

THE BOOKHAMS RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Company Limited by Guarantee - Number 10053863

Minutes of the 95th Annual General Meeting Held on Wednesday 13th July 2022

Amended: 3rd Nov 2022: Cllr Monica Weller added to Present

Present

Directors: Cllr Roger Adams, Cllr Clare Curran (CC), Andrew Freeman (AF), Chris Pullan (CP), Peter Seaward (PS), David Smith (DS)

Company Secretary: John Howarth (JGH)

Bookham Councillors: Cllr Sarah Chambers, Cllr Elizabeth Daly, Cllr Monica Weller

Members and Committee Members of the Association.

1. **Chairman's Welcome & Introduction**

Peter Seaward, Chairman, thanked everyone for coming on what was a very warm evening and explained that the guest speakers, following the formal business of the AGM, were Michael Coughlin Executive Director Partnerships, Prosperity and Growth for SCC and Jane Last Head of Community Partnership and Engagement. He commented that the amount we pay to SCC is by far the largest item of expenditure we pay out every month in Council Tax. So where does all this hard-earned cash go?

2. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies had been received from David Cox, Lyn and Peter Smudge

3. **Minutes of the 94th Annual General Meeting**

3.1 Accuracy

The Minutes were **ACCEPTED** as a true record of the meeting.

3.2 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising that would not be covered on the agenda.

4. **Chairman's Report**

Peter Seaward presented the following report.

This will be my last year as BRA Chairman. I was planning to step down this year but have been asked to stay another year so that our new Deputy Chairman, Simon Edge assuming you vote for him this evening can have a clear run into his new role.

As always there is a bed rock of tasks, we do all taking time and often unnoticed. Planning is one where we look at around two hundred applications very year. Membership and communications always take time and is a demanding activity, dealing with Highways and the problems associated with them, Mole Valley liaison on things like street cleaning litter and public area maintenance and improvement again take some time. Christmas lights, hanging baskets are another basic part of our workload.

Special activities this year included continuing work on the MVDC Local Plan, the new youth centre which may go to full planning stage soon. By the way if this does go ahead it will be the single biggest public investment in Bookham for the last 50 years or even more. This problem about the lack of investment in our public spaces and facilities is an issue we raise regularly with Mole Valley, SCC and all our Councillors. We call ourselves a village., We are a small town and growing. 12000 people live here probably bigger than Leatherhead and slightly smaller than Ashted All we have had in the past ten years I would guess are two cycle racks and the refurbishment of the toilets on Lower Shott. We deserve better We have through our own resources, which is all organisations in Bookham not just the BRA raised well over £1 million pounds for redevelopment of various village halls, scouting centre, sports facilities at Space and so on.

A major achievement this year was finally getting rid of the flooding on the Lower Road by the Squareabout and East Street This is something we have worked and lobbied on for well over 10 years or more and special thanks are due to Clare Curran who has persisted in making SCC Highways step up and get this done. Thank goodness no more wedding day dresses being ruined by inconsiderate drivers rushing through the floods. (I witnessed this in the past).

There is an ongoing Boundary Review for Mole Valley District now, and we have worked hard with others to get this first recommendation from the Boundary Commission changed. This would have created a new ward from the centre of Church Road, The High Street and Dorking Road going east well into Fetcham and may still be called Eastwick Ward. As the Boundary Commission are supposed to take strong notice of specific location identities this makes no sense. We await to see if the Boundary Commission take note of all we have said along with our Councillors and Fetcham too to get this proposal changed.

The Local Plan is still taking time and money as the hearings from the Planning Inspector are well under way. Many in the village think this is just a problem for those who live in Little Bookham Street. Not so in addition to the Preston Farm site there are other small sites plus continuing infill of over two hundred dwellings. All this on top of an infrastructure already creaking. Our mantra constantly is Bookham is Full. Unfortunately, this is not a recognised Planning term!

CIL Community Infrastructure levy also is taking some time. CIL is a levy on all new building which is paid to Mole Valley and is in two parts. The majority goes to the Council for strategic developments and some 25% in the case of Bookham to a Neighbourhood development pot. This fund is to alleviate the effect of new buildings in respect of infrastructure improvements. These can be varied, MVDC recently changed the rules for CIL some good to help improve administration and visibility some not so good. This latter included to ability to pool funds whereas the scheme as laid down by HMG was for the money raised to be used in the location where it originated. This I not implying MVDC are doing anything incorrectly but in our view could be used in projects someway form origination. We have used CIL to help fill up the gap in funds I mentioned before about Public Realm investment. We have just completed a power source to St Nicholas lychgate for outdoor events (Remembrance Sunday) and lighting for the tree there which is a Christmas focal point. Another project approved and being implemented now is to improve the planting and planters in the shopping area. We are waiting ti hear whether a large grant to improve signage especially for disadvantaged travellers has been approved for Bookham Station. Beyond that we are seeking funds to make cricket safer on Chrystie Rec, a replacement facility for the old Skateboard Park on the Lower Road rec and eventually to refurbish and extend the sports pavilion to the northern end of Christie Rec. This is used by Bookham Sports Association which includes football and cricket, and the building needs a serious renovation, extension, and upgrade.

