

PETERSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

The thirty-fifth Annual Town Meeting was held at the Town Hall, Petersfield on Monday 29 March 2010 at 7 pm.

PRESENT: Cllr Mrs H Ayer (Town Mayor), Cllr R Ayer, Cllr V Clarke, Cllr Mrs S Kerby, Cllr P Molloy, Cllr W Organ, Cllr C Shore, Cllr Ms M Vincent and Cllr G Watkinson

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs S McMorran (Deputy Town Clerk), Mr J West (EHDC and HCC Councillor), Petersfield Herald and 13 members of the public

MINUTES

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs Aiston and Mrs Butler

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 30 March 2009 be authorised to be signed as a correct record.

TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT

The Town Mayor gave her report - a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

Following which she invited the Chairmen of Committees to give their reports.

CLLR MRS SUSAN KERBY - CHAIRMAN - PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Chairman gave her report to those present - a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

CLLR KENNETH HICK - CHAIRMAN - PUBLIC HALLS COMMITTEE

The Chairman gave his report to those present - a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

CLLR G WATKINSON - CHAIRMAN - FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

The Chairman gave his report to those present - a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

Cllr Shore joined the meeting at 7.20 pm

CLLR CLIVE SHORE - CHAIRMAN - GROUNDS COMMITTEE

The Chairman gave his report to those present - a copy of which is attached to these minutes

EAST HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS

CLLR JOHN WEST

Cllr West gave his report to those present - a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

CLLR BOB AYER

Cllr Ayer reported that he was Chairman of both Planning and Licensing at EHDC.

With regard to planning it had been a surprise when the reserve site in Liphook had been approved by the planning inspector on appeal. There were four reserve sites in Petersfield which, until the Liphook decision, members had been comfortable with. However this had now all changed and there was now activity on two of the reserve sites in Petersfield and it was inevitable that planning applications would be received for these two sites in the near future. It was a difficult time for planning at EHDC. One site was in ownership of the Town Council and therefore Cllr Ayer could take no part in the discussion or decision on this site.

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS

CLLR JOHN WEST

Cllr West gave his report to those present - a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

CLLR VAUGHAN CLARKE

Cllr Clarke advised that he represented Rother and St Mary's ward in Petersfield. During the recent cold weather the system for salting roads was explained. Roads were either priority one or priority two with the remaining roads not being treated. Priority one roads were salted 53 times and priority two roads 12 times. Hampshire carried 12 days of reserve salt and received regular deliveries to top this up. However during the recent bad weather Central Government had diverted Hampshire Supplies to Surrey, Wiltshire and Southampton. Hampshire were now going to carry 18 days reserve of salt - the barns to store this were going to cost £1 million.

Cllr Clarke went on to report that in a year the average number of pot holes was 100,000 but it was estimated that an additional 25,000 had been caused by the bad weather. The policy was to fill the pot holes quickly to try to stop any legal claims (estimated 1,000 legal claims per year) and then resurface the road at a later date. College Street would be resurfaced week commencing 12 April and would be closed. Hampshire received £1M Government funding for road repairs and used another £20M from reserves. It was estimated that if all roads were repaired in Hampshire the cost would be £1.5 Billion.

Hampshire County Council required £1.7 Billion a year with £1.1Billion going to education from Central Government with no burden on the Tax payer. This left

£672M with £540 M coming from Council Tax and £140 from Central Government - that is 80% from Council Tax Payers and 20% from Central Government. Hampshire County Council also had £162M in reserves but £29M was available with the rest held for schools (£90M) and the rest awaiting a legal ruling on equal pay.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Simon Auty asked members to consider allowing the public to speak at Council meetings on non-agenda items without giving notice with notice only being given if the public wished to speak on agenda items.

Olivia Tottle asked why the rubbish from the twice weekly markets went to land-fill and not re-cycling. Cllr Ayer advised he would take this matter up at EHDC.

John Crowhurst asked for an assurance that EHDC would not sell the Festival Hall Car Park as this would have a bad effect on both the Festival Hall and the Petersfield Open Air Swimming Pool. He also felt that it would be difficult for the Town Councillors who were also EHDC Councillors as they would not be able to take part in discussion as they had an interest. The Town Mayor assured those present that EHDC were aware that the car park was needed although there was nothing happening on the matter at the present time. Cllr Ayer corrected Mr Crowhurst in the fact that Town Councillors did not have any interest as the car park was not owned by the Town Council.

Mr Crowhurst also requested a report on the work carried out on the Pond with regard to the Heath Management Plan. Cllr Shore advised that he would make this available as soon as possible.

Tom Norgate expressed his concern at the situation regarding parking in Petersfield at the present time. Permit holders were finding it very difficult to park as spaces were taken up by others parking for long periods - one car had been parked for 11 days! He also expressed his concern at the fact that the Central Car Park had not been cleared of the debris left following the heavy snow fall. Drains had become blocked with the grit which had not been cleared away. The road surface from this area to the shopmobility centre was in need of re-surfacing.

There was also a problem with 'A' boards in the High Street put out by traders which made the navigation around very difficult.

Cllr Ayer advised that he did move 'A' boards if they were causing an obstruction and advised that not all the pavement was a footway - some belonged to the shop keepers. He agreed that the permit parking was a problem but EHDC could not, at the present time, enforce parking. He also agreed that Central Car Park needed looking at.

Cllr West advised that the problem of 'A' boards was difficult. Either all had to be removed or the status quo was kept. It would be very unpopular in the current trading conditions to make retailers remove these boards.

Mr Norgate suggested that perhaps a code of conduct for retailers' use of 'A' boards was needed.

John Crowhurst wished **John West** a good journey and a quick return from his forthcoming hospital stay and went on to give a vote of thanks to all the work the Town Council did for Petersfield.

The meeting closed at 8.20 pm.