

# **BRAISHFIELD ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

Minutes of the Meeting held at the Village Hall, Braishfield  
on Tuesday 1st May 2012 at 8.00pm

## **1. PRESENT**

Parish Councillors - Mike Prince (Chairman)  
Dorothy Ross  
Mike Edwards  
Nick Virgo  
Clive John  
Carole Renvoize

Borough Councillor - Martin Hatley

Apologies for absence were received from Alan Dowden

## **2 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 17th May 2011 were agreed.

## **3. PRESENTATION BY DANIEL FEARNLEY - Hampshire County Council**

The guest speaker was Daniel Fearnley, Program Manager of Hampshire County Council's Local Broadband Plan. He started by describing the provision of fibre optic broadband feeds to Schools in Hampshire which had cost £7m. Total coverage of all households in Hampshire was problematic as 15-20% was not commercially viable for superfast broadband ie < 24Mb/s.

It was intended to go out to tender for the provision of fibre optic broadband with HCC providing £10m of match funding so as to produce £20m. It was expected to complete the procurement by the end of the year. However, it was important that potential users should sign up to the need so as to make it more attractive to the bidders. HCC believes that the take-up in rural areas will be about 40%, a figure rather higher than assumed by the bidders. The implementation timescale would be 2013-15.

The aim was to provide 90% coverage at 24Mb/s with the remaining 10% having a minimum of 2Mb/s. This would be done by providing fibre optic links into roadside cabinets which feed existing copper cables into premises.

Attached to the Braishfield exchange are 827 residential properties and 125 businesses. Superfast broadband is not yet available because there is no fibre optic into the exchange. If >200 people sign up to superfast broadband, then BT would be interested in upgrading the system. As things stand, it looks as though the whole of the village of Braishfield will be upgraded, but only 90% of Michelmersh.

Mike Prince thanked Daniel Fearnley for a very interesting talk.

## **4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

The following is the written report given to the Meeting by Mike Prince, Chairman of the Parish Council:

At the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council on 17th May 2011 Mike Prince and Mike Edwards were re-elected Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council respectively. A change which has taken place during

the year is that Camilla Horton has decided to resign from the Council owing to pressing family priorities and I would like to thank her for the contribution she has made to the working of the Council. This means that there is now a vacancy on the Council and there is a notice on the board right now giving Parishioners the right to call for an election, though this expires tomorrow. If no election is called the Council will be invited to fill the vacancy by co-option and a notice to this effect will be posted on the board.

The Parish Council has met regularly throughout the year and meets at 7pm on the first Tuesday of each month except August. However this rule is occasionally modified, particularly in 'Jubilee' years and also we often have the July Meeting later in the month owing to the lack of a Meeting in August. Residents of the village are very welcome and encouraged to attend Parish Council Meetings. There is an open discussion period at the end of each meeting when any relevant matter may be aired. Villagers may also make presentations about matters such as planning applications at the start of the meeting.

## **PLANNING**

The Parish Council monitors all planning applications in the village, as well as in nearby industrial areas such as Bunny Lane and Yokesford Hill, and comments on them where it thinks fit. The Parish Council takes into account the effects that the proposals may have on the adjoining properties and on the village as a whole both in the short and long terms. It also takes into account the Borough Local Plan, the Braishfield Village Design Statement and the Conservation Area status. The Borough Local Plan is due to be replaced by the Core Strategy and the Council has commented on the draft document.

There have been 24 planning applications considered in the past year, together with quite a number to do with tree works in the Conservation Area. This number of planning applications is a drop of 10 on the 34 of last year but slightly higher than the 21 of the year before that. The Council has no objection to most applications but this year there were very few of significance in the village with which the Council disagreed. Indeed, the only one I would mention is the hay barn at Braishfield House. The Council felt that its size and height was inappropriate for the location adjacent to Braishfield Road. Nevertheless, it received permission.

Outside the village is a different story. The refused RFSF Recycling application went to appeal, the outcome of which is due very shortly. The Council made a presentation to the appeal objecting to the application.

