

**Minutes of the
Parish Annual Assembly
held on 23 March 2022 at
St George's School, Ascot**

9 Parish Councillors attended

?? Residents attended

8162 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. She explained why there has been a hiatus in the Annual Assembly as, due to Covid, the meeting has not been held since 2019.

8163 The minutes of the Annual Assembly, held on 20 March 2019, were approved as a correct record and signed as such.

8164 A presentation was received from the Parish Council regarding activities during the past year and future plans.

- Cllr Robin Wood spoke about finances – where the money comes from and where it goes. Spent in 3 main areas – leisure maintenance; capital projects (including Cheapside playpark); running/admin costs of the parish. We have one of the lowest precepts in RBWM. He explained that in the 2022/23 years there is a 4% increase. We are looking to spend significant funds on the South Ascot recreation ground. We also have CIL – Cllr Wood explained what this is and that we have some funds available for funding of projects. Our financial situation is healthy and we don't spend more than we need to.
- Councillor Robert Ellison, acting chair of the Leisure Committee, spoke about the L&C's activities. Our parks and grounds were open all through Covid, except some play areas which the govt legislated to be closed. We have four parks. We are waiting for a new lease to be signed with Sunninghill Trust. Behind the VF is TGF – over the years we have opened this up and made it more welcoming for wildlife and people. We have discovered the cow pond which we intend to open up and make more attractive. Cheapside play park has been completely overhauled. We also have allotments in Cheapside and give a prize each year. Cemetery – we have agreed to plant flowering cherry trees under which ashes may be scattered. Ten years ago SAPC hosted an event at VF to celebrate the diamond jubilee. We intend to recreate this event on 2nd June and will have all the usual features including a beacon. Later in the year we intend to plant 7 trees at Victory Field for the jubilee.
- Cllr Lydia Davison spoke about litter picking. We have a volunteer group which has around 100 members and have handed out c 30 sets of equipment to enable people to go out litter picking. We have volunteers who are doing their DofE. We have spent approx. 150kg of NOx canisters for recycling. On 23rd April we will be having a community litter pick, people are invited to come and join in.
- Cllr Robin Wood spoke about planning. He explained the purpose of the planning committee and how it provides recommendations to RBWM on planning applications. We also have input into major developments and provide guidance on adherence with our neighbourhood plan. The plan is currently coming to the end of it's life, at which time we will canvas public opinion as to what they would like to see in the community. We have had 18 meetings in the year and have considered ?? applications. This included the Bridgerton film set which we did not think was appropriate in the place suggested. RBWM agreed with us and the application was denied. The MSL house in S'hill High St – to put an extra floor on, which has gone to appeal. Berkshire House on Ascot High St, above some shops, the plan was to turn these into 30 flats, this was turned down. Green Meadows surgery, which has now moved to the new hospital, the old site will be developed – the applications we have seen were for 9 houses, then 8, and currently 1 house and 4 semi-detached. Heatherwood – the hospital has all but

moved to its new location. The existing hospital will be developed by Taylor Woodrow who have just been given approval. We felt there weren't enough parking spaces but it has been approved. In addition, coming to Ascot in the next 2 years or so, 3 further large applications on the High St and one the Shorts site. We need to make sure these come through to achieve the goal of improving Ascot.

- Cllr Ceri Richardson spoke about the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). In 2021 a working group. Ceri explained how the CIL money is allowed to be used and how applications can be made and will be assessed. To date we have had an application from Charters for an outdoor classroom, which we funded in collaboration with Sunningdale PC. There is a video on the website explaining what CIL is and can be used for. We welcome applications.
- Cllr Allison Sharpe explained how the PC awards grants and under what power this is. Approx £5k each year is awarded and applications are taken twice per year. Charities are invited to keep applying, even if they have had a grant awarded in a previous year.
- Cllr Sharpe then went on to speak about the work the PC has done in helping to support Sunninghill Library which was faced with possible closure last year when RBWM's consultation showed it as a possible closure. The PC met with the Sunninghill Reading Room Trust, the Durning Trust and RBWM. Through this we were able to identify the core issues and establish a proposal to allow this much loved facility to remain open for a period of 5 years under a SLA. This gives the Reading Room Trust some breathing space so it can begin to generate it's own income through rental of the adjoining cottage.
- The parish clerk spoke about the Ascot Covid Support Hub.

