



# DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes and Reports of the Annual Parish Assembly Held at Dogmersfield Primary School 11<sup>th</sup> April 2016

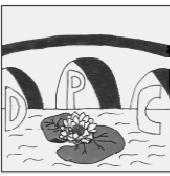
### Councillors present:

Cllr Geoff Beaven (GB)	Cllr Graham Leach (GL)	Cllr Jo Thomas (JT)
Cllr Alastair Clark (AJC)	Cllr Mike Ricketts (MR)	Clerk Claire Inglis (CI)

### Members of Public present and denoted initials used in the minutes below.

M Morrison	Mr J Bailey	Mr R Dixon
Mrs Y Beaven	Mrs E Waller	Mrs C Dixon
Mr C Ward	Mr C Waller	Mr M Fullbrook
Mr R Cansdale	Ms C McGee	Mrs B Robson
Mrs D Melbourne	Mrs M Maunsell-Thomas	Mr J Maunsell-Thomas
Mrs C Lowe	Mrs V Scott	Mrs S Sizeland
Ms L Brutman	Mr T Scott	Miss J Thomas
Mr R Lister	Mrs C Smith	Miss S Thomas
Cllr K Crookes	Mrs P Clark	D Fisher
Cllr J Kennett	Mr B Leversha	Mrs D Patton
Miss H Moxam	Mrs F Lister	S Smith

<p>40/16</p> <p>Slide 1</p>	<p><b><u>Welcome &amp; Apologies</u></b></p> <p>The meeting was opened at 7.35pm by Chairman who welcomed everyone.</p> <p>A safety briefing was provided.</p> <p>Apologies had been received from District Cllr Stephen Gorys, County Councillor Jonathan Glen, PC Paul Franks and PCSO Liz Wallace.</p>
<p>41/16</p>	<p><b><u>Chairman's Report</u></b></p> <p><b>Please refer to the associated slides that were produced for the event.</b></p> <p>GB welcomed questions at the end of each topic with an opportunity to raise any issues not covered during the evening at the end.</p> <p>GB confirmed he would not provide a blow by blow account of everything that has happened over the last 12 months but would say a few words about some of the more significant matters that have arisen.</p> <p>Before doing so GB was pleased to introduce and welcome one or two people who are new to this event.</p> <p>GB first introduced Doreen Melbourne who many of you know is the chair of school governors.</p>



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Doreen will say a few words about changes at the primary school. Doreen thanked the parish council for the opportunity to come to the event and confirmed that a report had been distributed on the busy school year and talks about the changes that have taken place in the year. The biggest change being a new head teacher now in post. We all bid a sad farewell to Miss Wall at the end of last term after 12 years at the school but it is with great pleasure that she is able to introduce Mrs Dot Patton who has just completed her first day in post and on her birthday!

Mrs Dot Patton also thanked the parish council for inviting her to introduce herself to the community and was pleased to have survived her first day at the school. The children had been fantastic and welcoming and a real credit to the school. She was attracted to Dogmersfield Primary because of its family atmosphere and looks forward to being involved in the community which also seems to be very welcoming. Dot went on to say that she has two teenage boys 16 & 18 currently sitting GCSE's and A levels so the home front is challenging at the moment! Her husband was once stationed at RAF Odiham but now works in London and hence the family has moved about quite a bit but they now feel settled in Hampshire, a lovely place to live. Dot Patton explained her great passion for education and that she was previously Deputy Head at Oakwood in Hartley Wintney for 4 and a half years before coming to Dogmersfield and lives locally in Hook.

GB thanked the new head teacher and the school Governors for allowing DPC to use the School for our regular meetings of the Parish Council and for this Annual Parish Assembly.

GB went on to introduce Lynn Brutman. As many of you will know Charlie Parker the General Manager of the Four Seasons Hotel is moving on to greater things within the company. Charlie has been a good friend to the parish and we wish him well in his new challenges. GB was pleased to introduce Lynn Brutman who is the new General Manager of Four Seasons. He extended a warm welcome to Dogmersfield and confirmed that DPC look forward to working with her in the future. Lynn thanked Geoff and agreed that the villagers were considered good friends of the Four Seasons and she also looked forward to maintaining the partnership going forward.

Finally. As the Basingstoke Canal is a very important local recreational asset the parish council for a change have invited the Basingstoke Canal Society to address us this evening and I therefore introduce Roger Cansdale who will speak to us later.

Slide 2

GB displayed the outline agenda for the evening.

## Election

Before speaking on the Annual Finance GB spoke on the recent election process for DPC. As you should all be aware this is what is known as an all-out year for Dogmersfield Parish Council. This means that all of the current Councillors have their office automatically terminated and they have to seek re-election if they wish to continue. GB was pleased to confirm that all five current Councillors have submitted valid nomination papers and there were no other nominations. Consequently the Dogmersfield election was not contested and the same team will be continuing as before.

Slide 3

## Annual Finance

You will recently have received your Council Tax Bill for 2016/2017 and no doubt will have noticed that the element for Parish Council – our precept - has increased by a staggering 30.4%. GB went on to explain why.

Slide 4

## Pressure on Resources

This slide was shown at the APA last year where it explained why the Parish Council was running down its reserves. It must be emphasised that this doesn't mean that the finances are out of control. It just means that for the last few years we have budgeting to spend more than we received



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as income.

