



**Minutes of the Open meeting and AGM
held
on Thursday, 30th June 2016 at 7.30pm
in Bulphan Village Hall**

Present: Janet McCheyne (Secretary), Cllr. Sue Little, Cllr. Brian Little, Dave Hale, Bob Shearing, Angela Shearing, Iris Aedy, Yvonne Conway, Corinne White, Ed Lacy, Bernie Benn, Alan and Lynda Cox, Judy Wright, Diane Perkins

Visitor: Kim Towlson (Horndon-on-the-Hill Society/Community Forum)

1. **Apologies** had been received from David Gilbane so Janet took the chair and welcomed all to the meeting. Various other residents had sent apologies.
2. The **minutes of the 2015 AGM** held on 9th July 2015 were approved and signed
3. There were no **matters arising** which were not on the agenda
4. Janet read out David Gilbane's **chair's report**, which mentioned the many activities and initiatives in the village as a whole, and he paid tribute to the efforts of many volunteers in the various organisations.
5. Ed Lacy distributed the **treasurer's report**, detailing spending for the year. Apart from spending most of the funding given by the solar farm, very little money had been spent. £625.34 of the Solar Farm money remains and is ring-fenced for improvements to the entranceway, £195.00 is ring-fenced for the drainage group. The total bank balance is £4,041.61 and the cash balance is £44.70.

Ed was thanked for his report, which was agreed.

The flowerbeds at the front of the village hall have now been weeded, dug, planted and mulched. Ed requested that the Forum pay for the mulch for 3 of the beds (the WI had already paid for the remaining one). The total cost would be £440. This was agreed.

Ed is moving to Southwold soon, and therefore retiring after a year of being the treasurer. He was warmly thanked and given 2 bottles of Adnams Ale (local Southwold beer).

6. Election of next year's committee: Cllr. Sue Little took the chair to conduct the election of the chair. She expressed thanks to David Gilbane for his 10 years as chair. Results of the election were:

Chair: Janet McCheyne proposed by Ed Lacy, seconded by Judy Wright

Treasurer: Bernie Benn proposed by Dave Hale, seconded by Janet McCheyne

Secretary: no nominations were received and a secretary or minutes secretary would be recruited by the next Open Meeting in September.

Committee: Angela Shearing proposed by Alan Cox and seconded by Iris Aedy

Diane Parsons proposed by Angela Shearing and seconded by Judy Wright

All were elected unopposed.

7. The **minutes** of the last Open meeting held on 12th May 2016 were agreed and signed.

8. Matters arising from those minutes:

a) **Damage to verges and road surfaces by HGVs** on Fen Lane and Dunnings Lane: the councillors passed on the response from the Traffic Team that there is currently an investigation into HGV movements within the borough and a new budget set up to specifically deal with inappropriate HGV movements.

b) **Cycle path consultation:** Cllr. Brian Little is part of a group ensuring that cycle paths and bridleways (which can be cycled on) connect up. There will be an Orsett ward audit of both bridleways and Highway furniture (signs etc) to see what is needed. The "No horses, no golf" sign for the recreation ground will be part of the resulting batch of signs to be produced.

c) As portfolio holder for Highways, Cllr. Brian Little offered to take up the issue of the **dazzling lights at Burrows Farm 2**

d) **Burrows Farm 1 & 2** enforcement action: 3 enforcement notices have been served on Burrows Farm: 2 on Burrows Yard 2 and 1 on Burrows Yard 1. These came into effect on 31st May and 10th June respectively unless an appeal is lodged. The Cllr. expected that an appeal would have been lodged, in which case the matter would go to a national inspector. Cllr. Brian Little will find out if appeals have been lodged.

e) **Monthly enforcement reports:** these had been promised but had not materialised as yet. Cllr. Brian Little explained that our area was one of those where there were more breaches of planning law than

average and that the council had to weigh up the high cost of pursuing serious breaches but that they were trying to reduce the number of unresolved enforcements.

f) Liaison with the police: PCSO JoJo Mitchell had contacted the Forum via our councillors and told us of the new police facebook page named Essex Police - Thurrock <http://www.facebook.com/EPThurrock>. They are keen to reach as many people in the community of Thurrock as possible. As this is a "page" rather than a site they can only feed messages out and get responses on those, there is no system for them to receive private messages or posts but they feel it is a really effective tool to engage with communities.