8165 Jeff Pick, Community Engagement Officer for TVP spoke. Burglary – dwellings – 3 in the last 30 days; theft from motor vehicles – 10 offences. He recommended people have video door bells. Fake TV – flickers, for a front-facing upstairs room to look as if your house is occupied. Burglar alarms – thieves usually walk past. Cars – key fobs are all on one frequency. Keyless cars – especially particular ones – are being stolen to order by using a particular piece of equipment, they don't need your keys. Buy an air tag and hide it in your car and you can then track it. The tracker company can tell that you're car is being driven without the keys and will phone you to tell you the car has been stolen. He spoke about the way to report if you don't feel safe in your road and how the police will add this to their patrols. Scams – letters, at the door (Nottingham Knockers), telephone. Relationship fraud & sextaution – exploiting people through

8166 Mr John Fletcher, headteacher of Charter's School introduced the head boy and head girl who spoke about some of the charitable initiatives at the school as well as the Enrichment Programme the sixth formers undertake. They thanked SAPC for the partial funding of the outdoor classroom area. Mr Fletcher then spoke about the need for positive spaces and environment in the school. During lockdown they used the time to invest in and improve the learning environment with painting and new furniture as well as some murals. They are seeing emotion issues as a result of the pandemic, young children trying to develop their emotional skills having missed out on time during the lockdown, while some older children are struggling to get used to exams. They have invested in working to help these students to develop emotional resilience and get more confidence and engagement. The enrichment opportunities spoken about help and they also use outside agencies. This work will continue and they will continue to support their local community within their remit of unity, respect and ??

8167 Catalina Estrada of Imperial College presented on the Green Corridor Project which she is heading up, funded by SAPC.

8168 Wayne Eveleigh, Senior Community Warden for RBWM, spoke about the work of the community warden team.

8169 The Chairman then asked to receive a report from the Borough Councillors. Cllr Julian Sharpe spoke about what the borough has been involved with. The BLP was adopted in Feb which removes the centre of Ascot from the Greenbelt and allows the Ascot Rejuvenation to move forward. We are looking forward to that proceeding over the next several years. Very recently a company called London Square has acquired the site to the west of Station Hill and are in the process of putting forward an application for that land. They have been brought into the work that is happening with the Princes Trust and people will be kept informed as that project develops. We need to make sure that the various schemes are properly co-ordinated across the area. Other borough priorities: we have continued to strengthen RBWM financial position – most of financing goes to children and adult social care services, approx. 70%. C £92m, in some areas it is an astonishingly large sum of money required to ensure these children are properly looked after. OFSTED has rated the childrens services as good. Adult social care is operated within the Frimley care system and we are working to free up hospital beds as quickly as possible. We are at the stage where our process is viewed as very good. With the beginnigns of the cost of living crisis we are pleased that our council tax is one of the lowest in the country.

For 3 years we have been in a situation where, despite Covid, we have delivered a positive budget. The bin collections have changed; the main reason was to improve our recycling levels. We are now seeing the signs of that with recycling rising to 50% and beyond. The money received for recycling turns into a positive cashflow rather than being a drain on the finances. Climate Change work is moving on and they have set up a new private-public partnership with major businesses getting involved as well as major academic people which has been a positive move. In a few weeks they will be announcing a solar panel scheme to enable residents to get discounted solar panels for their houses. Other things are residents parking schemes in Windsor & Maidenhead.

- 8170 Stephanie James, service lead for economic growth directorate on behalf of Windsor, Eton & Ascot Town Manager spoke about the work of their office. She spoke about how businesses survived through Covid and the financial help that was given to them. They ran a campaign "Don't let your guard down" encouraged people to come out safely to support local businesses. She encouraged local businesses to get in touch with their team to sign up for their businesses to be promoted. They have a Windsor Platinum Committee organising events in Windsor and surrounding areas over the weekend and reminded people that this Friday is the last date to register for road closures for jubilee events this year.
- 8171 The Chairman stated that accounts had been received from the Sunninghill Parochial Church Council, the Ascot Fire Brigade and the Sunninghill Trust which were available for inspection in the foyer.
- 8172 The Chairman invited questions to be put to the parish council and speakers over refreshments in the foyer.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending the Assembly and St George's School for their hospitality. The meeting closed at 9.40pm. Refreshments followed.

Councillor Allison Sharpe, Chairman