## Slide 5

### Tax Take 2015/2016

This slide is also very similar to a slide that was shown last year to illustrate that for 2015/2016 the Parish precept was one of the lowest in Hart. These are not the exact same figures, as last year the precept for a Band G property was depicted but for some inexplicable reason Hart District Council are now only providing this information for Band D properties.

If you were present last year you may recall that DPC explained that the Council needed to increase the precept in order to maintain the current level of activity on a sound financial footing. This was illustrated by showing the impact of both a £1000 and a £2000 increase to the precept which at that time stood at about £7400. On a show of hands there was widespread support for these levels of increase.

In the event after a full review of our finances in the Autumn the Council decided that it would increase the precept for 2016/2017 by £2000.

## Slide 6

### Tax Take 2016/2017

This slide shows the same band D figures for the upcoming financial year. Despite the 30% increase the Dogmersfield level of precept has only really caught up with some similar Parishes and it is still lower than most of our immediate neighbours.

## Slide 7

### Precept 2015/2016

Last year we showed you these figures where in terms of total income Dogmersfield was in the relegation zone. This shows the £7400 total that was the precept level for last and some previous years.

## Slide 8

### Precept 2016/2017

As can be seen despite the £2000 increase for 2016/2017 Dogmersfield is still one of the lowest spending Parish Councils in Hart. The Parish Council will review its financial position again in the Autumn and we may feel that a further increase is needed next year.

Whilst the figures are displayed on the screen you may like to note that Fleet has doubled its not inconsiderable income from half million to nearly one million. This has been done to meet the cost of rebuilding the Harlington Centre and although endorsed at a public meeting the substantial increase has proved to be controversial.

GB confirmed it was not his intention to cover the recently closed Refined Options Consultation as part of this report although it is expected that Cllr Ken Crookes will give you an update on the Local Plan later.

## Slide 9

GB voiced his thanks to the residents for supporting what the Parish Council considered to be best for the future of the Parish in their response to the consultation. However GB using the information provided wanted to illustrate one of the issues that came out of the consultation. This was the settlement categorisation where you may remember that Dogmersfield had been placed in Tier 4 – main villages whereas we believed that an error had been made and we should be in Tier 5. Such a change would have significant implications.

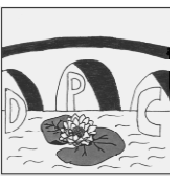
### Categorisation/Precept 2016/2017

The blue shading shows villages/areas that fall into Tiers 1, 2 and 3 of the categorisation defined by HDC with yellow showing Tier 5. Based on income DPC are now closer to other Tier 4 Parishes. However this was not the way categorisation has been worked out which in fact relates to Settlements and not Parishes

## Slide 10

### Categorisation

This slide depicts a page from the report prepared for Hart District Council with the Tier 4



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settlements shown in yellow. In this case Dogmersfield (at the bottom) is clearly out of its natural position. The columns identify key features in each settlement such as supermarket, dental surgery, school, pub and such like. The total number of these are then added up in the final column and this total is used to determine the settlement's category. The reason that Dogmersfield has been placed in Tier 4 is that it scores 4 in the final column whereas most others in Tier 5 score 2 or less. However, a close examination of why this has occurred reveals we have been assessed as having a Price Comparison Store (which is a mini supermarket) and a Children's Playing Field in addition to a Public House and a Primary School. When the incorrect entries for the store and the playing field are removed there is a very strong case for Dogmersfield to be re-categorised as Tier 5 which is where we belong. We recommended that you highlight this shortcoming in your responses to the consultation which most of you did.

## Slide 11 Planning Applications

GB then moved on to talk about some planning matters. Since this time last year the Parish council has considered about 25 planning applications and although many of these have been about minor matters such as tree works, with only a few having significant implications for the Parish and its residents.

Recently the Parish Council has been publically criticised for its negative attitude towards new development in the Parish. This reflects the fact that we have objected to a number of the more significant applications. GB considered this event a good opportunity to bring you up to date, explain our actions with respect to two major schemes and the impact our actions have had.

## Slide 12 Church Lane - original scheme

Many of you will recognise that this is the proposal to build three new houses on two plots of land in Church Lane. There was an exhibition of the scheme in this hall last summer and a full planning application was submitted in October 2015.

After due consideration the Parish Council concluded that the scheme would cause an unacceptable level of harm to the Dogmersfield Conservation Area - many of the residents immediately affected also expressed similar concerns. One of the major concerns expressed in our objection was that the solid straight line block of very similar large houses would be completely out of character with the varied collection of existing houses on the other side of Church Lane. Often our objections are ignored but to the surprise of DPC in this case the developer resubmitted a revised set of plans shown on the next slide.

## Slide 13 Church Lane - updated plan

The houses are now reduced in footprint, of more varied appearance and with a staggered building line. The next slide illustrates the impact of the changes from the street scene.

## Slide 14 Church Lane – street scene

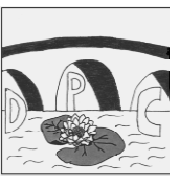
As the developer had responded positively to our concerns and in light of other circumstances the Parish Council withdrew its objection.

The application was considered by the Hart DC Planning Committee on Wednesday the 10th February. GB represented the Parish Council and explained why DPC had changed from an objection to a neutral position.

