

WMB asked whether people in Church Crookham will be able to respond. AO answered that anyone can view the planning application and make comment. But in the end it seems that it will be up to residents in Fleet to decide whether it happens, if it is simply FTC who pick up the bill.

Apparently there has been some discussion about whether Fleet residents should be entitled to discounted rates for use of The Harlington, if they are the ones having to pay for the repairs/rebuild. FTC has talked about providing a Fleet discount card, vouchers or better seats at performances.

A resident asked whether other parish councils who might agree to contribute, would be able to be included in such a scheme. Apparently this is still all up for further discussion.

A question was made about car-parking, if part of the Gurkha Square was used for a rebuild of The Harlington, how would extra car-parking be provided. AO explained that only part of the Gurkha Square would be used for the new building, but there were discussions about making better use of the current car-parking areas. Maybe part of the Victoria Road car-park could be decked to provide more parking spaces. There was no intention at all to reduce car-parking space in Fleet, in fact they hoped that demand would increase with any improvements at The Harlington.

FTC were seeking expert advice about the future running costs of the facility, if the scale of The Harlington was increased they would expect that the running costs would also increase. The town council had no intention of taking on a White Elephant that they could not afford to run into the future. They were preparing a business plan and were very aware of the need to avoid over-extending their ability to operate such a facility. However, they had proved that they are able to run a very successful events venue now, and their plans were to retain as much as they could of the functions and activities that currently use the facility, but they do hope to expand and provide a more efficient centre into the future.

A question was asked about whether the site could be used in a multi-faceted way, maybe by enabling residential use nearby that could help to expand demand. The answer was that the option to rebuild would allow the district council to redevelop the current Harlington building. Developers would probably be very interested in taking on that site for residential development, this should be a very positive opportunity to improve this part of the town.

There may also be opportunities to apply for grants from the Arts Council, but they would need to have planning permission first. Their hope with building a new Harlington was to provide 2 performance spaces, a theatre and a live music arena. They wanted a space that could take up to 150 people for smaller band performances. They were aware that they should be able to fill such a venue 5 nights a week, providing the costs were right. They would like to provide more for the younger age groups, who were currently not well served.

WMB asked whether it was FTC view that this would continue to be a community facility. AO replied that they were keen to ensure that they do not price out any local community groups. They would need to keep costs to a level that the current hirers could afford to continue to pay, and that local people could continue to pay for seats at performances. It was not their intention to be a profit making facility. Town and parish councils are there to provide services for local people. Local business people and groups rely on having well run facilities in order to thrive. We have some excellent examples such as the Len Tyler Music groups, Charity Theatre groups and the local Rock Choir. They would do their utmost to make sure that any increase in costs would be related to inflation costs only, and their aim was to make the facility stronger and better.

4.5 County Matters:

John Bennison welcomed everyone at the meeting. As the county councillor for Church Crookham and Ewshot he wanted to talk about a variety of topics that people frequently asked him about: county council elections, county council tax, highways, drainage, and potholes.

County Council Elections: were held last year in May and was a good result for the Conservatives. But 6 weeks later there was the General Election which was a different story. At Hampshire County Council there are now 19 Lib Dem councillors, 2 Labour (they had lost 2 seats), and only 1 Independent, John. He was sorry to say that his independent colleague lost her seat to the Conservatives in Lymington. The 10 UKIP members were wiped out at the election. There are now 56 Conservatives, so they have a clear majority in administration. At the end of the day, John was successful to be re-elected, and this time he is on 2 select committees: Economy, Transport and Environment and Culture and Communities. He is also on the Basingstoke Canal Joint Management Committee and the South East Employers Local Democracy and Accountability Network. The county council hold an 'all-out' election every 4 years, whilst Hart District Council hold district elections for each of the intervening 3 years, as an election of

thirds. Each of the 11 district wards has 3 elected members, so they are elected in order, each for a 4 year term.

Council Tax: people should be aware that central government have clear rules about local authorities who wish to increase their council tax for households. As we all know HCC are responsible for a wide range of services, some such as adult services, children's services and education are in need of more funding, so HCC are having to increase their council tax rate this year, and they are likely to have to increase the rate again next year. At the HCC Full Council meeting on 22nd February they agreed to increase the tax level to the maximum allowed without having to call for a referendum.

