

DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Notes and Reports of the Annual Parish Assembly Held at Dogmersfield Primary School 16th April 2018

Councillors present:

Cllr Geoff Beaven (GB) (CHAIRPERSON)
Cllr Alastair Clark (AC)
Cllr Jo Thomas (JT)
Cllr Brian White (BW)

CLERK: Helen Wright (HW)

Members of the public present:

There were 32 members of the public present including
Cllr Ken Crookes (KC)

Welcome,

Apologies

and

Introductions

Apologies were received from Cllr David Simpson and Cllr Stephen Gorys.

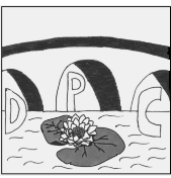
GB outlined the changes to the Council itself over the past 12 months. He explained that in July last year sadly Graham Leach resigned from the Council for personal reasons resulting from the ill health and frailty of a much-loved very close relative, and following the completion of the necessary processes Cllr Brian White was co-opted. He explained that BW is a local farmer whose knowledge of rural matters is proving to be a very valuable asset to what has in the past tended to be a rather 'village centric' Council.

GB reported that at the same time as Graham left he had also had to announce that Claire Inglis was leaving to become the Clerk for the much larger Parish of Church Crookham, where she was already an Assistant Clerk. He explained that Claire had served the Council with distinction and although Dogmersfield Parish Council (DPC) fully supported her 'promotion' they were sorry when she resigned. However, he stated that DPC were very lucky to find a very worthy replacement and he introduced HW who became Parish Clerk in September. He explained that HW is a 'return to work mum' who has quickly become fully effective in what is a new role for her.

GB also reported that Mike Ricketts has also left DPC. Mike's latest term had been his second time as a Councillor, and GB expressed gratitude for the way in which Mike had managed to juggle all of his commitments since re-joining the Council in 2013. GB stated that the local recruitment process is still underway but that there is one very suitable candidate, and GB is hopeful that DPC will formally co-opt a new Councillor at the Annual General Meeting on 14th May.

GB commented that losing three key members of the team in a few short months has been a bit traumatic, but he would like to use this opportunity to express his sincere thanks to Graham, Mike and Claire for their hard work and excellent service for the community.

GB displayed the agenda for the evening.



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Chairman's Report

GB reported as summarised below (please refer to the associated slides on the Parish Council website):

Finance

The Council Tax Bill for 2018/2019 shows that the element for the Parish Council i.e. the precept has decreased by 19.6%. This is very different in comparison to 2017/18 where the precept had increased by 36.9%, following a 30.4% increase for the previous year. **SLIDE 5** shows the income that the Parish Council has received from the Council Tax for each of the years shown.

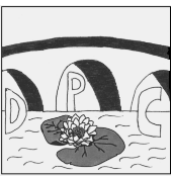
For many years the Parish Council managed within a more or less fixed income of about £7,500 per year. After explaining at the APA in 2015 that this austere approach was no longer sustainable, the Parish Council increased its annual income for 2016/2017 by £2,000. This was a 26% increase to the Council's income which resulted in a 30.4% increase in the charge to each household. (The income level is set by the Parish Council but the Council Tax charge is calculated by Hart District Council, and quite a number of factors which are outside DPC's control influence the end result.) For 2017/2018 the Parish Council decided it needed to increase its own income by a further £2,000 per annum, and also that it needed to put aside an additional £2,000 for supporting the work to develop a Neighbourhood Plan. The £4,000 total increase for 2017/2018 represented a 42% increase to the Council's income, but this turned into only a 36.9% increase to residents' Council Tax.

For this financial year – 2018/2019 - the Neighbourhood Plan financing was a one-off provision and the Council decided that its current level of income was about right. This means that the total amount raised has been reduced by £2,000 which is a 15% reduction in income and a 19.6% reduction to the Council Tax figure compared to the year before. (In this case the difference between the 15% and the 19.6% figures is due to the completion of the three new houses in Church Lane which spreads the Council's income over a larger number of properties.)

SLIDE 6 ranks all of the parishes in Hart based on the Parish Council Tax for a band D property, and shows that Dogmersfield is now just below the mid-point which is probably about where it should be. **SLIDE 7** shows that despite all of the recent increases, based on income Dogmersfield remains one of the smallest parishes in Hart.