There is more but I hope this gives you an understanding of what keeps us busy and how we try and spend your £5 wisely.

I need as always to thank many so please bear with me. To Chris Pullan, John Howarth and Andrew Freeman for keeping us on the straight and narrow, managing our money and all our legal and reporting matters Our Membership Secretary Carolyn Elson who looks after all the road Stewards and many other membership channels which is some task. Thanks to for everything Les Huett does on our Communications strategy and implementation. Within less than 4 years with Carolyn Les has moved us well into the digital arena using every social media channel but not Tik Tok, (Yet). We now have two thousand of you on our data base which makes it so much easier to keep you up to date, but we have not forgotten our print media or good old fashioned notice boards which really have a major purpose.

The Planning team under Nigel Smith and now Keith Whale are all unsung heroes So thanks Brain Eve, Julia Dickinson. Frances Fancourt, Chris Cunningham, Peter Witter, and Geoff Tranter. Fighting the peculiarities of the Planning System and balancing individual needs with those of the community is not an easy task.

Margaret Lawson does wonders for the village in keeping in clean and tidy. Not just through the regular monthly litter Picks (please join us on the first Sunday of every month at Lower Road car park). But also getting other groups to help as well as her own womble scheme. Here individuals adopt their own road or location to improve it. This is a growing band.

Frances Fancourt with her colleagues look after everything horticultural and along with Chris Cunningham lead the way of all matters relating to trees. In the is band too we should include the Poole's (Diane and Steve) for their leading work on Blue Hearts. Not to mention Steve and his intimate relationship with the Daleks and the Squareabout (ILIB Bookham users will know this well). Nick Forrer used to look after all our notice boards and what a difference he made. Unfortunately, due to health problems Nick has stood down so anyone who would like to undertake this task please talk to me. A really clever way to get 10,000 steps a day.

I need to thank Michael Agius for all his work as Deputy Chairman and his continuing activities on Highways. He along with Clare did so much through the Flood Forum and highways to get the Squareabout fixed.

Keith Francis does his usual excellent detailed work on everything relating to Transport and especially buses which since Falcon took over the 479 have improved. By the way if you have not used the SCC funded on demand bus please do so. All the reports are favourable and is remarkable excellent value for money. Just load the Surrey Connect app on you mobile. Andrew Matthews needs a special thak you. His work in attempting to get improved disabled access at Bookham Station has been outstanding. His procurement skills are pretty good to in finding watering machines for the shopping areas.

Finally, Thanks to all our Councillors and to those who lost at the last election. All are full members of our committee and their willingness to work on all these matters is so much appreciated.

On being put vote the Chairman's Report was **ACCEPTED**.

5. Treasurer's Report

Chris Pullan made the following report:

The surplus for the year was £408 compared with a surplus last year of £215

We have two main sources of income. The subscriptions which were £10852, 28% above last year's figure. This very good result was boosted by Members paying more than the requested £5. A major charge on BRA funds was the £3120 on Xmas lights. There were contributions of £3850 for Covid projects from MVDC with corresponding expenditure.

Other organisations asked us to donate to their projects. In 2021 they were higher. We are pleased on behalf of the village to make such donations.

You will note that the BRA has a number of sub-funds which amounted to £17341. These are reserved for specific purposes for example light fittings in the lychgate.

My thanks to Lawrence Penney for examining the Accounts and I would like to propose that he continues in this role for another year.

6. Election of Directors

6.1 Resignations from the Board

The meeting noted that Michael Agius resigned from the Board during the year.

6.2 Retirement by Rotation

Dave Smith Retired by Rotation under Article 55 and offered himself for re-election. On being put to the vote this was **AGREED**.

6.3 Ratification of Appointments to the Board

The Directors are empowered to make appointments to the Board during the year, subject to such appointments being ratified at the following AGM. During the year Simon Edge, Les Huett and Geoff Tranter were thus appointed. The meeting was asked to ratify these appointments. On being put to

the vote this was **AGREED**.

6.4 Election of new Directors

No nominations had been put forward. The Company Secretary reminded the meeting that the Board could make such appointments during the year and that they would have to be ratified at the following AGM. He said that anyone wishing to join the Board should contact him.

7. **Election of Officers**

7.1 Election of Chairman

Peter Seaward was nominated as Chairman. On being put to the vote this was **AGREED**.

7.2 Election of Vice Chairman

Simon Edge was nominated as Vice Chairman. On being put to the vote this was **AGREED**.

7.3 Election of Treasurer

Chris Pullan was nominated as Treasurer. On being put to the vote this was **AGREED**.

7.4 Election of Honorary President

Deferred until the 2023 AGM

7.5 Election of Honorary Vice Presidents

There were nominations.

8. **Independent Examiner**

Chris Pullan proposed that Lawrence Penney continue as Independent Examiner. This was **AGREED**.

9. **Membership Subscription**

It was **AGREED** that the membership subscription remained at £5 per household for the year 2023. The meeting was reminded that it was the members who decided the subscription on the Board's recommendation. If it was deemed necessary to increase the subscription during the year (given the current national economic climate) an Extraordinary General Meeting would have to be convened.

10. **Any Other Business**

There were no other items.

11. **Date (and format) of Next Annual General Meeting**

To be advised in due course.