

BRAISHFIELD ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting held at the Village Hall, Braishfield
on Tuesday 27th April 2004 at 8.00pm

1. PRESENT

Parish Councillors - A Lalonde, M Edwards, M Prince, Mrs M Payne
A Light, Mrs Jean Lowe

County Councillor - Councillor A Dowden

Borough Councillor M Hatley

5 Parishioners

Apologies were received from Mrs Sue Ransom

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 6th May 2003 were agreed by the Chairman.

3. INSPECTOR FUNNELL

After welcoming everyone, the Chairman of the Parish Council, Andrew Lalonde, introduced Inspector Funnell of the Romsey Police. He said that Romsey Police Station covered 80 square miles with 55,000 inhabitants. To police this he had 26 PCs in post (30 approved posts) to provide 24 hr 7 day cover. Romsey station duty staff were civilians.

The demands on his staff were huge. There had been a considerable increase in recent years, one reason for which was that with the advent of mobile telephones, the police often got several calls reporting the same incident. The Winchester control room tried to sort this out, receiving 40,000 calls a month. Calls were graded and account was taken of the increased travelling time to rural areas.

In Romsey, the main issue was antisocial behaviour, mainly due to alcohol on Friday and Saturday nights. Youths, some as young as 13 or 14, were taken home to their parents. This seemed to have a beneficial effect. Depending on the seriousness of the incident, a first 'offence' would receive a reprimand from the Police. A second one would receive a final warning from the Police.

The second main issue was fear of crime, even though it was relatively low in Test Valley. All crime, even imagined, had to be recorded for HMG. Crime figures for Braishfield over the last 12 months were:

Violent	4
Burglaries (dwellings)	2
Burglaries (sheds)	11
Damage	2
Theft	7
Vehicle crime	5

This amounted to 2% of the Romsey Police workload.

Speeding was a problem, but this was dealt with by the Roads Policing Unit. Cameras were installed where they were most needed.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

At the Annual General Meeting held in May 2003 Mr Andrew Lalonde and Mr Michael Prince were re-elected Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively of the Parish Council.

The Parish Council met regularly throughout the year and meets at 7pm on the first Tuesday of the month except August.

Planning

The Parish Council monitored all planning applications in the village and commented on them. In considering planning applications, the Parish Council took into account the effects that the proposals may have on the adjoining properties and the village as a whole in both the short and long term. It also took into account the Borough Local Plan and the newly adopted Village Design Statement.

The Test Valley Borough Local Plan was still under review and the closing dates for comments had now passed. The Parish Council lodged objections to the extent of the development at Abbotswood, the conversion of agricultural land at Ganger Farm into a sports ground and tighter parking standards in Romsey. This latter point would affect adversely those who need to travel into Romsey by car.

Of the many planning matters dealt with, some of interest were:

A further application was made by Gales Brewery to redevelop Newport Farm. The first application for two houses had been withdrawn, but the second one to redevelop the existing farm building had not yet been determined by TVBC.

The redevelopment of the Chapel Works site was approved on appeal against the decision to refuse by TVBC. The house now being constructed attracted a good deal of adverse comment and the Parish Council endeavoured to get the Planning Inspector to look at the site again. No decision would be changed, but it would be appropriate for the Planning Inspector to understand the reasons for the comments. Most of Newport Lane was in the Conservation Area but this seemed to have had little bearing on the decision.

Highways and Road Safety

The Parish Council continued to report defects in the highway to the Assistant Chief Engineer. However, there was further concern about the standard of road maintenance and the level of resources being made available. The patch and mend policy did not appear to be adequate for country lanes constructed over 50 years ago now carrying modern traffic levels. The Crook Hill bend was a problem requiring more than one visit to get simple repair work done. Also at Crook Hill, there was little success in getting a footpath constructed, as Hampshire County Council said the accident record is too good.

Flytipping continued to be a problem, not helped by TVBC charges for disposal of waste, though TVBC did respond quickly to complaints of tipping. The Parish Council offered to make a contribution towards the construction of a parking area for the Hill View bungalows, a scheme for which had recently received planning permission. With the aid of a grant from TVBC, four noticeboards were installed using volunteer effort on verges in the Parish. Consideration was being given to extending the traffic calming scheme further north through the village.

