

OVERTON PARISH COUNCIL
Parish Meeting
Held at 7.45 pm on 2 April 2003 at the Community Centre, Overton

Present: 70 members of the public.

Mrs M Atkins, Mr M Attwell, Cllr P Baker, Mr P Baker, Mr J Bennett (Chairman), Dr S Johnson, Mr B Langer, Ms S Mill, Mrs L Sloane Williams, Mrs P Taylor, Cllr I Tilbury, Mrs L Harley (Clerk).
Elen Cooke, Chris Penney (St Luke's Hall Management Committee), Mr Alan Turner (St Mary's Hall Management Sub Committee).

1. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies.

2. Approve the minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting

The minutes for the Annual Parish Meeting held on 2 April 2003 had been approved at the parish council meeting on 9 April 2003. Mr Bennett asked for approval from the Annual Parish Meeting and this was proposed by Cllr Tilbury and seconded by Mrs Taylor.

3. Report by the Chairman on parish matters

John Bennett, the chairman of the parish council, started his talk by saying that a parish council election had taken place in May 2003 at which 12 councillors had been elected. Subsequently two had stood down and two had been co-opted. To raise public awareness, photos of the councillors would appear both on the website and in the library, and tonight all councillors were wearing labels.

The website www.overtonvillage.org.uk was in the process of being developed and expanded. He asked how many people in the room did not have access to the World Wide Web and 9 people put up their hands.

News and Views was now available on the website, but there was no intention of stopping a hard copy being delivered to every household in the parish and he thanked the voluntary deliverers and Teresa Reynolds, the Editor. The council had recently looked at how News and Views could be improved – but had not come up with any ideas – however the council was always open to suggestions.

Mr Bennett felt that it was important to get information to new residents especially as about two hundred families could move into the village in the next few years. The council was looking for feedback regarding a new residents' pack for the village. It was noted that no residents who had lived in the village for less than 18 months were at the meeting.

Mr Bennett went on to say that the London Road application had now been passed, but the borough council had not yet passed the Foxdown development. The parish council had objected to a recent planning application for infill housing – the village did not want more £400,000 houses but cheaper three bedroom houses. Mrs Atkins would represent the parish council's objection at the borough council's planning meeting.

The St Mary's Hall plans for refurbishment had been submitted and passed. The new skateboard park had been installed at Sapley Lane Playing Field and a new clock had been put in the bell tower of the Community Centre. The Overton Biodiversity Society had drawn up a plan for Little Meadow and was now applying for grants.

The parish council had recently discussed the thorny subject of car parking – and it was agreed to look at the subject of traffic management around the village as a whole. Mr Bennett asked that people use the existing facilities better.

Mr Bennett finished by thanking the borough councillors – Paula Baker and Ian Tilbury for their support of the village. He also thanked the parish councillors, the Clerk and the parishioners for coming to the meeting.

4. CCTV – a short presentation by Laura Harley

Mrs Harley stated that the parish council had been asked to pursue the idea of installing CCTV in the centre of the village in the winter of 2002, to help with the detection of public order crime and to act as a deterrent. The original intention was to have a system that covered the Community Centre forecourt, the northern end of Winchester Street and the High Street, and in the early part of 2003 PC Green, Cllr Baker and Mrs Harley had met with a number of companies to discuss the project.

It was proposed to mount a camera on a pole at the crossroads, but the Conservation Officers at the borough council were unhappy about further street furniture being erected in the centre of Overton. So the parish council agreed to support a reduced scheme to install a CCTV system in the Community Centre forecourt only. Cllr Baker and Mrs Harley met with further companies and received three quotes ranging from £3500 to £5500.

Grants are available from the borough council and Police Authority to fund this work, and the parish council has set aside some monies towards the capital cost of this work. However, even if the project is totally funded by outside bodies there is still an ongoing maintenance cost of between £350 and £1350 per year (dependent

on company). The cost of this would need to be compared with the cost of vandalism over the past three years, which has amounted to £2900.00 in total.

The parish council would like to know:

How comfortable would people be with CCTV in the centre of the village – would people feel safer or would they consider it an infringement of privacy?

Is there a cost benefit to paying a maintenance cost for a CCTV system versus the repair of damage done?

Are there other areas in the village that would benefit from CCTV?

5. Guest speakers – to speak about proposed future plans for the three village halls

Overton Community Association – Paula Baker

The Overton Community Association is a voluntary body and was established in 1978 to manage the Community Centre, an attractive listed building that is rented from Hampshire county Council for £4,000.00 per year. The OCA is also responsible for the cost of maintenance. The hall has a number of regular users including the playgroup.

The Overton Combined Halls Group had recognised that the Community Centre should be used for education purposes and other small activities – and this fitted in well with the library, which is already housed in the building. One of the major plans is to get open access computer facilities – and the library already has one computer.