The Hart DC Planning Committee was divided between those who supported the amended scheme and those who thought that more than three houses should be built on this site. The committee member's vote was divided equally but the Chairman supported the application.

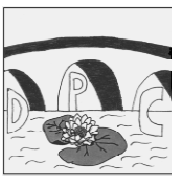
As the site is outside the settlement boundary the Planning Committee could only submit a recommendation to the full Council where subsequently permission was granted.

There are a number of conditions attached to the permission although most relate to design details reflecting the concerns expressed by the Conservation Officer. The normal restrictions to construction working hours will apply and the work must go ahead within 12 months due to concerns about the dwindling SANG capacity.



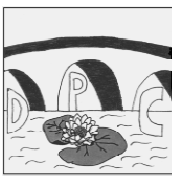
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<b>Slide 15</b>	<p><b>Schoolfield Corner</b></p> <p>Whilst in Church Lane the Parish Council has recently had some informal discussions about possible future development with the owners of Schoolfield Corner. We had a meeting with them on the 29<sup>th</sup> February and the minutes can be found on the DPC website. The owners have now formally sought pre-application advice from Hart District Council and the proposed scheme for 4 houses is shown on this slide.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the main topic of discussion will be the number of houses.</p>
<b>Slide 16</b>	<p><b>Street Scene Schoolfield Corner</b></p> <p>This slide is drawn from Hart website showing the street scene.</p>
<b>Slide 17</b>	<p><b>Street scene coloured</b></p> <p>GB explained he had taken some licence to highlight what is intended in that the existing high hedge will be retained.</p> <p>Before he moved on GB thought he must just touch on the Fisk field site in Chatter Alley. Many of you will recall that proposals were put forward for three new houses but at the pre-application meeting Hart DC officials concluded that they would recommend refusal as the development would obscure the view across open fields, which is an important feature of the Conservation Area. The prospect of development has not gone away as the developers have recently requested another meeting with the Parish Council to discuss their future plans for the area.</p>
<b>Slide 18</b>	<p><b>Solar Farm</b></p> <p>This slide is a drawing of the layout of panels for the solar farm to be built at Hungerford Farm. The field is in Winchfield Parish but it has significant implications for Dogmersfield.</p>
<b>Slide 19</b>	<p><b>Solar Farm location plan</b></p> <p>As can be seen from this slide the Solar Farm will be very close to Winchfield Court and also near to properties in Chatter Alley. We were aware that many residents supported the drive for renewable energy and for this scheme in particular. However, the Parish Council still raised significant concerns within an objection submission.</p> <p>Typical of what we objected to was the developer's proposal to route all of the construction traffic along Chatter Alley through the village centre past the school in order to reach the main road between Fleet to Hartley Wintney. Initially our objections were rebuffed particularly because the Transport Officer at Hart District Council also thought it was the best access route.</p>
<b>Slide 20</b>	<p><b>Google traffic</b></p> <p>The tide only started to turn when this slide of photos was sent to the developer showing the traffic problems in Chatter Alley as portrayed on Google. There was also some robust discussion at a Parish Council meeting when the developer turned up to explain how wrong we were.</p>
<b>Slide 21</b>	<p><b>Transport Routes</b></p> <p>There is now a new transport plan which routes most of the construction traffic along Pale Lane direct to the A323 with only a small number of the tallest loads coming through the village. We have asked for advanced notice of when this will occur and hopefully the worst times of day will be avoided.</p>
<b>Slide 22</b>	<p>However not all new development has negative implications as with the granting of planning permission for the solar farm at Hungerford Farm the developer Solstice have set up a Community Benefit fund.</p> <p>The Company and the Parish Council have signed a Community Benefit Agreement whereby Dogmersfield Parish will receive an annual payment of £400 per megawatt of installed generation capacity. This will equate to somewhere near to £2000 per year to be spent on projects that benefit the community and it also understood that there is to be separate consideration for the</p>