Raymond Brown has taken over the skip business of BKP in Bunny Lane and has been making an objectionable noise. Its application for a picking station received approval but a noise mitigation plan has to be submitted by them to Hampshire County Council.

Ace Liftaway at Yokesford Hill is in trouble with the planning authorities over the height of its stockpiles. The Company has been taken to Court over them. Nearby residents to Ace Liftaway have made a strong complaint about noise and dust from the site.

The affordable housing project on the land opposite the Wheatsheaf is not proceeding as hoped and the Council has suggested an alternative site to Hyde Housing.

## **HIGHWAYS AND ROAD SAFETY**

The Parish Council has continued to report numerous defects in the highway to Hampshire Highways. Hampshire County Council now seems to be making a more determined effort to repair highway defects properly. Kiln Lane has been resurfaced over a year ago and a stretch of Lower Street has just received the same treatment.

There have been numerous water leaks from the old water mains in the village and the Council has complained to Southern Water. We have heard, albeit not confirmed in writing, that there will be very extensive water main replacement in the village over the next 18 months. We are still trying to find out if this includes Crook Hill where there has been a particular problem.

### **RECREATION GROUND and WAR MEMORIAL**

As usual, the Recreation Ground has required maintenance, some of which is done by willing villagers and the Football Club.

Progress is being made on the replacement Football Pavilion as the Charity Commission has now approved an alteration to the Trust Deed which will permit the Club to build a pavilion on the Recreation Ground. This might seem odd but the fact is that the original Trust Deed actually forbade the construction of a building which means that the building of the current pavilion in the 1970s was very questionable.

The Jubilee Committee has been working hard on the celebratory event which will take place on the Recreation Ground over the weekend at the beginning of June.

### **PARISH COUNCIL**

As Chairman I would like to thank the Councillors and Clerk, John Rhodes, for the work they put into the successful running of the Council and to Councillors Dowden and Hatley for their contributions and help. The Parish Council has continued to be supported by the Braishfield Village Association and this is much appreciated.

### **PRECEPT**

The Parish Council precept for the coming year remains at £10,000. The make-up of the 2012/13 Council Tax for a Band D property in Braishfield is as follows, with 2011/12 figures in brackets:

	2012/13	2011/12	change
Hampshire County Council	1037.88	(1037.88)	0.0%
Hampshire Police Authority	146.25	(146.25)	0.0%
Hampshire Fire & Rescue	61.38	(61.38)	0.0%
Test Valley Borough Council	121.41	(121.41)	0.0%
Braishfield Parish Council	29.33	(28.99)	1.2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1396.25</b>	<b>(1395.91)</b>	<b>0.0%</b>

For comparison purposes, the Band D Council Tax has risen 51.5% in the ten years since 2002/2003, when it was £921.55. The apparent rise in Parish Precept for a Band D property is due to a change in the number of occupied properties.

## **5. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

The following is the written report submitted to the Meeting by Alan Dowden, County Councillor:

The national and local situation has been rather gloomy because of the financial position in trying to reduce the huge debts that the coalition government inherited. Although nationally within 2012 we can all celebrate the Queens Diamond Jubilee and then that will be followed by the Olympic Games. These

events should give us all a great deal of pride & pleasure. I hope these events will also help business to thrive and provide additional employment for many of those who are presently without work.

Hampshire County Council's revenue budget for providing all its services excluding schools is £663 million. Ongoing cuts in public spending led to Hampshire losing 14.3% of its Government grant last year and it will lose a further 10.4% during the next financial year 2012/13. The human cost of making savings of £100 million has been the loss of 1400 staff, including one in four managers, and a further 228 staff will be made redundant during this coming year.

The County Council have agreed to freeze Council Tax again this year in order to take advantage of the extra £13.2 million freeze grant awarded by the coalition Government to councils who do not increase the Council Tax. This action that there should be no extra tax burden placed on the public, whilst everyone is feeling the effects of the financial downturn was agreed by all the political parties. Therefore the Band (D) Council Tax will remain for the third year running at £1037. 88p.

