

THE BOOKHAMS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Company Limited by Guarantee - Number 10053863

Committee Meeting

Notes of meeting held on Monday 6th November 2023

Church Room St Nicolas Church

In Attendance: Simon Edge (Chair), Neil McDowall, Cllr Andrew Matthews, Nick Forrer, Diane Poole, Christine Milstead, Francis Fancourt, Kristine Downman, Margaret Lawson, Richard Moyes, Gill Caldwell, David Cox, Simon Baxter, Les Huett, Peter Seaward, David Armstrong..

Special Guests: Cllrs Stephen Cooksey, Leader of the MVDC and Cllr Margaret Cooksey.

Apologies: Carolyn Elson, Cllr Roger Adams, Cllr Monica Weller, Cllr Paul Kennedy, Cllr Elizabeth Daly.
C Cllr Clare Curran.

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, concern was expressed over the illness of Keith Francis wishing him a speedy recovery.

1. Minutes of the Last Meeting:

Accepted as a true record without any amendments.

2. Chairman's Updates:

2.1 Police Presentation: A very successful public meeting with the Police had been held on the 25th October with over 60 residents attending. Inspector Green's slides can be seen on the BRA website.

2.2 Christmas Decorations: Winter Hanging Baskets had now been hung up in the High Street and decorative lights would go up soon.

2.3 Spirit of Christmas: The Rotary Club is setting up a Christmas Community event in the High St, which will include closure of the road on the 2nd

December. MVDC is permitting free parking on their two car parks on 2, 9 and 16 December.

3 Councillors Updates:

3.1 Station Improvements: Cllr Andrew Matthews reported that work had been completed on the station toilets but they had yet to open and he is still pursuing getting a RDAR key fitted. A New white LED displays have been set up on both platforms. Also, LSWR have offered to make up the funding gap for the project to install a 32 inch bus and train display for platform one of over £5,000. Noted SWR had contributed £14,000 to these improvements.

4. Cllr Stephen Cooksey's Presentation:

Cllr Stephen Cooksey was accompanied by Cllr Margaret Cooksey Cllr Cooksey stated that he was hoping to meet all the Residents Associations and Parish Councils within the MV and to discuss with them the various issues of mutual concern. The main Strategies to be discussed were the development of the Town Centers, the future of CCTV, the Local Plan, and Crime and Anti Social Behavior.

4.1 Town Centre Development Plans were being developed for Dorking and Bookham and BRA would be fully consulted upon as the plans were developed.

4.2 Police to withdraw funding for CCTV monitoring leaving MVDC to decide, after consultation, whether to support a reduced camera coverage or withdraw the facility altogether.

4.3 The future of the Local Plan was on hold pending receipt of the revisions being proposed by HMG. The main revision expected was the changes in Green Belt Policy and its effect on the location of new houses.

4.4 The other area of concern to the MVDC was the preparation of the Budget for 2024/5 which was particularly affected by the ever decreasing financial support from HMG. This resulted in a deficit of £1.4m. Difficult choices would need to be made, including using reserves to maintain services.

4.5 Finally relations with the Clarion were causing concern mainly due to their uncooperative behavior.

4.6 The Chairman thanked Cllr Cooksey for his presentation and particularly noting the proposed Master Plan for Bookham which would involve BRA to a great extent, the need to hold the Clarion to account, the availability of Funding Grants and the difficulties of the MVDC in funding the Budget.

4.7 The following questions were raised from the floor.

4.7.1 Richard Moyse enquired whether it had been considered that the possible withdrawal of CCTV cameras would lead to an increase in Anti-Social Behaviour. Cllr Cooksey replied that consideration was being given to retain some cameras for the collection of Council information.

4.7.2 Les Huett pointed out that Dorking had 71 CCTV Cameras whereas Bookham only had 3. It was assumed that Dorking had more problems than Bookham.

4.7.3 Christine Milstead asked if we should wait for HMG to decide on its new NPPF, or continue with the current contents of the new Local Plan. Cllr Margaret Cooley replied that it was better to wait.

4.7.4 David Cox enquired how MV information on School Admissions should be advised. Cllr Cooksey replied that this would be on their website and that this could be added to the BRA website in due course.

4.7.5 Diane Poole had visited the plan for the development of the Leatherhead Riverside quarter and enquired whether any other alternatives had been considered. Cllr Cooksey replied that was not possible.

4.7.6 Les Huett pointed out that many old people found it difficult to use computers and modern day machines such as the new Rail Machines at stations. Cllr Cooksey replied that this was being taken into account and remedies were being sought. He confirmed that MVDC would always accommodate those who are not comfortable using new technology in the services it provides.

4.7.7 Peter Seaward noted that grants from the MVDC were being reduced. Cllr Cooksey replied that some grants were being provided, and improvement funds used such as the recent refurbishment of the Lower Road car park.

Also Peter observed that the withdrawal of funding by the Police for CCTV was to save money which he considered very ill advised. Finally he enquired on the future of Pippbrook House in Dorking which is a drain on MVDC's limited resources. Cllr Cooksey replied that various options were being considered such as a Community Centre although no firm decisions had been made pending completion of structural repairs. It was noted as being a Grade 2 Listed Building.

4.7.8 Richard Moyle stated that the use of Hydrogen rather than electric batteries was being considered which may have an affect on the use of electric charging points including the 6 erected in Lower Shott car park.

4.7.9 Finally Simon Edge enquired whether MVDC could do anything about speeding in and around Bookham. Cllr Cooksey replied that this was the responsibility of the SCC although MV would support suggestions to improve the current situation.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Stephen, and Margaret, Cooksey for their time and the useful discussion.

5 Key updates

The only one advised was that the War Memorial was being cleaned in readiness for the Armistice Day on the 11th November.

6 AOB

None reported.

7 Date of next Meeting

Would be a Directors Meeting on the 4th December 2023 to be held in Geoff Tranters House in Maddox Lane. **Next Committee meeting 8 January 2024.**

In paragraph 2.3, the Christmas Community Event is taking place on the 2nd December 2023. This was not specifically stated in the notes.

In paragraph 3.1, Cllr Andrew Matthews has now advised that the refurbished toilets have yet to open and is still pursuing getting a RDAR key fitted. New white LED displays have been set up on both platforms. Also, LSWR have offered to make up the funding gap for the project to install a 32 inch bus and train display for platform one of over £5,000.