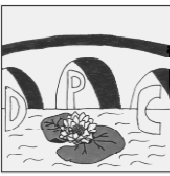
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	<p>Dogmersfield Primary School. This funding will only become available when the installation is completed and power is being generated which should be later this year. We intend to set up a residents group to identify suitable projects.</p>
<b>Slide 23</b>	<p><b><u>QH Flooding</u></b></p> <p>GB commented that whilst not a planning matter he wanted to mention this well-known water feature! For those who don't it's the very regular flooding of the road opposite the Queens Head. All that can be said is that DPC know about it, we have a good idea about the root cause and we are doing our very best to get it fixed.</p> <p>The problem is with the roadside drains and the lack of a clear path the river. Hampshire Highways have known about it for at least 2 years and probably longer, we have discussed it on at least two walkabouts with Highways and DPC have been promised a solution on several occasions with the latest being in February. This image was taken on the 28<sup>th</sup> March and so we are no nearer to resolving the problem. DPC will continue to press for a solution but as people and property are not directly at risk it will always be considered of low priority.</p>
<b>Slide 24</b>	<p><b><u>Neighbourhood Planning</u></b></p> <p>GB's final topic is the Dogmersfield Neighbourhood Plan</p> <p>At last year's APA GB explained in some detail why the Parish Council had concluded that it was in our interests to prepare a 20 year Neighbourhood Plan which would eventually be combined with the Hart Local Plan and have a significant influence on future development in the Parish. Again your show of hands indicated strong support for this proposal.</p> <p>At its meeting in June 2015 the Parish Council formally decided to go ahead with the initial steps for producing the plan.</p>
<b>Slide 25</b>	<p>NHP 8 step process</p> <p>As part of this DPC adopted the illustrated 8 step process<sup>th</sup> which is based on the advice provided by the CPRE. GB went on to use these steps to explain where in the process DPC have reached.</p>
<b>Slide 26</b>	<p>Step 1</p> <p>DPC has done its best to publicise the work to create the plan, to seek resident's views and encourage involvement. This has involved newsletters, a questionnaire which will be referred to later, a full day drop-in event held here and house to house calls.</p> <p>Formal designation has been obtained from Hart District Council for a plan that covers the whole Parish.</p> <p>I am pleased to announce that a number of residents have offered their talents to form the Steering Group that will shape and oversee the process to produce the plan. The group will comprise Chris Ward, Carol Anne Harrison, Christine and Mark Lowe and Valery Scott. There is one other potential member but they are currently unwell and I am not able to confirm their membership tonight. GB will also be a member representing the Parish Council.</p> <p>The available Grants should enable the plan to be delivered without drawing any funding from the precept.</p> <p>A programme will be prepared by the Steering Group.</p>
<b>Slide 27</b>	<p>Step 2</p> <p>Referring back to the questionnaire that was distributed last year in which DPC sought your responses on the topics on this slide. We are pleased to say that we received well over 70 completed responses which bearing mind that these are only approximately 110 occupied houses in the parish is an excellent outcome. Thank you for your support for this vital first step.</p>
<b>Slide 28</b>	<p>Step 3</p> <p>As you can see the next step is to use the feedback from the questionnaires to produce a vision for</p>



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	<p>Dogmersfield for the next 20 years together with the objectives that need to be met in order to achieve the vision. This work is now underway and the plan will go no further until you have had an opportunity to express views on the outcome of this next step.</p> <p>GB commented that he is the first to admit that progress on the Neighbourhood plan could have been better. There have been a number of reasons for this not least the efforts that were put into the Refined options Consultation. However, DPC are now confident that the work will proceed more quickly.</p> <p>GB asked for questions at the end of his presentation.</p> <p>In relation to grant funding for NHP's one resident considered that the availability of funding had already been shared amongst other parishes. This was not the opinion of the parish council or Cllr Ken Crookes.</p>
<p><b>42/16</b></p> <p><b>Slide 29 &amp; 30</b></p> <p><b>Slide 31</b></p> <p><b>Slide 32</b></p> <p><b>Slide 33</b></p> <p><b>Slide 34 &amp; 35</b></p> <p><b>Slide 36</b></p> <p><b>Slide 37</b></p> <p><b>Slide 38</b></p>	<p><b><u>Report on Village Environment by Cllr Graham Leach</u></b></p> <p>GL confirmed that whilst he was speaking on the this topic the work carried out during the year has very much been a team effort with all the Council involved, residents help on volunteer days and use of the Community Payback Teams. The theme remains the same as in previous years as stated on slide 30.</p> <p>The focus this year has been on utilising the CPT in keeping the ditches clear and the verges well maintained with two visits from the appointed contractor. Work was carried out on what is referred to as the school footpath, the project outlined last year on Pilcot Green North and tree management.</p> <p>The resources utilised to achieve the on-going maintenance has been through Hampshire County Council with some verge maintenance and tree work for branches overhanging the roadway; allocation from the budget via the precept and the Lengthsman funding; requesting landowners to maintain hedges so that they do not encroach the roadway; CPT and volunteer days with the assistance of a good handful of residents and councillors.</p> <p>In relation to the school footpath a good result was achieved last summer utilising the CPT laying weed matting down and a layer of donated wood chippings but with the wet winter and the naturally wet condition of some of the stretch of the footpath this will be revisited this year again.</p> <p>The plan for Pilcot Green North last year has been taking shape this year with good progress made on many aspects such as drainage, reduction in the level of invasive species, creating/improving access and spreading wild flower seeds. There may not be such a requirement for reduction in the canopy but this will be judged as further work continues in this area.</p> <p>Work was carried out on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> April to remove three trees from Pilcot Green South which was after advice had been sought on the health and safety of the trees in question. The decision after canvassing opinion of residents and following the advice was taken to fell the trees. Replacement trees will be planted but this will be after seeking advice on appropriate species and the condition of the soil following the fungal infection that impacted on the felled trees.</p> <p>The proposal for the chicane project where the traffic islands are struggling to sustain shrub growth due to lack of soil depth or lack of light is progressing but DPC have been met with bureaucracy of obtaining the appropriate licences to operate next to the highway. Once the appropriate paperwork has been completed this project will take place.</p> <p>GL went on to explain the budget put aside in previous year, the year just finished and the budget for the financial year just commencing. Actual expenditure in the past two years has not been dissimilar but has been allocated according to the most pressing work required in those years. This year for example £230 was spent on repairing a fence knocked down in a road traffic accident. The increase in the verge maintenance year on year reflects the twice yearly visit compared to one visit in the prior year. The same contract will continue this year. In the budget this coming year the tree work just completed at a cost of £1000 has been committed with a budget for replacement trees</p>



