

SHERE PARISH COUNCIL

*Serving the villages of Gomshall,
Holmbury St. Mary, Peaslake and Shere*

Minutes of the Council meeting held on 27th February 2009 in Tanyard Hall, 30 Station Road, Gomshall at 8.00 p.m.

Present: Mr. R. Newman (Chairman), Mr. R. Andrews, Dr. C. Brooke, Mr. C. Carlisle, Mr. R. Davey, Mr. D. Hall, Mr. J. Hutton, Mrs. S. Nielson, Mr. R. Smith, Mrs. M. Taylor-Cotter, Mr. M. Urban, Mrs. J. Williams, the Clerk Mrs L. Childs and six members of the public.

162/08 Apologies and reason for absence in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, paragraph 40 – apologies were submitted and accepted on behalf of Mr J. Tenner (ill) and Borough Councillor R. Hogben.

163/08 Declaration of Personal or Prejudicial Interests by Councillors on any of the agenda items below in accordance with the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007 – (SI.2007/1159). No declarations were made.

164/08 Register of Interests – no changes were made.

165/08 Declaration of gifts or hospitality over £25 – none declared.

The Chairman commenced the meeting by stating that the Council was delighted that Councillor James Hutton is recovering from his recent heart attack and that he had been able to attend a site meeting the previous evening and would be present at this evening's Council meeting.

166/08 The Minutes and the confidential Minutes of the Council meeting held on 9th January 2009 were **AGREED AND SIGNED** as a correct record.

167/08 Recreditation of Quality Council Status – the Chairman reported that the Council's Quality Council status had been **RENEWED**. The Clerk was thanked for preparing the necessary portfolio for submission to the examination panel.

168/08 Police Report – no member of Surrey Constabulary was present at the meeting. However, the Chairman reported that he and the Clerk had been invited to meet the members of the local police team at Albury Mansion recently. He stated that, although the local surgery in Tanyard Hall had been discontinued (due to lack of visitors) and the Police Community Partnership disbanded, the Police intended to hold local forums.

169/08 Traffic Matters

- The Clerk stated that Surrey County Council had submitted an objection to the planning application for the public car park in Shere on the grounds of inadequate visibility at the junction of London Lane/Upper Street, Shere. However, they might be prepared to withdraw their objection provided that approval was subject to a planning condition stipulating the installation of a pinchpoint in Upper Street prior to the car park coming into use. Councillors

had been informed of this possible planning condition at the Planning meeting on 10th February and were happy with this proposed course of action.

- Pinchpoint - The Council **AUTHORISED** expenditure of £5,000 (plus matching grant aid) plus a further £2,000 promised by County Councillor D. Davis. (Expenditure Power – Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 s.72). The Parish Council had previously approved the installation of a pinchpoint subject to agreement of the final plans for this.
- Future meetings of the Traffic Working Group – it was **AGREED** that the Working Group will be contacted when the design of the pinchpoint is received.
- Speedwatch – Mrs Williams gave an up to date report on the scheme. She **AGREED** to arrange a training to be held in April. The Council **AGREED** to write to the Police expressing concern over their recent lack of interest if Mrs. Williams decided that this would be desirable. Further information is also required urgently to enable the Clerk to purchase speed watch equipment and this would be chased by Mrs. Williams.
- Blackheath Village Signs – notification had been received from Surrey County Council that these signs are erected on private land and the speed limits displayed cannot therefore be legally enforced.
- Lighting of posts, Middle Street, Shere – following the unauthorised removal of the solar lights the Council **RESOLVED** to purchase a further supply. Expenditure of approximately £200 will be deducted from the Parish Maintenance Account (Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 s.72).

170/08 Parish Plan – following considerable discussion on the most suitable ways to consult the public it was **AGREED** that a Working Group would be formed to consider this and the possible production of a Parish Plan. Mr. Roy Davey offered to lead the Group and his offer was **ACCEPTED**.

Greening Campaign – to be considered by the Parish Plan Working Group.

