

Annual Parish Meeting for Overton
4th April 2011
Held at 7.30pm in Overton Community Centre

Present: Dr T Ridler (chairman), Cllr P Baker, Mr T Leach, Mrs J Lessware, Cllr I Tilbury, Mr A Whitney, Cllr Anna McNair Scott (HCC), PC Richard Baldwin, Sgt Martin Cullis, PSCO Sabrina Smith, Mrs L Harley (Clerk), 53 members of the public.

1. Elect Chairperson

The chairman of the parish council Tom Ridler chaired the meeting (Local Government Act 1972, Sch 12, pars 11 and 27)

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Mr P Baker, Mr B Langer and Mr K MacKenzie.

3. Approve the minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting 27.05.10

These had been approved at the parish council meeting on 9th June 2010 and were formally approved at the meeting.

4. Introduction from the Chairman

Dr Ridler introduced the County Councillor Anna McNair Scott, borough councillors Ian Tilbury and Paula Baker and the parish councillors. Dr Ridler went on to thank the retiring Parish Councillors, Alan Whitney, Maggie Atkins and David Llewellyn. Dr Ridler thought that the upcoming parish council would have to deal with new legislation and the conclusions of the Core Strategy and Local Development Framework. He felt that the most important duty of the parish council was to communicate with parishioners via News and Views and the website (including the chairman's blog) and wanted to encourage people to reciprocate. He still felt that it was important for the new parish council to prepare a Parish Plan and hoped that there would be enthusiasm to undertake this. He also thanked the WI for providing the refreshments.

5. Guest Speakers

The first speaker was Steven Lugg, the Chief Executive of the Hampshire Association of Local Councils which supported Town and Parish Councils in Hampshire. He was also a local politician so was interested in localism.

The Localism and Decentralising bill was currently going through parliament. It was a plan for local communities but also a plan for growth and development. The Localism bill was going to affect the parish council and therefore the community. It was both an opportunity and a threat – but it seemed to be more of a planning bill with a few community enhancements. Mr Lugg suggested that communities would need to act on their own behalf as they would not receive monies from higher tiers of authority as funds would be used to carry out statutory duties. Local communities would need to have open and honest conversations about whether precepts should be increased and what items money should be spent on. Mr Lugg was concerned that the Standards Board for England would be abolished and that parish councils would have to work to a voluntary code.

Mr Lugg stated that the local community could trigger a referendum if large increases in council tax were planned and that this would affect district and large parish councils. Parish councils would also have the ability to buy and run community assets which had previously been managed

by district and county councils. There was also to be a change in the regulations on the way parish polls were run to make them more meaningful.

In essence the Localism bill was a bill for growth and councils would be able to take advantage of the good bits and avoid the bad bits. Once the bill was determined, Overton would need to plan for the future – including expenditure, ensuring that there was communication on these matters with parishioners.

Mr Leach – stated that parish councils had to be proactive and not sit on the sidelines watching other community organisations doing the work.

The second speaker was Cllr Anna McNair Scott, Hampshire County Councillor for the Candovers ward. Cllr McNair Scott stated that the county council had to save £55 million over the next two years. Some areas of expenditure were to be protected such as schools; libraries had also had a lot of investment over the past few years.

Cllr McNair Scott expressed her concern regarding the growth in the use of poor roads particularly in Overton. She passed her thanks to Brian Langer who had campaigned to have the Concessionary Travel times extended to 9.00am; she was still working on the including the last evening bus within the scheme.

Cllr McNair Scott had also been involved with the Harroway. A lot of money had been spent to renovate the track and she was sorry that the explanatory signs had taken such a long time to be erected. If users continued to destroy the surface of the track then a seasonal control (TRO) would have to be considered. However if restrictions were to be imposed, then all other measures of control had to have been undertaken

Terry Robinson – stated that it was up to the county council to protect the rights of the flora and fauna around the Harroway.

Alan Whitney – asked if the county council had any plans to improve the C29. There were some concerns that Satallite Navigation systems meant that the road was more greatly used than previously.

Tracy Cox – was concerned about the amount of money spent to refurbish the Harroway. She stated that the Friends of the Harroway were still intending to fight for a reclassification of the track.

The third speakers were Cllr Ian Tilbury and Cllr Paula Baker, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Councillors for the Overton, Laverstoke and Steventon Ward.

Cllr Baker gave a brief overview of the Local Development Framework which started the year with the scrutiny of the SHLAA. The Regional Spatial Strategy was abolished – which took away the basis for the housing numbers in the borough area and also took Overton out of the Rest of Hampshire. The LDF process had to be based on evidence and a consultation had been carried out from November 2010 – January 2011. There were 133 responses from Overton and Cllr Baker detailed the responses that had been received.

An Accommodation Workshop had been undertaken to investigate whether one of the buildings at the Civic Offices could be used for staff and the other let out to a third party. Consultations had suggested that this was not a good idea – but it is still going ahead at a cost of £11,000,000.00.

Cllr Baker briefly described the problems with the Red Lion Lane development site which had impinged on land owned by the borough council. The contractor was required to make good the site.

Cllr Tilbury asked that people get involved with the Local Development Framework consultations and took notice of documents produced by the borough council as they were likely to have an impact on housing in Overton.

The final speaker was PC Baldwin, Overton's Beat Officer. PC Baldwin stated that crime was down to an average of 12 crimes per months and this had been achieved through teamwork. He introduced PCSO Sabrina Smith, the Whitchurch Sergeant Martin Cullis and mentioned Special Constables Paul Bushell and Kevin Wragg who were all responsible for keeping crime low in Overton. He also mentioned that there was a new Rural Inspector, Steve Payne but did not expect that there would any further changes to the team for the foreseeable future. PC Baldwin stated that he thought of himself as the sheriff so would like to be voted in (nobody voted against him). PC Baldwin stated that he hoped to be a police officer in Overton for the next 12 years (until his retirement). The three priorities for 2011 were anti social behaviour, the enforcement of speeding traffic and crime prevention.

6. Open Forum

There were no further comments

The meeting was closed at 9.05pm.