



BADGER FARM PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

Minutes of the Meeting held on 20th April 2009

PRESENT:

Keith Taylor (Chair)
John Godbold
Dean Upton
Ian Tait
Daniel Phelps
Will Hawthorne

APOLOGIES:

Ray Stannard
Fenella Jarvis
Cllr Brian Collin (WCC)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Martin Macpherson (Clerk)
Cllr Charlotte Bailey (HCC)
Cllr David Spender (WCC)

32. Introduction

The Chairman opened the meeting by regretting that no members of the public were present for the annual Assembly.

33. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous Assembly Meeting held on 14 April 2008 were **AGREED** and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.

34. Parish Council – Chairman's Report

The following is the text of the Chairman's report read to the meeting by **KT**:

In May we had local elections where the Parish Council was re-elected without a vote being required. At the time, in the City elections, the Green Party looked to gain an advantage from the local activity on Climate Change and the rising cost of fuel, but this has rather been overtaken by the recession recently. Of course, I am still in favour of making people more aware of environmental issues, and we cannot become complacent just because the price of fuel has gone back down.

A different sort of environmental issue is dog fouling in the streets and on the Ridge. The Parish Council has been looking at providing another bin for dog waste, but we need owners to use them. The cost of emptying another bin is high compared to its likely benefits.

Last summer, we planted a row of shrubs to try to protect the wall to the south side of the Central Kickabout area. There continues to be a lot of vandalism near there, and the garage roofs could present a safety hazard if children tried to climb over the wall. Most of the shrubs are still in place, but problems continue with some parts of the wall.

New play equipment for toddlers was installed on the central kickabout area last year, and we also worked with a local group of football enthusiasts to put up another goal nearby (funded by a separate grant).

Traffic on Badger Farm road continues to be a problem, and this is likely to continue as the new Park and Ride facility is built. We have had at least three accidents at the Sainsburys roundabout in the last year, and indeed we are also seeing accidents in the Sainsbury's car park.

Their refurbishment of the store is complete and the petrol station is progressing. However, we have had several issues with noise, particularly the bottle recycling and the refrigeration plant. The latter has been largely dealt with, but the bottle bank has yet to be moved.

In the autumn, we included a questionnaire in Community News to find out more about views on such issues as speeding, dog fouling, rowdy behaviour, rampant hedges, and so on. We had some replies, but not many! The main issues seemed to be roads and pavements, although rowdy behaviour is always a concern.

The crime rate in the area continues to be low, although there have been several thefts from houses and cars.

At the beginning of September Stagecoach removed the Number One bus service from Stanmore School (within easy reach from parts of Badger Farm) because the buses couldn't get past all the cars. This now means that there is further to walk, and no bus shelter or wheelchair access for users from this area. I have raised this matter at the transport user group, but so far there is no bus stop sign, hard stand, or shelter at the nearest point to Badger Farm.

Some people had the pavement outside of their houses re-surfaced, and in some cases there were complaints that chippings were left loose on the ground. At least the new surface covers the trench left when the cable TV was installed.

In the frosty weather, the salt and grit in the bins was very useful to help to make the local roads passable. The priority for the Council gritting is for bus routes, so most of the roads in the parish were not gritted directly.

In these difficult financial times, the Parish Council is mindful of keeping its costs down. One cost saving has been to take on some of the inspection work previously done by Serco ourselves. Another way to save Council Tax money is to make use of grants from other sources wherever possible, and we have done this on several occasions in the last year. The cost we pay as residents is less than in those parts of the City which do not have Parish Councils.

One of the things we do spend money on is Whiteshure Ridge. In fact it costs us more than any other part of the Parish. This large open space is only a few minutes walk from almost everywhere in the Parish, so if you have neighbours who have never been up there, please tell them to walk up and have a look. There is a spectacular view of the City. The easiest access is from Ivy Close or the footpath beside Badger Farm Road, but there are also steps up from Harrow Down and the bottom of the Davis kick-about area.

Could I remind everyone that the Parish Council web site has details of the councillors on it. It is at <http://www.bfobrc.com/> and also provides information about meetings.

We have recently obtained funding for some bulb-planting which should brighten up the spring next year, but let's enjoy this one first!

35. Presentation of Parish Council Finances for 2008/2009

The Parish Clerk reported that the accounts for the year 2008/2009 had been prepared but not yet audited. He went on to outline that:

- a) During 2008/2009 the Parish Council had received a total income of £29,351. This was made up of a Precept from the City Council of £27,000, £695 interest on investments, a £275 insurance claim for vandalised play equipment repair, £455 from grants and donations and £926 held on behalf of a Youth football project.
- b) Expenditure amounted to £39,683. This consisted of:
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| (i) | Clerk's Salary, PAYE & NIC | £ 6,409 |
| (ii) | Administration | £ 3,808 |
| (iii) | Litter | £ 1,412 |
| (iv) | Open Spaces | £ 886 |
| (v) | Play Equipment | £ 14,017 |
| (vi) | Whiteshute Ridge | £ 10,735 |
| (vii) | Football Project | £ 916 |
| (viii) | Donations | £ 1,500 |
- c) The donation of £1,500 had been made to the Carroll Centre.
- d) The deficit on the year was therefore £10,332. This was predominantly due to the purchase of new play equipment which had resulted in an increase in expenditure on the previous year of some £10,000 although a reduction in donations and management costs had mitigated some of the effect.
- e) Taking into account the previous year's brought forward figures this resulted in a final overall balance of £9,949 with a further £14,500 held in reserve for the lease of Whiteshute Ridge and £1,231 in the Pension Fund.

36. Question Time

There being no questions the Chairman closed the meeting at 1945.

Signed

Date