

HITCHAM & TAPLOW SOCIETY

Executive Committee Meeting Taplow House Hotel Monday 18th September 2017 8.00pm

MINUTES

Present:

Eva Lipman (chair)
Louise Symons
Al Hill
Nigel Smales

Rupert Sellers
Zoe Hatch
Roger Worthington

Apologies:

Robert Harrap
Charlie Greeves
Bob Hanbury
Fred Russell

- **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the May meeting were agreed.

- **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Balances at 4th September were: Community acc £2992.04, deposit £1575.76

A cash book year to date is attached.

Zoe handed the VGP cash to Roger, Al provide the receipts from the VGP and Nigel passed over a £10 subscription. Roger will pass all to Robert on his return.

It was requested that Robert produce a list of outstanding subscriptions and send a standard reminder email to these members, so that any still outstanding can be chased in person during newsletter delivery.

- **NEWSLETTER**

Nigel advised that it was all in hand but had three concerns.

Andrew Findlay is very busy so the layout process will have to be carefully managed.

The status of the A4 Cycleway objections may be changing up to the last minute.

The Mill Lane Footbridge is expected to be installed 5th October but again exact status not known until it happens.

- **PLANNING**

Details of these objections are carried on our web site.

Our objection to the use of Hitcham Lane for construction traffic was ignored by SBDC and promptly led to damage and obstructions caused by this traffic.

Our objection to the change of use application for the offices at the Old Boathouse in Mill Lane were overruled. Councils now have limited discretion on such applications due to recent changes to the planning laws.

Objection continue to the proposed Cycleway along the A4. The proposals returned in July essentially unchanged, despite the well-articulated and serious objections made at the consultation in October 2016. Subsequent to further objections and an ill managed meeting at a Costa coffee bar, Councillor Shaw retracted the banning of right turns at Berry Hill but still gave no satisfactory defence of the whole scheme.

Dev Dhillon (out BCC councillor), George Sandy (our SBDC councillor), Taplow Parish Council and ourselves then sent a series of questions to Cllr Shaw for response. The project manager has replied to these but the answers do not deal with the substance of the questions and objections. Currently our MP Dominic Grieve has agreed to speak to BCC on the matter.

Rupert gave an update on the situation at 5 Ellington Gardens. The developer won on appeal so now has permission for a house on the site of the garages. Residents have formed an association to better represent their concerns and the developer has agreed to send a representative to a meeting.

Roger reported that Dominic Grieve had given an update on the progress of Unitary Authority decisions. They are being handled sequentially and presently Dorset is generating delays in the process. Will be well into next year for Bucks. Dominic commented that although the SBDC / Chiltern proposal was viable, the consequential one for Aylesbury Vale was not in its present state.

Roger has been approached (via the Neighbourhood Plan channel) by the company looking to build a Care Home (we believe on the Roots land). Meeting to be arranged for more information.

Parking concerns around the station remain of great concern, especially as all the Institute Road housing is nearing completion. There is strong belief that residents will have more cars than allowed for, with consequent serious parking overflows.

- **VILLAGE GREEN PARTY**

Al was congratulated on a successful event and Zoe's great success with the ticketing very much appreciated. Event was marred later on by vandals burning the carving board and two trestles that will need replacing for next year. We shall have to institute a fire management protocol for next year. June 23rd next year – the band is booked and Roger will advise the Parish Council.

Subsequent to discussion at the last meeting it was determined that we would not make a donation to the school but it was agreed that they should be offered the raffle.

Our thinking is that although we had a successful financial result we could easily have several years of bad weather so we need to keep a healthy reserve.

- **OPG BENCH**

The bench has been delivered to Miv and now awaits his team organising the delivery to site and installation. There are reports of a possible homeless person camping in the OPG which will be checked on.

- **TECHNOLOGY REPORT**

Zoe advised that everything appeared to be running well. Now that Robert and Roger are accredited on-line authorisers for the account Zoe wishes to take the next step of validating our on-line presence with the company we want to handle direct debits by executing a 1p transfer. This awaits Roberts return from holiday.

