

MINUTES of the CHART SUTTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING held on Monday 29th April 2019 in the Village Hall.

PRESENT: Mr Peter Forknall as Chairman and Parish Councillors S Waring, V Underdown, M FitzGerald MBE, P McLoughlin and P Ward, together with approximately 7 parishioners/speakers, and Miss T Jenkins, Clerk to the Parish Council.

They were joined by County Councillor Eric Hotson, Borough Councillor Steve Munford, Community Warden Liz Lovatt and Mr Michael Smithson from the Alzheimer's Society.

1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed all those present.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Chris Webb, PCSO Pete Gardner and Christine Parkes.

3. POLICE REPORT

PCSO report read by the Chairman. Chart Sutton has continued to maintain a low level of crime during the last year. The PCSO has dealt with a number of issues/activities throughout the year such as providing a visible presence, regular speed checks in the Chart Hill Road area, joint agency work, several operations in the area around rural crime and scrap metal, following up on the victims of burglaries/breaks, giving crime prevention advice and monthly surgeries in the area (advertised on Kent police website). A recent incident of note was the robbery at the shop on the green. The offender was successfully identified thanks to the CCTV in the village and has been sentenced to more than 4 years in prison. Residents should pass on any information on anti-social behaviour and anything they deem suspicious by calling 101. PCSO Gardner can be contacted on the non-emergency Police number 101.

Liz Lovatt has been a KCC Community Warden for 15 years. Liz works closely with Borough & Parish Councils, KFRS, Trading Standards, Social Services and other agencies. This year Liz's priorities are:- domestic abuse, antisocial behaviour, substance misuse, road safety, serious & organised crime, safeguarding vulnerable people and preventing extremism and hate crime. The Community Warden's work with GP's and the NHS has grown significantly over the past couple of years. Community Wardens are trained mental health first aiders, four day first aiders and help to tackle social isolation. Community Wardens are also the KCC Incident Liaison Officers working closely with Kent Resilience Forums in times of emergency. Community Wardens are able to give a number of talks on Road Safety, Anti Bullying, Think Jessica, Internet Awareness, Beat the Bogus Caller and Stop the Scammers. Chart Sutton has a vacancy for a Volunteer Support Warden, more information can be found at www.kent.gov.uk/communitywardens or on 03000 413455.

4. PRESENTATION BY MICHAEL SMITHSON, THE ALZHEIMER'S SOCIETY

Mr Smithson gave a general overview of dementia nationally and locally. Dementia covers lots of conditions that affect the brain. There are up to 100 different conditions under the dementia umbrella. Dementia is the leading cause of death in England and Wales. There are 850,000 people living with dementia in the UK. This is expected to increase to 1million by 2020. There are 24,000 people living with dementia in Kent. Two thirds live in the community, not in care homes, hospitals etc. 35% of people living with dementia only go out once a week. 27% of carers, when asked, felt cut off from society being a carer. The Alzheimer's Society are based locally in Loose. The dementia support service are available on the phone, to do home visits and give re-assurance. All enquiries are followed up to see how things are going. There are 3 day support services (in Tunbridge Wells, Maidstone and Loose). There are 12 dementia cafes in Kent and Medway. There is also a young people's dementia group, as it doesn't just affect the ageing population. Their youngest attendee is 42. There are two main types of dementia. Alzheimer's, which affects the proteins in the brain and Vascular dementia, which is caused by anything that affects the blood flow and oxygen to the brain, such as strokes/TIA's (minor strokes). Dementia affects everybody differently. Some can maintain their personality whilst other can have dramatic changes in personality. It affects the day to day (short term) memory, and people's concentration. People living with dementia find it difficult to sequence things; language and visual special skills are also affected. People living with dementia have difficulties distinguishing shades/colours, which can lead to falls. Following his presentation, Mr Smithson answered questions from the floor.

5. BOROUGH COUNCILLOR – STEVE MUNFORD

Cllr Munford spoke regarding homelessness and housing which are the main issues affecting residents. Cllr Munford gave an overview of the current situation regarding Maidstone Borough Council's Local Plan, which was adopted in 2017, which deals with housing requirements until 2031. The current target is for 17,600 new houses in Maidstone. Maidstone is required to review the plan after 5 years (2022). The Government has brought in new criteria which means that Maidstone needs to find another 7,000 homes over and above those in the local plan. A new call for sites will go out at the end of February. MBC have agreed to include garden villages/Towns (1,500-25,000) in their consideration. Maidstone must be able to demonstrate a 5-year housing supply but must also deliver 1,200 homes a year. Following his report, Cllr Munford answered questions from the floor.

