

Minutes of the 13th
CLAYGATE VILLAGE MEETING
7.45.00 pm on 16 May 2013 at Claygate Village Hall

Present:

Parish Councillors Anthony Sheppard (*Chairman*), Ken Huddart, Geoff Herbert, Alex Coomes, Noel Isaacs, Michael O'Brien, Mark Sugden

Borough Councillors: Mary Marshall, (Alex Coomes), (Geoff Herbert),

Parish Clerk: Freda Collins

Approx. 35 electors

The Chairman, Anthony Sheppard, welcomed everyone to the meeting which was being hosted by the Parish Council. He explained that the Chairman of the Council Shirley Round had sent apologies as she was unable to attend due to family circumstances. Apologies were also received from Cllrs Hayes and Hallett.

Cllr Sheppard stated that it was a privilege to welcome our speaker Mr Kevin Hurley, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey. The order of the agenda was changed at Mr Hurley's request to take his talk prior to other items.

Item 1. Report of the Parish Council

Cllr Sheppard reported that the Council has recently had two changes in membership. Jimmy Cartwright had retired from the Parish and Borough Councils and moved to Sussex. He is replaced by Michael O'Brien. Sarah Whittaker also retired from the Parish Council due to increased commitments at work and was replaced by Mark Sugden. Both new councillors were welcomed.

He then went on to talk about the precept, drawing attention to the recent *Courier* article; the Council had maintained a level precept for 7 years, but this cannot continue if the Parish Council wishes to continue giving financial support to worthwhile local initiatives. If the precept is kept the same, the Council will only be able to lobby, maintain the Highway Garden Sites and carry out some tree planting. He welcomed comments on this issue via the Council's email addresses.

Item 2. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes for the last village meeting on 24 May 2012 were available at the meeting. They were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

The chairman then changed the order of the agenda and introduced our guest speaker, Kevin Hurley.

Item 5. Speaker –Kevin Hurley

Mr Hurley explained that 41 separate Police forces had their system of governance changed. Previously there had been Police Authorities and their staff. The Government wanted to change the system so that there would be a more public face and greater transparency.

The new Commissioners are now working together in a non-political way and are becoming an effective force for lobbying Government.

He has 3 tasks:-

- i. to establish public priorities
 - ii to set an appropriate budget
 - iii. to hold the Chief Officer to account
- He has established priorities by researching public surveys country-wide and county-wide. He then discussed these findings round the county in number of large public meetings and established priorities. He has tested the priorities at lots of smaller meetings throughout the county.
 - He ensures that the budget delivers on best value.

- He meets with the Chief Constable of Surrey every month to ask her questions and then she answers and reports. This is carried out on a live webcast. No other county does this.

He then spoke about the budget for his organisation. Previously the Surrey Police Authority had a 1.3 million pound budget. He has since saved £250,000 which has been ploughed back into schemes to help victims of crime or to reduce crime. He has one Deputy and 2 part-time assistants.

The budget for Surrey police is £207,000,000. The force has a staff of 4,000, half of which are Police Officers and the rest civilian staff. The largest part of the Police budget is wages.

It is anticipated that this budget will be cut by £25,000,000 due to the current economic problems of the country. So there will have to be changes to the levels of service.

He then spoke about the priorities which had been established which he calls the 'Peoples priorities':-

- i. Zero Tolerance Police approach
- ii. more visible street policing
- iii. victims at the centre of the criminal justice system
- iv. more public say on policing
- v. protecting local policing
- vi expectations of high standards

At the end of his talk, Cllr Sheppard thanked him and invited questions from the floor.

Q. Why have you just cancelled a £15 million computer system?

A. This matter is being investigated. A decision was taken 6 years ago to approve a new computer system as the previous one dated back to 1996. It was agreed that Surrey would have its own unilateral system. Forces and organisations now need to be able to work effectively together and their computer systems need to be compatible; so the new Surrey system was of no use. It has been agreed to go with the same system used by several forces such as Sussex and Hampshire.

Q. There are poor relations between the Police and the public. Why was a fraud I was a victim of not properly investigated?

A. Nothing is perfect. Officers are continually being trained. It is known that more fraud investigators are required.

Q. How can the Criminal Justice system better serve the victim?

A. Mr Hurley is involved with talks with various organisations in the system such as the Courts, the Probation Service and the CPS to see if the system can be improved for the victim. The CPS do a good job on very limited resources, but unfortunately there is little money to spend on improvements.

Q. When I called the Police about youths illegally entering the Rec and taking drugs I was told that there were no cars available and it would be reported to local officers when they were next on duty.

A. There should be a mobile unit available 24/7, but there is a need to manage demand and resources. The call handler needed as much information as possible to make a value judgement. This was not serious and was therefore marked to be noted by local officers.

Q. Lots of money has been put into providing facilities at the Rec and recently there have been incidents of criminal damage but there has not been any preventative policing.

A. The mobile units will be dealing with serious incidents such as violent crime or road accidents. The matter would have been reported to the local officers.

Q. There are traffic congestion problems in Esher due to traffic coming out of Sandown whenever there is an event on. Can police officers be assigned to assist traffic flow?

A. Unfortunately on the list of priorities this is very low and there is little chance of having police officers on traffic duty.

Q. Is the change for the Police Authority with 17 members to you and your small staff too large a change?

A. This is the best way of squeezing as much as possible out of the funding available.

Q. What can be done if there is so little money?

A. We are trying to refocus on the priorities and deal with issues such as burglary, drugs and violent crime. I don't want to give you false promises but the truth.

