

SALEHURST & ROBERTSBRIDGE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING for the PARISH of SALEHURST & ROBERTSBRIDGE was held at ROBERTSBRIDGE HALL, STATION ROAD, ROBERTSBRIDGE MONDAY 4th March 2019 at 7.15 pm

Presiding: Cllr Nick Greenfield, Chairman of the Parish Council

Present: **Electors:** 89 **Press:** None

Elected Representatives:

Parish Council: Nick Brown; Nick Greenfield; Ruth Hardy; Stephen Hardy; Sean O'Hara; Roger Palamarczuk; Anne Wells

Rother District Council: Cllr Graham Browne; Cllr Sue Prochak

East Sussex County Council: Cllr Angharad Davies

Also in attendance: Karen Ripley, Parish Clerk; Gill Colquhoun, Assistant Clerk; Peter Pattenden, Village Steward & his wife Susan

Apologies were received from Cllr Jemima Bolton, Cllr Gillian Smith.

The following groups & organisations had tables or displays: Robertsbridge Enterprise Group; RAP (Robertsbridge Arts Partnership); Bell ringers; St Mary's Church; Community Church Robertsbridge; Rother Valley Railway; Oldwood Surgery & Battle Patient Participation Group; FOVTE; Stoolball Club; Community Speedwatch; Tree Warden; Footpath Volunteer Group; Helping Hands; Women's Institute.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the local organisations for their displays, and the W.I. for once again kindly organising the refreshments this evening. There was then was a minute's silence in memory of Roger Cowap who had died suddenly earlier in the day.

- 1. MINUTES OF THE PARISH MEETING 16TH APRIL 2018** - (available on PC website) were approved and signed.
- 2. REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL NICK GREENFIELD** – copy attached. Cllr Greenfield recorded special thanks to Cllr Stephen Hardy for leading on the Local Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Nick Brown and Cllr Roger Palamarczuk addressed the meeting to explain their role as Parish Councillors, and highlighted the rewards of volunteering in this capacity.
- 3. REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS SUE PROCHAK AND GRAHAM BROWNE** – Cllr Browne gave a verbal report. He highlighted that Biffa will replace Kier as the new waste contractor for Rother from late June, with glass being recycled in main recycle bins from 29 June. He recorded his thanks to the Parish for being able to represent the village for the last 8 years (as only one District Councillor would be representing Salehurst & Robertsbridge from May he would no longer be representing the village from May 2019). Cllr Prochak gave a report, copy attached.
- 4. REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR ANGHARAD DAVIES** – copy attached.

5. QUESTIONS/LOCAL MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR

a. Number of deer on local roads - a resident expressed serious concern about the number of deer on local roads and questioned how the population could be controlled. Andrew Hoad confirmed that it is a countrywide problem for landowners. Cllr Davies suggested that the National Farming Union had a role. Cllr Stephen Hardy reported that the High Weald AONB may be able to help; they have discussed the issue and, in collaboration with the Woodland Trust, are investigating the use of trained marksmen to control the deer population.

b. Cut to subsidy for meals on wheels - Cllr Prochak asked Cllr Davies what could be done regarding the proposed cut to the County subsidy for Meals on Wheels, which is putting the future of Robertsbridge Age Concern Lunch Club at stake. Cllr Davies stated that, although the idea of removing the subsidy had been put to Cabinet, a final decision had not yet been made. A public consultation will take place in the Summer. John Schultz, Chair of the Age Concern Lunch Club is in touch with East Sussex County Council and someone from the County Council will visit the club.

c. Recycling of black plastic - Cllr O'Hara asked Cllr Prochak to ensure that Rother District Council publicise that black plastic cannot be recycled (as informed at the Annual Parish Meeting last year).

d. Rubbish in Poppinghole Lane – a resident reported that she had recently collected 3 bags of rubbish in Poppinghole Lane. She asked what is being done to ensure this location is cleared of rubbish. It was confirmed that Kier is contracted to litter pick the A21. The Parish Council is organizing the Annual Tidy Day with volunteers on 24th March.

There was a break for refreshments, an opportunity to view local information provided by the various clubs and groups, and to chat informally.

6. **ROBERTSBRIDGE COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH** – Freddie Pooke, Robertsbridge Speedwatch coordinator updated the meeting on the work of the group: it is a small group of volunteers which is actively looking for more members so that more traffic surveys could be undertaken. In the latest survey 8 people had been found speeding on Brightling Road.
7. **UPDATE ON OLDWOOD SURGERY PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP** - Steve MacDonald, Chair of the Participation Group introduced himself and Libby Loosely the Practice Manager. He highlighted that the participation group had a contractual requirement to raise issues on behalf of individuals; to introduce initiatives that could help; collate feedback on the service and promote health (for example the group is looking for someone who could take elderly on walks around the village). The group meets monthly and those present were invited to sign up to be kept up to date on the work of the group. The group needs new members, including more younger people. There is a plan to deliver a health hub on the Culverwells building site, with space for peripheral activities. The practice is very keen to find out what the community want in that space. As plans firm up the practice will engage with the community to ensure it is a health hub fit for the community.