6. COUNTY COUNCILLOR – ERIC HOTSON

County Councillor Eric Hotson thanked the Parish Councillors and the Clerk for the hard work they do in an increasingly pressured role. The size of the parish is the main reason for no new housing developments en masse. Some more Unsuitable for HGV signs are in development for the parish. The Police have substantially upped the precept enabling 400 more officers to be recruited, who are undergoing lengthy training. However, the retirement process means that some officers will be lost. There will be more rural policing in Maidstone. KCC have had to find £60m of savings this year (and last year). In order to reduce spending, Community Wardens were on the 'cut' list. However, 81 Members agreed to delete this from the Treasurers list, as they are a great asset to the community and their roles have greatly increased in the last 5 years. Cllr Hotson is one of the 9 cabinet members at KCC. Cllr Hotson is responsible for all land and buildings in the County, including the buying/selling of land. Cllr Hotson is also responsible for the employment and well-being of 8,000 staff, and IT work and equipment. Cllr Hotson has a Communities and Highways grant available for Parish Councils to apply for. This has reduced from £40k to £25k, then £20k last year. It currently stands at £15k. KCC took the decision to keep 97 libraries open (some with reduced hours). 60% of KCC's overall annual budget of £1m goes on elderly care and child care. Cllr Hotson spoke regarding the highway infrastructure. There are 5 current schemes (The Wheatsheaf, Willington St (top and bottom), Hermitage Lane and Bearsted – Junction 5). The Leeds/Langley bypass is also back on the agenda, and KCC officers have been asked to look at it again. Cllr Hotson thanked Cllr FitzGerald MBE, on his continued work on the Maidstone bus partnership. There was a county wide consultation and 4 schemes have been approved. Maidstone is one, this will affect the 59 and 13 bus services.

7. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON 23RD APRIL 2018

It was discussed and resolved “that the Minutes be agreed as an accurate record”. This was Agreed and the Chairman signed off the Minutes.

8. PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

Copies of the Parish Council Annual Report including draft receipts and payments figures for 2018/19 were handed out. The report will be produced with the June edition of the Village News.

9. REPORTS OF LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

(a) Mr Mike Fitzgerald for The Royal British Legion Sutton Valence and District

The Branch has had a very busy and successful year while maintaining a healthy membership of around 70 members. The Branch meetings attract some 25 Members and are held in the Café, Sutton Valence School. During the year the Branch organised nearly one event a month, including lunch at the Stile Bridge Inn, afternoon tea at the London Beach hotel and a pub quiz in the Village Hall. The most important occasion was the Remembrance Day Services on Sunday 13th November 2018. This year it was followed by the Battle's Over event to mark the day 100 years ago when the guns fell silent at the end of the First World War, which included the lighting of a beacon. The Poppy appeal was very successful, with Chart Sutton raising almost £2,000. The annual award dinner was held at the Great Danes and was enjoyed by some 40 people. Residents are invited to a BBQ and Fun Day on 15th June 2019 at Chart Sutton Recreation Ground, to remember the 75th anniversary of the D-Day landings and supporting Armed Forces day.

(b) Miss Heather Knowler for St. Michael's Church

The electrical works have now been completed. The church has undergone a complete rewire and an upgrade of the lighting. Thanks to everyone who contributed. The Church are now hoping to replace the aisle carpet and the Parish Council has kindly donated £2,000 towards this. There are 3 services a month, two evensongs and an 11.30am morning prayer. Every fifth Sunday there is a shared service with the other Benefice churches. There are also other special services, such as the RAF memorial service, Christmas and Easter communions as well as a scattering of weddings and baptisms. Thanks to everyone who helps in the life of the church. There is currently a vacancy for Church Warden.

(c) Mrs Gloria Adams for the Village Hall Management Committee

The Village Hall's financial position is sound with a surplus of £9,000 last year. Lots of groups continue to use the hall. The current year will see a significant amount of spending from reserves for redecoration etc. (including windows). All required checks were undertaken and completed.

