

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL ASSEMBLY HELD ON 12 MARCH 2015

Present:	Mr John Chiverton	Chairman
	Mr David Goldhawk	Vice Chairman
	Mr Terry Mayne	
	Mrs Mary Mansell	
	Mr Ian Foster	
	Mr Stephen Cooksey	County Councillor
	Mr Mick Longhurst	District Councillor
	Mrs Pat Clare	Clerk
Apologies	Mrs Kathy Wheeler	

MINUTES

Minutes of the Annual Assembly held on 13 March 2014 were approved and signed as being correct at the meeting held on 28 May, 2014.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Firstly, it was my pleasant duty in September, 2014 to welcome Mrs Kathy Wheeler and in November to welcome Mr Ian Foster as new Councillors, following the resignations of Mr Tim Gamblen and Mr Charles Hill. I take this opportunity to thank Mr Gamblen and Mr Hill for their contributions to the work of the Council.

This past year has not been the easiest for either the Council or its Chairman. A number of issues, in some cases contentious, were raised calling for Council's attention / action and this was difficult in the absence of clear directives from parishioners at large.

Perhaps the issue causing most concern was that of increased aircraft noise over the Parish resulting from new "trialled" flight-paths out of Gatwick and the question (possibly linked?) of a second runway there. On the basis of perceived general discontent, but without any substantial endorsement in the form of direct communication from parishioners, whose views were known not to be unanimous, Council expressed serious concerns to the Gatwick Airport authorities, the CAA, Sir Paul Beresford (MP for Mole Valley) and Mole Valley District Council and has supported the active campaign of GACC.

A number of Planning Applications were reviewed by Council. Comments / objections were expressed to MVDC when considered to be appropriate; noteworthy examples were the continuing, revised applications in respect of open windrow composting at Swires Farm and exploratory oil drilling at Bury Hill which, although the actual sites fall outside our Parish boundaries, nevertheless would seriously impact upon the Parish in respect of traffic movements. Council also lodged objections in respect of the Housing and Traveller Sites development proposals on Green Belt land at Beare Green and Holmwood.

It is especially gratifying to record that, enabled by a generous donation from Mr George Sturt, and the obtaining by Mr Stephen Cooksey of a Surrey CC grant, the War Memorial was

cleaned, new railings installed and the steps and surround upgraded all in good time for the WW1 centenary in November.

As Managing Agents, Council continues to oversee the well-being of the Village Hall and Council is indebted to Councillor Mrs Mary Mansell and Mr Peter Bray (a Trustee of the Hall) for their work in this connection. Bookings are reported to be steady and the Steward's Cottage continues to generate rental income.

Wicksteeds continue to survey and maintain equipment at the Playground; this year, safety surfaces have been upgraded and the Sputnik and the see-saw have been repainted. Council was presented by a then Councillor with a proposal to install an Outdoor Fitness Centre - a series of gymnasium type fitness equipment - at an appropriate site in the village. Following detailed cost / benefit consideration - and again in the light of negligible expressions of interest from parishioners - it was decided not to pursue this possibility.

The A24 subway has been a matter of continuous concern to Council. Graffiti is an on-going problem and mirrors there have been replaced and re-vandalised so often that Council has now decided not to seek their replacement by Surrey CC. An approach was made to Surrey C.C. to install barriers at the entrances to the subway such as to deter inconsiderate cyclists who habitually ignore signs to dismount; the Surrey CC response was that the Disability Discrimination Act, which demands wheel-chair and mobility scooter accessibility, precludes the erection of effectively spaced barriers. Bus shelter vandalism and dog-fouling in public areas have also been matters for Council attention.

The Parish Council has again responsibly managed its finances, in terms of both current and projected expenditure. For the forthcoming year, a Precept of £10,500 is requested from MVDC - a reduction of £2,000 as against last year.

By means of the Council's website and a regular half-yearly Newsletter delivered by hand, Council seeks to keep parishioners informed in respect of its activities and of local issues generally.

In liaison with MVDC, Council is seeking a public response to "Heartstart" - a short training course being offered on basic emergency life-support skills.

Council is most appreciative of the attendance at Parish Council meetings of Mole Valley District and Surrey County Councillors and for their support and advice. Similarly, we are grateful for the regular attendance of a Police Officer, informing us of local crime statistics.

Finally, may I again express my gratitude to my fellow Councillors and our Parish Clerk who have greatly assisted me in doing much of the donkey-work with which the Council has had to deal.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

There were no questions.

Mrs Mary Mansell thanked John Chiverton for being Chairman this year as it has not been the easiest of years.