Planning

Since this time last year the Parish Council has considered about 40 planning applications which is slightly less than the 60 reported last year. Many of these cover relatively minor matters such as the clearance of conditions associated with approved applications and tree works. The current situations regarding a small number of applications that have significant implications for the parish are as follows:



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SLIDES 9 & 10 – Schoolfield Corner

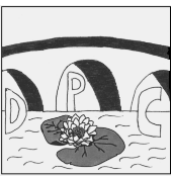
At this time last year the scheme was to build 4 houses on this site; the proposal is shown on **SLIDE 9**. There were two separate planning applications covering the front pair and then the rear pair of new houses, which were both refused when they were first submitted for a number of reasons including the shortage of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG). Dogmersfield is located within 5km of a Special Protection Area for ground nesting birds, which places restrictions on the building of new homes unless compensation is provided in the form of an area of SANG.

SLIDE 10 helps to explain the current situation. When both applications were resubmitted last summer the SANG shortage was resolved for the front pair, and planning permission for the two front houses shown on the slide has been granted. In addition to the shortage of SANG the rear pair were also originally refused because they represented 'back field' development, which was not considered to be appropriate for the Dogmersfield Conservation Area. The lack of a decision on the re-application for the rear pair caused the applicant to refer the matter to appeal. The appeal inspector concluded that 'back field' development should be allowed in this particular location, but as the lack of SANG remained unresolved the appeal was dismissed. For small schemes SANG is provided by Hart District Council, and as they are opposed to 'back field' development no SANG has been made available for the rear pair. It therefore seems likely that at least in the short term the re-application for the rear pair of houses will be put on hold, however it also seems probable that there will be a new application to build three houses in the front of the site. This alternative layout was put forward by Hart District Council officials in the past which means that permission may well be granted.

SLIDES 11 & 12 - Chatter Alley

SLIDE 11 Chatter Alley old scheme: At this time last year there had been an exhibition in the school hall of the developer's proposal to build 6 new houses on what is generally known as the Fiske field. A few weeks later a full application was submitted which attracted a large number of objections from local residents and parents of children attending the school. A direct result of this opposition was the withdrawal by the landowner of discretionary parking for the school on the field. This planning application was considered by the Hart District Council Planning Committee on 9th August when all members were against the proposal, although some did not oppose development of the site in principle. In the end the application was refused on a majority decision because of the adverse impact on the character of Dogmersfield Village and the damage to the Conservation Area.

SLIDE 12 Chatter Alley new scheme: Not long afterwards, following the appointment of a new architect, this new scheme was presented to both the school governors and the Parish Council. Apart from there being only 5 houses, the main difference is that the building line is much closer to the road with every new house having a separate driveway. The loss of roadside parking is offset by the provision of a parking area capable of accommodating 20 cars. The potential status of such



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a parking space has been the subject of our discussions with the architect, as local opinion might depend on the permanency of such an arrangement. At the time it was made clear that permissive use was envisaged which would not be permanent or even long term. A complicating factor is the existence of a wayleave or right of way across the particular area. A formal pre-application request for advice was made and the Parish Council was allowed to attend the meeting between the architects and Hart District Council planning officials. The advice given by the Hart officials was that refusal would be recommended because of the adverse impact on the character of Dogmersfield Village and the damage to the Conservation Area – as before. However the desire to develop this site has not gone away, and the architect has recently spoken to the school, Hampshire County Council are now involved and we expect that the Parish Council will soon be approached again.

SLIDE 13 Rushy House

A pre-application request for advice has been submitted for a possible new house in the paddock next to Rushy House. This area is within the Dogmersfield settlement boundary, and providing that the design is suitable planning permission is likely to be granted.

Two other notable examples of development are that the stables opposite Ormersfield Lodge are being converted into a house, and that Floods Farm Cottages has been demolished to be replaced by a new larger house that will be called Grace Gardens. Both schemes have a complicated history but both are now fully approved.

Hart Local Plan

The consultation is now closed and GB has recently distributed a letter to residents explaining how the Parish Council has responded. He and KC are happy to answer any questions.

Neighbourhood Plan

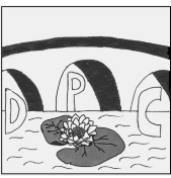
SLIDE 16 – Neighbourhood Plan Preparation Subgroups

These subgroups completed their in-depth examination of the various topics, capturing their conclusions in a number of working reports. Then, in close co-operation with DPC's consultants – now called 'Oneillhomer' - the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group distilled the subgroups' work into a number of 'policy options' which were used to draw up a draft of a full Neighbourhood Plan.

