

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting for Deane, held on April 13th 2017

Present: Mrs. Blackman (Chairman), Mrs. Bettridge, Mr. Ellison, Mrs. Foster-Key, Mr. Hewitt, Mr. Hooker, Dr. Johnstone, Mr. Law, Mr. Parry, Mr. Startin and Ms. Tofts, and Mrs. Taylor (Borough Councillor). No Deane residents attended the meeting.

Apologies were received from Mr. Bullions and Mrs. Gavin

1) Minutes: The minutes of the meeting held on 14th April 2016 had been confirmed and signed already, but had been re-distributed to all members prior to the meeting.

2) Parish Matters

General Matters: Mr. Law confirmed that he has been in discussion with Paul Tory (Malshanger Estate) regarding the unsightly state of the sub-station that was reported last year. The gardener has now vacated the site and the estate have cleared the front of the area, and put an earth barrier in place to reduce fly tipping. The possibility of creating an area for planting and providing seating for walkers and villagers had been explored, but that was not possible because of underground electric cables controlled by Southern Electric. Mr. Law will continue to put pressure on the estate to ensure that the internal area is cleared of rubbish. Deane has experienced an increase in fly tipping of building materials since the BC introduced charges at the waste tip. It has again been a flood free year.

Planning: The work to convert the Deane Gate pub into a restaurant has at last started. The building work will be monitored closely by the Borough Council conservation team to ensure that the character of the new extended building blends with the existing pub. The new owner expects to complete the project by September. Mr. Law informed members that he has been assured that a bar will be available as well as a restaurant which will be a benefit to local people. They also intend to serve breakfast and afternoon tea.

Oakley Hall plan to replace the marquee in the first quarter of 2018. They have commenced the planting that will shield the new marquee from the hotel. The new unit will be able to house what is currently stored in ugly metal storage containers which will be removed.

Highways: The Highways Authority are refusing to introduce the 40mph limit at the Deane Gate crossroads although they had promised to do this when the 50mph limit had been in place for 12 months. This has become more of a priority now that the conversion of the Deane Gate is underway. They are also refusing to consider a 30mph request for the roads in Deane. Mr. Law has suggested a blanket maximum 40mph on all C roads.

There are now safer bus stop hard standings opposite the entrance to Oakley Hall and opposite the Beach Arms.

Environment: There is an increase of people using the footpath through Deane House paddock, with many people parking cars in Manor Farm Lane near the entrance of the church drive.

This may increase further when the BBC show the Jane Austen programme that features Deane House.

The Wayfarer Walk passes through Deane and then through the middle of two fields to the railway line at Deane Down. There has always been resistance to allow the Malshanger Estate to divert the footpath around the fields where adequate walking areas exist.

The Estate is required to spray growing crop for a two metre path, which Mr. Law will discuss further with the Environment Working Party.

Crime: No significant crime has been reported this year.

Questions: Mr. Ellison and Ms. Tofts asked about the cellars of the Deane Gate Inn, and Mr. Law confirmed they are now tanked so no further flooding should affect the premises. Mrs. Foster-Key mentioned the rehousing of pipistrelle bats from the Deane Gate Inn, which had been done successfully.