

Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Parish Council

Annual Parish Meeting

**Minutes of the meeting held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 24th April 2007
at The Knutsford Road Community Room**

Present:

Mr White (Chairperson)

District Council: Mr McCraith

County Council: Mrs Oliver

Dr Robinson (Bassingbourn County Primary School) Mrs Ram (Kneesworth House Hospital) Mr Clarke (Huckle Trust) Mr Nickson (Neighbourhood Watch Scheme) Mr Webb (Book Café) Mrs Bond (Conservation Group) Mr Simpson (Bassingbourn Parish Church & Church Charities) Mr Siggers (Elbourn Memorial Trust & Elbourn Memorial Hall), Mr Taylor (Bassingbourn Village College)

Members of the Public: 17

Apologies for absence: Mr N Cathcart, Reverend Dr McFadyn

CHAIRPERSONS WELCOME

Mr White opened the meeting by welcoming those present. He advised that there was not a huge amount to report, quite a lot of projects had happened. The District Council had awarded a conservation award to the Parish Council for Ford Wood. There had been a lot of disruption with young people in the village which the police were aware of. Mr White advised he had been ably supported by Mr Hallett, Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes committee and Mr Forcey, Chairman of the Recreation Ground committee.

MINUTES OF 2006 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the meeting, held on 18th April 2006 were circulated amongst members and parishioners prior to the meeting. They were agreed a true record and signed by the Chairman after the correction of the spelling of Rev Dr McFadyn and the removal of Mr Nickson from those present.

MATTERS ARISING

NOTICE BOARD FOR MINUTES – Ms Lees asked when the board was going to appear. She was told it was the intention of the Parish Council to erect a board outside the Elbourn Memorial Hall once the Parish Council took control of the building. This had not happened. The Chairman agreed this request did need addressing and would be revisited at the next Parish Council meeting.

FINANCIAL REPORT 2006/2007

Copies of the report were distributed to the meeting. Ms Lees queried the balances. Mr Hallett explained that expenditure for 2006/07 was £63,000 and the precept requirement for 2007/08 £40,000. The build up of funds were gradually falling as anticipated. Mr Nickson asked if the amount spent as a result of vandalism could be identified in future. This would appear on the Income and Expenditure report for 2007/08.

REPORTS

KNEESWORTH HOUSE HOSPITAL (Mrs Linda Ram)

Mrs Ram thanked the Parish Council for the invitation to give an update on the hospital's activities during the past year. There had been some changes to the senior management team at the Hospital with Frank Corr now being the Regional Executive Director for the three hospitals in the north London Region and David Bidwell was now the Unit Manager for Kneesworth House. Mrs Ram was the Director of Clinical Services. During the year a restructuring of services had been carried out which had resulted in significant changes to the staffing structures. A 'Women's' Service Unit had been added to the range of services. A new Chaplain had been appointed and a hairdresser had been recruited to provide a service every Wednesday for the patients. The Village Liaison Committee continued to meet regularly and this further strengthened the link with the local community. There had been number of visits from the regulatory authorities and Mrs Ram confirmed there had been no significant issues raised by any of the bodies throughout their visits. One of the patients had been involved in a volunteer project at Wimpole Hall. A number of patients were also once again taking part in the Koestler Awards which were a national art competition for all those in secure accommodation. There was no confirmed date for

the commencement of the works on the new wards but the Parish Council would be advised once a start date was agreed. Mrs Ram asked for any questions.

Mrs Lord asked if there had been any lessening of educational services due to the redundancies at the hospital.

Mrs Ram confirmed there was still significant educational input for patients.

The Chairman stated that the livestock had now all gone which was very sad. Mrs Ram stated that consideration had to be given to the cost of maintaining animals and it was agreed that the money would be better spent on patient services.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Ram for her report and stated that the hospital still provided a lot of local employment and was a good neighbour.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH (Mr V Nickson)

Mr Nickson advised that many more people were doing all the right things regarding the reporting of a crime. Unfortunately the response was not always satisfactory. The image of the Neighbourhood Watch had become outdated. If anyone wanted to form a group he had the information. Mr Nickson went through the process of how to report an incident to the police. He advised that the Community Beat Manger Dave Martin and PCSO's Emma Garwood and Lee Nutbeam had recently been very focused on Bassingbourn. He then explained the concept of Policing Panels which empowered villages to influence policing priorities in the area. The Melbourn Sector panel was due to be launched in July and people were urged to attend the meeting with their priorities. Mrs Oliver advised that she had spoken to Inspector Ormerod to encourage a second meeting to be held in Bassingbourn. She also encouraged people to go to Melbourn. Mr Nickson concluded his report by stating that the village had a pretty good bunch of intelligent and healthy children and many of them were fed up with being tarred as troublesome teenagers, they said they hung around in groups for their own protection.