The councillors told us that Roger Hirst, the new Police and Crime Commissioner, has committed to putting more police "on the beat" and wants communities to identify the specific issues they Police to address in their area. Those present agreed that speeding traffic was the main problem, And asked specifically for police presence from time-to-time at the Community Speed Watch sessions so that on-the-spot fines could be issued.

Kim Towlson reported that the Community Speed Watch had made 9 visits to Bulphan, noting between 0 and 12 speeding vehicles. Their visits had been 7.45 - 9am. More volunteers are needed in order to cover afternoon sessions. Various traffic-calming measures were discussed.

g) Obstruction of pavements: Cllr. Sue Little noted specific addresses where cars were consistently parked blocking the whole pavement; she also reported that arrangements were being made to remove the obstruction in Church Lane. Both councillors stressed that residents should take responsibility for reporting issues like this on the REPORT IT section of the council's website (volunteers can assist people in doing this at the Community Cafe, if they don't have access to the internet).

h) Barking dog: again, residents were encouraged to report this via the council website.

i) Tree-planting: Essex Wildlife Trust, the Woodland Trust and the local Tree Council Tree warden had all offered advice. The trees should be planted in October, so Naomi would liaise with the experts in September. In the meantime, thanks were expressed to Rod Addison who continues to tend them in pots.

9. Planning updates: the councillors gave us feedback on an issue in Stanley Road and a building in Church Lane with no permission. Plans were again going to be submitted for a care facility near Martins Farm, Church Lane.

10. Shop update: the decision on the planning application for an extension to the village hall to provide a shop/Post Office is expected very soon. Builders' estimates are beginning to come in, and the end room is being cleared of excess items. The RCCE and other village halls continue to offer advice. The few queries raised by local residents have been satisfactorily answered. So all very positive so far. Once the specifications are finalised, these will be shared with the potential benefactor.

11. Village Hall report: Dave Hale reported that bookings continue to be healthy, facilities offered continue to be improved and the inevitable hiccups which occur are resolved.

12. Bulphan in Bloom: Alan and Lynda Cox reported that 700 plants were planted (in the rain!). Today a planted barrel had unfortunately been smashed by a delivery van but had already been replaced, the next tidy-up would be July 9th and an envelope drop probably in September.

13. Drainage update: recent very heavy rain had flooded the road in Church Lane: Janet was asked to publicise the whereabouts of the 2 pumps and how to access them in an emergency.

14. Questions from the floor: a resident asked about cutting back neighbour's branches overhanging her garden: Cllr. Brian Little quoted legislation saying you can cut back that which encroaches onto your boundary, and will find out whether you should dispose of it, or return it to your neighbour.

15. AOB: following issues regarding cutting of verges, the council will give Cllr. Brian Little a map, for local residents to mark which areas need cutting back and which areas can be left.

Bernard Holmes of Barnards Farm wrote to all councillors expressing his disappointment at the appearance of Thurrock. The council have decided that lorries will be checked at the ports to make sure

they are adequately netted; the whole borough will be "deep-cleaned" and teams will be sent out to issue on-the-spot fines for litterers. Also, evening teams will go out to ensure lorries are not parked where they shouldn't be.

16. Next event: Thurrock 100 Bulphan Walk leaves the village hall 3.45 on Friday, 8th July. Family-friendly walk with interesting information on heritage sites on the way.

17. Next Open meeting: Thursday 8th September 2016 at 7.30pm in Bulphan Village Hall