You may be aware that 2-3 years ago there were discussions about setting up a unitary authority along with all the districts, boroughs, the city authorities of Portsmouth and Southampton and also the Isle of Wight. Government were happy to support a combined authority but they insisted that the authority should need a mayor as overall leader. It proved impossible for all the authorities to agree to just one leader, so the plan fell apart. Once again there are talks about trying to resurrect the plan, the county council are writing to all the other authorities to see whether they would agree. It seems that so far the responses from some of the districts and boroughs are not very supportive.

Highways: you may recall from last year's report that JB had mentioned that that HCC highways were retendering their highways maintenance contract. Since then the new contractor, Skanska has taken over from Amey, as from 1st August 2017. Skanska is a Danish firm and have been contracted for other local authority contracts especially in the West County. They have also taken over the contract for the Bordon and Whitehill by-pass road, work that had been started by the collapsed company Carillion, and Skanska have now almost completed that work. Skanska are here to stay, they now have offices in Winchester. There has been a marked change of pace, already Skanska are completing a backlog of works that Amey had not accomplished. At a local level, there were 3 drainage works that HCC had identified in Church Crookham following the flooding events in 2015, which have now all been carried out: Basingbourne Road, Gordon Avenue and Beaufort Road. There are still 3 more highway drainage works to be done in Church Crookham: Gables Road, Dinorben Avenue and Gally Hill Road (HCC have identified that there are not enough gullies along the top part of Gally Hill Road), so this is positive news for the Operation Resilience team at HCC.

Windy Gap junction: is another site that has caused some concern for local people. Work was done 3 years ago as part of the agreed works for the Pyestock development, but the changes have not been effective. There was a life changing accident involving a lad on a motorbike, so 18 months ago HCC made changes to the junction to prevent Right-hand turns from Aldershot Road onto the A323, but there are still concerns, not everyone is happy with this arrangement. The diversion means that drivers who want to travel to Aldershot have to turn left and turn around at the Iveley Road canal roundabout, but HCC have now allowed cyclists to cross at the Windy Gap junction. The no right hand turn arrangement was installed on a temporary traffic order, 18 months ago, but as from November 2017 this was made a permanent order. Some adjustments need to be made because they have found that the left hand lane is not wide enough for buses and lorries, so that turning lane needs to be made wider. The Accident Reduction Team will be carrying out this work in the next few months. In the longer term HCC have been talking to the local landowner, the MoD, about a plans to install a roundabout or traffic lights at the junction, but any major plans like this will take time to agree, so don't hold your breath.

Bourley Road: As you see it is closed again. At present this is a military road, but the MoD has asked HCC to take it over. The problem is that it is not up to HCC standards. Works have been done in the past but it still needs some serious work to be done on drainage and support. Recent surveys have shown weaknesses. The road has simply been built up in the past without making sure that it had proper foundations. The only other option for the MoD was to close the road entirely, but as we know this is a busy route, if it was closed traffic would add pressure to other local roads and junctions. So, HCC have provided a large amount of money (about £600,000) to pay for works. They are also negotiating with the MoD to obtain pieces of land to improve other nearby roads and junctions on land they own, such as around Windy Gap and Kennels Lane. The current works on Bourley Road include resurfacing works from Beacon Hill Road to Tweseldown Racecourse, where they needed to connect up a permanent electrical supply. They discovered that some of the bends between the racecourse and the camping grounds were pulling away and the cambers were the wrong way, so they are having to reinforce and re-tank the bends through the woodland and realign the cambers. HCC are the ones doing all this work, as

they know it has to be fit for purpose. They will be doing a traffic order to make the 40mph speed limit legal. It is still not clear when this road will be adopted by HCC, but JB will let us know.

A question was asked when Bourley Road would be re-opened. It looked as though it was taking longer than expected, according to the dates on the notices on the road.

JB replied that he had a site visit recently and the engineers had explained that extra work needed doing, so it may be another month, and it will also depend on the weather conditions.