171/08 Peaslake Village Centre improvement scheme – the Council **AUTHORISED** acceptance of the scheme subject to minor amendments to be decided by the South West Ward Councillors. The Council also **AUTHORISED** the transfer of £5,000 funding (plus matching grant aid) to the Surrey Hills Office in part payment for this project. Crime and Disorder Act 1998 – the project will have no impact on crime and disorder.

172/08 Peaslake Village signs – funding of £100 per sign (part payment to the Surrey Hills Office) was **AUTHORISED** by the Council. Total £300 to be deducted from the Parish Maintenance Account (Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 s.72).

173/09 Abinger Common First School

The meeting was adjourned to enable Mrs Pamela Hilton, a governor of the school, to give details of the merger of Abinger Common and Westcott schools. She stated that it was felt that the proposed merger (whereby both villages will maintain provision for

reception and years 1-3 as at present with all children in years 4-6 coming together at Westcott) will ensure the survival of the school when Surrey County Council implement their recent decision to retain infant but not middle schools. Mrs Hilton stated that it was intended that the Governing Body would be drawn equally from both villages in an attempt to safeguard the future of both schools.

The meeting was restarted and the Council expressed its **SUPPORT** for the merger.

174/08 Sponsor a Telephone Kiosk – the Council **NOTED** that the Agreements for the adoption of the kiosks in Pursers Lane, Peaslake and Gomshall Lane, Shere have now been signed by the Clerk and forwarded to British Telecom for their completion. The agreement had been examined and approved by the Council’s solicitor prior to completion.

175/08 Vision for Guildford Borough 2026: Community Assembly – the Council **RECEIVED** a report on the “community assembly” held on 5th February 2009 at Millmead House, Guildford. A report on the feedback session is available and will be forwarded to all Councillors.

176/08 Speaker for the Annual Parish Assembly - The Council **ACCEPTED** a very kind offer from the Vice Chairman Dr. Candace Brooke to give a talk at the Annual Assembly on the subject of oil and gas exploration. It was **AGREED** to invite the Mayor of Guildford, Councillor Jennifer Jordan, to this event.

177/08 Mayor’s Award for Community Service – Councillors were requested to forward suggestions to the Clerk.

178/09 Mayor’s Award for Access – Councillors were requested to forward suggestions to the Clerk.

179/08 Shere War Memorial scheme – the Clerk reported that a telephone call had been received from Guildford Borough Council’s Conservation Department stating that they were happy with the proposed scheme. In addition Surrey County Council had stated that they would not require a deposit for the granting of an Opening Licence (authorisation for disturbance of the Highway) provided that the Parish Council indemnified the County Council against any work failure or claims resulting from the works. They also require in writing that the Parish Council will take action to rectify any works which fail within a two year period of the works being completed. This course of action was **AGREED** and the Council will also obtain a guarantee from the contractor. Crime & Disorder Act 1998 – this project will have no impact on crime & disorder.

The Chairman reported that a site meeting had been held recently to enable some interested parties to express their views regarding the proposed scheme. Following this it was felt that the Council should consider the following alterations to the scheme:

- The nose of the war memorial should not be extended as this could cause further traffic congestion in this area.
- The proposed seat to be removed from the plans.
- The proposed paving from Church Lane to the Lychgate to be continuous and wide enough for wheelchair use.

- In addition it was noted that the present stone edging surrounding the grass around war memorial would be retained and not replaced by granite setts as inadvertently indicated on the plans. These alterations were **AGREED** by the Council.

The Council then **AUTHORISED** the placing of the order with Mr. R. Knott. The cost of this would be met as follows:

£10,000 North Ward Account (funds from Filming in the village)

£11,000 Grant Aid from Guildford Borough Council

£ 2,000 from the Council's budget for the current year (surplus contracting costs)

£ 500 Donation promised from Shere PCC.

In addition it was hoped that several local residents would give a small donation to the project and a request will also be made to the local branch of the British Legion.

The cost of the scheme was **ACCEPTED** at £23,995 PLUS the cost of extra ironstone if required. Councillor James Hutton offered to underwrite any extra cost over that detailed above. This very kind offer was **ACCEPTED** with gratitude.

