



SHERE PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING MINUTES

Held 7th April 2022, Peaslake Memorial Hall, Walking Bottom, Peaslake GU5 9RR

Present: Councillors R Davey (Chairman), C Carlisle, P Carter, G Reffo, B Harrap, B Grover, M Keeble and J Cross
Guildford Borough Council Councillor D Jones
Leigh Thornton, Business and Biodiversity Manager, Surrey Wildlife Trust
Clerk S Hoyland, Assistant Clerk S Robins and Drop-in Coordinator J Duffy
Approximately nineteen members of the public.

Refreshments were served on arrival

Chairman R Davey gave a short welcome and firstly thanked Brian Grover with a card and gift for his nine years of service as councillor and his common-sense approach, together with his calm and balanced opinions.

Apologies for Absence: Councillors J Hutton, M Taylor-Cotter, R Smith, C Brooke and B Andrews
Apologies also received from Judy Potter

Report given by the Chairman of Shere Parish Council

Chairman R Davey started his report by highlighting that this had been the second council year affected by covid and praised the staff and council for the way in which both had adapted to new ways of working, achieving the same high-quality results seamlessly, whether working from home or in the office. Also reporting that the drop-in centre was fully open and had expanded to include talks, trips out, monthly movies and monthly hot meals, welcoming anyone who wanted to come along.

Chairman R Davey went on to highlight some of the challenges the council had faced in the past year:

- Finally, after two years wait, planning permission had been received for the eight affordable homes on Peaslake Farmyard. The project had now moved to the next phase of building; with consultation with local residents, this would begin in the autumn and take approximately 43 weeks. Peaslake Farm Fields were also being considered, by working on a potential project with Surrey Wildlife Trust to increase biodiversity, creating wet land to increase flood resilience and to protect the fields from development.
- A significant increase in visitors to the villages, propelled by social media, highlighted the need to readdress the balance between visitors and residents. Visitors have caused an increase in costs including, cleaning toilets, re-turfing by the stream in Shere, wear and tear on the car park and additional bins. Repairs to the Shere car park will cost approximately £40,000 and Guildford Borough Council has stopped the grant towards the costs of the public toilets.
- Surrey County Council (SCC) have increasingly required contribution or full payment towards works, normally the responsibility of SCC, including the virtual path in Gomshall, pavement widening and Holmbury St Mary traffic calming (due to take place shortly).

Chairman Roy Davey explained that the parish council did not want to step back from any of the works it undertakes but reserves are much lower and other income sources are needed. Therefore, the 5-year Strategic Plan has been introduced to identify how we want our community to look, over the next 5 years and how those changes can be

financed. In part changes come from community involvement such as the Garbage Gang and speed watch teams but also an increase in income is needed.

£150,000 Income is expected after the completion of the homes at Peaslake Farm, which can be used for capital projects only. Charging visitors in Shere Car Park (which was supported by residents) would help pay for repairs and maintenance.

Finally, Chairman R Davey expressed the council's aim to mitigate the impact of visitors and to protect the best of what we have.

Questions relating to the Chairman's report

Gomshall Farm – a member of the public gave a short report on the farm and in particular the slurry pit exceeding the planning permission conditions. He explained that the limit of four vehicles a day was being exceeded and there were on one occasion, fourteen in one day, from early in the morning to late in the evening. He explained that he would be reporting this to the Environment Agency and Guildford Borough Council and if anyone also had concerns, to speak with him that evening.

Short talk by guest speaker: Leigh Thornton, Business and Biodiversity Manager, Surrey Wildlife Trust

Topic – SWT Vision for Peaslake Farm Fields

to protect the fields from development and enhance the bio- diversity for future generations

Leigh was warmly received as he outlined the plans for protecting the fields on a 30-year lease, increasing the biodiversity and creating wetland habit to hold back water, thereby reducing the risk of flooding in the village centre. Members of the public were supportive and offered local knowledge to help the process. Leigh hoped that the Trustees of Surrey Wildlife Trust would support the project and discussions can move forward. It was agreed to hold a meeting to gain local knowledge and work with residents to achieve this lovely project.

Leigh Thornton was thanked for his presentation and his PowerPoint is available [HERE](#), on the council website or by emailing clerk@shereparishcouncil.gov.uk

Refreshments were available again and members of the public chatted with councillors.

Meeting ended approximately 10pm