Farnborough International Airshow is also coming up later this year, starting on July 8th. Following the Shoreham Airshow tragedy in 2015 the CAA have imposed road closures during Airshow training and events, so this will affect Windy Gap again. There will be the same restrictions as they set up for the last Airshow 2 years ago. They will block Bourley Road and the A232 around the Windy gap junction. The AA has been taken on to control the traffic, this time they will be manned to deal with any problems. There were many complaints last time.

There will also be restrictions to the Army training areas and wardens will be out to keep people away from the restricted flying zone areas.

Replacement fuel pipeline from Fawley Refinery to Houndslow (Heathrow Airport). Consultations and preparations are being made to replace the 90km of the fuel pipeline that supplies Heathrow Airport.

They are expecting to follow much the same route as they have already but there will be some adjustments. There is to be a public consultation event at the Baptist Church on Basingbourne Road on Wednesday 18th April, between 2 and 8pm. The pipeline goes past Ewshot, along Naishes Lane, across the Peter Driver Recreation grounds, across Tweseldown and Windy Gap and on through to Farnborough. They expect the consultation process to take 18-24 months. They will try to do the difficult sections first and will generally work from the south to the north. At present the pipeline goes over Basingstoke Canal, but now they intend to put it underneath. Most of the work will be done across farmland and will be open ditch work but there will be some moling works underground too. They expect the work will take 4-5 years to complete.

A question was asked about finance at HCC. What is the maximum they are allowed to increase council tax.

JB explained that the county council are not allowed to raise their part of the council tax by more than 2.9% in any one year. However, there is an exception this year in light of the huge pressures on Adult Social Care, so the Government has allowed councils to raise council tax by a further 3%. So, this year, as you can see on the HCC web-site they have agreed to raise council tax by 5.9% this coming year. Generally the law means that the county council can only raise council tax by 2.9% in any one year, if HCC wish to raise it higher than 3% they would have to hold a public referendum, which would cost about £1 million, so that is not a decision to be taken lightly.

The Chairman added that the county are basically allowed to put up council tax by 2.9%, but this year they can add an extra 3%, specifically to boost their Adult Social Care budget. However, central government are taking grant money away from the local authorities. This year they are reducing the central government grant to HCC by £40 million and they are expecting them to take a further £40 million the following year as well. So, people need to be aware of the bigger picture. Government are putting huge financial pressures onto the local authorities, but are still expecting them to provide all their statutory duties.

A member remarked that the extra Adult Social Care amount will be included in council tax this coming year, was sorely needed. He hoped that thought will also have been put in to the need to provide for the increase in National Living Wage, as many of the staff who work in Adult Services are on the minimum wage. Adult services cannot be provided without the frontline staff.

4.6 Elections:

The Chairman explained that the next district council election would be held on 3rd May this year. The CHH would be contesting 4 district council seats: Gill Butler would be standing again in Church Crookham East; Alan Oliver would be standing in Fleet Central; Jenny is standing down for Church Crookham West, and our candidate will be Peter Collings, and Angela Delaney is standing as another new candidate for us in Fleet West.

He invited Peter to introduce himself to the meeting.

PC explained that he was currently a member of Church Crookham Parish Council, and had recently moved to live on Crookham Park. He had links to this area from when he was posted to RAF Odiham in

1969 and had lived at the RAF quarters in Church Crookham for 10 years. He moved on in 1979, and when he left the RAF he joined the MoD Police Force and returned to live on Quetta Park in 1988. He joined the Surrey Police Force in 1993 and was based in Farnham and Farnborough until 2005. He then worked for the Hampshire Police Force for just over a year, he was involved with analysing crime figures, until he retired in 2007. He then moved away for 5 years, but came back to Odiham in 2012, until he moved to a new house on Crookham Park last year. He was keen to get more involved with local community issues so he joined the parish council, when they had a vacancy last autumn. He had met up with members of the CCH whilst preparing for one of the QEB highways contribution steering group meetings, because he is also keen to see that developer funding is used well. When he was asked if he would be interested in standing at the next district council election, he thought 'why not?' He is not a party politician, he is independently minded and is not prepared to blindly follow national party political lines, he wants to be able to make his own decisions, and the CCH seem to suit his approach. With Jenny standing down, he knows there are high expectations, but he hopes to bring a broader outlook and his own experiences to bear, and will be happy to take on this role if he is elected. Thank you.