The Conservative administration has always stated its intention is to try to deliver four years worth of savings in two years, in order to try to provide stability in service provision by reducing the time over which changes and restructures take place.

One of the consequences of achieving the goal of four years cost reduction, if successful, would be the early capture of efficiencies which would be available for one off investment purposes. There are though significant risks that is why they have provided such high levels of contingencies.

As the opposition Adult Social Care Spokesperson I lobbied for an extra £1 million to address the unfairness which was revealed within the new home care charges.

Those clients who have assets above the threshold amount of £23,250 and who cannot manage without the help of two carers have seen their weekly charges increased significantly. In some cases by double the cost they were previously charged.

The Leader Ken Thornber agreed to my request and was particularly moved by two individuals one lady from Valley Park and a gentleman from Romsey who gave very powerful presentations of their situations to the Full Council and argued that the extra charges imposed by the Council was a extra tax on disability.

The opposition Liberal Democrats argued in their budget amendment that £19 million of the allocated £44 million of contingency funds should be utilised to reverse the cuts to Children's Centres, Youth Services, Libraries and Rural Bus Services. The amendment included that an additional 10 million should be allocated to the Adult Social Care Services budget in order to manage the significant programme of change and deal with continuing pressure arising from the complexity and demography changes.

Within the Capital Programme for 2012/13 the County Council will provide an extra £30 million for school places for children, £4 million to extend Broadband and £45 million to support Extra Care housing for elderly people. It is anticipated that these extra sums will also leverage in significant additional private sector investments. In total £600 million over 3 years in the very fabric of our great County. Not only does such investment reduce our future costs, it makes investments that will make Hampshire fit for purpose in the future.

The money invested will assist small and medium sized businesses, it goes to maintenance and construction contractors, it goes to suppliers and to a number of national partners, all of whom help create jobs, wealth and opportunity in the County. The County Council have needed to spend £10 million on repairing Hampshire's highways through the Operation Resilience project.

The authority are introducing increased apprenticeships initially 20 school or college leavers and the Leader introduced an initiative to give jobs to Care Leavers who would otherwise not find employment and it has proved to be a great success. This will be followed by a scheme of employment for people with Learning Difficulties.

My County Councillors Community Grant allowance last year was allocated to various organisations a few to mention are Relate for Family and Young peoples Counselling, Eastleigh & Romsey Mencap, The North Baddesley Health Centre Patient Participation Group for a specialised blood pressure monitoring device. Grant aid for Knightwood Youth Club for the provision of Learning Skills and Opportunities Programme for youngsters. St Francis Football Club for Knights Initiatives for Young People. The Newport Inn Braishfield Cricket Club in order to provide new equipment. North Baddesley over 60's Club for the provision of Xmas lunch & entertainment.

HCC Cllr. Alan Dowden

## **6. BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

The following is the written report submitted to the Meeting by Martin Hatley:

Having just served 30 years as an Ampfield parish councillor and 17 years as your Borough Councillor for Ampfield and Braishfield, I think I can now safely say my apprenticeship has been completed. However the learning process is very much an ongoing one with major changes happening both nationally and locally eg the new Localism Bill and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

### **PLANNING MATTERS & THE CORE STRATEGY**

I remain Deputy Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation. In these roles, I have been very involved over the last year in the production and publishing, for public comment, the Draft Core Strategy for Test Valley. This draft Core Strategy (the new name for the Borough Local Plan) is the first stage on the road to setting out the housing and employment needs for Test Valley for the period 2006 to 2031. The previous draft was only to 2026. Last year I explained how I had been successful in getting the strategic housing requirement for Southern Test Valley reduced by 7%, to an interim figure of 180 houses per annum, due to studying the various pieces of work commissioned by PUSH (Partnership for Urban Southern Hampshire). 196 houses a year were originally imposed upon us by the previous Government.

The new Localism Bill now allows us to set our own figure, but it must be evidenced based – zero is therefore not an option! The Borough commissioned its own consultants to examine the future housing requirements for the whole of Test Valley, split north and south. Various scenarios were highlighted and this enabled me to successfully recommend to the full Council a final 12% reduction in housing numbers for the south. This revised average of 172 p.a. is lower than that required in previous local plans dating back to 1996, however that still equates to a total requirement of 4,300 dwellings to be built in Southern Test Valley during the plan period.