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<p>Slide 39</p>	<p>remaining.</p> <p>GL asked for any questions.</p> <p>Could the CPT be used for litter collection it is particularly bad at the Chalky Lane entrance to the village? It was agreed that the team could make a visit to improve the entrance to the village from this direction.</p> <p>A resident passed on his congratulations to DPC for making great improvements in the maintenance of the village.</p> <p>Could the damaged posts in the verges around Pilcot Green South be replaced with something more in keeping and substantial? GB confirmed that in discussion with Highways DPC have agreed to take on the repair/ replacement of these items and this will be considered at a future meeting.</p> <p>Could the Church Lane sign underneath the Queens Head pub sign on the green be reduced in height as it blocks sight lines? GB agreed that it sits high but having tried to reduce the height established that it is concreted in and therefore would be a highways issue.</p>
<p>43/16</p>	<p><b><u>Report on behalf of District Councillors delivered by Cllr Ken Crookes</u></b></p> <p>Ken Crookes opened with thanking the parish council for the invitation.</p> <p>This brief report covers the period April 2015 to March 2016</p> <p><b>Your Councillors</b></p> <p>Hart is made up of 11 wards, each represented by 3 councillors. Dogmersfield is part of the Odiham ward represented by Stephen Gorys, John Kennett and Ken Crookes. The ward is large and diverse consisting of 6 parishes. Councillor Kennett focuses on South Warnborough, Greywell, Long Sutton and RAF Odiham, Councillor Gorys on Crondall and Odiham, and Councillor Crookes on Dogmersfield and Odiham. Apologies come from Stephen Gorys this evening as he is attending Crondall's APA. There is an election in every ward this May, this results in John Kennett standing for re-election here in Odiham Ward. All 3 local councillors are members of Hart's executive Cabinet and bring a wealth of experience to the cabinet.</p> <p><b>Hart's Finances</b></p> <p>Hart's finances remain in very good shape. The efficiency savings and joint working arrangements which we have made over the years continue to pay dividends. Once again central Government grants have been cut for this new financial year so we have had to increase Hart's Council tax for the first time in 6 years. The financial outlook remains difficult for the next two years, but Hart is in better shape than many other councils and ready for the future.</p> <p><b>New Initiatives at Hart</b></p> <p>Hart has commissioned Wilmot Dixon to build a new Hart Leisure Centre on Hitches Lane and work is well under way on the £23million project which will complete early next year. We have outsourced the operation of the leisure centres to Everyone Active who took over the existing Hart Leisure Centre and Frogmore Leisure Centre in February. This leisure initiative will bring substantial financial benefits to Hart and provide first class facilities and service to residents.</p> <p>Hart has worked with 4 other councils in a joint outsourcing contract for back office services. These services are already outsourced at Hart and working effectively, this new larger contract will retain that good level of service and reduce our costs.</p> <p><b>Parish Flood Forum</b></p>





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We have continued the local “Parish Flood Forum” which I set up 2 years ago to address local flooding issues in Odiham , Crondall and Dogmersfield. Together with your Parish Council we have made steady progress with Thames Water in particular. A good open dialogue has been achieved and it is hoped that this will facilitate a resolution to the local issues in due course.

## **Planning – The new Local Plan**

As you know Hart has consulted on housing options as part of its emerging Local Plan. The consultation is not a referendum to be decided by volume of votes, it is just part of the plan making process. I have always said that we should maximise the use of brownfield land and we have had some success in converting disused offices in Fleet, Blackwater and Hook. The big recent breakthrough is the agreement to use the Pyestock site for housing instead of building massive warehousing, something I have been advocating since we started this Local Plan process. We have partnered with East Hants District Council who possess extensive resources, skills and experience having already completed and adopted their Local Plan. Your local councillors are committed to getting the right result for our villages from Hart’s local plan. Whilst we recognise that our villages need some new housing, it must be in keeping, in scale and style, with what we currently have and value. Odiham is making good progress with its Neighbourhood Plan and we applaud your Parish Council for starting a similar initiative here in Dogmersfield.

Ken invited questions from the audience.

Will Pyestock deliver a new school? It is clear that such a development will require a school similar to the QEB development. There will inevitably be an impact on secondary school places but it is less likely to result in a new secondary school. There have been extensive extensions to Calthorpe and plans to extend Robert Mays and Yateley is undersubscribed.

Is there capacity for more than the 1,000 units suggested for Pyestock as it is a large area? The site is still being assessed for the density of dwellings that it will deliver but the correct balance will need to be struck for it to be a nice place to live as well as delivering much needed homes.

What is planned for infrastructure improvements with the ever increasing pressure on roads and the significant increase in local traffic? Providing infrastructure is difficult as with roads you cannot force drivers to use the preferable routes the strategy needs to be to improve junctions so that traffic keeps flowing. This area unfortunately has the highest number of cars per household. Surgeries are also asked for and developers may provide a parcel of land for a new surgery to be built upon but the funding stream for these is different and therefore relies upon that.

Ken Crookes was thanked for his input into the evening.