The chairman then introduced Angela Delaney, who will be our candidate for Fleet West. As we know Sara Kinnell and Richard Woods joined the CCH from the Conservative group 18 months ago. Since then some active residents in Elvetham Heath, which is part of the Fleet West ward, had serious concerns about the proposed development on Pale Lane, set up the Stop Elvetham Chase group. We welcome Angela and Katie, who are founder members of the Stop Elvetham Chase group, who are with us this evening, and are working together on that campaign, and they are also supporting the CCH. Richard Woods had decided not to stand for re-election in Fleet West, so we asked Ange if she would kindly volunteer as our next candidate for that district ward, and she agreed. We know that this will be a tough election campaign, but it is important to make sure that we get someone who speaks up for local people. The chairman said he had a good feeling about this and we have some really good candidates who are prepared to stand for our group.

5. Annual Treasurer Report and Statement of Accounts:

Chris Axam, the CCH Treasurer was not able to attend the meeting today, and he had sent his sincere apologies. He has provided the Chairman with the Annual Report and Statement of Accounts. Everyone should have a copy of the Statement of Accounts on their seats. The Chairman also has a brief summary note on the accounts from the treasurer to present.

As always we are obliged to give an official Statement of Accounts to members at the AGM. There are regulatory hoops that we have to jump and we need to publish our accounts in order to follow the Electoral Commission rules.

Notes on CCH Accounts as provided by CA:

1. The accounts are prepared on a cash accounting basis, which follows local government guidance.
2. We have 2 sources of income. The first is our annual membership fees and the second are donations made by all our elected representatives, from part of their monthly council allowance.
3. Income and expenditure for the year 2017 were closely matched. Although we saw a significant increase in donations owing to the addition of 2 new CCH councillors, there was an almost equal increase in the cost of producing Newsletter and Election material in contesting two divisions at the Hampshire County Election in May 2017.
4. The net result was a small decrease in the cash balance at 31st December 2017 of £31.22. When added to our opening cash balance as at 1st January 2017, this gives a closing balance at 31st December 2017 was £2,104.50.

Please find the Treasurer Report and Annual Report and Statement of Accounts 1st Jan 2017- 31st Dec 2017 as attached as **Appendix A**.

The Chairman asked if there were any questions on the accounts. Someone pointed out that the hall hire cost was very reasonable.

Geoff Marks, Chairman of FARA (Farnborough Aerodrome Residents Association) and committee member of the AEF thanked the CCH for continuing their membership of the AEF. They were reviewing their web-site and their newsletter could now be accessed on line.

The Chairman asked if everyone was satisfied with the Statement of Accounts, if so he would put it to the membership for acceptance.

The motion was proposed by the Chairman EJR and seconded by JB. The vote was taken and accepted. There were no objections.

6. Election of Officers:

The Chairman explained that all officers were happy to stand again for re-election at this meeting, and members agreed to elect them all on block. When the Chairman asked for any other nominations, no one else made any suggestions or put themselves forward for election to these posts.

Chairman:	James Radley
Vice Chairman:	Simon Ambler
Secretary:	Jenny Radley
Treasurer:	Chris Axam
Membership Secretary:	Gill Butler
Election Agent:	Julia Ambler

The motion was proposed by JB and seconded by WMB.
All Officers were elected by unanimous vote as proposed.

7. Open Floor session:

The Chairman asked for any comments or questions from the members at the meeting.

Question 1. Having read Hart News recently a member was concerned to see that Hart District Council is likely to lose money to central government.

Answer 1: The Chairman replied: Each year the Government gives the local authorities a grant, but with the ongoing austerity policy it seems they are cutting their grants significantly each year and there is a danger that they will be reducing this to zero. In fact there is suggestion that in due course they will expect local authorities to start paying the government money. In Hampshire the district and borough councils are the authorities that have to collect council tax on behalf of the county council, police, fire and rescue and parish councils. Now it seems that we are being expected to give more to Government. Unfortunately Central Government seem determined to continue to cut the grants they provide, yet they expect the local authorities to continue to manage and still provide all the statutory duties.

