

HARPSDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at Harpsden Village Hall

on

Wednesday 13th April 2016

- Present: Cllr Kester George (KG) - Chairman
Cllr Malcolm Plews (MP)
Cllr Catherine Rubinstein (CR)
Cllr Tony Wright (TW)
Cllr Paul Harrison (PH) - SODC Councillor
Cllr David Bartholomew (DB) – OCC Councillor
- Residents: About 21
- Golf Club Guy Norgrove - Chairman, Clubhouse Re-Development Committee
Rob Water - Blaise Architecture
Jonathan Walton - Turley & Co Planning Consultants
- In attendance: Mrs Sarah Tipple (ST) - Harpsden Parish Clerk

- 1. Welcomes:** KG welcomed everyone to the meeting. Councillor Robin Dorkings had sent his apologies.
- 2. Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the APM held on 22nd April 2015 were signed as a correct record.
- 3. i. Financial Report:** The financial report for the last year was available for everyone to examine. The report was proposed by TW and seconded by KG. It is attached to these minutes at Appendix 1.
ii. Chairman's Report: KG gave his annual report, in which he explained that the year had once again been dominated by the Council's participation in the joint Henley/Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan (NP) and the associated Traffic Report by Peter Brett Associates. The Council was gratified by the outcome of the NP referendum and would ensure that such Section 106 and/or CIL monies made available from the development of Highlands Farm, would be spent on improvements to Gillotts Lane, the Valley Road and Sheephouse Lane. KG also made reference to a further application by the owners of Thames Farm for 95 houses at the site. The Council would, once again, oppose the application. A full text of KG's report is attached to these minutes at Appendix 2. KG then introduced Guy Norgrove, Chairman of the Project Committee at Henley Golf Club, who would present the Club's plans to move the Club House from its current location opposite the Cricket Club, to the top of Chalk Hill.
- 4. Proposed Move of Henley Golf Club's Club House to the top of Chalk Hill**
Guy Norgrove (GN) explained that the cost to maintain the fabric of the Club House in its current condition was running at approximately £50,000 per year and that this cost was rising and would be unsupportable within ten years. The Club was not in a strong enough financial position to be able to afford a major refurbishment of the Club House at its current location whilst at the same time maintaining existing members and indeed attracting new ones. The Club was faced with falling membership, spiralling maintenance costs and a Club House which was not fit for purpose. The Project Committee proposed, therefore, building a new Club House at

the top of Chalk Hill, which would be financed by selling the land on which the existing Club House stood as well as the two properties owned by the Golf Club along the Valley Road. The proposal had generally met with approval from SODC at the pre-planning stage, albeit with several caveats such as particular landscaping requirements and improvements to Chalk Hill. The Golf Club would soon be holding an EGM of its members to seek approval for the project, and subject to a successful outcome of that meeting and approval by SODC of its plans, the new Club House would be built in 2017 and the houses on the existing land towards the end of 2018. GN then introduced Jonathan Walton (JW), their planning consultant, who drew residents' attention to the indicative model and plans that had been drawn up. He explained that the plans would have to comply with SODC's Core Strategy, the new, emerging local plan and the NP and, subject to approval by members at its EGM, the Golf Club would be submitting a formal application within six months. He pointed out that the new Club House would have a room that could be rented out to the benefit of the local community for exercise classes, for example. The consultants would be conducting a thorough traffic survey of Chalk Hill and also a postcode analysis of the Club's members to ascertain how much Chalk Hill would be affected by the proposed move. GN and JW then answered several questions and concerns from residents: it was proposed to build three houses at the existing site; the manager's and greenkeeper's houses would be sold on the open market; a full lighting and acoustic survey would be carried out at the new site, to ensure minimal impact on not only the other residents at Mays Green but also the local wildlife; the existing Club House site would be regarded as infill although the policy regarding the improvement to a dilapidated building would take precedence over the policy on infill; a detailed traffic survey of Chalk Hill would be carried out, including incorporating new passing places, in conjunction with OCC Highways; a 'construction logistics plan' would be brought into play before construction began, to ensure minimal disruption to residents at peak times and to ensure a thorough clean-up operation at the end; the proposed car park would offer the same number of spaces as the existing one; there were policies in place which supported building leisure facilities in an AONB; a full utilities survey would be carried out prior to submitting the plans; membership of Golf Clubs generally was in decline and Golf Clubs needed to offer value for money, which included a Club House which was fit for purpose. KG thanked the Golf Club for presenting their project. However, a straw poll of those present indicated an overwhelming majority were against the move.

5. Open Forum for Other Issues

- i. Thames Farm:** Jonathan Walton pointed out that a new statement from the Housing Minister had clarified that Neighbourhood Plans carried more weight than housing supply concerns. DB explained that any development at Thames Farm would be in addition to the 500 homes earmarked by the NP and with Highlands Farm having received an allocation of 170 houses, Harpsden risked being squeezed at both ends if development at Thames Farm went ahead. He urged residents to write to SODC with their objections as this was a new application – previous objections would not be taken into consideration. The flyer which had been distributed in Henley about the new proposal at Thames Farm had received only a 4% response rate, and these were mostly from the Elizabeth Road area of Henley. It was agreed that the question on the flyer was very misleading.
- ii. Gillotts Lane:** On behalf of the Gillotts Lane Residents' Association, Odette Moss wanted it to be minuted that their members did not believe that installing chicanes on the lane was either necessary or sensible. The road had dangerous bends where it was impossible to see vehicles approaching in either direction. The traffic survey carried out in 2012 had identified the main problem being the number of vehicles using the lane, not the speed at which they were travelling.

KG closed the meeting at 8.30pm.