180/08 Tree in the Square, Shere – the Council **ACCEPTED** a very kind offer from Mrs. Handa Bray to provide funds, when the time is right, for a replacement tree. It was **RESOLVED** that Mr. Andrew Colebrook be asked to provide a detailed report on the tree and also several other trees highlighted following land inspections carried out by Councillors (Expenditure power - Local Government Act 1972 s. 111). It was also **AGREED** that the area around the tree in the Square will be turfed once any work required to the tree has been carried out (Open Spaces Act 1906).

181/08 Small Recreation Ground, Goose Green – the Council noted that the gate installed on the common land was still in place despite 2 letters to the neighbour seeking removal of this. It was **DECIDED** to seek the Council's solicitors advice as to the next step to be taken regarding this matter.

182/08 Complaints Policy – the Council considered a reply from the National Association of Local Councils. This stated that it is vital that the public can complain about the acts of omissions of a Parish Council and that such complaints are acknowledged by them and also dealt with fairly and efficiently. A robust complaints procedure (which is publicised and accessible) is something a parish council should therefore develop, as an established written complaints' procedure installs confidence in a (potential) complainant and should enable the council to handle complaints with relative ease and consistency.

Mr Smith then proposed that the Complaints policy suggested by the NALC should not be adopted as he felt that a complaints' procedure should not be adversarial. A vote was taken with only Mr. Smith in favour of his proposal. The Chairman then proposed that the complaints policy considered recently be adopted by the Council. This was **APPROVED** with ten Councillors in favour, one abstention and one vote against. Mr. Smith requested that his vote against the proposal be **RECORDED** in the Minutes of the meeting.

183/08 Heritage Open Days 11/13th September – the Council **AGREED** that Tanyard Hall would be included in the programme for this year and will be opened to the public on 12th September. The Parish Council will advertise this locally.

184/08 Walkfest 2009 – it was **NOTED** that the Council will be hosting a walk from Gomshall on the morning of 30th July.

185/08 Council Policies

- a. Training Policy – the Council **ADOPTED** A Statement of Intent.
- b. Other policies will be considered as and when required.

186/08 Clerk's Report

The Clerk informed the Council of the following:

- Tanyard Hall – enquiries were being made regarding renewable-energy based heating systems for village halls at zero cost to the hall itself. Further details to follow.
- Application to Star Energy for A donation towards A larger soakaway in London Lane – this does not meet the scheme's criteria as provision is a County Council responsibility.
- Pothole repairs – extra gangs are being assigned to the work by Surrey County Council.
- Power of Well-being introduced – details to be forwarded to all Councillors.

187/08 Councillors' Business (for noting or inclusion on the agenda for the next meeting).

Parking problems on the west side of the Horsham Road, Holmbury St. Mary outside the properties Hurtbank and Weyside were discussed and the Clerk was asked to **SEEK** the assistance of Surrey County Council No action will be taken about overgrown hedges in this area.

Parking on the pavement near Holmbury Village Club will also be **REFERRED** to Surrey County Council.

The Vice Chairman reported that she had been attempting to ascertain the reason for the obnoxious smells emanating from the Albury landfill site. However, she had been unable to obtain any information on this matter but presumed that the movement of materials westwards had released trapped gases.

The very poor condition of the pavement southwards on the Horsham Road, Holmbury St. Mary from the junction with Pitland Street had been reported to Surrey County Council.

The removal of an overhanging branch in Pursers Lane was requested. The Council's contractor will be asked to remove this.

Electric fence problem at Peaslake – the Clerk to be informed of further details in order that the assistance of Surrey County Council can be sought.

Emergency Plan Working Group – it was **AGREED** that Mrs Neilson would form part of the membership of the Working Group.

SHORT ADJOURNMENT TO ENABLE THE PUBLIC TO ASK QUESTIONS OR TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL

Council's contact with the public – a suggestion was received that Councillors set up “surgeries” at hotspots such as at the entrance to the village shop, village green etc. in order to talk to the public and ascertain their views on Council matters. This will be considered by the Parish Plan Working Group.