JB added that the situation was the same at county council. Over the next 2 years the government has cut the revenue support grant that they provide to the county council by £80 million. The County Council is having to manage cuts of £40 million to their budget this year, and they will lose another £40 million next year as well.

Most people do not seem to realise the extent of these cuts being made to local authority grants. It beggars belief.

One member suggested that everyone should email their MP. This information is not well publicised. The Chairman added that the district council received a report from government 2 days before Christmas which included a spreadsheet. The previous year the spreadsheet had many columns, but they noticed a negative amount, which the CEOs initially thought was an accounting error. When they checked they were told that the grants had been cut.

JB added that county council had been led to believe that they would be able to keep up to 50% of the business rates that were collected in the county. They thought this was to help make up for some of the cuts in grants. Now they are told that the government will take this back as well. It seems that the idea to allow authorities to keep part of the business rates was just a red herring.

PC suggested that we should be talking to the MP. Would people be interested in holding a Q&A session with Ranil? He had suggested to Church Crookham Parish Council that they could invite him to

attend their AGM, but the reply was that he was not available. He may be willing to come to a Q&A session on another occasion. We should be able to ask our local MP questions.

AO added that there are currently proposed boundary changes to MP constituencies, which would mean that Church Crookham would become part of the Aldershot constituency.

Q 2. A question was asked about the junction of the A287 and Redfields Lane. Are the plans for a new junction going ahead?

A 2: SA replied that this was part of the Watery Lane (Albany Park) application. The developers are obliged to finish the new roundabout before first occupation. Watery Lane is a development of 300 houses that was granted at appeal and the developer has to provide the new roundabout as part of the agreement. We all know that the junction is already at full capacity at peak times and many drivers do not feel that it is safe. SA has seen one of the initial plans for the roundabout, but this is not part of the latest reserve matters application. In fact the site of the new roundabout will be further up the hill, not at the current road junction. It was suggested that Redfields Lane was not suitable for any more traffic and there were concerns about it being part of a cycle route. SA added that the entrance to the development on Redfields Lane was likely to be a signalised junction. There was discussion about how best to use the end of Redfields Lane once the road had been altered to the new roundabout. Several people thought that a central refuge was necessary on the A287 to provide a safer cycle and pedestrian crossing. Redfields Lane also has a history of bad drainage and problems with gullies.

Q Did the agreed application include a pavement to St Nicolas' School? The answer was no. The new link road will take Redfields Lane across the field to the south, to the new roundabout site, this should provide a better/safer junction with the A287.

It would be good to see the plans for the new roundabout, so we know what to expect. The plan should be available on the original application, although the details are not fully agreed.

AO is not aware that the developers actually own the land they need to build the new roundabout and access road. No doubt the landowner will want to negotiate the full benefits before they finally agree to a deal.

Q 3. Another question was raised about the Revenue Support Grant for the budget year April 2018 – March 2019, will that be negative?

A 3: The Chairman answered. It is expected that Hart District Council will be in negative figures of up to £500,000 for the year 2019/2020 with Revenue Support Grant. The council will have no choice but to make cuts to their budget.

Q 4. A question was asked about the reason for the road works near the proposed entrance to the Pale Lane site. This area has been fenced off for road works for many weeks. What is this about?

A 4: Katie gave the answer. This is to do with the Brickyard Plantation site where 50 houses are being built on the Elvetham Heath side of the road. They are not building yet on the other side of the road, but she agreed that this does seem to be a lot of work for just 50 houses.

There were no further questions.

8. Close:

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and engaging in the discussions this evening. The group really appreciated all the valuable support from all members.

Finally, the Chairman asked if there were any willing volunteers who would be happy to support us as Meet and Greeters at the Polling Stations on Thursday 3rd May for the District Council elections, if so to let Jenny know, please.

There being no further business, the Chairman was happy to draw the meeting to a close.

We hope to see everyone again next year.

The meeting was closed at 9.10 pm.