8. REPORTS FROM LOCAL GROUPS / ORGANISATIONS, INCLUDING:

- a) **Community Church** – Nigel Lockwood highlighted the activities organized by the Community Church: informal Sunday services, Thursday morning coffee morning, tool mission collections (next collection 21st March), courses and bible study, parenting/friendship group, and collecting for local Food Bank at the Village Hall (the church can issue food bank vouchers).
- b) **Robertsbridge Arts Partnership (RAP)** – Gillian Branford reported that RAP membership is current around 90. Events include musical performance and other events, contribution to Xmas Capers, Big Arts quiz, and the Literary Festival in May. Next year will be the group's 20th anniversary. The group is planning an arts and crafts festival in May 2020.
- c) **Women's Institute** – Gillian Jones, Chair of Robertsbridge Women's Institute, spoke to say that the group is looking for more members. It is considering introducing evening meetings to attract more people. The club had purchased a shelter box to mark its Centenary in 2019. A quiz is planned for September.
- d) **Cricket Club** – Allan Hughes addressed the meeting. The cricket club is always looking for new members. The Junior section is a real success, last year at least 6 junior members moved onto adult cricket. Junior coaching for all ages including toddlers takes place throughout the year. This year will be the 50th anniversary of the Cooper Cup. The current major fundraiser for the club is for new nets.
- e) **Robertsbridge & District Motor Enthusiasts Group** – Michael Hennessey introduced this new group which he is proposing to set up for local motor enthusiasts. He has arranged a first meeting on 12th March at the Ostrich at 8pm
- f) **Jazz Club** – Pete Beament reported that the jazz club, which meets at the Village Hall on the second Thursday of each month, provides performances by top jazz artists, is very popular. It is a non-profit making organisation which has made donations towards the Village Hall heating system and an additional defibrillator for the village. He publicly thanked the volunteers who ran the club.
- g) **Robertsbridge British Legion** - Chairman Nick Moor informed the meeting that the Robertsbridge Poppy Appeal for 2018 was outstanding at £10840.29, this included donations towards the new Tommy silhouettes.
- h) **Robertsbridge Enterprise Group (REG)** – Stephen Hardy outlined the work of REG: putting up the Xmas trees on houses (around 100 trees in 2018) and organizing Xmas Capers for the last 5-6 years. A new organizer is needed for both the trees and Xmas Capers in 2019 to provide new vision and enthusiasm.
- i) **St Mary's Church** – Rev Annette Hawkins addressed the meeting. She thanked everyone who had exhibited advent windows in December 2018. The Church has held new events such as open-air coffee mornings, open gardens day and the teddy zipwire. There were record numbers attending Remembrance Day in November 2018. She reported that letters regarding the Church Electoral roll, which starts every 6 years, are being distributed as an insert to the March Parish Newsletter. The Church roll is important if the village is to retain a vicar, historical interest alone in the church will not keep it open. She highlighted that a new hygiene bank is located at Salehurst Halt.

- j) Robertsbride Bonfire Society** – Roger Palamarczuk spoke. More people were encouraged to join the society. The 2018 bonfire had been very successful with a street collection of just over £2700. All money will be donated to village groups and societies. Fundraising for the 2019 Bonfire has started: car boot sales, 10K run, auction of promises, outside bars. The lunch for elderly in the village had been resurrected in 2018. The 30th anniversary of the ‘new era’ of the bonfire will take place in 2020.
- k) Robertsbridge Club** – Roger Palamarczuk reported that the Club building was over 100 years. A refurbishment programme funded by revenue from members began 3 years ago. A new roof has been installed in 2018. Membership has gained popularity, there are currently just over 450 members. A new website is being launched in March 2019 robertsbridgeclub.co.uk or Robertsbridgeclub. This will include a history page.
- l) Twinning Association** – David Faithfull had given his apologies. He had submitted a written report which was read by Cllr Greenfield – copy attached. See the Villager for Twinning Association developments, including plans for a 20th anniversary celebration.
- m) Robertsbridge Scout Group** – Sean O’Hara spoke, in his capacity as Chair of 1st Robertsbridge Scout Group. He informed the meeting that the group was celebrating its 110th anniversary in 2019. It was urgently looking for a new group treasurer which involves a 2 hours per week commitment. The group is also appealing for uniformed leaders.
- n) Robertsbridge Wine Club** – Sean O’Hara updated the meeting on the Wine Group which had been launched a year ago. Activities to date include events with Majestic, Biddenden Wines and gin tasting. Future events include a trip to Chapel Down winery.
- o) Rother Responders** – Gary Spray spoke about the work of Rother Responders, a team of five and expanding, which works in collaboration with the Ambulance Service. Responders attend incidents until ambulances turn up. He publicly recorded his thanks to the Jazz Club for donating a defibrillator to the village (Rother Responders have donated a cover for this). To locate your nearest defibrillator ring 999.
- p) Libby Loosely Practice Manager, Oldwood Surgery** – introduced herself. She is happy to answer questions about the proposed new Health Hub building.
- q) Tree Warden** – Caroline Knight introduced herself as the local tree warden. She had written a tree quiz for the meeting and she gave the answers to this. A prize was given to the winning entrant.
- r) Rococo** – Anne Wells promoted the choir which meets each Wednesday evening, and also a sea shanty workshop which will take place at Robertsbridge Club on Saturday 30 March 2-6pm

9. NOTICES & INFORMATION –

The next Parish Council meeting will take place on 18 March 2019.

The Village Tidy Day will take place on 24 March 2019.

Meeting closed at 9.34pm.

Chairman.....

Date.....