

THE HARPENDEN SOCIETY COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday 27th January 2014 at 7.30 p.m. at The Harpenden House Hotel
MINUTES

Present: Chris Marsden (CM), Barbara Ouston (BOu), Anthony Steele (AS), Eric Midwinter (EM), Victoria Evans (VE), Ann James (AJa), Ron Taylor (RTa), Mike Waddilove (MW), Donald Robertson (DR), John Davis (JD), Steve Gledhill (SG), Alan Jackson (AJ), Penny Ayres (PA), and Bob Fletcher (RF).

1. Apologies for absence were received from Arnold Allen (AA), Tim Riley (TR), Harry Downie (HD) and Richard Thomas (RTh).
2. Minutes of the meeting on 9th December 2013, previously circulated, were approved as a true record.
3. Matters arising not on the Agenda:
 - a) It was agreed that a discussion on raising funds (in addition to the subscription income) would be on the agenda of the next meeting.
4. **Treasurer's Report**
 - a) AA was not present but had distributed a draft copy of the 2013 accounts. The draft accounts were approved by the committee.
5. **Secretary's Items**
 - a) Speakers for Public Meetings – reported that the February meeting has been cancelled with Park Hall.
 - b) PA agreed to speak to Ian Piggott about arranging a summer visit to his farm education centre.
 - c) RF reported that Rothamsted had offered to hold a public meeting to discuss the new GM trial being planned. **Action: RF to liaise with Rothamsted to arrange this.**
6. **Strategic Local Plan**
 - a) Considerable discussion took place regarding what the Society's approach should be to the impending Strategic Local Plan which is expected to re-define the green belt boundaries and to include a target of 2,000+ more houses to be built in Harpenden.
 - b) Discussion centred on whether the Society should completely object, object but compromise on certain aspects or not object at all.
 - c) Comment made that this is not solving a local Harpenden problem as there are few jobs in Harpenden. This is a central government policy imposing a national problem on Harpenden. The people who will come into Harpenden will nearly all travel out of Harpenden to work hence increasing traffic on the roads and increasing the utilisation of the trains and station parking.
 - d) Stated that the process was Strategic Local Plan – Detailed Local Plan – Neighbourhood Plan. The Community can get involved at the Detailed Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan stage.
 - e) It was agreed that as a first step the Chairman should develop a "Town Dialogue" to help to understand the position of other parties within Harpenden. **Action: CM to contact BCAG and others to arrange meetings to further discuss this topic.**
7. **Membership Secretary's Items**
 - a) BOu stated that approx. 425 members paid by Standing Order. Payments have been made from these Standing Orders although some are still at the old, lower rate. About two thirds of members are now on email.
8. **Newsletter Editor's Items**
 - a) The Newsletter Editor's report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting.

9. Publicity Officer's Items

- a) The Publicity Officer's report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting.

10. Press Officer's Items

- a) The Press Officer's report that input for the September issue of Forum is mid-July.

11. Working Group Reports

- a) **Public Order:** The Public Order report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting.
- b) **Environment:** The Environment report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting. JD reported that the protest around the airport expansion were now concentrating on Section 25 of the Localism Bill.
- c) **Transport:** The Transport report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting. DR reported that a list of questions had been received for the 30th January public meeting.
- d) **Education & Leisure.** The E&L report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting. EM stated that he was planning a meeting of the E&L working group to discuss issues regarding the type of secondary school that was needed.
EM reported that the library trial with volunteers was now going ahead. More volunteers are still required especially for the 4-7pm slot. **CM requested that committee members volunteer to act as "emergency volunteers" to help the situation.**
- e) **Health & Social Welfare.** The Health & Social Welfare report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting. EM reported that there had been a meeting of the Red House Forum that morning. The plan was now being submitted to the Gateway Process. Next meeting of the Forum is in March.
- f) **Built Environment.** Discussion took place about the new Tesco store on the Luton Road. Two issues were apparent, there is only one parking place and there is concern that the air conditioning may be very noisy. Issue is that as there is no change of use no special permission was required for this development. **Action RTa to contact protest group to see if they want any support. CM to contact Tesco to discuss noise issue.**
- g) **Economic Activity.** RTa reported that the Harpenden Christmas Shopping Facebook page was now being converted in a more generic Harpenden Shopping page.

12. Any Other Business

13. Dates of the next meetings:

- a) Committee meeting dates: 24th March 2014, 19th May 14, 21st July, 22nd Sept, 8th Dec, 26th Jan 15, 23rd March 15.
- b) Public 'speaker' meetings are scheduled for: 26th March 2014 (AGM), 24th April 2014 (both at Rothamsted), 25th Sept, 23rd Oct, 11th Dec, 29th Jan 15, 26th Feb 15, 26th March 15 (AGM).

- 14. The meeting closed at 9.45 p.m.