

LANGSTONE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING held at Tesco Community Room at 7:30pm on Tuesday 16 May 2017

Chaired by Mrs Elaine Kilbey

(1) WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chairman welcomed Councillors Ray Bolton – Hampshire County Council, Jackie Branson and Tim Pike – Havant Borough Council. There were fifty one residents from Langstone, some of whom were not members of the Association. Six apologies for absence were received and recorded.

(2) MINUTES OF THE 2016 AGM

The minutes had previously been agreed by the Committee. Formal approval was requested and agreed. The minutes were then signed by the Chairman.

(3) MATTERS ARISING AND NOT ON THE AGENDA

None

(4) CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and presented her report on the past year.

The Review covered the Autumn Talk on Wildfowling, in October, the ongoing success of the website and a plea for every member to provide an e-mail address to aid communication and reduce printing costs.

Current issues were then addressed - Southmere Field, Havant Borough Council's Local Plan Housing Statement 2036 and the consequent critical Infrastructure Advisory Group. The outcome of the study, in which the LRA is heavily involved, is of vital importance to the community of Langstone. The Chairman referred to the proposed shared pedestrian/cycle path from Mill Lane to the Langstone Technology Park junction, Phase 1 of which is due to start later in the year and to the recent exhibition by the Environment Agency about Options for Sea Defence Works at Southmoor.

Concluding her report, the full text of which is appended to these Minutes, the Chairman referred to the need to recruit new members to the Committee.

(5) TREASURER'S REPORT

Neil Paterson presented his last report, after serving as Honorary Treasurer for 10+ years. The full report is appended to these Minutes.

He reported the Association's Financial Statement had been reviewed by the Honorary Independent Examiner, Owen Davies, who has found them to be a true and fair record of the Association's finances. Copies were available to members attending the AGM.

A detailed account was given of the Association's income and expenditure noting income was down on the previous year. The balance sheet shows the general fund stands at £4,750 indicating the Association to be in a strong position to carry out its objectives. The annual subscription will therefore remain at £2 per household. NP, while talking about his involvement in the LRA since 2006, offered to assist whoever volunteers to take over this role in the future. He also confirmed the agreement of Owen Davies to continue to act as the Independent Examiner.

There were no questions.

(6) ELECTION OF THE COMMITTEE

DP reported that he had not received any nominations for new members, but that all current Committee members, excepting Neil Paterson, have indicated their willingness to serve for the coming year. The re-election of the Committee en bloc was proposed by Angela Armstrong, seconded by David Miles and then carried unanimously. The Secretary reiterated earlier comments about the need to fill vacancies and asked members to consider volunteering.

(7) ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

The current post holders, Elaine Kilbey as Chairman, David Pattenden as Secretary, and Owen Davies as Independent Examiner have offered to remain in post. A replacement Honorary Treasurer is required urgently.

The re-election of the above Officers was proposed by David Miles, seconded by J Wilson and then carried unanimously.

(8) LANGSTONE CONSERVATION GROUP REPORT

Mike Combes reported the ongoing work of the Group, which had, over the past year, collected 658 cans, 556 plastic bottles, 209 glass bottles and filled 52 bags of general waste. A shopping trolley and a bicycle had also been recovered. He noted that dog fouling has increased recently, but enforcement action by Havant Borough Council will see this is better controlled.

After a trial period of responsibility for the Venturi Building, it has been decided to take over the ownership from Havant Borough Council. However, for this to happen the LCG must become a registered charity. MC confirmed the appropriate action to achieve this is underway.

(9) HCC/HBC COUNCILLORS

The Chairman invited the Councillors to speak to the members on current matters of interest.

Cllr Tim Pike began by commenting on progress with the new Local Plan. Central Government has required Local Authorities to provide more housing and to manage the process a new Local Plan is required. A Borough wide "call for sites" was made and subsequently many parcels of land were included in the Plan and given an initial rating of their suitability. He acknowledged the interest and concerns of the LRA about Southmere Field, but said it was submitted by the Land Owner – Fasset. He recognised the existence of a restrictive covenant on the land, but remarked that was a legal constraint, not one of planning. There are other problems with the site, a gas main running across it and its ecological value. He admitted doubts about the strength of such factors in preventing future development.

Cllr TP next referred to the recent Environment Agency exhibition (9 May 2017) where options were displayed to attempt to resolve the problem of the breached sea wall protecting Southmoor. The promoted solution – Managed Retreat, which will

allow the land to flood at times of certain high tides or storms is subject to consultation. He urged everybody to express their views.

