

## PETERSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

The thirty-eighth Annual Town Meeting was held at the Rose Room, Festival Hall, Petersfield on Wednesday 3 April 2013 at 7 pm.

**PRESENT:** Cllr P Marshall (Deputy Mayor), Cllr G Budden, Cllr V Clarke, Cllr Mrs L Farrow, Cllr Mrs S Harwood, Cllr W Organ, Cllr A Tarver and Cllr G Watkinson.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr N Hitch (Town Clerk), Mr J West (EHDC and HCC Councillor), Mr P Price, Mr M Walton, Petersfield Herald and 42 members of the public

### MINUTES

#### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Ms M Vincent.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 30th April 2012 be authorised to be signed as a correct record.

#### TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT

In the absence of the Town Mayor, the Deputy Town Mayor gave his report - a copy of which is attached to these minutes and introduced the speakers.

#### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. It was observed that the Town Council has considerable assets and enquired whether there were any plans to sell Penns Field for development.

The issue of whether Penns Field is developed or not will depend on many factors, particularly the ongoing Neighbourhood Plan and any proposed development would have to be in accordance with local and national planning policies. It was though possible that the developer could, given the delay in approving the joint Core Strategy following the suspension of the Public Examination submit a planning application on the site before the Neighbourhood Plan was completed.

2. Concern was expressed over the methods and composition of the working party meeting to look at Heath Pond. It was asked whether the Council would be restoring the Pond into the condition that it should be as a fishing pond. The opinion was expressed that the pond was continuing to silt up and that the Heath Management Plan was not being used as far as the pond was concerned.

Cllr Organ advised that membership of the working party included people who know about the Pond and they were aiming to improve the condition and appearance of the Pond.

3. It was asked if the rent and profit share arrangement recently agreed for the Plump Duck at the Heath kiosk would work.

Cllr Marshall observed that time would tell if this had been a good idea.

4. How had the money received from the extension of the Option Agreement from Kebbells at Penns Field been spent .

The Town Clerk advised that some had been spent on capital projects such as replacing the hemp lines in the Festival Hall and other amounts had been earmarked for future projects such as improving the Heath Pond.

5. If the grounds maintenance and litter contract were to be brought in-house on expiry of the current contract how would it impact on current officers payscales

Cllr Marshall replied that it would possibly be a better or cheaper service by doing the work in-house.

### **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Mr Walton, Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group reported on progress made to date in completing the Neighbourhood Plan, commenting on the background to the way planning is now being done in the country and the real opportunities being given to communities to get involved and have an influence over planning decisions affecting their communities in the future. He advised that everybody in the community was a stakeholder in the project.

The focus of the Plan is on housing and land use although it will look at other matters such as community, tourism and transport. There is a limit to what the Plan can do; for example there is not much it can do about illegal parking.

Working parties will be going on and the group will be delighted to receive offers of help from anybody within the community. A leaflet has been produced and a good web site exists with an interactive map on it which everyone is encouraged to use.

It was acknowledged that many surveys have been done in the past and that the community can feel over-consulted but the Neighbourhood Plan is the only one that will matter; the only one where planning becomes bottom-up.

A draft Plan will hopefully be produced in the autumn and the final Plan has to pass a referendum which will probably be held in May or June 2014. A majority of those voting have to approve the Plan for it to become reality. It has to be robust. It is not a Local Plan but a Town Plan of what the community wants the town to look like in the next 15 years.

Various questions were asked:

How are you trying to attract opinions of the young people of Petersfield?

- ⤴ Want to fully consult with all people in Petersfield
- ⤴ Partly through events, partly through smaller groups, clubs and societies
- ⤴ Workshops to be done at schools
- ⤴ Invitation received to do presentation to the ATC
- ⤴ People's ideas on how to engage with young people would be welcomed

Once the Neighbourhood Plan is complete what will be its status? Can it be overridden by Planning Inspectors or Government Ministers?

- ⤴ It becomes part of the Local Plan and has statutory power
- ⤴ It is as strong as we can make it
- ⤴ It must be compliant with the Local Development Framework and National Planning Policy
- ⤴ The community is much more protected with a Neighbourhood Plan than it is without it.

What has happened to the other Plans done in the last few years?

- ⤴ All have been used as part of creating the Neighbourhood Plan in providing initial core evidence

How does the Neighbourhood Plan link in with infrastructure?

- ⤴ It is a land use document
- ⤴ If there is strong opinion in the town on the need for additional infrastructure then it will be included within the Plan

How would the Plan deal with traffic issues?

- ⤴ It can look at different ideas for traffic flows around the town and provides an opportunity to express views about perceived troublespots

## **HEATH BARROWS**

Mr Price gave a highly informative presentation on the Bronze Age Barrows found on The Heath, including the numbers of barrows, their style and type as well as their alignment. Some ideas of customs and practices of the times were also given as well as possible links to Stonehenge and Avebury. The mystery of why they were created remains.

## **PRESENTATION OF COMMUNITY GRANTS**

The Deputy Town Mayor was delighted to present grants to a number of groups within the community. These were:

- ⤴ Home Start Butser
- ⤴ Petersfield Musical Festival
- ⤴ Victim Support
- ⤴ East Petersfield Community Group
- ⤴ Age Concern Petersfield
- ⤴ Junior Squash tournament organiser
- ⤴ Herne Junior School

The Deputy Town Mayor closed by advising people of the Youth Centre model at the back of the room where Mr Wells would be delighted to tell people about the proposed project and informing that there was some wine behind the bar for those wishing to stay a little longer.

The meeting closed at 8.45 p.m.