



**Minutes of the Open meeting held on
Thursday, 10th March 2016 at 7.30pm in
Bulphan Village Hall**

Present: David Gilbane (Chairman), Janet McCheyne (Secretary), Ed Lacy (treasurer), Bernie Benn (committee) Iris Aedy, Sylvie Besant, Rod Addison, Marion Chaplin, Cllr. Sue Little, Maureen Wall, Graham Pinkerton, Peter Bennett, Judy Wright, Denise Wakeling, Dave Hale, Corinne White, Gail Willson, Jim Mortimer, Kim Towlson (Horndon-on-the-Hill Forum chairman)

Guest speaker: Kirsty Stokes, Principal Planning Officer, Thurrock Council

1.	<p>Welcome and apologies: Janet welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were accepted from Cllr. Brian Little (at a planning meeting) and Bob and Angela Shearing (virtual wedding).</p>
2.	<p>Kirsty Stokes gave an interesting presentation on the Thurrock Local Plan, and how we could get involved by commenting on the proposals and making our own suggestions. She actively wants residents to check and challenge the council's plan by answering 8 key questions. 4 Residents' Forum areas will be established, of which one is "Rural". Kirsty promised to send hard copy consultation forms and envelopes, as well as encouraging people to complete the consultation online. There would be a Local Plan Road Show in Orsett Churches Centre on Friday 18th March from 2 - 7pm.</p> <p>Kirsty also explained the process of making a Neighbourhood plan (which once agreed, has the same status as a local plan). However, if a Neighbourhood Plan was made, once the new Local Plan was agreed, the Neighbourhood Plan would have to be done again. A Neighbourhood Plan can only be presented by a designated "Neighbourhood Forum", which must consist of at least 21 unrelated residents, who have formally registered the Neighbourhood Forum, which must have people with the skills and capacity to produce the plan, or pay someone to do it for them (Locality or Planning Aid can offer advice on employing an independent consultant).</p> <p>A survey of the village would need to be carried out. The plan would be submitted to the LA. An independent organisation would evaluate it. There would be a community referendum, and the plan would be passed if over 50% of those who turned up voted in favour. Useful resources are available online at "Placecheck" (funded by English Heritage)</p> <p>Kirsty was asked how many new houses Thurrock would be expected to build in the future: Kirsty said that local authorities can decide their own needs and numbers: the proposal is for 960 per year until 2021, when needs will be reviewed.</p> <p>Kirsty was asked if sites for new housing would include green belt. The answer was that if all available sites are protected, then the proposed numbers could be reduced (as long as it was in accordance with the National Plan), or a neighbouring authority could be asked to take on some. Greenbelt land would be revised, making logical boundaries and for regeneration. There would be a National Policy test to comply with for this.</p> <p>David Gilbane thanked Kirsty warmly for an interesting and informative presentation.</p>
3.	<p>The minutes of the last meeting were agreed and signed</p>
4.	<p>Matters arising: consultation on the Brentwood and Basildon Local Plans are also taking place currently: residents were advised to view and comment, as there would be implications for Bulphan, especially east of A128.</p> <p>Thurrock Over Fifties Forum invite older residents to a workshop and luncheon.</p>
5.	<p>Treasurer's Report: Ed reported the following balances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Current account: £4,047 (of which £635-24 is solar funding to be used for the entranceway and £195 is ring-fenced for the drainage group, leaving £3,223 available to the Forum) ● Cash: £6 ● There had been no expenses since the last meeting

6.	Community Cafe and Outreach Post Office: the Outreach Post Office is projected to open at 1.30 on Thursday, 17th March 2016: grateful thanks to Merwyn Anthony (Post Office field change officer) and Bala, the postmaster at Grays Post Office. The Post Office will be open in the village hall every Thursday and Friday, 1.30 - 4.30pm and the Community Cafe hours will increase to those same times/days. Denis Fewtrell, former sub-postmaster at Bulphan, will officiate at the opening ceremony, and it is important for people to support the Post Office in order to retain this service.
7.	Lower Thames Crossing: there has been much activity regarding the consultation on another Thames Crossing in Thurrock. Kim Towlson (Horndon-on-the-Hill Forum) reminded us that hard copy consultation response forms should be posted by 19th March in order to ensure they meet the deadline of 24th March. He also invited residents to join in a peaceful protest at Grays Memorial at 12 noon this Sunday.
8.	Current planning applications and decisions: planning for 4 houses at Hatch Farm stables was on the agenda of this evening's planning meeting. Burrows Farm: the council intend to pursue a breach of legal agreement rather than the normal enforcement route - this would have a better chance of success. In addition, Yard 2 will also be looked at. Cllr. Sue Little will put in a complaint about the bright lights which dazzle drivers, and, following a query from our last Forum meeting, it was confirmed that wheel-washing is obligatory: please report if the road by Burrows Farm is muddy.
9.	Village Hall update: residents viewed the plans for an extension to the east of the hall, to be used as a village shop. Regretfully, recycling would no longer be viable at the village hall, as the council now treat the hall as a commercial concern and charge for each bin emptied. Regular users would be encouraged to take their recycling home to put in their own blue bins. The Bulphan Women's Institute Centenary flowerbed would be planted next weekend (Phase 1).
10.	Feedback from councillors: layby on A128 near Four Acres: Cllr. Pothercary has pledged her support for getting this cleared up and, if possible, closed. Dumped fridges: large numbers of white goods have been dumped around the area: Cllr. Sue said that the council will pick them up and will consider cameras. So keep reporting them. Sue added that if fridges were security marked, the flytippers could be traced. Old Church Hill: this would be closed 21st - 24th March, 8am - 5pm.
11.	Police matters: the results of the recent traffic survey on Church Road showed that traffic is speeding and we have been put on a list of sites to be considered for a Vehicle-Activated Speed sign. This will probably be sited in a fixed socket and remain for 3 - 6 months, and then be moved to another local area, on a rota system. The Forum were given the option of purchasing the vehicle activated sign themselves, to have permanently, for a cost of around £6,000. It was decided to wait for the allocated sign. After many years as our local PCSO, Paul Challis will be leaving in May.
12.	Community Speedwatch: this is operating successfully but could always do with more volunteers.
13.	Bulphan in Bloom: volunteers have been cutting grass and carried out a litter-picking session where 12 bags of rubbish were collected. They were unable to clear the contaminated litter at the A128 layby, but the deep ruts were filled in. On 15th May, there will be a Plant Sale and Strawberry Tea in the churchyard.
14.	Questions from the floor: the Shearings had submitted a question in writing regarding the heavy vehicles which are destroying the verges of our lanes and compounding the pothole problems. The Shearings asked if signs could be erected saying that the lanes are unsuitable for heavy traffic. After discussion, residents asked Janet to email Cllr. Brian Little to ask if a weight restriction could be put on Fen Lane and Dunnings Lane. Vehicles infringing this could be reported to their companies as well as to the authorities.
15.	Future events: Post Office opening 1.30pm Thursday, 17th March 2016 Easter Antics Monday, 28th March 2016, 1 - 4pm
16.	Next Open meetings: Thursday, 12 th May 2016 Thursday, 30 th June 2016 (AGM)