This is a very significant milestone but residents' involvement going forward will be increasingly important to the success of this endeavour.

SLIDE 17 shows a leaflet prepared by Hart District Council which summarises all of the stages needed to develop a Neighbourhood Plan and identifies which organisation is responsible for carrying them out.

SLIDE 18 highlights the first two stages. Although not apparent from the bullet points, stage two is



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the most challenging and requires the most work to complete. The penultimate step is to determine whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment and/or Habitat Regulation Assessment is required, and Hart District Council can provide a screening opinion. Our draft plan has been submitted to Hart District Council for this screening opinion, however as Hart need to consult some statutory bodies this process can take up to 8 weeks. The Steering Group has concluded that in the meantime residents should be given early visibility of the draft plan. This will take the form of an informal publication of the current version of the draft plan, and an opportunity to give the Parish Council your initial views. This will be initiated in the next week or so.

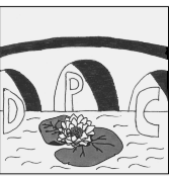
When the Parish Council launched the work to create a Neighbourhood Plan, a firm intention was that this should be funded through grants and not be a burden on the precept. Grants to the value of £11,000 are available, which have been successfully bid for as the work has progressed and used almost exclusively to fund consultancy support. However, it became evident a year or so ago that if a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is needed the grant funding would not be sufficient to cover this requirement. Consequently the Parish Council made the one-off provision of £2,000 described earlier, to ensure that an SEA could be afforded if it were needed. One of the objectives in drawing up the draft plan has been to avoid the need for an SEA, but there is no certainty that this has been achieved until the aforementioned screening opinion has been provided. Currently the plan work is progressing on budget, but it is too early to confirm whether the plan will complete all its stages without using any precept funding.

SLIDE 19 describes Stage 3 which is all about a statutory 6 week consultation known as Regulation 14. This will be carried out by the Steering Group and will invite residents as well as a number of nominated consultees to comment on the draft plan. Unfortunately this stage cannot be put in hand until the screening opinion has been received, and if necessary acted upon, and in the worst case it could be around 3 months before the Regulation 14 consultation can be launched.

SLIDE 20

Having completed the local Regulation 14 consultation, and taken account of any comments, the Steering Group will then submit the draft plan to Hart District Council. The next stages will include a further statutory consultation known as Regulation 16, where residents will have another opportunity to comment on the plan. Providing this step does not reveal any roadblocks the draft plan will then be subjected to an external examination. Providing the examination is successful Hart District Council will then hold a referendum. This will invite Dogmersfield residents to make a final decision on the plan. If more than 50% of those who vote support the plan it will be adopted by Hart District Council and will be used when considering future planning applications. GB emphasised the importance of residents responding to the referendum so that a fair representation of their views is generated.

In answer to a question from the public it was noted that the government are able to change planning regulations at any time, therefore the plan may be overridden at some point in the future.



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Currently a plan would be reviewed every 5 years and the latest plan to be reviewed takes precedence.

Worthy Causes

Recently a mini consultation was held regarding whether the Parish Council should be giving more support to worthy causes.

SLIDE 22 shows that DPC received responses from 28 households and the outcome was split roughly two thirds to one third in favour of more expenditure. Although this was not a referendum, the Parish Council have acted upon the clear outcome by drawing up and adopting a few clear policy statements that will be used when considering requests for support in the future. These policies should ensure that the Council is fair and legal, and they will also provide some guidance to those wondering whether Council support might be forthcoming. The Worthy Cause Support Policy is on the Parish Council website for reference.

Regarding issues of legality, GB explained that should the Parish Council wish to support worthy causes such expenditure would normally be covered by Section 137 of the Local Government Act. This allows a local authority to incur such expenditure but there are constraints on what it can approve, and there is also a limit on the total expenditure allowed which is currently £7.57 per elector which for Dogmersfield would be around £2,000 per annum. Furthermore, providing financial assistance to the Parish Church is potentially problematic and legally complex. The Local Government Act 1894 transferred powers from the Vestry and Churchwardens to the newly formed Parish Councils except so far as relates to the affairs of the church or to ecclesiastical charities - in general the 1894 Act prohibits Councils' involvement in activities such as the maintenance or improvement of buildings or land or contributing to those costs. Although subsequent legislation has provided clarity or overridden some of the original provisions the complete legal picture is still unclear, and special care will be needed when considering any support request connected with All Saints' Church.