Cllr Sheppard thanked Mr Hurley. He mentioned that issues can also be raised at the regular Police panel meetings.

Item 3. Report of the Committees

- Anthony Sheppard – **Environment.**
- Ken Huddart – **Highways and Transportation**
- Noel Isaacs – **Planning.**

Environment

This Committee is chaired by Cllr Anthony Sheppard who gave the report.

- i. Thanks to the Green Team and members of CIB who keep the village looking nice. More volunteers are needed.
- ii. We know there are lots of people who regularly pick up litter in their streets and we thank you. One of our co-opted members, Bill Chilcott is trying to get together a regular litter-picking team
- iii. Congratulations to CIB who won a silver-gilt medal in Britain in Bloom.
- iv. CPC re-tendered the HGS contract and it was awarded to a firm called Green Gardens.
- v. The Environment Committee and the whole Parish Council supported the refurbishment of the War Memorial.
- vi. We have improvements to the HGS at Red Lane and Glenavon Close in hand.

Highways & Transportation

This committee is chaired by Cllr Ken Huddart who gave the report.

- i. This Committee helped to protest against the proposal for on-street car parking charges.
- ii. We have arranged for some free spaces in Hare Lane car park for school drop-off and pick-up times.
- iii. The times of the on-street parking bays near the shops have been changed in order to prevent commuters using them all day.
- iv. Parking charges have increased in the car parks, which is not appropriate for a village car park.
- v. EBC may want to sell all or part of the two Claygate car parks. CPC wish to see these protected.
- vi. We have an excellent bus service in the K3 which is run by TfL. A new contract to run this has recently been awarded. The service will stay more or less the same, apart from a better service on Sundays. CPC is loath to interfere with this route.
- vii. We have purchased cycle parking and arranged more cycle parking at the station.
- viii. SCC has mainly ceased its tree planting. CPC is pursuing a tree planting programme, but needs more volunteers.
- ix. We have suggested traffic calming measures for Hare Lane and we support Speedwatch.

Planning

This committee is chaired by Noel Isaacs, who gave the report

- i. EBC are consulting on their Settlement ID Plans. The comments made by CPC are displayed on the notice board. The audience were requested to submit their own comments by Monday 20 May. It was noted that people can act as agents for those who do not have internet access.
 - Particularly important are the protection of Green Belt and retention of the car parks. It was a surprise to many to learn that a season ticket in the EBC car parks is £250 pa, but in the station car park is £750 pa.
 - The Telephone Exchange has been marked as potential development site. CPC has no problem with the development of the site, but the density of dwellings suggested by EBC is too high.
 - Originally we were told that the number of units projected to be built in Claygate was a maximum, now we find that it is a minimum.
 - More provision of school places is needed at both primary and secondary level.

Item 4. Presentation of the Brian Rhodes Community Cup

The Chairman announced the winner of the cup for this year was Francis Boff. He was nominated primarily for his work on the restoration of the War Memorial and with Claygate in Bloom.

The Chairman presented the cup and Francis gave a short speech of acceptance thanking everyone who helped with the project.

Item 5. Speaker

Already dealt with

Item 6. Open Forum

The Chairman announced that general questions would be taken.

Q: CPC was thanked for the generosity towards projects on the Recreation Ground such as the new pavilion, the path and the multi-use games area. But the success of the facilities at the ground has brought up highway issues. Road markings were promised for Church Road. At the last CRGT meeting there was a representation from the residents in The Causeway about parking problems. The CRGT puts out cones to try to deter abusive parking at the junction with The Causeway.

A: SCC did mark part of the junction so that the bus can turn the corner without obstruction. Delays in traversing Church Road due to parked cars just have to be accepted.

Q: What can be done to prevent parking on the bus stop in Hare Lane?

A: SCC put this matter out for consultation. The only way to solve the problem would be to have a 24/7 bus stop clearway which would involve moving the bus stop. The frontager objects to this.

Q: Are road markings going to be put in The Avenue at the junction of Hare Lane?

CPC has researched this junction and the problem is intermittent so it is hard to make a case to SCC for markings.

Q: Can something be done about the abusive parking in the disabled bays?

A: There is a parking warden who visits Claygate and does issue tickets. The problem of parking is a civil matter handled by EBC. If there is a problem please draw it to the attention of EBC.

Q: Can parking be provided on the Recreation Ground- or double yellow lines be put in Church Road? It is now difficult to negotiate Church Road because of the number of parked cars.

A: Both car parks in Claygate are underused. CPC has been trying to get the footpath leading from Torrington Lodge car park to Hare Lane re-opened. This would make walking from there to the Rec easier. The CRGT do try to make visiting sports clubs park in the car parks, but this is difficult. It was agreed that the reasonable charges in the car parks need to be advertised. The sale of season tickets for the car parks in Claygate is the lowest in the Borough.

Q: Does the precept go up in line with Council Tax and what is it spent on?

A: No, the precept does not follow Council Tax- it is set separately. EBC merely collect the precept on our behalf. There is a breakdown of spending in the latest Courier. Obviously there is an administrative cost as we have to conform to legislation on how the Council is run, but we try not to let the administrative burden increase.

Q: There are concerns about the safety of rides and charging at the Fair at the Flower Show.

A: This is nothing to do with the Parish Council; the Flower Show is run by an independent Committee. Claygate prides itself on the number of independent organisations that run events in the village.

Q: Can we have an outdoor table tennis table on the Recreation Ground?

A: The CRGT do have a long-term plan which includes more outdoor activities. But they are still in debt from the pavilion.

The Chairman thanked everyone for coming and raising issues.

.....Chairman

..... Date