Cllr TP advised the Borough is monitoring the land erosion in the Harbour adjacent to the Langstone Sailing Club. Action will be taken when the results of the various surveys are known.

Cllr TP reported on Stage 1 of a Cycle Path plan, to be funded from the Section 106 contribution by the Premier Inn planning approval. Changes to the junction of Langbrook Close with Langstone Road will allow a new bus stop and shelter to be constructed and a "yellow box" traffic control feature formed at the LTP entrance with the A3023. He said he preferred an option for the cycle path to be separated from the Highway. Further ideas are being examined.

Commenting on the Hayling Island Infrastructure Advisory Group, Cllr TP said he remained confident it will achieve a positive result and so feed usefully into the Local Plan 2036. A new traffic engineer has been appointed by the Borough and ideas are being looked at to help vehicles move more easily on the Island, to reduce the need for people to leave the Island and discuss ideas with the Bus Company, which may reduce traffic volume. It is hoped to have details later this summer.

Completing his report, Cllr TP referred to the new Public Space Protection Order, which will help with controlling dogs and the appointment of a new Enforcement Team to patrol and enforce rules about dog fouling and general litter. Targeted areas will be the beaches and Havant Bus Depot. The sanction is an £80 "on the spot" fine.

Councillor Ray Bolton (HCC) was invited to speak next. He reminded the meeting of the County's responsibility within Havant district.

Coastal Footpaths – referring again to the EA Exhibition – reference: Southmoor and the section of shoreline from the Royal Oak towards Wade Lane.

He mentioned the grants available, which had recently funded two defibrillators, located at the public houses.

Cllr RB commented on the provision of Children Services, Adult Services and the recent increase in Hampshire County Council's precept to help fund this work. Concluding, Cllr RB referred to Cultural Services and the quality of Havant's Library.

Cllr RB next commented on current local issues and, in particular, Southmere Field. He reminded members of his efforts to prevent the development of Bosmere Field and offered to take similar action over Southmere. He referred to the Borough's refusal to permit the Rook Farm scheme on Hayling Island, a decision which relied heavily on traffic information impacting on the A3023. He remarked that when/if a planning application is made to build on Southmere Field he will make a deputation against the development, if sound planning reasons against the scheme are prepared.

QUESTIONS

Q Angela Armstrong. Traffic was an issue at Bosmere. It is now clearly worse. Surely the covenant will stop building at Southmere.

A Councillor TP replied. Traffic is being monitored to give more accurate data. The covenant is a legal document not a planning consideration.

Q Tim Thomas asked why a 120 homes might be built near to Southmoor, which it is proposed will be allowed to flood.

Malcolm Snowdon stated he had taken legal advice and the covenant is strong, is still enforceable and the local community will oppose any plans to build on this land. He stated that the Councillors should be aware that his solicitors are informed.

A Cllr TP reiterated there is no application to oppose. Further, Havant Borough Council's Legal Team have advised the covenant can be overturned if the parties agree.

Q Ann Griffith asked if Langstone Harbour Board had been consulted over the Environment Agency's Managed Retreat Proposal. Also, why isn't Havant Borough Council building within Havant Town, instead of looking to Green Field sites, such as Southmere. Market Parade was given as an example.

A Cllr TP replied that housing is being provided in the town. The Market Parade approval expires in August and other ideas are being considered for that site. East Street is another location where plans are proceeding. Answering a question about unfulfilled approvals he stated there are some 400 units awaiting commencement.

Q Alan Sherwood commented on the poor quality of the EA exhibition about Southmoor. He said the information was scant and the comparison with the Medmerry scheme in Pagham was unrealistic, given the enormous variation in size between the two sites.

A Cllr TP reminded the meeting that Southmoor is a privately owned piece of land and the Local Authority cannot oblige the Owner to act. The problem has been recognised and ideas are being developed in conjunction with the EA. However, it must be noted that sea defence works will protect housing, not open land. Cost is always a major factor.

Q Felicity Coutts urged all members to contact Tony Haffenden (EA) and comment about the Southmoor scheme. She said the maps were poor and if the current wall is not repaired damage from flying stones, during storms, will threaten housing further inland.

A Such events are rare, but all factors are being considered.

Q Alan Sherwood asked what view HCC take on building of Southmere.

A Cllr RB replied, in the absence of an application no response is possible.