The next three slides show the policies which are grouped under three headings:

SLIDE 23 – Worthiness

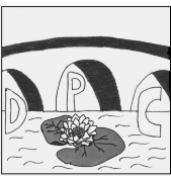
This group is focused around the question of whether a request for support is sufficiently worthy.

SLIDE 24 – Viability

This group responds to concerns that sponsorship should not be given to an event or other proposal that is capable of being self-funding. In particular we do not want to provide support that will simply increase the 'profit' generated by the event.

SLIDE 25 – Limitations

This group reflects the legal background for providing support.



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Having adopted these policies the Council considered a long outstanding request and decided that it would sponsor the craft tent at the forthcoming Dogmersfield, Winchfield and Crookham Village Horticultural Society Annual Flower Show and Fete.

The Community Benefit Fund (CBF) is a sum of £28,000 currently held in a Parish Council interest earning account which arose as a result of the construction of the Solar Farm just beyond the Parish boundary in Winchfield. The possibility of using the CBF for supporting worthy events was considered some time ago, but the Parish Council concluded that this windfall finance should be used for schemes that would have an enduring benefit - if the fund were used to support event running costs it would easily be dispersed with no lasting legacy. The intention was to form a small group of residents to advise the Parish Council on how the fund should be used, and as such the Community Benefit Fund Management Group has now been established and has had some initial discussions on potential projects which have included placing a defibrillator in the phone box and improvements to rural footpaths and pavements in the village.

SLIDE 26 - CBF Management Group These are the volunteer members of this important body and they will welcome residents' ideas for beneficial projects that could be considered.

SLIDES 29, 30 & 31 - Odiham RAF 100 Box Car Race

On 1st April 2018 the Royal Air Force celebrated its 100th birthday and this important centenary is being marked by special events at local and national levels throughout the coming year. The Odiham Parish Council have decided to take part in these centenary celebrations and in honour of RAF Odiham they are holding a charity party in the High Street on Saturday 9th June.

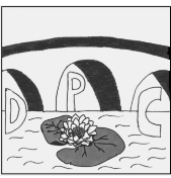
Preceding the street party will be an RAF-themed Box Car Race. All local parishes were invited to enter a team for the Box Car event and Dogmersfield, having a long history of supporting local and national charity causes, have jumped at the chance. The Pathfinders were the Elite RAF Squadrons who were a group of men who spearheaded one of the greatest air battles of the Second World War. The 'Pilcot Pathfinders', like their namesakes, are the cream of raw engineering and sporting talent of Dogmersfield. At this very moment, many candles have been burnt long into the night at a top secret location to create an aerodynamic masterpiece that will honour the pathfinder heritage and put our humble parish on the map! The team not only intends to bring home the racing trophy but they want to come top of the podium for raising funds for the RAF 100 charity as well – please see the Just Giving webpage.

**District
Councillor's
Report**

Councillor Ken Crookes reported as below covering the period April 2017 to March 2018:

Local Elections

There were no Hart District Council (HDC) elections in May 2017 as it was the Hampshire County Council election. Dogmersfield was moved from the Hook and Odiham division to the Hartley Wintney division and is now represented at Winchester by Councillor David Simpson.



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KC stated that in the May 3rd 2018 HDC election he will be standing for re-election to represent Dogmersfield as part of the Odiham Ward.

Political Changes at HDC

At the Hart AGM in May 2017 a coalition of Liberal Democrats and Community Campaign Hart took political control of the Council.

Hart's New Leisure Centre

This was opened on April 1st 2017, on time and on budget. It is operated by Everyone Active and has seen approximately 600,000 visitors in its first year. A new sports hall is being built adjacent to the old leisure centre for the exclusive use of Calthorpe Park School. When this is complete, the old leisure centre will be demolished. The new centre makes a significant positive financial contribution to Hart's budget. As a result the Council was able to balance its budget for 2018/19 with a Council Tax increase of just over 3%.

Five Councils Joint Working

HDC has worked with 4 other councils in a joint outsourcing contract for back office services. These services were already outsourced at Hart and working effectively. This new contract should retain a good level of service and reduce our costs, but is still in a challenging implementation phase. A second outsourcing contract (Lot 2) was let which would have included car park management however this will not be implemented.

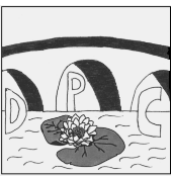
Planning – the new Local Plan.

