

Yateley Town Council
Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting on Wednesday, 11th March 2020, 7pm
held at Yateley School, School Lane, Yateley, GU46 6NW

Present

Town Councillors: Gerry Crisp, Stuart Bailey, Graham Cockarill, Bob McSorley, Pam Phelps-Jones, Tony Spencer and Jenny Cole

Members of the Public: 20

Town Clerk

Deputy Town Clerk

Events & Communications Officer

1. Welcome by Town Mayor

The Town Mayor, Cllr Gerry Crisp, opened the meeting and welcomed all present, including Hart Police Inspector Jennifer Lovegrove.

Cllr Crisp outlined plans for the Feel Good Festival in September, which will focus on wellbeing and all round healthy lifestyles. The Council will be working with a range of community partners to deliver this event.

Cllr Crisp thanked pupils from Yateley School for their musical performance at the start of the evening.

2. Clerk to the Meeting

It was confirmed that the Town Clerk, Rochelle Halliday, act as Clerk to the meeting.

3. Apologies

Apologies were received from Town Councillors Greg Easterbrook, Bob Harward, Maria Pierce, Mark Griffin, Adrian Collett and Gill Hennell.

4. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 14th March 2019 were agreed as an accurate record by all present.

5. Annual Report

Cllr Gerry Crisp provided a detailed report on the Council's activities over the past year. The headline topics include:

- Introduction of Councillor Surgeries to enable residents to meet and share with our Town Councillors;
- Newly launched community events programme and recruitment of an Events and Communications Officer;
- Permanent inscription on the war memorial to commemorate Royal Marine Adam Brown;
- Further development of the Neighbourhood Plan;
- Improved security fencing at the allotment site;
- Weekly outdoor market;
- Resurfacing the Darby Green Centre car park and also Heathlands Cemetery paths.

Plans for the coming year include:

- VE Day celebrations on 8th May in conjunction with the Lions and Royal British Legion;
- Major refurbishment of the Monteagle Community Hall;
- New lighting scheme along Pipson's Lane;
- Outline plans to renovate Chandler's Pond and improve amenity value of the surrounding area;
- Formation of a Climate Change Community Group to be managed under the Community and Environment Committee;
- Plans to rework the Community Picnic in June to showcase talents from the community.
- Planning work to extend burial provision at Heathlands Cemetery;

The Council continues to work with many community partners, including Vision 4 Youth, Yelabus, Yateley & District Lions, Daisy Chain Café, Yateley Common Management, District and County Councils plus the Police.

6. Accounts

The annual audited accounts for 2018/19 were presented and agreed by members of the public present as being a fair reflection.

7. Open Public Questions

Members of the public were invited to ask questions. The following questions and comments were recorded:

Comment: With regard to affordable homes, high house prices make many homes in the area unaffordable. There are options, including community-led housing. Cllr Bailey replied that this is a national issue, though Planning Policy can be developed to encourage more affordable housing where shortages exist. The emerging Local Plan does not allocate any further housing developments in the parish, so tackling affordability is for private landlords and housing associations to work on with the District Council. Cllr Cockarill confirmed that the proposed garden village has the potential to cater for affordable homes in the wider district.

Comment: The recent resident survey talks about promoting active and sustainable travel. It would be great if a safe cycling route can be created from the parish to link up to paths at Horseshoe Lake. Cllr Crisp agreed that this would be beneficial. County Councillor David Simpson confirmed that the County Council is developing a local cycle and walking infrastructure plan, which will be subject to public consultation.

Question: Residents are very lucky to have the benefit of grass verges in the parish, however, over time these verges are being eroded by vehicle movements. What can be done to stop the erosion, such as the planting of trees. Inspector Lovegrove was invited to comment and confirmed that drivers can receive a fixed penalty notice for parking on verges but Police work does have to be prioritised according to needs and resources. Cllr Bailey stated that dragon's teeth bollards can be installed on Council owned verges but often it is difficult to determine land ownership.

Comment: The parking issue is still ongoing. There are several pavements that need review to improve accessibility. Cllr Bailey replied that Cllr Cole has been working on a review of the dropped crossing points on pavements. In terms of the parking problems at Church End Green, the Council has been actively working with the District Council to improve parking enforcement. Work is due to take place imminently to install more posts by St. Peter's Church.

Question: What action can be taken if a resident fences off an area of land belonging to the Council and then applies for planning permission to build on that land? Cllr Bailey replied that action can be taken to protect Town Council land, where an infringement has taken place. Cllr Cockarill added that planning consent is determined independently of land ownership but consent from the landowner is needed to undertake the work. The Town Clerk will progress this matter with the resident outside of the meeting.

The meeting ended at 8.48pm.

Chair