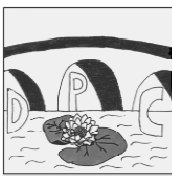
44/16

Slides 40 to 52

## **Report from Basingstoke Canal Society by Roger Cansdale**

Roger apologised on behalf of Philip Riley who was invited to present on behalf of the society. Referring to his first slide Roger explained that following receipt of the letter displayed the society came into being 50 years ago. Therefore this year the society is celebrating its half centenary and a flyer was displayed advertising the event to take place in Woking over a weekend in August, this will include a historic narrow boat parade.

Moving on to talk about the Dogmersfield slip which occurred in 2014 some slides displayed various photos. Roger explained that two sides of the bank were affected and the canal was nearly closed to navigation. You can see how narrow it is from the photo of the boat squeezing through. Historically John Pinkerton carried out a lot of work to make the canal navigable and it could be said that the banks were made too steep which may explain the falling trees during this slip. The slides show the work carried out by the society to remove the trees and the logs were sold from the canal bank near



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the Barley Mow raising £3,000. All monies raised in this way goes back into the canal. Further work has also been carried out to cut back rhododendron plants encroaching the waterway and this was in negotiation with the landowner on this stretch of the canal. This work is due to continue to further improve the navigation.

The method for repairing the current slip is likely to be with sheet metal pilings in the bank where the previous slip that occurred in 1982 was repaired with 15ft deep wire basket gabions back filled with aggregate. It is hoped that the repair will take place this winter but it is difficult getting Hampshire County Council to move quickly.

What does the future hold for the canal? It was considered a brave decision by Surrey and Hampshire County Councils to buy the canal. It is obviously not core business of a council and councils are under huge financial pressures from central government. There is an obligation to maintain the canal however and at one time the Basingstoke canal was considered the number one risk to public health and safety. People may remember the bank slippage in the 1960's which flooded the locality meaning the Farnborough Air show was under water. Risks have been significantly reduced since that time.

The County councils are looking to change the management structure with funding currently coming 2/3 from county councils. Some district councils such as Hart and Woking are good at paying their share but others are poor. There is a joint management committee based at Mytchett.

A trust may be set up to run the canal but this comes with cost difficulties and has financial implications such as VAT being payable on repairs which would be significant.

The Canal & River Trust could run it as they have the plant and expertise to maintain canals. Passing ownership to the Canal & river Trust would be one of the best solutions but this would require a large endowment and funding would have to be considered.

But certainly too much has been put into to the canal to allow it to disappear.

Roger was thanked for his informative presentation.

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Slides 53  
& 54

## **Report on Local Policing from PCSO Jack Whitear delivered by Councillor Alastair Clark**

Cllr Clark opened by reporting on a recent local Rural Policing event which is looking to set up twice yearly meetings. A new Chief Constable has been appointed and Fleet police station is almost closed with the police sharing the local HDC offices. Dogmersfield has one beat officer Paul Franks and a PCSO Liz Wallace but their shift rotas make it difficult for them to attend parish council meetings. They remain keen to be involved in local issues.

As per the report which follows it is advisable to report any suspicious activity via 101. Other current issues where progress is being made is setting up a speed watch in the village in partnership with the Fleet speed watch team.

Dear Dogmersfield Parish Council,

Unfortunately we cannot attend this parish council meeting due to alternative commitments in our duties. We can however give you this report to update you on all incidents we have had a problem with in your area and surrounding. Apologies for the absence and we shall attempt to make future meetings.

The following figures have been acquired from Hampshire Alerts. The police use this system to publicly inform the community about what is going on in the area. If not registered already, I



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strongly suggest registering with Hampshire Alerts to get the information directly. For further information you can search the Alert numbers referenced.

Hampshire Alerts from 01/03/2016 – 06/04/2016

- 142346 – Bogus Caller – Hart South – 01/04/2016
- 142303 – Non-Dwelling Burglaries – Hart – 23/03/2016
- 141102 – Non-Dwelling Burglary – Crondall – 14/03/2016
- 141046 – Non-Dwelling Burglary – Long Sutton – 14/03/2016
- 139944 – Non-Dwelling Burglary – Crondall – 01/03/2016
- 139939 – Fly Grazing – South Warnborough – 01/03/2016

Although there have been no reports sent out to the public that are directly related to Dogmersfield, residents are advised to remain vigilant about the above cases and to make any necessary safeguarding measures for themselves.

Operations

Op Liberal / Op Signature - We are pushing forward with Operation Liberal which refers to safeguarding the victims of scams, cold callers and distraction burglars / thieves. Between the 11/04/2016 and the 15/04/2016 we are conducting an Operation Liberal week where the police and other partner agencies will be doing house to house crime prevention and be setting up some engagements for the public in local high street banks. At the moment leaflet drops will be conducted on Church Lane. The nearest engagement for the residence will either be the Lloyds branch in Odiham or Fleet high street.

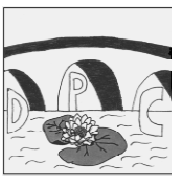
Police Comment:

We would advise everyone in Dogmersfield to be wary of Cold Callers that are offering to do work on your properties. If the caller is unknown to residents, they should ask for ID and then look up the company through their own means. If unsure, don't open the door.  
Of course everyone is welcome at the Op Liberal week so please come along if you are free, once we have got the engagements set in stone.  
We would also advise residents to make sure that all their out buildings, sheds and garages are securely locked and that there is sufficient lighting to deter intruders.  
To get the most recent updates on what is happening, log onto Hampshire Alerts and get the most up to date occurrences in your area.

