

Notes of the Annual General Meeting held at The Mount Somerset Hotel on Thursday 24 October 2013



Present: Gill Ellis (Chair)
Paul Stroner (Vice Chair)
Mike Westlake (Treasurer)
Jacqueline Cairns (Committee Member)
John Ashbaugh (Committee Member)
9 Members

In attendance: Mike Marshall – Vice Chairman, Ruishton Parish Council

1 Neighbourhood Plan

- 1.1 Mike Marshall, Vice Chairman of Ruishton Parish Council, gave an overview of what is needed to formulate a Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.2 A Neighbourhood Plan establishes general planning policies for the development and use of land in a neighbourhood, such as:
- where new homes and offices should be built
 - what they should look like

The plan can be detailed or general, depending what local people want.

Neighbourhood plans allow local people to get the right type of development for their community, but the plans must still meet the needs of the wider area and may not conflict with the Local Plan established by the local planning authority (Taunton Dean, in our case).

- 1.3 He explained that this is a statutory legal document and is a chance for local people to have a say in local development. The Parish Council are at the point of ascertaining whether a Neighbourhood Plan should be put in place and whether this should be done in isolation or in collaboration with other parishes.
- 1.4 The Parish Council cannot produce the plan but can facilitate the production of the plan by the community. It is estimated that the timescale for production of the plan would be in the region of two years, though participants would not necessarily need to commit to the whole process. Anybody interested in becoming involved should contact Mike Marshall directly.
- 1.5 A number of those present voiced their concerns over the ability of such a document to positively influence planning decisions

2 Planning matters

- 2.1 Mike Marshall explained that outline plans for a second strategic employment site are now being published by Taunton Deane Borough Council and any objections/responses are to be made by 12 December 2013.
- 2.2 There is an issue as to where these plans will be exhibited which Mike is currently pursuing with Taunton Deane

3 Treasurer's Report

- 3.1 Mike Westlake reported that the Association is currently £157 in credit, having spent money last year on the purchase of the Marquee.

4 Chairman's Report

- 4.1 Gill reported that there are currently 40 paid up members of the Association, including 3 residents new to the area. Gill reported the sad news that Mrs Pat House passed away recently.

5 Election of Committee

5.1 The following committee members were re-elected unanimously

- Gill Elliis Chairman
- Paul Stroner Vice Chairman
- Mike Westlake Treasurer
- Jacqueline Cairns Committee Member

5.2 Shirley Cozens was proposed, seconded and duly elected to the Committee.

6 Neighbourhood Watch

6.1 Mike Westlake reported that crime remained low but that people should remain vigilant during the winter period.

7 Flood Alleviation

7.1 Gill reported that we are still waiting for the requested flood emergency equipment to materialise. The subject of ditch clearance was discussed and options are being investigated to get this done.

7.2 Dan Martin, Somerset County Council Flood Risk Management Engineer, had recently visited the area and taken photographs of the watercourses. He was intending to speak to the Council regarding the culvert under the road connecting the two watercourses.

8 Speed Watch

8.1 Gill reported that we are due to have a Speed Indicator Device installed in the area from 4 November 2013. The device will be deployed for two weeks every four months (similar to the one in Haydon).

8.2 There was discussion about the perennial problem of speeding cars and volume of traffic through the area.

9 Social

9.1 It was agreed that the social side of the Association was going well and the Pub Games and Summer Barbecue were well attended. Very few people came on the walks in 2013 so it was agreed to discontinue them.

9.2 Dates for the following events were agreed:

- Mince Pies at Henlade Lodge – Friday evening 6.30-9.00 pm, 6 December 2013 – bring appropriate food and drink to share
- Games Night at The Nags Head – Friday 31 January 2014
- Barbecue – 21 June 2014 (Provisional)

10 Any Other Business

10.1 A number of members reported that they had received notices from the Land Registry regarding mineral rights. There appeared to be little consistency over which properties are affected. Some residents had objected to the notices and were waiting for a further response. It was agreed they were not cause for undue concern.

11. Dates of Next Meetings

11.1 The dates of the next meetings (now confirmed) are:
24th April 2014
23rd October 2014 (AGM)