(d) Mrs Gloria Adams for the Chart Sutton Social Amenities Committee

In 2018 the Amenities group organised two dances, a coffee morning and an afternoon tea. These were in addition to running two jumble sales. Although most of these events proved successful financially, the support always comes from the same group of villagers. A free coffee morning was arranged for 6th April last, but sadly the turnout was very disappointing – 15 people.

(e) Mr Peter Underdown for the Chart Sutton Social Bowls Club

The Indoor Short Mat Bowls club continues to play in the Village Hall on Friday nights at 7.15pm. There are 12 members (8 from Chart Sutton). There is only sufficient room for 2 mats in the Village Hall, with 6 players on each mat. More people would always be welcome.

- (f) **Mr Peter Forknall for Mrs Joan Johnson Trust**
Mr Forknall explained that the Trust is money left by Joan Johnson to assist the elderly and needy of the Parish. Last year the Trust Fund had an income of around £500 with £505 distributed to 6 or 7 people in the Village. This is usually done at Christmastime. A freezer was also purchased for a resident. Applications to the Trust are always welcomed.
- (g) **Mr Steven Waring for the Chart Sutton Community Shop (Shop on the Green)**
The shop is doing very well with turnover increasing each year. The shop is now VAT registered. The shop has had a new roof. The biggest issue is the lack of volunteers.
- (h) **Mrs Valerie Underdown for Neighbourhood Watch**
The Neighbourhood Watch had died a death recently in this area as the person who used to send out crime reports moved to another job at Police HQ. There used to be quarterly meetings of all the villages, the Police and Neighbourhood Watch but these stopped last year. However, Mrs Underdown has just had notification that the meetings are going to start up again in June.
- (i) **Mrs Valerie Underdown for Speedwatch**
In July 2018, the speedwatch people suspended monitoring for a year, as we had so many motorists doing excessive speed that the Police decided to send the camera van to the village at least 3 times a month. They are being very successful with this. Recently 4 more sites have been accepted by the Police as being suitable for carrying out checks, so the team hopes to be able to get out and do some more sessions (weather dependant).
- (j) **Mrs Valerie Underdown for the Chart Sutton Book Club**
The Book Club continues to meet on the third Wednesday at the Curious Eatery in Boughton Monchelsea. We have 6 members but would welcome more so come along at 2.30pm if you would like to join us.
- (k) **Mrs Valerie Underdown as Kent Messenger Village Correspondent**
Most weeks there is nothing to report in the KM village section. Parish Council meetings ensure that at least one week a month there is a report.
- (l) **Miss Claire Corkran for Sutton Valence Preparatory School**
Miss Corkran is now in her third year of Headship at SVPS. The school values it's history and traditions. Making a positive contribution to the local community is close to Miss Corkran's heart. The School has welcomed children from a number of local primary schools to the termly workshops for the 'Able and Interested' known as 'Curiosity Club'. In January the school launched it's 50-week Nursery. The parent and toddler group, Little Lambs, is incredibly popular. Miss Corkran has visited the sister school, HIKSVS International in Tianjin, China on two occasions. The school continues to send the majority of children at the end of their time at SVPS to the Senior School or to local grammar schools.
- (m) **Three Suttons Helpline (report read by the Chairman)**
The Helpline has continued to give hundreds of lifts to doctor's surgeries, hospitals and other medical appointments during the past year. One of the volunteer drivers has moved and another has had to withdraw for family reasons, and unfortunately there have been no new drivers to replace them, so they would very much welcome anyone else who would be interested in helping. The Helpline is extremely grateful for the support given to it by Chart Sutton Parish Council, which is an enormous help in enabling the scheme to continue.
- (n) **Sutton Strollers (report read by the Chairman)**
The Sutton Strollers have continued to meet regularly on the third Sunday of most months throughout the past year. However, numbers taking part in the 2 to 2.5 hour Sunday afternoon walks have been disappointing given that they have an email circulation of around 50. A publicity campaign to attract more people to join is in hand. If you are interested in some local exercise and gossip, why not let us have your contact details. We next meet on Sunday 19th May at 13.30 and will email you where the start point will be.

The Clerk to the Parish Council holds copies of the full reports made to the meeting by some of the Local Organisations.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

There being no other business the Chairman closed the Meeting at 9.20pm, at which time refreshments were served.