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Slides 55  
to 62

**Report on No Cold Calling Zone Consultation from Clerk, Claire Inglis**

CI first explained a bit about what a No Cold Calling Zone sets out to do.  
Please see the summary provided on the slides. To achieve a NCCZ requires 66% of households in a designated zone to be in favour of launching a zone with households being provided with door/window stickers, the status of the road listed on the Hampshire County Council website and DPC website and signage can also be erected.  
DPC has nominated Chalky Lane, Church Lane, Pilcot Hill and Chatter Alley and will be carrying out a consultation in the hope of achieving the required 66% in favour. All homes will be contacted but it is hoped that with the support of people tonight that we can reduce the level of door knocking required as part of the consultation.  
Those present were asked to complete the form (one member from each household only) on the table provided.  
Households not represented tonight will receive a house call from a Councillor or the Clerk to complete the form.  
CI thanked everyone for their co-operation and support.



# DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

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## Written Report from County Cllr Jonathan Glen

### Beating the Budget... Where the money goes

For the last five years we have frozen the County precept and administered our finances such that Hampshire County taxpayers currently have the second lowest county precept in the country. This year out of necessity the Budget contains a proposal to increase the precept by 3.99%. In setting our budget we always bear in mind our priorities, those who use and need our services, especially vulnerable children and adults who need care. We also have a responsibility to the residents who pay for these services and they do not want tax bills that go up year on year. A fair balance has to be struck.

Also, for 6 years we have kept the county precept at the same level, this year because of the funding settlement – its changed formula and the axing by the Government of the Council Tax freeze grant we have no option to raise the tax. In real terms taking into account inflation over those six years it will still be less than it was in 2010. And you will see in the consultation taken in the autumn the majority of the respondents did recognise a limited tax rise could be appropriate.

In the funding settlement proposed just before Christmas, the Government recognised that Councils with responsibility for Adult Social Care could raise their precept by 2%. In their calculation of our Core spending power, a new concept, they went further and assumed we would increase our precept by that amount although they have asked us to prove money so raised will be spent on Adult Care. No problem there. Increased pressure and therefore the spend on Adult Care far exceeds the £10 million approximately that a 2% rise will produce. That money is needed and will be well spent.

In the settlement the council tax freeze element of Government grant was also abolished – that was worth 1% another £5 million lost and in fact the Core spending assumption referred to assumes we will increase tax by the 1.99% allowed before triggering a referendum. Referendums are very expensive and unpredictable things and we would not recommend going down that route.

The very worst element of the settlement was to come with the revision of the funding formula diverting significantly more money to metropolitan areas and taking it off shire counties. We were bracing ourselves for a £20 million cut and indeed had prudently planned for that and then with no consultation we were told we would lose not the expected and planned for £20 million but £48 million.

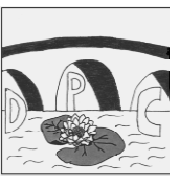
A staggering and totally unexpected amount.

We understand the Chancellor has to aim eventually to balance the national budget; you cannot keep loading debt on our children and grandchildren so we recognise the need for financial stringency. We equally recognise that areas of deprivation need support from the Government but there was a shock element of this announcement for which we could not have prepared and the new formula seems to treat residents in shire areas very poorly indeed.

For instance the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) for Hampshire in 2016/17 was announced to be £139.80 per dwelling. A reduction of over 37%. The average reduction for shire counties was 34% so we were hit worse than the average. The reduction in Metropolitan areas was 22% against our 37% reduction.

So a Metropolitan area like Manchester now gets RSG grant per dwelling of £441.23 against dwellings in Hampshire of £139.80 more than 3 times as much. We hear talk of northern power houses but it seems more like northern power vacuum to us, sucking up huge subsidies.

The change was unfair, especially the unexpected nature of it and we now wish to pay tribute to Hampshire's MPs who with other counties' MPs lobbied the Secretary of State. We wrote personally to the Prime Minister, the Chancellor and the Secretary of State pointing out the unfairness of this



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as well as supporting action by the County Council Network (CCN) and Local Government Association (LGA).

As a result of those joint endeavours, the Secretary of State recently announced transitional payments especially to shire counties and districts that were hardest hit and in Hampshire's case we were allocated transitional payment of £9 million for this year and another £9 million for next. Hampshire's grant was the second highest. Only Surrey got more with £12 million for the next two years. The districts also got payments with Winchester doing particularly well – apparently under the obscure formula Winchester was the only District to get a Rural Service Delivery element.

We are grateful to the Secretary of State for that transitional relief and for our MPs efforts on our behalf and I wish more of our letters could earn £18 million for Hampshire.

However we must not get carried away. The £48 million we have lost is for this year and every year after. The £9 million transitional grant is only for this year and next. So we still have a huge extra pressure immediately and no glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel.

