

MINUTES OF EAST PECKHAM ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD IN THE CURRAN HALL ON MONDAY 02 APRIL 2007 AT 19.30 HOURS

PRESENT: Parish Councillors: Boyle, Crawford (Chairman), Crowley, Mrs. Curry, Gardner, Gress, Poole, Shead, Street & Whiteside

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs. K Bell (Clerk), 36 residents, Borough Councillors Mrs Holland and Rogers, PCSO Holly Wilkes, Village Police Constable Andy Sergeant, Suzanne Gorringe (The Hop Farm County Park), Susan Murphy (The Hop Farm country Park), representatives from the Press.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Received and accepted from Cllr. Bearman & 2 residents

The Chairman of the PC, Councillor Peter Crawford opened the meeting. He welcomed all present and introduced the Parish Councillors, the guest speakers and the police representatives.

1. MINUTES 2005 APM

Those present were reminded that pending clarification on item 5d the minutes had not been signed. The Clerk read out a suggested amendment, which would replace the original minute 5d. The amendment was accepted and the minutes of the APM held on 04 April 05 were signed as a true record.

2006 APM

The minutes of the meeting held on 03 April 06 were signed as a true record.

2. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

Councillor Crawford presented the Annual Report, which had been distributed to all households. Attention was drawn to specific items within the document including the projects for 2007/08, which consisted of the installation of CCTV and the repairs to the Sports Hall. Cllr Crawford also drew attention to the reports from the Emergency Planning Group, East Peckham Playing field Committee and Community and Police Working Group.

Emergency Planning Group

Cllr Poole stated that there was nothing further to add to the report and but assured those present that continued liaison was taking place between the PC and the EA, TMBC and UMIDB in order to obtain further flood risk preventative action for the village.

Community & Police Working Group

Cllr. Gardner drew attention to the weak police presence experienced in the past and hoped that with the arrival of the new Police Constable, the PCSO and the replacement Community Warden policing should improve. The Police Constable answered a question from the audience on shift patterns and advised that he was to hold monthly drop in surgeries. The contact details for the police and the surgeries would be available in the Parish Magazine and on the PCs website. Cllr Crawford stated that policing on the village appeared to be improving and so too hopefully would the quality of life for residents.

East Pechkam Playing Field Committee

Cllr. Crowley advised that the new toddlers play area should be completed in time for Easter. Mrs. Poole thanked the EPPFC for repairing the Chat Room and for stabilizing its condition. A parishioner raised a question regarding the costs of repairing the Sports Hall and was advised that a cost effective solution would be found to keep the hall open and functioning as an asset for the community. Those present were advised that the repairs were necessary owing to a lack of ongoing routine maintenance by the former committee.

3. PRESENTATION OF THE BILLY CAN AWARDS

Mrs Joan Boyle was invited to present the 2007 Billy Can Shields. This year they were awarded to Mr J de Coverly for his work in the village which included the Parish Magazine and to Mr and Mrs. Easom for their commitment to the East Peckham Scout Group. Both recipients were delighted to receive their awards and made short acceptance speeches.

4. GUEST SPEAKERS: THE HOP FARM COUNTRY PARK

Ms Gorringe and Ms Murphy were welcomed to the meeting and proceeded to present a broad outline of the future plans for the visitor attraction, which included:

- 64 holiday lodges which would support the future sustainability of the business And would form part of an ongoing programme of revitalisation to ensure that the Hop farm Country Park continued to be a successful and popular visitor attraction. The holiday lodges would enhance the quality and diversity of the services offered.
- The Hop Farm requiring constant innovation and evolution if its product was to remain competitive
- Future plans would attempt to convey the vision for the development of facilities and visitor amenities
- Proposals to create a centre for Kent businesses with an emphasis on providing local products and services and supporting cottage industries with a wide range of event, group function and wedding services
- The development of conference space, the relaunch of catering facilities and stimulation of complimentary leisure services which would support the sustainability of the whole site
- It was envisaged that future admission to the site would be for nominal charge with only attendance of events and the use of specific facilities attracting fees.

There then followed a question and answer session during which the following issues were raised:

- An increase in day events would create more traffic and noise problems. Those present were assured that the event calendar was already saturated and there was no scope to hold any further events although there was their desire to hold one high calibre concert each year
- The staging and siting of speakers would use the latest technology, which would reduce the sound and the impact on village residents
- Footpaths – the maintenance of the footpaths would be improved and discussions were taking place with KCC PROW to improve the PROW network both from a safety and aesthetically viewpoint.
- It was felt logical that the redevelopment of the ditches and ponds and the creation of outdoor pursuits opportunities would complement the existing facilities
- Gold Card membership scheme would continue
- Car park would be repaired towards the end of the season

Cllr Crawford thanked Ms Gorringe and Ms Murphy for attending the meeting and looked forward to the future developments

5. RESIDENTS QUESTIONS

- Speeding in Old Road - A parishioner raised his concern with speeding along Old Road. The matter would be referred to KHS. A brief résumé of the Speedwatch scheme was given. It was noted that Speedwatch relied heavily on volunteers and no one had expressed an interest in the scheme when it was included in the 2005/06 Annual Report.
- A parishioner drew attention to works being carried out at 19 Addlestead Road. The matter would be referred to TMBC Planners.
- A parishioner questioned the input the PC would have over the redevelopment of the Syngenta site at Yalding. The parishioner was advised that as East Peckham was only indirectly affected the PCs role would be limited to an advisory capacity.

6. Close of meeting

Before closing the meeting Cllr. Crawford advised those present that PC elections were due to be held during May and that if anyone was interested in standing for election nomination forms were available and that they needed to be completed and returned to TMBC by noon on 04.04.07. Cllr. Crawford then proceeded to thank the following:

- The Salvation Army and Mr Stuart Boyle for providing the sound system
- Mr and Mrs. Buckland for coordination the village poppy appeal
- The Clerk
- The Parish Councillors
- The 36 parishioners who had attended the meeting

There being no additional business, the meeting concluded at 20.50 p.m.