Interestingly, all the evidence suggested an increase of over 9% was required in the north of the borough. Their figure is nearly double that of the south at 330 houses p.a. and 8,250 for the plan period. The total for the Borough is 12,550 houses or 502 houses a year..

This total number of dwellings required within Test Valley up to 2031 has been agreed generally as being correct by both political groups on the Borough. However the final locations will still no doubt be subject to much debate. Any development has to consider the sustainability and viability of Romsey and its shops and businesses. It is worth remembering that Southern Test Valley, as far as the Core Strategy is

concerned, is strictly defined as the 7 parishes of Ampfield (NOT Braishfield), Chilworth, North Baddesley, Nursling and Rownhams, Valley Park, Romsey Town and Romsey Extra. None of the 4,300 houses can be allocated anywhere other than these parishes. Furthermore, due to space constraints, Romsey Town and Valley Park have virtually no scope to accommodate any more large scale development other than that already accounted for on the Old Brewery Site – a ‘sobering’ thought!

The current Draft Core Strategy still does not contain any major housing for Ampfield and Braishfield and still includes the local gap separating Ampfield and Braishfield from Valley Park and Chandlers Ford. Braishfield, although for this purpose not in the south, can of course be affected by future development proposals eg. the current building taking place just down the road at Abbotswood.

The Borough is mindful that the average age for a first time buyer is now 37 and that the Borough’s housing waiting list for social housing is 3524 households with a local connection or living within Test Valley – many of these are young professional people who traditionally would have been home owners. Accordingly there is a requirement that 40% of the proposed developments must be affordable housing inc. social rented, shared equity or low cost local.

The Core Strategy recognizes and reflects the priorities recently identified by the Borough’s residents and captured in our priorities for the Council – access to a decent home, a competitive economy supporting local jobs, preserving our environment and encouraging communities to reach their full potential.

After considering all the comments, a revised draft will be published for further public consultation in June/July and a Public Examination into the amended Deposit Core Strategy Document by a government appointed inspector will occur in the Autumn 2012.

When I attended the exhibition for the proposed small development of affordable housing in the village, most residents were supportive but with the important proviso of suitable designs and positioning on the site.

### **Olympic Torch Relay comes to Test Valley**

March saw the announcement of the Olympic Torch Relay Routes and runners. The route has been planned to travel an estimated 8000 miles around the United Kingdom giving thousands of people the opportunity to be involved in the Olympics.

In Test Valley the torch will be coming through Andover on 11 July. Local details are available on the website [www.testvalley.gov.uk/london2012](http://www.testvalley.gov.uk/london2012) or nationally on [www.london2012.com](http://www.london2012.com)

### **Free Insulate Hampshire Scheme Extended until 31<sup>st</sup>. December 2012**

This scheme is detailed in the Spring Edition of the Test Valley News that accompanied your Council Tax Bill. The cut off date of 31 March has just been extended to 31 December 2012. Test Valley Borough Council and Hampshire County Council are working in partnership with Scottish Power to bring residents Insulate Hampshire.

Insulate Hampshire offers cavity wall insulation FREE OF CHARGE and loft insulation FREE OF CHARGE\* subject to a free, no obligation technical survey provided by the scheme. The scheme is available to Hampshire homeowners and privately renting tenants (with landlords’ permission). Insulate Hampshire can also offer rolls of insulation to top up your existing loft insulation for £49 for a maximum 100m<sub>2</sub>.

Statistics from the Energy Saving Trust, based on an average 3 bedroom semi-detached property, suggest that installing home insulation can offer savings of over £300 a year!

The organisation can also help advise you on installing solar panels and refer you to other community services such as benefit entitlement checks and home safety visits. Residents can contact the Insulate Hampshire team by calling 0800 952 0037, emailing [enquiries@insulatehampshire.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@insulatehampshire.co.uk) or visiting [www.insulatehampshire.co.uk](http://www.insulatehampshire.co.uk) to sign up.