188/08 Finance

- Income totalling £897 and expenditure of £21,391.20 was **AUTHORISED AND APPROVED** and the detailed list of transactions signed by the Chairman.
- The Council **RECEIVED AND ACCEPTED** a bank reconciliation to 30th January 2009.
- The Council **REVIEWED** the budget as at 30th January 2009. No adjustments were necessary.
- The Council **ACCEPTED** an estimate of £950.65 for the purchase of a new desktop PC and monitor (see Minutes of the last Finance Committee meeting) – Local Government Act 1972 s. 111. The Council also **AUTHORISED** training costs for the Clerk should she so require in respect of the MS Office 2007 programme (Expenditure to be taken from the Training Account – power Local Government Act 1972 s. 111).
- The Council gratefully accepted an offer from County Councillor David Davis for a donation of £500 towards the reprint of Millennium maps. This is conditional on the return of a donation made by Surrey County Council to the Youth Hostel Association in respect of the Holmbury St. Mary improvement scheme which had been cancelled. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk would seek the return of the donation made by the Parish Council.
- The Council noted the Council Tax amounts for a Band D property in respect of the individual Parishes in Guildford Borough. It was noted that Shere's Council Tax was the second highest mainly due to the large size of the Parish and the scope of the Council's activities in relation to the number of Council tax payers.
- Council Fees – the Council stated that it was happy with its current fees and hiring charges.
- Bank of Ireland – the Council was informed of the changes to the compensation arrangements.

189/08 Items of correspondence

Consultation Documents

- Communities in Control: Real People, real power – code of recommended practice on local authority publicity (www.communities.gov.uk - under consultation section). Closing date for responses 12th March 2009. To be dealt with via email.

Correspondence received after the agenda had been printed but requiring the attention of the Council (for noting or inclusion on the agenda for the next meeting – full details available at the meeting).

- Invitation to enter the Surrey Village of the Year competition. **NOTED.**
- Letter from a resident of Holmbury St. Mary re flooding problems around the Green – resident advised to contact Surrey County Council.
- Email from a resident of Peaslake re problems with the 7.45 bus service from Peaslake to Guildford – letter to be sent to Arriva Bus Company. If subsequently found to be a subsidised service then a letter also to be sent to Surrey County Council.
- Copy of a letter to Guildford Borough Council from a resident of New Road, Gomshall re parking problems in that area – a copy of the reply from GBC requested. Police also aware of this problem.
- Reply to the Council's letter re parking problems in Lower Street received from a resident of Lower Street. **NOTED.**

Correspondence received which may be of interest to Councillors but not necessarily requiring discussion by the full Council – for noting only or a request made to the Clerk for inclusion on the agenda for the next meeting (correspondence available immediately prior to the meeting).

Direct Information Service newsletters

Annual Report Surrey Safety Camera Partnership

About Guildford newsletter

Letter of thanks for grit bin received from the Lifetrain Trust.

Surrey Community Action – details of grant aid for rural communities.

Floodbags UK – details of collapsible bags.

Surrey Playing Field Association newsletter.

Surrey County Association briefing and update bulletin.

Email from the Treasurer of Shere Parochial Church Council thanking the Council for the donation of 50% of the costs of maintaining the Shere and Peaslake cemeteries.

Thank you letter for the proposed donation to Holmbury St. Mary Village Hall for the purchase of new chairs.

Email from Star Energy giving an update on the position of Star Energy's decision to delay work on the Albury 1 Gas Storage project.

Conservative News.

Surrey Research Park News magazine.

Reply to the Council's letter to a resident of Shere Lane stating that plants overhanging the pavement have now been trimmed.

WASP Bus – thank you letter for proposed donation.

Clerk and Councils' Direct magazine.

Exclusion of the Public and the Press (Public Bodies Admission to meetings Act 1960).

190/08 Land rents – the Council **AGREED** that it would commence negotiations for a rent review at the beginning of 2010.

191/08 Staffing matters – As recommended by the National Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks a new contract was issued to the

Clerk to take into account statutory changes, new case law decisions as well as some anomalies of previous contracts.

Further details re 190/08 and 191/08 are recorded in the confidential Minutes.

Date of next meeting: Friday 3rd April 2009.