

Chalfont Heights Roads Committee

Minutes of the Fifty fifth Annual General Meeting

Held at the Parish Church Hall, Chalfont St Peter
at 20.15 on
Wednesday 24th February 2010

Present:

Fifty-three residents (representing forty-three properties) were present including nine members of the Committee as follows:

P G Cassell (Chairman), S. Allright, R J Burge, G Eykyn, J Garnham, K. Krokosz, Mrs P E McNair, R. Mellor, K. Quilter.

Apologies for absence were received from:

G. Brown, Pam Bryan, Michael Greaves, Mrs Kendal, John Nesbitt, Robert Warrington, Roy & Kim Weblin

Janice Buchanan (Secretary) in attendance

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the AGM and apologies were read out. Chairman introduced committee members who would be submitting their reports. Residents were asked to ensure that they signed the attendance list which would be circulated during the meeting.

55.1 Minutes

1.1 The Minutes of the fifty-fourth Annual General Meeting, held on 25^h February 2009 were submitted for acceptance - proposed by Denis Palmer, seconded by Bruce Allen and the proposal was carried. There were no matters arising.

55.2 Incorporation as a Company Limited by Guarantee

2.1 The Chairman commented on the incorporation of the Chalfont Heights Roads Committee into Chalfont Heights Roads Committee Limited as referenced in the 2009 report. Comments from the floor indicated full agreement for this decision which was recommended by the Roads Association and B P Collins, solicitors.

55.3 Financial Report & Accounts – Keith Quilter (Treasurer)

3.1 The Treasurer explained some of the changes which have been necessitated by our transition to a limited company, particularly in regard to banking arrangements. Unfortunately new Standing Orders will have to be issued because of this banking change and a revised Standing Order form will be circulated with the Minutes of this meeting to every resident during the latter part of March. The Treasurer stressed that this form should be sent to the resident's bank, using the house name as a reference, and not returned to him. He urged the use of a Standing Order since with the incorporation every cheque paid into the bank incurred a significant surcharge.

- 3.2. KQ reported that only one resident is in default of payment of subscription. A query arose re non payment when a house comes up for sale and KQ explained that solicitors are obliged to deal with any outstanding debts attached to the property and that a delay in negotiations invariably occurred. A resident asked why we don't publish the names of non-payers. The Chairman advised that we have taken legal advice on this matter and that offending residents could invoke the Data Protection Act. The Chairman indicated that although he would not identify the non-payer to the meeting, he was able to indicate that the initial refusal to pay was pending a claim for damage to a vehicle allegedly caused by speed humps on three occasions. Despite having received payment from our insurers however, the resident had still not seen fit to pay their dues to the Estate. Comment was made 'why don't we publish a list of all those who *have* paid' which received approval from the residents. Chairman thanked Treasurer for his efforts particularly in chasing up late and non payers.
- 3.3. Acceptance of the Financial Report and Accounts was proposed by Derek Bryan, seconded by Dr John Warder and the proposal carried.
- 3.4. Over the years the committee has been advised that we should be keeping the reserve at approximately three times our annual income. This income will actually diminish a little in the next financial year because of the lack of development income and also the low interest rates. In view of this the Treasurer proposed that there should be an increase in subscriptions in order to replenish our reserves which had been depleted by the larger than usual road repair bill this year. He recommended an increase in subscription by £20 to £170 per year although suggesting a discounted rate of £160 per year for those paying by SO since this payment would not incur bank charges and would also ensure that there was a prompt flow of cash into our reserves before the end of May. He also proposed that the penalty for late payment after 31st May should be £190. This recommendation was proposed by Mrs Wickham and seconded by Michael March and was carried by the meeting.

55.4 Committee Reports

55.4.1 Development – Robin Mellor, Tricia McNair

- 4.1.1 RM referred to the recently circulated report and commented that we have suffered in this past year from the lack of revenue received from the development levy. Major development on Woodside Hill is now over. Thanks were expressed to John Nesbitt, Architectural Adviser for his invaluable help.
- 4.1.2 Bruce Allen advised the meeting that the Scout Camp freehold is now owned by the Greater West Middlesex Scout Association due largely to a £500,000 donation from the USA and that the land to the rear of Woodside Hill will now be safeguarded. Thanks expressed to all who also contributed.