- **CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES**

A revised draft was circulated after comment. After further comment at the meeting a revised draft was agreed. This would be put as a motion at the AGM (with explanation).

Dissolution

If an Executive Committee meeting decides that it is necessary to close down the Society it may call a Special General Meeting to do so. The sole business of this meeting will be to determine the dissolution of the Society. If it is agreed to dissolve the Society, all remaining money and other assets, once outstanding debts have been paid, will be donated to another local group with concerns for Taplow, to be determined at the Special General Meeting.

- **JOINING MMPA**

The Maidenhead and Marlow Passenger Association has good connections to the various rail operators that affect Taplow station. It was agreed that the Society should join for an annual subscription of £10.

- **PUBLICITY / RECRUITMENT**

Not much progress has been made on this but it was agreed that it was still too early for a full scale recruitment drive on Mill Lane and Institute Road. Still thought that inclusion in the Spring 2018 newsletter would be cost effective.

- **AOB**

1. Speaker for the AGM. A suggestion was that Martin Knight would be an attraction to talk about Bridges. Concern that he is very busy. Nigel would approach him.
2. The absence of a chairman is of increasing concern. Someone need to be the public face of the Society. Not needed particularly to chair meetings etc. but to do the external side of our activities. All asked to consider possibilities (whether already a member or not).
3. Nigel advised he was giving two further historical talks. Wraysbury 7:30pm 12th October on Skindles; Nancy Astor and the Cliveden Set Beconsfield 14th October.

Meeting closed at 9:45pm.

Next HTS Committee Meeting: 16th October

Overview of responses to the Taplow Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire May 2017

This note is an overview of the responses made to the questionnaire. The detailed report is available on the Parish Council website.

Housing

There is a majority view that Taplow has undergone very significant growth in recent times and that time is needed to absorb these changes. Lack of infrastructure and amenities are a concern. All the suggested areas for developments are presently in the Green Belt (other than around Tesco).

Heritage

The larger Victorian and Edwardian house are a strong identifier of Taplow and are in need of good protection as they are not of standard listed building status. Individual clusters of houses and street scenes are valued, together with the walks and open views across the parish. Several unique features are also identified such as the bridge boathouse and the Village Hall murals. There is concern that Conservation Areas may be in need of strengthening.

Footpaths

There is support for creating new paths and publicising the ones we do have. The strong concerns over poor maintenance are temporised with cautions over making Taplow look urban.

Leisure facilities

Most people believe that local facilities are sufficient, particularly with the close availability of services in Maidenhead. Strongest support for local facilities is for tennis courts, a sports hall and a playground.

St Nicolas School

Suggestions to move the school, provide a school bus and encourage access from the rear.

The Hall, the Green and Old Priory gardens

These are valued, with the Old Priory gardens rather less used.

Bus services

Little used but many views on improvements, including routes past the station, Marsh Lane and to the north.

Cycling

Nearly half of respondents cycle. Strong views on the dangers and difficulties. A range of suggestions for improvements and new routes. These include the A4, a Thames bridge and off road provisions

Driving

Road improvements are against new roads other than a new Thames crossing but strong on better maintenance. Concerns for the A4 including the Berry Hill junction and management around the station. Very strong concerns for speeding, more or less right across the parish. Requests for more roundabouts, yellow lines, diversion of heavy lorries and better policing.

Business development

General view that there is enough. Belief in more home based and private employment, together with broadband improvement. Desire for a village shop. Specific mention of the preservation of the Hermitage and Boathouse as businesses.

Respondents

Almost all are home owners with an average residency of 19 years. Only a fifth have resident children. A majority do not favour increasing the precept for more service provision but there are suggestions as to what the council could do. They centre on things best managed locally such as path maintenance and driving voluntary supports. Should be more involved in planning decisions and managing service delivery.

My Words

As might be expected, a broad range of topics.

Impact of recent high growth, need to protect trees and wildlife, untidy environment, need for more powers devolved to parish, Green Belt support, general traffic concerns for narrow lanes.