

# OCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

## Annual Assembly

The Annual Assembly of Ockley Parish Council was held at Ockley Village Hall on Monday 13 May 2019 at 7.30 pm.

## Councillors present

Mr B Thorne                      Chairman for the meeting  
Ms A Barclay  
Mr S Figg  
Mrs L Hogarth  
Mr J Lee-Steere  
Ms J Page  
Mr D Thomas  
Mrs L Fletcher                  Clerk

Also present 14 parishioners

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Annual Assembly including: SCCouncillor and now also MVDCouncillor Helyn Clack two new Ockley Parish Councillors - Amanda Barclay and James Lee-Steere. Gordon Lee-Steere and Richard Herbert had not stood for re-election and were thanked for their service to the parish council (GL-S after 43 years of service, RH moved out of the area).

### **1. Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 29 May 2018**

These minutes had been circulated to councillors and had been made available to those present at the meeting. They were confirmed as correct and signed by the Chairman.

### **2. Annual Reports 2018/19**

#### **a) Ockley Parish Council - Chairman's report**

The report highlighted the following key points:

#### Parish magazine

The change with the church parish boundaries had meant that the magazine would not have been able to continue in its current form. It was felt that as it was important for communication in and around the village a replacement should be produced. A team was set up led by A Hardy to produce a new magazine. Although still early days it appeared to be going well and could only improve communication as it is delivered free of charge to 700 homes in Ockley, Forest Green, Oakwood Hill and Walliswood plus 200 to businesses, pubs, churches and village halls. Thanks to A Hardy for all the work he had carried out to get the new magazine up and running.

#### Neighbourhood Development Plan

The Ockley NDP remains on hold as it must be in line with the Future MV Plan.

MV produced a draft of possible development sites which the parish council considered, providing feedback and discussing options. The parish council wants to see more affordable homes built in the village and for them to be properly affordable. Discussions have been held with the Prince's Foundation and also with organisations regarding setting up a Community Land Trust. These discussions are still proceeding.

#### School Buildings at Ockley

The application for the buildings to be registered as an Asset of Community Value was refused. However when the parish council heard that Guildford BC had approved a similar

application the parish council asked MV to reconsider their decision. A recent communication from MV confirmed the original decision - refused.

#### GDPR

The parish council appointed an external Data Protection Officer to ensure that the parish council complied with the regulation. The website had been updated.

#### Play area at village hall

An annual inspection report is received from MV and any faults corrected. Weekly checks are also carried out. Grants were received so that a new dinosaur slide was installed. An official opening was carried out in October by SCCouncillor H Clack. The dilapidated fencing on the Rectory side of the play area had recently been replaced by The Diocese.

#### Car park at Ockley station

During the year a charge for parking had been introduced. The number of cars parked had dropped so that there were usually spaces available all day. The parish council decided not to proceed with plans for additional parking. It was hoped that planning permission could be maintained in case the situation changed.

#### Speedwatch

A reasonably priced 24 hour automatic speed camera system had been discovered that would go a long way to permanently reducing speeding in the village. Surrey Police were approached for comments regarding the system. A disappointing response was received six months later; seven reasons were highlighted for the system not to be considered for Ockley, one being that it would catch too many people. The parish council had yet to respond and intend to discuss this further. The parish council had also been in discussion with the provider of a portable average speed camera system that could be shared between several villages, thus reducing the cost to each. Discussions were also being held with a specialist about other traffic calming measures that SCC Highways might be persuaded to introduce. He thanked the members of the Speedwatch team letting them know that there were 17 new recruits awaiting police training so they can join the team rota. This would make life easier for those currently on the rota.

#### Ockley Society

Thanks to the Ockley Society for continuing to provide their ever popular events throughout the year.

Thanks also to parish councillors (retiring and new) and clerk for their support and time given to parish matters throughout the year.

#### **b) Report from SCCouncillor H Clack**

HC had sent through a report which had been circulated to councillors and made available to those at the meeting. She stated that she had a high regard for parish councils and appreciated all the work that the parish council had carried out during the previous year. Since sending through her report she had been elected as District Councillor for the Okewood ward which included the parish of Ockley. She felt it was an advantage to be both a county (Dorking Rural) and district councillor. She looked forward to working with the parish council in both positions. She went on to highlight:

- the CC was going through a lot of changes with many challenges regarding funding and the impact that has on services
- a new Chief Executive Officer had been recruited and a new County Council Leader had been welcomed
- HC was no longer on the Cabinet but was now Vice Chair of the CC - visiting organisations / ambassadorial role

- £20 million additional investment into road repairs after the 'beast from the east' for repairs to potholes
- HC still does work at Gatwick Airport on Noise Management Board

D Thomas thanked HC for coming to the meeting and presenting her report.

### **3. Question time**

Parishioners raised the following concerns:

a) repairs to potholes - not always successful and so further work often required. HC outlined '15 minute repairs' and stated that she would take concerns back to SCC. Reports of potholes can always be logged on the SCC website.

b) positive aspects/successes of community raised (magazine, cafe at pavilion, Ockley Society, new councillors, Toddler group) but need to know what's happening with regards to further housing / school / estate involvement so that more families attracted to come to live in the village to keep community alive. Challenges remain the same as six years ago.

JP stated that the recent application for a Free School in Ockley had been turned down. Funds raised would be used for independent research into whether there was a need in the area for a new school. If the research identifies a need then a further application would be submitted with renewed evidence.

It had been noted that currently there were surplus school places in the MV area.

A new school was being built in the Horsham area which would take in children from all the newly built houses in the Horsham area. Thus no families would travel to Ockley for a school place; thus a Free School not needed.

BT had reported that the parish council was working with MV regarding housing in the village. GL-S stated that DC planning policies in the past had meant that no new housing had been built in the village. The DC was now working on some development although recent changes in councillors after the May elections may bring change (now LibDem not IndCon Cabinet). HC commented that not all villages wanted more housing. However there was a need to keep the village alive. AB stated that it was up to all in the village to 'step up' so that the community involvement and spirit in the village was maintained.

GL-S stated that Ockley's history regarding the NDP went back over six years. Last year MV began to work with Ockley ; MV incorporating Ockley's housing plans into Future MV. The NDP must change if the village changes. He recognised that the village had changed over the years but was not yet dead.

### **4. Any other business**

BT thanked GL-S on behalf of the parish council and village for all that he had done during his time as a parish councillor. He was presented with a gift.

There was no other business.

The Chairman thanked all for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8.30 pm.