The OCA has already received planning permission from the borough council to carry out alterations to the building including knocking down the existing toilet block, rebuilding the toilet block in the courtyard space at the back of the building, and fund raising had now commenced to pay for this work. The OCA was always looking for people to join the management team. Some explanatory notices had been displayed at the back of the hall together with comment forms.

St Luke's Hall – Pat Taylor

St Luke's Hall had been given to Overton Parish Council by the Bank of England for the use of the inhabitants of Overton. Many activities took place in the hall including, youth club, short mat bowls, yoga, keep fit, and band nights. The current management committee had been together for less than a year and had sorted out the fencing to the side of the hall, drawn up a licence for the land at the back of the hall, installed a new kitchen, sorted out the heating, painted the interior and put up new curtains. It was now in as good a condition as could be expected.

The Village Hall referendum that had taken place in autumn 2002 had intimated that any new hall should remain in the centre of the village. There was now a parking problem in the centre of the village. The parish council had requested the monies given to the Charity for the new hall on Overton Hill to be handed back, which indicated that plans for a new hall at that location had now been shelved. The committee was now looking at rebuilding St Luke's Hall at the back of the plot in Winchester Street with parking at the front. The committee was looking for comments from local people and were prepared to listen to what everybody had to say. A lot of money would need to be raised to enable a new hall to be built. The new plans would be discussed at the St Luke's Hall AGM, which would take place on 30 June 2004.

St Mary's Hall – Alan Turner

St Mary's Hall was well built but was in need of refurbishment – especially the toilets, which were in a disgusting state. The plans, which had been passed by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, were currently at the Building Regulation stage. A specification for the work had been drawn up and would go out to local builders for quotation.

It was hoped that the garden at the back of the property would be refurbished with the help of people from the village. At the front of the property it was hoped that the bus shelter could be removed and that a canopy be placed on the front of the hall to act as a shelter and give the building some identity.

It was hoped that the St Mary's Hall could be used as a regional arts centre, which central groups could use to put on plays.

It was likely that the work could cost in the region of £180,000 and it was hoped that the scheme could be partly financed using S106 monies from the borough council, and that there would not be too much reliance on the precept. It was hoped that refurbishment work could be completed within the current year.

6. Open Forum

Debbie Tomlin asked what would happen to the strip of land that had been leased to a neighbour, if the hall was moved to the back of the site. It was noted that the strip of land was only 8 foot deep, and that the right of ownership had been established.

Bob Reid wished to make it clear that the gardens of St Mary's Hall did not stretch down to the river, and that Mr Minall's land bordered the river.

Ken Watson made the point that CCTV could be linked into the new website – giving a webcam for the village.

David Thomas asked what the timeframe was for looking for a new site for a car park in Overton. Mr Bennett responded by saying that there was no easy answer to the problem. A number of sites had been identified, but some were not suitable. The critical question was whether there was any money available for such a project. The parish council were looking at traffic management throughout the parish including as far a field as the railway bridge on the C29.

Brenda Palmer asked whether there would be disabled access into St Mary's Hall. It was noted that this was part of the refurbishment plans. Mrs Palmer pointed out that a number of people did not have access to the website and that the delivery of News and Views to all parishioners must not stop.

Gill Corbett asked what would happen with the land on Overton Hill if the plan to build a new village hall was now dead in the water. This matter would need to be discussed.

Bob Reid was concerned about raising money for all the proposals that were being put forward by the village. It was pointed out that until all the halls produced costed plans, it would be difficult to judge where all the money would come from. Obviously there would be some S106 money available, and the parish council could raise money by the precept. There was still some chance of getting money from grants and from the Lotteries Board. It was noted that apart from the three village halls there were two other large projects planned for Overton – the Berrydown Project and the HART wildlife centre.

Ursula Majoribanks asked if a temporary car park would be sited in Overton Hill. This was still being considered.

Nicholas Crace was concerned about the reduction in reserves as shown on the parish council accounts. Money had been raised for some years to pay for a skateboard park and other improvements at Sapley Lane Playing field and this work had taken place in the 2003/2004 financial year.

Bill James asked when the Overton Handbook would be printed, and it was stated that this would be imminent.

Darren Hutchings spoke on behalf of the youth of Overton, a number of whom attended the meeting. He stated that he had been arranging band nights for 9 years in Overton providing entertainment to the children in the area. He stated that this could not happen without the halls in the village, as it would not be possible to put on such events in a new hall. Mrs Taylor stated that 150 youths attended each gig and that the hall was always left in a spotless condition after use.

Mr Bennett introduced the new village policeman, PC Chris Swallow, to the parishioners present. He thanked the speakers, and invited parishioners to partake of food prepared by the Overton WI.

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm.