

BRAISHFIELD ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on 17th April 1997

at Braishfield Village Hall

1. 10 parishioners attended.

Parish Councillors - Mrs M Balchin, M Edwards, T Howkins, A Lalonde, Mrs P Melbourne, M Prince, Ms P Saunders,

Borough Councillor - Councillor M Hatley

County Councillor - Councillor A Dowden

2. The Chairman of the Parish Council, Andrew Lalonde welcomed those present to the meeting and introduced the members of the Parish Council and the representatives of the Borough and County Councils.
3. It was moved and agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on the 18th April 1996 be signed by the Chairman of the Parish Council as a correct record.
4. The Chairman introduced Steve Lees, a senior Planning officer with the Borough Council who gave a presentation on the Borough's cycling policy to promote safer cycling in Test Valley. He referred to Government and County Council criteria which advocated less use of the car and which promoted alternative journeys which were less damaging to the environment. The County Council's budget included additional funds for cycling and pedestrian schemes although it was still only a small percentage of their total budget. It was therefore likely that many of the new cycle schemes would be incorporated in new housing developments. It was more difficult for new routes to be constructed in established areas such as Romsey. The Borough Council had prepared a draft cycle strategy which attempted to develop a network of routes starting and finishing in towns. Many of these were funded by developers' contribution and possible development in Alma Road, Romsey would incorporate new cycle routes. In response to questions from the floor Mr Lees confirmed that the cycling policy was not an attempt to get bikes used all the time but provided routes for short journeys for both leisure and possible essential use. He confirmed that in comparison with schemes in Europe British engineers were more rigid in applying criteria and standards for cycle routes although these were becoming more flexible. The County Council were promoting safer cycling routes for school children and referred to that route recently completed between Baddesley and Romsey's Mountbatten school. He also referred to the design and costing for the now defunct sprat and winkle cycle route which would have linked Romsey with Andover.

5. The Chairman of the Parish Council Andrew Lalonde outlined the work of the Council during the year. This included the completion of the refurbishment of the War Memorial, continuing efforts to get improvements to the Braishfield Road/Jermyns Lane junction including the erection of stop signs, discussions with Michelmersh & Timsbury Parish Council about the Casbrook area and the Parish Council's efforts along with those of Councillor Martin Hatley to object to proposals to extend the shooting range at Pucknall Farm which had now been refused by the Borough Council.
6. County Council representative Alan Dowden spoke about the County budget and the reduced levels of government grant received by the County. Despite this Hampshire's Council Tax was still below the national average. He also referred to changes that would be brought about by the new structure plan which had to accommodate 44,000 new homes throughout the County. He also referred to his work on the Planning & Transportation Committee and the Fire & Rescue Services and to his efforts to support Braishfield's pleas for the installation of stop signs at the Jermyns Lane junction.
7. Martin Hatley Test Valley Borough Council's representative reported that the Borough's Council Tax was still the lowest in Hampshire. He referred to a recent restructuring of the senior management within the Council following the appointment of Alan Jones, the Borough's new Chief Executive. This reduced the number of directors from six to two. He also commented on the planning matters that affected Braishfield including the removal of the steel fabrication works from Hawkes Farm and to the refusal of the Pucknall shooting range. He reminded those present that the Borough Council had now introduced public participation at many of its Committee meetings.
8. Andrew Lalonde invited questions from the floor and the following matters were raised.

Road Names

Reference was made to the confusion over the name of Braishfield Road running through the village. Parts of the road were known as Crook Hill, The Square and Kings Somborne Road although these were not marked. It was agreed that the Parish Council would consider the question of road names at a subsequent meeting and seek advice from the Borough Council.

Village Shop

It was reported that the village post office and stores had submitted an application to the Borough Council to convert their shop premises to residential. The Parish Council were concerned about this move and would continue investigating what could be done to assist and promote the use of the shop amongst the local parishioners.

9. Andrew Lalonde concluded the evening by thanking the guest speaker for his attendance and to the help afforded to the Parish Council during the year by Councillors Hatley and Dowden and the local residents and organisations who had assisted with local tasks.