The Chairman thanked Mr Nickson for all his work.

BASSINGBOURN VILLAGE COLLEGE (Mr Taylor)

Mr Taylor started his report by stating the Village College continued to provide high quality educational opportunities for its students and remained firmly committed to being a centre of learning for the whole community. Summer 2006 once again saw the students achieve very good examination results with 67% achieving 5 or more GCSE's at the higher grades of A*-C. All students in the year group left with some GCSE success. Key stage 3 results continued to be excellent with the school again being placed amongst the top performing in the County on any measure. The continued improvement was a testament to the hard work and effort shown by all students and the support that they received from their teachers and parents. The success had been recognised by the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust which had identified the College as a High Performing Specialist School. The College had opted to become a specialist Vocational College which would allow an increasing range of appropriate courses to develop skills and work related learning opportunities for a students. As with every year, the College had organised a range of educational trips and activities to help the students deepen their knowledge and understanding and also to broaden their range of experiences. In sport the College had competed in many local, district and county competitions achieving its fair share of success for a relatively small school. Students had also been very active in raising money for charity and a total of £2200 had been given to a range of charities. Adult education continued to be successful. The future would bring challenges as funding from the Learning and Skills Council was being cut. The College however remained fully committed to the delivery of high quality education to adults. Anti social behaviour was something that the school and community suffered from at times and it was very sad that the actions of a distinct minority could have such a negative impact. The College recognised this and through much of its work was trying to ensure that the young members of the community understood their rights and responsibilities and those of others. The youth workers were committed to providing a quality service to the young people and to provide them with a range of positive activities. Work had finally started on the new sports facility for the local community. This was an exciting time and the building of the new facilities created a range of opportunities not only for students at the College but also the whole community. The College would need to work in partnership with interested parties to ensure it meets their needs. It would also need to fully utilise the support of the groups to ensure that the facility was fully equipped and at present it was anticipated that a further £15,000-£20,000 would be needed to provide equipment for the fullest range of activities.

Mr Taylor stated that the College were looking to improve communications with parents on how children behave in the community.

Mrs Oliver advised that there were constant complaints regarding rubbish around the grounds and would like the youngsters to be encouraged to be more careful. It had also been reported that lorries were moving onto the building site before the agreed time. Mr Taylor agreed to speak to the contractors with whom he had a meeting arranged later in the week. Mr Hallett added that most of the litter was around the Recreation Ground not the Village College.

The Chairman thanked Mr Taylor for his report.

ELBOURN MEMORIAL TRUST & ELBOURN MEMORIAL HALL (Mr S Sagers)

Mr Sagers reported that this had been a year of change. A few of the old Trustees had been lost but the Trust was now officially a proper charity with ongoing discussions with the Charity Commission and Alms House Trust. At the next Annual Parish Meeting the Chairman should be in a position to report much more extensively. Mr Nickson asked what the future would be for the Memorial Hall. Mr Sagers replied that the future was not known at this stage, the building was an asset and needed to be utilised in some way. The existing condition of the building was discussed. Mr Sagers advised that when the Red Cross handed over the building there was also a sum of money. The land might be developed but no decision had been made at this stage. More Trustees needed to come forward.

HUCKLE TRUST (Mr Clarke)

The Frank Huckle Trust was established in 1919 on the death of Frank Huckle. The current Trustees were Mr Matthews and Mr Bob Clarke. The assets had lain dormant since its establishment since 1919. It had been stated in the will of Mr Huckle that they were to be expended on the purchase of land to be used as recreation ground for the enjoyment of the inhabitants of Bassingbourn.

BASSINGBOURN PARISH CHURCH –(Mr J Simpson)

Mr Simpson reported that the Annual PC meeting had taken place the previous Sunday. Mrs Marshall and himself had been appointed Church Wardens. The roof had been the main fundraiser this year and due to donations and fund raising, had now been paid for. There had been a bible reading marathon in which 250 people took part and £16,500 was raised. The wider use of the building was now being looked at for the use of the community. Mrs Lord suggested using for Parish Council meetings,

BASSINGBOURN CHURCH CHARITIES- (Mr J Simpson)

Mr Simpson reported that the Stoughton and Fordham charities were for the benefit of the needy in the parish. There was currently £3,000 available, with no requests made during the year. The allocation was the responsibility of the Vicar and the Church Wardens. Mr Simpson thanked the people of the church for their hard work.

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Mr Clarke advised that the invitation to report had been received too late. A report would be made in 2008.

