Melchet Park & Plaitford Annual Parish Meeting

Minutes of meeting held at Plaitford Village Hall on 15th May 2017

Present

K Curtis (Chairman)

J Wright (Parish Clerk)

PC Tristan Pugh (Hampshire Police)

6 Members of the Parish

Cllr G Bailey (TVBC) Cllr RJ Perry (HCC)

Apologies

No apologies had been received.

The minutes of the May 2016 meeting had been agreed and signed at an earlier Parish Council meeting.

PC Tristan Pugh

A member of the parish commented that the Hampshire Alert was of limited value since most incidences were far from Plaitford: it seems that one can set up filters for the system which allow a more focused list.

If one is aware of a crime or of dubious activities (e.g. suspicious cold calling) one should inform Crime Stoppers. It is better not to do this anonymously since the police are more likely to react if one gives one's personal details.

Hampshire Police are organised into three sections: Prevention and Neighbourhood, Response and Patrol, and Investigation. The Investigation unit has already reached the number of reported crimes expected for the entire year. All reported crimes are assessed but they have to be prioritised for investigation. Burglaries are always investigated and this is done by Hampshire CID.

The Prevention and Neighbourhood team investigate hate crimes but also deal with trying to protect vulnerable residents, often using a multi-agency approach.

Operation WOLF (where vehicles are pulled over for checking) is deemed to be of value. It involves both the Police and Customs, the latter have the power to search a vehicle for anything whereas the Police have to have a reason. Vehicles can be impounded and this plus fines and points on the licence of the driver makes it more difficult for criminals to continue with their activities.

PC Pugh caused amusement when he informed the meeting that he was a "tactical cyclist" because the Police have found that this is the best form of transport when policing high profile events. (Hampshire does not have any mounted police units.)

The Chairman thanked PC Pugh for his very interesting input and for the enthusiasm he showed for his job.

Report by Cllr Perry (HCC)

Although there have been some ward boundary changes to reflect population changes the number of councillors has remained the same.

The Revenue budget for 2017/18 remains at £1.9bn. The Council Tax will increase by 4.99% this year, including the 3% increase for Adult Social Care. This is the first increase for 6 years. Hampshire no longer has the lowest Council Tax having been over-taken by Somerset, by just £8.31 per year for Band D.

Each member of HCC has a small fund from which s/he can award grants, usually of the order of a few £100's.

In league table terms the local schools are doing better than the national average. Wellow Primary School was well above the national average (72% compared with 53% nationally) in reading, writing and maths.

Potholes etc should be reported via the website. A member commented that the criteria for severity seems to have changed; another member commented that any problem is inspected promptly but remedial action is often weeks later.

Devolution proposals are on hold.

Current plans should ensure 97.4% coverage of Superfast Broadband. There is a scheme to offer satellite technology or fixed wireless solutions for premises with sub-2Mbps speed. This was of particular interest to one member who lives in Melchet Park where the speeds are well below 2Mbps.

Report by Cllr Bailey (TVBC)

The TVBC Local Plan has been approved by the Inspectorate and by TVBC and has now been issued: the challenged by a developer with an interest in a site at Nursling & Rownhams was rejected by the High Court and TVBC were awarded costs. The Plan strengthens TVBC's opposition to inappropriate development.

Wellow is progressing with its Neighbourhood Plan.

The New Forest National Park Authority is reviewing its Local Plan and although the old garden centre site could perhaps have some development this seems unlikely given its access onto the A36

TVBC has again had to increase the Council Tax, partly because its investment income is very low. It is now beginning a programme of property investment which should enable a higher level of income to be generated. There is money available in the Councillor Grant Scheme for projects within the Blackwater ward: last year a grant was made to Plaitford Village Hall towards the cost of the replacement storage shed.

The Boundary Commission has yet to approve the proposed boundary changes within Test Valley.

There being no other business the meeting closed at approximately 8.00 p.m.