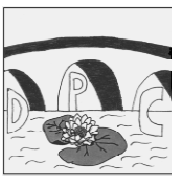
If there is any element of relief in this, it is that we had a Grant Equalisation Reserve (GER) which we have always used to help us ease the path of making reductions, by doing so in a planned way. Rather than spend those reserves as if there were no tomorrow, as so often the opposition parties here would have us do, we have kept the GER. However the shocks to the system this year mean we have in one fell swoop had to use those reserves. At one time it looked as though it would be reduced by £0.5 million. This is a miniscule sum for an organisation that employs close to 10,000 people directly and has a gross revenue budget to manage of approximately £1.9 billion. That is why we have no doubt that we must accept the prudent advice of our Director and put that £9m that our MPs lobbying achieved straight into the GER. Now is not the time to pretend there will never be further shocks.

The Government is quite clear in its aim to remove the Revenue Support Grant by the end of this Parliament. In the meantime it is imperative during the next 14 months that the County Council is not distracted from delivering the Transition to (Tt) 2017 Programme, irrespective of the financial outlook in the years beyond 2017/18. Any failure to deliver recurring sustainable savings from 2017/18 will only serve to worsen the position. It is therefore intended to review reserves and complete a further "housekeeping" exercise, in order that additional one-off resources can be found by April 2017 to meet the remaining predicted gap of £15m.

Fortunately because of our forward financial planning we do not have to present any new savings proposals other than those already indicated last year. This is a difficult budget made possible because of our past prudence.

We have had to propose a 3.99% increase in Council Tax. We are not happy in doing that but our consultation tells us it is acceptable to residents and despite the increase it will mean that Hampshire's precept will now be the lowest so any County in the Country and our services compare favourably with any.

***If you would like to discuss any issues raised in this article or indeed any other county council related matter, please come along into the next county council surgery at Inclusion Hampshire, Dickson House, London Road, Hook, this month on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> May, at 2pm. For an appointment please ring 01256 760800; and leave a number where you can be contacted, or give me a call on 763643.***



# DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

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## Written report from Mrs Melbourne, Chair of Governors for Dogmersfield Primary School

Our school has had a good year, with test results for both key stages being better than the National Average.

Attendance is recorded and reported to parents every month and is 100% for most classes and very close for others, only dropping below 100% in cases of illness.

Numbers remain steady at around 127 with spaces in some year groups due to families moving away. It is still disappointing that so few children from the village attend our school, most coming from Crookham Village, Church Crookham, Zebon Copse and even Elvetham Heath.

With regard to staffing, we are now in the possibly unique position of having five classes with FOUR male teachers! Men practitioners in primary school are almost as rare as hen's teeth! Our most recent recruit, Tom Joy, is a newly qualified teacher who joined us in September and is doing an excellent job with the Year 3 /4 children.

Colin Gray was appointed Assistant Head teacher following the retirement of Mrs. Beverley Ross who, after eleven years left us last July, swapping Dogmersfield for the wilds of Dartmoor.

Financially, due to excellent management by Miss Wall and Miss Riley, our Finance Officer, and with the support of the governors' Finance Committee, the school is in a healthy condition. In no small part, this is also due to funding from the Diocese and the unfailing energy, enthusiasm and commitment of the DSA – Dogmersfield School Association - who raise on average £10,000 a year to provide equipment not covered by government funding.

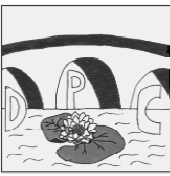
Many of you will know that it was with considerable heart-searching and not a few regrets that Miss Wall decided to leave teaching and handed in her notice in the Autumn Term. She had spent twelve happy and very successful years as head teacher of our school and will be very much missed. She was given a wonderful send-off with a trip on the canal followed by a meal at the Barley Mow; a Ritz-style tea with best bone china, finger sandwiches, scones and cream and loaded tiered cake-stands, all provided by parents and attended by parents and colleagues past and present; a picnic on the field for the children – once more provided by parents, and a final farewell at our Easter Service in the Church. She was presented with many gifts, including an iPad Air, a gold bracelet, vouchers for the Mayflower Theatre in Southampton, vouchers for the Vue cinema, a cushion proclaiming 'New York, Paris, Dogmersfield' and many collections of photographs and messages from everyone who has known her – also, enough flowers to start her own flower shop! She was even given her very own Build-A-Bear by one of the children! This is a clear and lasting testament to the high esteem in which she was held.

So, the end of an era, and the beginning of another.

The governing body were faced with the prospect of recruiting a replacement for Miss Wall and, in the current climate, schools are finding it difficult to recruit anyone at all. We were told that some schools in the area were on their second and even third round of recruitment having failed to attract a suitable candidate.

The governors all worked extremely hard during the Autumn term producing a very comprehensive recruitment pack and wording an enticing advertisement and we were rewarded with considerable interest and requests from eight prospective candidates to visit the school. This resulted in four applications of whom three were short-listed.

After two days of intensive activities and interviewing it was with unanimous agreement that we offered the position to Mrs. Dorothy Patton, at that time Deputy Head teacher at Oakwood Infant School in Hartley Wintney. We were delighted - and more than a little relieved - when she accepted and we look forward to a happy and productive working relationship with her as she joins the Dogmersfield 'family'. We wish her every happiness in her new post.



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**Questions were invited by the Chairman**

No additional questions were forthcoming.

A resident asked the audience to thank the Parish Councillors for all their hard work with a round of applause.

GB thanked all those that delivered reports this evening and for those attending.

The evening concluded at 9.10pm

Signed.....  
Chairman

Date.....