

PETTS WOOD & DISTRICT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

**MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY, 24th MARCH 2011 IN THE MEMORIAL HALL**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr Paul Stanley	Chairman	Mr Chris House
Mr Chris Harris	Vice-Chairman	Mr Derek Marrable
Mr Roger Barber	Treasurer	Mr John Pattenden
Mrs Janet Guntrip	Secretary	Mrs Susan Radford
		Mrs Andrea Stevens
		Mrs Elizabeth Strachan
		Mr Dennis Tinker
		Mr Philip Webb

GUESTS:

Mr James Cleverly GLA	Cllr Simon Fawthrop
Cllr Tony Owen	Mr Rob Vale, LBB
Sgt John Kemp (SNT)	PC Katherine Reeves (SNT)
PCSO Joanne Matthews	PCSO Colin Bissett
Dr Bob Hadley (Crofton RA & Federation)	Mr Ted Fenwick (Crofton RA)
Mr Paul Savage (Knoll RA)	Mr Richard Burton (Knoll RA)
Mr Tony McClarty (The Chislehurst Society)	Mr Tim Betts (National Trust)
Mr Sam Pettman (National Trust Ranger)	John Charsley (PW Business Association)
Mr Ralph Ambrose (May Fayre Committee)	Rev Simon Cragg (PW Churches Together)
Mr Fred Dale (Auditor)	

About 95 other Members were present

APOLOGIES:

Mr Jo Johnson MP	Cllr Doug Auld
Ms Jan Abrahams (Crofton RA)	Ms Alison Stammers (The Chislehurst Society)
Ms Sian Spencer Little (PRUH)	Adrian Ruffle (Member)

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The Chairman opened proceedings by welcoming all those present and particularly our guests. Apologies had been received from those listed above.

Before proceeding with the agenda Mr Stanley stated that there was important news to impart following a special full Council and Executive meeting last night. He asked Cllr Fawthrop to explain: the meeting had been convened to vote on Biggin Hill Airport Ltd's bid to vary the lease so that they could carry fare-paying passengers and extend their flying hours during the 2012 Olympic Games. At the meeting the motion which the Council debated – *against* the amendments to the lease as requested by BHAL – was put forward by Cllr Fawthrop and seconded by Cllr Owen. There were 8 main grounds for refusal and, when put to the vote, the results of the 54 Council Members present were 37 for the motion, 8 against the motion and 10 abstentions. There was therefore a clear majority against any change in the lease. At a separate meeting following the Council meeting, all 8 members of the Executive Committee confirmed the will of the Council by voting against any amendment to the lease. In answer to a question from a member Cllr Fawthrop confirmed that BHAL could not appeal the decision but they could take the Council to court for being unreasonable. The Council had therefore been very careful not to use provocative or emotive language. Cllr Owen added that this decision related only to the Olympic application, but councillors feared that there was a further application in the background, so they had to remain vigilant.

1. MINUTES OF LAST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 23rd MARCH 2010

The Minutes, copies of which had been available via the website and on the top table before the meeting, were taken as a true and accurate record. Mr Marrable proposed that they should be adopted, Mr Tinker seconded the proposition and it was carried by the meeting.

2. ANNUAL REPORT

The Chairman commended to the meeting the report which had been published in the March Gazette giving the overview of each member of the committee. Mr Stanley thanked Mrs Mary Mason for stepping in when he resigned two years ago and doing an excellent job. She had resigned in October last year for personal reasons and her valued contribution was missed by the committee. Mr Stanley had been voted in as Chairman by the committee and Mr Harris had agreed to be Vice-Chairman. The committee's objective for the coming year was to work more closely with our ward councillors and other local organisations with a view to making more of an impact.

Mr Stanley commended the annual report as published in the March Gazette to the meeting. Mr Charsley proposed that it should be adopted, Mr Webb seconded the proposal and it was carried by the meeting.

3. TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer was pleased to present the Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2010 which were published in the March Gazette. He felt that there was no more that he could add to his report, apart from apologising that the wrong year appeared at the bottom of the accounts and at the end of the Auditor's report. Mr Wood pointed out that there had been a deficit for the last two years and if this continued the reserves would very quickly be depleted. Mr Barber said that he had addressed this by adding 16 new advertisements to the Gazette.

There being no further questions, Mr Stoneham proposed that the Accounts should be adopted, Mr Stevens seconded the proposal and it was carried by the meeting.

Subscription Mr Barber said that he saw no reason to increase the subscription this year, so Mr Webb proposed that the subscription should remain at £3 for 2011, Mr Stevens seconded the proposition and it was carried by the meeting.

4. ELECTION OF OFFICERS, COMMITTEE AND AUDITOR

Mr Stanley reported that there had been some changes in the committee since the last AGM. Mrs Mary Mason had resigned and several members had been co-opted on during the year: Mrs Susan Radford (Education), Mrs Andrea Stevens (Planning), Mr Dennis Tinker (Membership) and Mrs Elizabeth Strachan who had yet to take on a portfolio. We still needed volunteers to cover Health and Community. During the year the committee had welcomed Mrs Rebecca Dudley as Editor of the Gazette, a task which Mr Stanley had been delighted to relinquish, and she was doing an excellent job. The Chairman thanked all the new volunteers.