The Parish Council complained about the level of gas discharge from the Transco gas station at the top of Bunny Lane. There appeared to have been some improvement. The Parish Council also

lobbied hard for a post box to replace the one removed from the old post office in Hill View. It eventually succeeded with one installed in front of the Chapel Close bungalows. At the moment, the Council was trying to find out the future of the telephone box with the missing telephone.

Recreation Ground

The Recreation Ground required maintenance, some of which was done by willing villagers and the Football Club, but there was expenditure on the fencing along both the east and south boundaries. The car park required further repair and the playground needed attention in order to meet the requirements of the Disability Act and the results of a safety report. There were plans to replace the newspaper box and site it next to the village hall, subject to the agreement of the Hall management committee.

Generally

The Council continued to be supported by the Braishfield Village Association and this was much appreciated.

Parish Council

The Councillors and Clerk were thanked for the work they put into the successful running of the Council and also Councillors Dowden and Hatley for their back up.

Precept

The Parish Council precept for the coming year remained at £9000 and the make-up of the 2004/5 Council tax for a Band D property was as follows with 2003/4 figures in brackets:

Hampshire County Council	840.15	(844.56)
Hampshire Police Authority	108.36	(97.29)
Hampshire Fire & Rescue	51.30	-
Test Valley Borough Council	94.41	(86.85)
Braishfield Parish Council	26.87	(27.52)
TOTAL	1121.09	(1056.22)
Increase on last year	6.14%	(14.6%)

The Clerk presented a draft Receipts and Payments account for the year 2003/4 and invited comments.

5. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

In his report, Alan Dowden said that over the next 12 months the South East England Regional Assembly would be starting work on the South East Plan. It would be consulting widely and the plan was to last until 2026. SEERA would be responsible for Regional spatial strategy once the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act became law later in the year. The Plan would be a wide-ranging statutory document covering not just normal planning issues but also education and health.

Hampshire County Council's part of the Council Tax was to rise by 4.7%. It was lower than forecast owing to a one-off grant of £7.5m from HMG. It could have been even lower but £20.9m was being held in reserve. Fire & Rescue set its own precept and when District and Parish precepts were all added together, the Council Tax would rise by just over 6%.

Next year it was possible that Nursling & Rownhams would not be part of the Baddesley Division in the HCC elections if a Boundary Commission change was accepted. It might be in Romsey Extra.

Alan said that he was a member of the Policy & Resources PRC and the Social Services PRC. He was also a member of the Regulatory Committee and the Health Review Committee. He has been given responsibility to be the lead member on the healthfit programme for older people and to lead on access to Podiatry services for insulin diabetics.

6. BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

In his report, Martin Hatley said that he was now entering his ninth year as Councillor, but following a change of name, this was the first as Councillor for Ampfield & Braishfield. His busy year included a diverse range of issues including Broadband, noticeboards, strategic gaps and Local Plans, green waste collection, sewerage effluent, smelly pigs, relocation of street signs, litter, street cleaning, as well as numerous planning applications and also the issue of Council Tax.

Many people signed up to have the Braishfield telephone exchange upgraded to take Broadband. The Borough Local Plan finished its consultation stage on 21st March and the Inquiry stage was likely to start in September. The Local Ampfield/Valley Park gap had been reinstated into the plan.

The green waste scheme was regrettable but HMG had not lifted its Foot & Mouth restrictions. This had required the introduction of the woven sacks. Had this been provided at no extra charge, then £22 would have been added to the Council Tax.

The Borough's share of the Council Tax increased by 8.7% to £94.41 for a Band D household. Had it not been for additional unfunded responsibilities put on the District by HMG, then the Tax could have been reduced or service level increased.

7. QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE FLOOR

Concern was expressed at the effect of the new Waitrose on traffic in Romsey and also on the other shops in the town. Some small shops had suffered.

The issue of school closures was mentioned, particularly that of Ampfield. Alan Dowden said that the decision on Ampfield would be taken by the Executive Member for Education and not by the Council.

In connection with the Borough Local Plan Review, it was asked why there was to be no housing along Highwood Lane.