

Minutes from the Annual Assembly held on 21 March 2018 at Ascot Racecourse commencing at 7.00pm.

13 Parish Councillors, 3 Borough Councillors and 13 Residents attended.

7012 The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and made an announcement regarding safety matters applicable to the meeting. She explained the purpose of the Annual Assembly as being an opportunity for the electorate to hold their Councillors and local charities to account and to find out about the Parish Council's activities, finances, role and structure.

7013 The minutes of the Annual Assembly, held on 22 March 2017, were approved as a correct record.

7014 A presentation was then received from the Parish Council regarding activities during the past year and future plans. This presentation began with Councillor David Hilton explaining the results of the recent Parish Plan questionnaire. He outlined the reason for the questionnaire, went through the key questions asked, highlighted residents' main concerns and the actions the Borough and Parish Council were taking to address these issues, which were mainly focused around parking and congestion and development within the Parish. Two questions were received from residents, one regarding recycling facilities in Ascot and the second regarding the potential loss of trees in Car Park 6 following the proposed rejuvenation of the High Street. Councillor Hilton replied that he would look into these matters. Councillor Robert Ellison went on to outline the Leisure Committee's activities, including the works to enhance bio-diversity at Tom Green's Field in Sunninghill and at the Blythewood Nature Reserve, the re-surfacing of pathways at the cemetery behind St Michael and All Angels Church in Sunninghill, the new gates and fencing at the Cheapside allotment site and the new play equipment planned for Victory Field, Sunninghill, as well as proposals to improve the adjoining footpath that runs down from Oriental Road. The role of the Parish Council in local planning applications was then explained by Councillor Barbara Hilton, with the significant developments touched on, as were the finances of the Parish Council by Councillor Robin Wood and the grant giving process and outcomes by Councillor Brian Humphreys. The forthcoming 2018 Victorian Street Fayre was advertised and the 2017 Party in the Park highlighted as a success.

The Chairman finished the presentation by thanking her fellow Parish Councillors, Parish Council staff and community groups for their time and support.

7015 The Chairman then asked to receive a report from Borough Councillor John Story who began by giving apologies for Councillors Lilly Evans and Lynda Yong who were both unwell. Next he stated how pleased he was that Heatherwood Hospital would remain in operation following community action. Councillor Story then detailed the proposals to alter the current electoral ward boundaries under the boundary review undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission. These proposals would reduce the number of Borough Councillors in the area from seven to six and from three to two wards, with one ward covering Sunningdale and South Ascot and the other ward covering Ascot, Sunninghill, Cheapside and parts of Windsor Great Park. The Parish and Ward Councillors had stated their concern that this proposal would reduce the identity electors would have with their ward but these concerns had not altered the proposal. However Councillor Story stated that the proposals were now out for public consultation (due to be completed by 7 May) and so there was still an opportunity for electors to voice their opinion. Next Councillor Julian Sharpe gave an update on proposals to reduce congestion and improve parking in Sunninghill, a complex issue that would now be considered by a working group made up of local stakeholders. He also outlined traffic management proposals for the A329 junction with Silwood Road.

The Chairman thanked both Councillors for their presentation.

7016 The Chairman then invited Anne Ayers, the co-founder of the Wildlife in Ascot Group, to present an overview of their work. She began by stating that the group was six and a half years old and had 300 supporters. Their purpose was to look after the wildlife and bio-diversity in the area which they did through collecting data, promoting good gardening practices, building community support through events, walks and conservation activities, improving the 'Green Corridors' in the Parish and developing wildlife friendly areas. The Group had recently gained charity status and were lobbying on bio-diversity matters within both Bracknell Forest Council and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. The Group were particularly pleased to have received a grant of just over £50,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund to encourage kingfisher habitats within the stream that led from Englemere Pond to the Blackmoor Pond. The Chairman thanked Mrs Ayers for her presentation.

7017 The three charities within the Parish were then invited to provide their accounts. Only Councillor David Hilton, Chairman of the Ascot Fire Brigade Trust, was in attendance who presented their accounts and briefly explained their aims and activities. The Clerk stated that accounts had been received from the Sunninghill Trust and were available for inspection but not from the Sunninghill Parochial Charities and that both charities had sent their apologies.

7018 The Chairman then opened the floor up to a Question and Answer Session. No questions were received and so the Chairman invited Inspector Louise Warbrick and Richard Pilgrim, the Co-Headteacher at Charters School, to explain about their work. Louise Warbrick began by stating that she was the local Neighbourhood Inspector and had responsibility for community engagement and resilience. This was a wide ranging role from involvement with the local Food Academy for young people to coordinating the policing for the forthcoming Royal Wedding. The risk of radicalisation and sexual exploitation were key themes for the police along with crime and burglary. Next Mr Pilgrim stated that his fellow head-teacher Martyn Parker was due to retire and that a new senior leadership team was in place. The school continued to achieve excellent academic results being in the top 10% of schools nationally in terms of 'progress made.' The school was also involved in a range of wider curriculum activities such as participating in the Royal Society Exhibition and a cross country finals in Paris. The governing arrangements for Tirabid, the out of bounds activity centre, were being updated and on 30 June the school would celebrate its 60th Anniversary. Funding and recruitment remained a challenge and the school was aware that it needed to maintain its reputation within the community, with concerns about worsening behaviour by students recognised. The Chairman thanked them both for their input.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending the Assembly and the Ascot Authority for their hospitality. The meeting closed at 8.45pm.

Refreshments followed.

Councillor Allison Sharpe, Chairman