Q Leo Ward pointed out that several surveys have been undertaken on Southmere Field – topographical and trial holes, to what end if building is not planned.

A Cllr RB acknowledged receipt of several e-mails on the subject, but has no information to reply. Sue Sherwood advised that she had asked Colin Hedley and Fasset about this. Both were unaware of the surveys, so it was assumed there must have been trespass.

Q Felicity Coutts asked what the LRA should do about this.

A Cllr RB replied – collect evidence. It was noted Ann Griffiths was doing this already.

Q Andy Lewis asked, if the parties to the covenant were to “test” its discharge, would the LRA be informed.

A Cllr TP said he thought not. It would be a private, not a public matter.

Q Leo Ward referred to the Council meeting, discussing the Local Plan and various sites identified, when reference was made to an infrastructure study because of problems with access through Langstone to Hayling Island.

A Cllr TP replied, it is not just a matter of roads. The Local Authority Study is looking at a myriad of matters – health/utilities/drains/flooding etc. However, funding will be a major issue. He referred to the proposal for the Emsworth/Denvilles gap. To undertake this scheme a new road junction would be needed on the A3M, at a cost of between £15m to £40m. That sort of investment will need Government assistance.

The Local Plan will be a guide book, not a firm proposal to build.

Q Alan Sherwood then asked why wasn't the Infrastructure Study carried out before the Local Plan.

A There was no reply.

Q Graham Gordon expressed concern about the development at 1 Woodbury Avenue. This prompted other questions. The site appears to be a builders' yard, debris is scattered all around. Several vehicle movements including heavy vehicles occur frequently. What planning permission exists? It appears a business is being run from this site in a residential area.

A Cllr TP advised the concern of neighbours has been noted and enforcement action, as appropriate, will be taken. Permission was granted for work to the house, for a garage with a large room above, a revised access drive and new fencing. Business use is not permitted.

The immediate difficulty appears to be that works have been started, as approved, but there is no time limit on completion. The Local Authority is aware of this situation and is monitoring the site.

Q Ernie Wells asked if and when the brick stack, at the bottom of Wade Lane, is to be removed. The sea wall was repaired last year and the site should have been cleared before now.

A Cllr TP acknowledged the question and explained the work was completed late in the year after which vehicles were not permitted to access the site for fear of disturbing nesting birds. The material will be taken away shortly.

Q A question was raised about new cycle paths in Langstone.

A Cllr TP repeated an earlier comment about his ongoing efforts to find alternative routes which would be clear of the Highway. Options, some of which affect private land, are being investigated.

Q Elaine Kilbey asked about Footpath 51B, and the recent laying of a gravelled surface to fill in depressions caused by cyclists. No one knows who is responsible.

A Cllr TP said the footpath is not a cycle route, to which Sue Sherwood commented that the anti-bike barriers have been removed and even motor cycles have been seen using the path.

Cllr Jackie Branson advised that in such circumstances witnesses should call Customer Services, who will ensure the correct department reacts.

Q Felicity Coutts then informed the meeting of the closure of Havant Police Station over the weekend. Enquiries are now to be referred to Waterlooville, the new local Police Station.

A Cllr TP replied saying neighbourhood policing goes on all the time and reported a plan to relocate the Neighbourhood Policing Unit at the Plaza from which those services will be available. The Waterlooville Station will house the custody suite.

At the end of the Question and Answer session, Councillor Ray Bolton stood to thank all members of the Association and its Officers, for the help provided which assists him in doing his job effectively.

10) OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS

None

11) RETIREMENT OF THE LANGSTONE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION'S TREASURER

David Barrett then made a presentation to the retiring Treasurer, Neil Paterson, thanking him and his wife for all the work undertaken since 2006.

NP responded, thanking members for his gift and for the flowers given to Jenny. He recalled joining the Committee in 2006 and taking over from David Thomas fully in 2007. He expressed his pride at the work undertaken and the benefits achieved by the LRA for the community of Langstone. He remarked on the changes made over the years, highlighting the new website and the multi-page colour printed version of the newsletter. He said the Association is a valuable asset to Langstone, dealing with difficult issues and members' queries. He thanked his Committee colleagues and wished them well for the future.

The Chairman brought the meeting to a close at 9:17pm, thanking all for attending, for the questions raised and to the Councillors for their helpful replies

David Pattenden
Secretary
Langstone Residents Association
DGTP/JRP
15 May 2017