55.4.2 Trees, Islands and Estate Verges – Jasper Garnham

- 4.2.1. JG reported that there will be a considerable increase in necessary tree work this year owing to the disturbance caused by vehicles and adverse weather conditions. All residents were encouraged to take care of the verges outside their properties.
- 4.2.2. Bruce Allen referenced two huge trees on his verge and asked for them to be removed as he deems them to be dangerous. He also mentioned parking on the verges and proliferation of posts and stakes on verges. Fineland Forestry have said that if a tree is dangerous it should be removed and JG will discuss the mentioned trees with the

contractor and visit the site. Upway seems to be the only location where posts present a problem. Bruce Allen advised he would put rocks on his verges. PC commented there had been an incident in the past when a lady fell over a rock in Lewis Lane and sustained a fractured ankle. Householders could be held liable for injuries caused by obstacles they had placed on the verges. Denis Palmer commented that the top of Chiltern Hill and Upway always need attention to the verges in summer after damage caused in the winter.

4.2.3. JG advised that Fineland Forestry are available to help residents with any tree issues they have.

55.4.3 Roads and Signs – Rob Burge & Kris Krokosz.

4.3.1. Rob Burge commented on the resurfacing of Woodside Hill by the new contractors which was very satisfactory although one small hole has appeared which will be repaired. The new humps now meet Department of Transport specifications although in one or two instances the channel at the side needs some attention. Old soakaways on the estate are causing some problems. They will be cleared shortly when the roads are swept. Each soakaway costs approximately £800 to be installed and it is anticipated that the two at the bottom of Chiltern Hill will need to be replaced.

4.3.2. RB referred to his report in which comments about the difficulties caused by the inability of our gritting contractor to fulfil his agreement were made. RB is still investigating other contractors who might suit our requirements, but indicated that they were hard to find and quite expensive.

A moderate supply of grit was obtained for our own sandbins but there was a national shortage due to the severe weather. Bins were filled up but RB suspects that people outside the estate availed themselves of the contents. New bins are being considered, green if possible, and bins to be padlocked with a note advising where to collect the key. Committee member Steve Allright has agreed to take responsibility for gritting. The possibility of more bins to be sited around estate at hilly points was discussed.

Terry Ansell suggested possibility of connecting a snow plough to a 4x4 vehicle. He also commented that grit (rock salt) needs to go down before a snow fall to be effective. RB replied that all aspects are under consideration and that this year's conditions were exceptional. The only roads gritted by the council were the main roads and most residential roads were as badly affected as the estate.

Thanks were expressed to the Sandy Rise residents who all helped clear and grit their road. A resident commented that elderly people are unable to spread grit from the bins themselves. Steve Allright asked for people willing to help to see him at end of meeting and he would coordinate efforts although it was stated that the average age of Sandy Rise residents who cleared the road was 70+.

4.3.3. Much discussion ensued regarding the difficulties some residents encountered in getting off the estate and inability to get to work. Particularly difficult areas were mentioned and Steve Allright agreed to look at the black spots and endeavour to achieve a solution.

4.3.4. David Grieve voiced concern over the siting of certain bollards close to the road which he deemed to be dangerous in snow conditions. RB advised that bollards were not set in concrete and should not cause damage if hit. Plastic bollards provided an alternative but were unsightly.

4.3.5. Brian Davies paid tribute to Rob Burge and his wife for their outstanding efforts in distributing the grit supply – two tons in total. The meeting expressed appreciation for his efforts on our behalf.

4.3.6. Chairman had visited all the other private estates in Chalfont St Peter and Gerrards Cross and Chalfont Heights was the only one which carried out *any* gritting. In such conditions there is only a limited amount which can be done and cost is always a consideration.

55.4.4. Acceptance of the Committee Reports proposed by Michael March and seconded by Dr John Warder.

55.5 Committee

5.1. Chairman advised that Steve Allright had been co-opted onto the Committee during the year. All members listed in the report are willing to stand for re-election and this was proposed by J. Ballantyne and seconded by B. Davies.

55.6 Any Other Business-

6.1. **SURVEY.** George Eykyn spoke about the recent survey covering House Numbering, E-mail, Standing Orders and Police Alerts. A summary of the results was circulated to the meeting and is also attached to these Minutes.