For years Hart has struggled to get a Local Plan in place, mostly because the national guidance on housing numbers was unclear and subjective. Earlier this year the Government published new clear guidance, including housing numbers lower than those Hart was considering i.e. 388 instead of almost 500 per annum. The result is that Hart can meet its housing need with the planning permissions which have been granted without any major new development sites. The ruling coalition have chosen to include a new settlement in the Winchfield/Murrell Green Area even though the housing supply is not required to meet Hart's target.

The Plan, together with representations received, will shortly be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. Odiham's Neighbourhood Plan is adopted and in force and should guide development in the parish. Crondall and Dogmersfield continue to make progress with their plans.

GB explained that the inspection of the Local Plan will consider whether it is soundly constructed – the level of support or otherwise is no longer relevant.

In answer to a resident's concern regarding unsatisfactory rail services from Winchfield, KC commented that our MP met with SWT and Network Rail this week to try to determine the causes of operational problems, and that there will be an infrastructure plan from HDC.



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Parish Flood Forum

The local Parish Flood Forum was set up several years ago, including Dogmersfield. Hart has now adopted a similar approach to cover all parishes who wish to be involved.

A resident queried why the pumping station is so active at the moment, even during the night. GB explained that it is being overloaded at the moment. He has booked a slot with Thames Water at the forthcoming Flood Forum meeting to discuss issues such as this and the ongoing problems with the sewage smell. He emphasised that success in resolving such matters with Thames Water is more likely if residents complain directly to Thames Water and log their complaints with them, as properly logged complaints must be notified to Ofwat.

Other Items to Note

- A new country park has been opened at Bramshot Farm, the land having been purchased by HDC.
- Church Road car park in Fleet is shortly to be resurfaced.
- The new car parking machines in Fleet appear to be well received by most people.
- Fleet Town Council wish to build a new Harlington Centre on Gurkha Square. Outline planning permission has been granted but the Town Council and residents in Fleet are divided in their support for the scheme.
- A new contract has been awarded for the bin collection service. The new provider is Serco who will take over in October.

County Councillor's Report

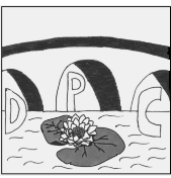
As Cllr David Simpson was unable to attend, AC read out his report as follows:

"First thank you for electing me last May. Regardless of how you voted I will do my best for the village.

Once again my Lib Dem colleagues asked me to be the Group spokesman on Economy Transport & Environment. The very first meeting of ETE, in early June, had the Director explaining that with regard to roads they were "managing a depreciating asset". In other words - the roads are bad, they are going to get worse. I think we can all see the truth of this.

In August Skansk took over from Amey as the contractor who fixes the roads. Inevitably this meant there was a backlog as Amey were not asked to do things and they were held over for Skansk. Skansk then had to employ extra gangs in order to catch up before the end of the council year in March.

In November it was confirmed that all community transport subsidies would stop, Household Waste Recycling Centres were to be looked at for closing up to half of them and all school crossing patrols would stop. Mrs May then decided that Councils could put up Council Tax by an



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extra 1% and these were savedfor now.

Further afield we wait for the result of the Planning Inquiry into Bramshill House with its 12 different planning applications. Other sites have been lost on Appeal but it appears that Hart may finally get a Local Plan this year. Unfortunately they have decided to restrict their area of search for a new development to Murrell Green and Winchfield. In my opinion Winchfield is one of the worst possible sites on which to develop a new settlement whilst Murrell Green is only slightly better. Either will lead to enormous problems on the highways. If Winchfield then all the narrow country lanes will become clogged as traffic tries to seek a way out that bypasses the long queues on the A30 or A287. If Murrell Green then longer queues in Hook and Hartley Wintney and chaos if the M3 is closed and diverted along the A30 again. So far my suggestion of building the infrastructure first has not been taken up by Government.

I am also on the Regulatory Committee – most people would think of this as the planning committee. This means all Footpaths or Rights of Way Applications and BOATS (Byway Open All Traffic) come to us, as do any new schools or extensions on existing ones. If a new quarry is required or anything to do with Minerals and Waste then we hear the application.