(\*Where there is currently less than 60mm (2 1/2 inches) and is subject to extra metreage charges).

### **Government White Paper on the Natural Environment**

The Ministerial Advisory Panel of 10 experts I was asked to join by DEFRA, and which reported directly to the Minister, has now finished its work with the production of the White Paper 'The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature'. I led a high ranking delegation visiting various parts of the country and as diverse as Manchester and rural Suffolk. I am very pleased that much of the intelligence gleaned and insights from those visits have made it into the White Paper in the form of commitments and texts. On a personal note I am particularly proud that many of my ideas have been included, the most important being the setting up of Local Nature Partnerships (LNP's) all over the country. A Hampshire-wide LNP bid to DEFRA, led by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Nature Trust, looks as if it has been successful.

### **Council Tax**

While the Borough Council did indeed deliver another freeze of our council tax for the second year running, it is worth noting some other facts. The weekly cost of Test Valley services for a Band D council tax payer is £2.33, one of the lowest in England. For this we provide services from waste collection to park maintenance, planning to environmental health and leisure facilities to funding affordable housing.

To achieve this freeze we had to find savings of nearly £1.4m and to achieve this again next year, another £1.2m of savings will have to be found.

To support our local traders, car parking is still free in all our car parks in Romsey and Andover after 4pm.

### **The Diamond Jubilee**

TVBC are encouraging communities to come together to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee on 5<sup>th</sup> June by holding street parties and events. To help street party organisers TVBC have simplified the process to close quiet residential streets and at no charge, as well as making road closure signs available. And on the 3<sup>rd</sup> June the Borough Council will be hosting a fun packed JUBILEE JAMBOREE in Beech Hurst Park, Weyhill Rd., Andover on the lines of a traditional street party.

Celebrations are centred on the long weekend of the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> June. Any community group wishing to hold a party and close a road must apply to the Borough Council ASAP. There is no charge and application forms are available from [engineering@testvalley.gov.uk](mailto:engineering@testvalley.gov.uk) or telephone 01264 368723.

The Council can even offer advice on organising an event and on how to secure funding. If you need any help please contact Marianne Piggin on 01264 368623. Also contact her if you wish details on arranging to take part in THE BIG LUNCH on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> June.

### **Regular review of the Council's office accommodation**

There has been much speculation in the press about the current accommodation review which includes the Duttons Road offices. We have a duty to all our residents to regularly monitor that we are managing all our assets wisely and using their council tax cost effectively. This includes all our buildings. .

The Leader of the Council sent an email to the Clerks and Chairmen of the southern parishes on 9th March to clarify the position regarding this accommodation review clarifying two important principles:

- first that if alternative premises in Romsey (eg the Old Magistrates Court) were taken forward in place of our Duttons Road offices, then all the customer service facilities currently enjoyed at Duttons Road would continue to be offered to residents in the new location and
- secondly that Council meetings and meetings of the Council's committees which are currently held in the Council Chamber at Duttons Road will continue to be held in the south of the borough.

No decision has yet been made to relocate or not. However, as you would expect, all options are being examined but subject strictly to the above two important criteria. I hope that this will be of some reassurance to you.

*As always, I remain readily contactable by phone or email. Tel. 07970 501050 or 02380 254040 .  
E mail [cllrmhatley@testvalley.gov.uk](mailto:cllrmhatley@testvalley.gov.uk)*

*Cllr. Martin Hatley*

## **7. OPEN PERIOD**

During questions and answers, Mike Prince explained the position with regard to the proposed affordable housing in Braishfield. Although 320 such homes were due to be built at Abbotswood, this needed to be compared with the 3524 on TVBC's waiting list, so it was still desirable to have additional housing in villages like Braishfield.

PC Vernon Gook and PCSO Jo Cole attended to meeting and described the various problems of theft of heating oil and of scrap metal, including catalytic converters from vehicles. The Romsey Police will still be manned but without a front desk.

At the close of the meeting at 9.45pm, Mike Prince thanked everyone for attending.