House Numbering – only one road polled sufficient votes to opt for numbering. Other residents expressed disappointment particularly as difficulties have been experienced by emergency vehicles trying to find houses by name only. Jasper Garnham commented he is frequently asked for directions on the estate. Residents who wished to see house numbering were invited to lobby others in their roads accordingly.

E-mail. George Eykyn apologised that the first police alert had inadvertently shown subscribers' e-mail addresses. This should not have happened, and from now on all emails would be forwarded as 'blind copies' to maintain privacy. 89% of residents had responded that they were happy to be contacted by e-mail by the committee and 84% wanted to receive the police alerts. A resident asked for an explanation of police alerts and GE advised that this would cover crime, vehicles, safety, and notice of public meetings with police. GE also advised that the committee would send an occasional newsletter to residents who had supplied their email address. This would allow residents wishing to raise and discuss issues of interest and concern with others to invite contact, without clogging everyone's email inbox.

Thanks were expressed to George Eykyn for this work on communication.

6.2. **TRAFFIC.** Concern was expressed regarding possible increase in traffic through estate when the office block at the foot of Chiltern Hill is complete. PC advised that arrangements to monitor traffic is in hand. Some residents were in favour of a barrier but it was felt that security guards would be preferable. Apparently there will be 73 parking spaces at the office block and residents fear that there could be additional parking on the estate. Resident asked if car stickers could be provided. Threat of clamping also suggested, and possibly charging a toll. Barry Bradbrook suggested writing to the MD of the company advising him of our fears. The concern is that estate could be used as a cut through. Chairman commented that if and when that happens, it will be dealt with. Dawn Palmer raised issue of manning gates and also difficulties they have experienced with exiting their driveway at busy times. PC advised that the recent bridge repair caused an increase in traffic but this has now reverted to normal levels. Some residents disagreed. Residents were warned that they could put themselves at risk by trying to deal with non-estate drivers who could become belligerent.

- 6.3. **ELECTRONIC GATES.** Mrs Wickham expressed concern regarding use of electronic gates which detract from the friendly aspect of the estate and make it difficult to express neighbourly intentions. PC advised that the covenants do not cover such gates as they are a new development. One resident commented that they provide additional domestic security. RM advised that the estate prefers to see wooden gates not metal ones. Much discussion ensued but consensus of opinion was that we now live in a more violent society and more incidents occur therefore security becomes a priority. Derek Bryan commented that there had been a recent incident in the Woodhill Estate when an 88 year old resident had been attacked.
- 6.4. **SANDY RISE.** Mrs Brownrigg brought to the meeting's attention the difficulties encountered by residents from car parking, fly tipping etc. Request was for NO PARKING signs to be erected. Other residents referenced parking by parents taking children to the Montessori school which frequently block driveways. Consultation needed with Youth Club Leader and also School authorities who originally asked parents to park in the village. PC promised discussion of these issues at the forthcoming committee meeting and that he would write to the leader of the Youth Centre. KQ advised that the Youth Club pay an annual levy of £450. End of Sandy Rise is not owned by estate but by local authority.
- 6.5. **WHEELIE BINS.** Complaints were received about these being left in the road by contractors whose lorries also damage verges. PC asked residents to leave bins in the drive entrance, and offered to write to Chiltern Waste Management requesting that they instruct the contractors to replace them there, and not in the road after emptying. Dr John Warder said he would also forward comments to the local authority. He took the opportunity to mention the local Core Strategy Document currently in draft form which will be finalised after the election. Donna Allright stated she was very happy with the current refuse collection arrangements and did not want to antagonise the contractors and/or the staff in the new office block but felt it important to be friendly.
- 6.6. **HAYWARDEN.** Bruce Allen advised the meeting that a trust fund had been set up to assist the orphaned son of the Haywarden who was tragically killed on the A413. The village has raised £10,000 to help this young boy who will leave Robertswood School next year. Thanks were expressed to all concerned.
- 6.7. Michael March asked whether the local protest organisation SENSE could be contacted by the estate to register our support.
- 6.8. A vote of thanks to the committee was expressed by the residents.

There being no further business the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 21.50.