The Council also re-appointed me to Hampshire Fire & Rescue Authority where in January the Chairman and the Chief Fire Officer asked me to be the Champion for all RDS (Retained Duty Stations). This requires me to visit all the fire stations where there are retained fire fighters i.e. most of the county. If you are fit and live or work within 4 minutes of a station then we would love for you to join. Unfortunately it means I cannot get to as many Parish meetings as I would like; I cover 8 parishes and some meetings already clashed, but all retained firefighters train in the evenings so as I work my way around over 40 RDS I have even fewer evenings to get to Parish Councils. Hopefully this will change as the year goes on and I will once again get to the meetings, but in the meantime please continue to send me any problems you think I can deal with at the County level.”

In response to a request from a resident, AC agreed to raise with Cllr Simpson the cleaning of road signs on the A287.

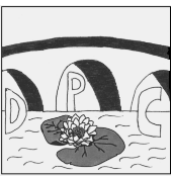
Police Report

AC read out the report from the Fleet Neighbourhood Policing Team (who unfortunately were unable to attend this evening) as follows:

“The following records come from our Police Record Management System. Due to the sensitive nature of the information held, we can only share what is stated below. Any further disclosable information will have been sent out to residents using the Hampshire Alert system.

Hampshire Alerts and Police Records (60 day search)

- 13/02/2018 – Burglary other than a Dwelling



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- 22/02/2018 – Vehicle Nuisance on Pilcot Road Closure
- 13/03/2018 – Theft from Vehicle (Op Autumn)
- 12/04/2018 – Damage only Road Traffic Incident on Chalky Lane

Operations

Op Falcon – This relates to the theft of fuel in rural areas. As a lot of properties in the country rely on fuel tanks to power their houses, this can affect home owners as well as fuel tankers and petrol stations.

Op Autumn – Op Autumn relates to thefts from vans in the Hart and Rushmoor area whereby tools have been targeted or stolen. There has been a recent increase in crimes of this kind and we would like to advise van owners to secure their vans, and where possible not to leave valuable goods within them overnight.

Op Rebate – Op Rebate relates to non-dwelling burglaries, more specifically in the rural areas. Often offenders will target garages, sheds and out-houses in a hope not to set off any alarms and to gain access more easily compared to a dwelling.

Policing Comments:

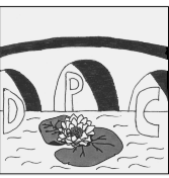
Due to the increase in thefts from vehicles in Hart and Rushmoor I would suggest that all van owners consider options to secure their vans further and at the very least lock their vans overnight. The local neighbourhood teams will be out looking for vulnerable vans so that we can speak with the owners and offer further advice.

Ensure you secure any valuables you keep in or outside your homes and ensure that you attempt to mark them in such a way that they can be identified, should they be stolen. Should anyone spot what they believe to be a poacher or a theft in progress, please call 999 immediately to report what you have seen. If you believe you have been a victim of a burglary but suspect that the offenders have gone, please ring 101 to make a crime report.”

School Governor's Report

Claire Inglis (CI), Chair of Governors, reported that once again it has been a busy year at the school and the learning environment has been a very exciting one. The school has a new-look library which has made the space a wonderful place to be and was funded by all the hard work of the Dogmersfield School Association. The next fundraising target is for new books to fill the library!

CI explained that the children are learning so much through their Mantle of the Expert work. This is where the children are a fictional responsible team (e.g: conservationists) and have a client who commissions them to solve a problem for them. The engagement in this style of learning has been very evident when Governors recently visited the school to talk to the children. At recent external visits to the school, other Headteachers and a county inspector were very impressed by the work



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of the children and staff and the use of Mantle of the Expert, and to be recognised in this way is indicative of the quality and hard work of all the staff at Dogmersfield.

Governorship

CI stated that it has been a real pleasure and privilege to have been part of the team of governors over the past numerous years, especially through one of the biggest changes at the school through a change in leadership. Despite financial challenges the school continues to thrive and through the hard work and dedication of the whole school team the children's education and wellbeing is paramount and remains at the centre of all that is done there.

CI explained that there have been a few governors who for a variety of reasons have decided to stand down so the school are currently seeking replacement governors. She stated that the school is an exciting place to be at the moment and encouraged members from the local community to get involved. CI suggested that anyone interested should take one of her flyers, which has useful information about what is involved and who to contact to explore this great opportunity, and a chat with the Headteacher, Mrs Patton, or herself as Chair of Governors, could be arranged.

No further issues were raised. GB thanked everybody for attending.

The meeting concluded at 9.05 p.m.

Signed
Chairman

Date