BASSINGBOURN COUNTY PRIMARY SCHOOL (Dr L Robinson)

Dr Robinson reported it had been another very exciting year. The changing rooms had been moved outside to enable more teaching spaces. There were more clubs and activities including a science club and design and technology. Also there had been new playground markings and new play equipment. The Deputy Head, Mrs Murray, had been appointed Head Teacher and the school had joined the extended schools group with the Headteachers working together. The school was starting the application for the Safer Routes to School Scheme. In addition to the Parish Plan, the Primary School were carrying out their own survey about the village. Mr McCraith expressed his congratulations to Mrs Murray for running such a good school. Mrs Lord asked for highlights of Dr Robinson's report to be put in the Village Voice.

BASSINGBOURN PRE –SCHOOL –Ms Claire Wright

The Chairman read the report submitted by Ms Wright. It stated the Pre-School were a self funding charity that provided pre-school education within the village for children from the age of 2 ½ years to when they started school. Seven staff were employed. Fundraising had been ongoing through the year. A successful quiz night was held in November, a table top sale at Christmas and a Treasure Hunt around the village at Easter. The committee were in the process of arranging a sponsored cycle ride in May. These additional funds were very important to help fund the building maintenance and additional items that make the Pre-School a fun, educational and enjoyable place for the children to be.

CONSERVATION GROUP –Mrs Lesley Bond

Mrs Bond reported that the group were a sub group of the Parish Council and their aims were to maintain small parts of the village in a rural way for all to enjoy. She advised that a 'Bat Evening' was to be held at Wellhead on the 16th May with a wildlife expert from the Wildlife Trust. The latest 'Tidy Up' had fewer volunteers than usual but some villagers had adopted an area which they endeavoured to keep litter free. A report had been received from the Woodland Trust on Ford Wood and Keith Woods stating they were both growing steadily. Ford Wood was more robust because it had better soil and was more sheltered. The group had held two mornings of 'Hedge Dancing' in the Spring aiming to reduce weed growth along the new boundary hedge in Keith Wood without resorting to chemical spray. As mentioned in the Chairman's report Ford Wood had received an award which would be displayed at the Book Cafe. Clunch pit wood was an ongoing project with the aim to enhance the current clunch pit area with some tree and hedge planting, hoping eventually to be able to work towards a green corridor linking the small area of woodland nearby. A copy of the plan detailing proposed trees, shrubs, wildflower seeds and bird boxes, for the Village College Sports Development, was held. The need to be inclusive as possible for long term environmental benefits, involving the Village College, villagers and Primary School and if possible a Wildlife Group for young people to be established. Pollarding of the Lime trees on North End had been postponed until August 2007. The Horse chestnut tree outside the church had not been

replaced and the Parish Council were asked to pay for a replacement. The group were looking for a new Tree Warden as Angela Craxford-Snelling had resigned. Mrs Bond thanked her for her role over the past four years and stated the group would love to hear from any villagers who would like to be involved in the Conservation Group and who had the enthusiasm for small projects within this rural location.

BASSINGBOURN BOOK CAFÉ –Mr Rupert Webb

Mr Webb reported that since the departure of June Hughes, he had taken over temporarily as Chairman. The cafe still performed a vital role as a library and information point. It was now open on Monday in addition to Thursday and Saturday with positive feedback. It was totally manned by volunteers and was reliant on donations of money which last year amounted to £3,200. This came from the Parish Council donation, sale of refreshments, use of computer equipment and fundraising. The biggest earner was the introduction of 'Friends of the Book Cafe' with membership amounting to £1,025. The cafe was outgrowing their premises and were currently looking at where to go.

PARISH PLAN

Dr Robinson reported that the questionnaire was on schedule with 1500 being printed and deliveries and collection in place. There were 1437 houses in the village and the questionnaires would be sent out with the May issue of the Village Voice There were 38 questions, which was a lot less than the village appraisal. The Chairman added that as with the original study of the village needs, Dr Robinson had put in an enormous amount of time.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

VILLAGE VOICE –Mr Clarke asked why there was so much publicity in the newsletter for the Church. The Chairman advised that the newsletter was for the village and any groups were invited to contribute. There were concerns over the late distribution by Ms Corlett who collected the newsletter from the printers and distributed to other distributors. She stated that often events had passed by the time the newsletter went out. It was advised that the role of the Editor and distributors were voluntary and the Parish Council helped support. The meeting agreed the whole operation needed to be reviewed. This would be discussed at the Parish Council AGM on 22nd May.

The Chairman and other representatives were thanked for their reports.

DATE OF PARISH COUNCIL AGM - Tuesday 22nd May 2007.

The Chairperson closed the meeting at 9.35pm

(Chairperson)

Date