All nominees had been proposed and seconded in the March Gazette and the officers were duly elected: Paul Stanley (Chairman), Chris Harris (Vice-Chairman), Roger Barber (Treasurer) and Janet Guntrip (Secretary). The rest of the committee was then elected en bloc: Chris House, Derek Marrable, John Pattenden, Susan Radford, Andrea Stevens, Elizabeth Strachan, Dennis Tinker and Phil Webb.

Mr Fred Dale had kindly offered to continue as Auditor for another year and Mr Stanley proposed that he should be so elected. Mr Marrable seconded the proposal and it was carried by the meeting.

5. GUEST SPEAKER – ROB VALE

The Chairman introduced Rob Vale, who spoke entertainingly to the meeting about his job as Head of the Public Protection Division of Trading Standards at the Council.

6. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

Trees and plants Ms Heffron of Woodland Way wondered if anybody had been asked to water the flowers and trees which had been planted by the Council in the shopping centre. She suggested that the Association might arrange for a few members to look after them, as some plants had not survived. A lady member understood that the shops had been given the task of watering them.

Chislehurst Road bridge Mr Callinan of Wood Ride asked for the latest position with regard to the proposed closure of the Chislehurst Road bridge. Cllr Owen said that the contracts were out to tender at the present time and we should hear the results in a month's time. Mr Stanley said that it was understood that the work was likely to start in October this year and could continue for up to 18 months. The committee was very concerned about the proposed length of time for the closure and wondered where all the traffic would be diverted. The committee had asked for a meeting with the councillors to discuss this. Cllr Fawthrop reported that the Council had issued a moratorium on all road works while the bridge was closed to ease the problems on surrounding roads. He also said that the suggestion that contractors might use National Trust land to place their equipment during the work would not now happen, as they would be able to use the approaches to the bridge. There was to be pedestrian access to the bridge.

Bus stop in Crofton Lane Mrs Foster of Crofton Lane asked what had happened to the proposal to install a bus stop in Crofton Lane. Mr Harris explained that the degree of opposition he had received from residents of Crofton Lane to his search to find a possible site for a bus stop meant that he had regrettably given up. He was very disappointed, as he felt that an extra bus stop would help the elderly, but most of the objections were based on road safety. It had been difficult for TfL to find a spot which was suitable and they had come up with one possibility, but the opposition meant that the whole project had been abandoned.

Speed cushions in Crofton Lane Mrs Hiscocks of St George's Road asked whether the speed cushions in Crofton Lane were at the right height, as she understood that there were regulations so that cars were not damaged. When the speed humps were removed and the cushions installed, she felt that some of them were too high, but our councillors confirmed that they were legal.

131 Queensway Mrs Gurney of Crest View Drive asked whether there was anything that could be done to remove the skip outside No 131 Queensway as it was an eyesore and had been there for some months. Mr Charsley pointed out that it was on private land and he understood the landlord was in dispute with the prospective tenant (another restaurant to be called the Bengal Lancer), so nothing was happening to the refurbishment. It was agreed that it is an eyesore, but the landlord was uncooperative.

15 Chatsworth Parade There was a query about whether the Council could get the fencing on the forecourt of the former Woolworths store removed, as the windows had been installed and the scaffolding taken down. There was no need to cordon off the forecourt any longer and Cllr Fawthrop promised to look into this. A member asked why the Woolworths sign had not yet been taken down and wondered whether a tenant had been decided. There had been talk of a craft shop but Mr Charsley said that the latest suggestion was a *give2give* charity shop. The premises shared the same landlord as 131 Queensway.

Zebra crossing and mini-roundabout Mrs Hiscocks of St George's Road asked whether members were happy with the new zebra crossing and she wondered why it had not yet been completed. Mr Pattenden said that both the crossing and the mini-roundabout should have been working by now, but there had been problems with the electrics. Mrs Hiscocks said that she was not happy about the siting of the crossing because it was so close to the roundabout and she felt that it was dangerous, especially as there was to be no refuge in the middle and the public would have to hurry across. It was pointed out that traffic should slow down from both directions because of the roundabout and therefore the crossing should be safe. Cllr Fawthrop said that both the crossing and the mini-roundabout had been requested for years, as pedestrians found it difficult to cross into Station Square. There had been a great deal of consultation and the Council now had the funding available for which they were to be congratulated. Once it was working it would be a lot safer on that corner and he promised to look into the delay.

Public toilets A member asked about the latest position on the toilets in Station Square. The Council had been considering a community toilet scheme in the borough but it needed the cooperation of shop keepers to provide alternative facilities. Mr Stanley said that the bus drivers for whom Station Square was a terminus used the toilets a lot, but members of Petts Wood Business Association were not keen on making their toilets available to the general public even though the Council was offering £1,000 to each outlet. It was pointed out that those shops that were interested in the scheme were not necessarily suitable as

their trading hours were not always when they would be most needed. Mr Cleverly said that the London Assembly was trying to get a general idea of how many public toilets there were across London and who owned them. Some were the responsibility of the local authority, others were run by transport or private companies. A list was being compiled of the number of facilities that were available to the general public and Mr Cleverly would circulate it when it became available. The Mayor was trying to encourage retailers to get involved and some of the larger companies were more likely to have facilities which they could share. A member felt that the money could be better spent elsewhere. Mr Callinan said that residents were not concerned about the whole of London, they wanted to know whether the toilets in Station Square would remain open. Cllr Owen stated that if something better was available to the general public in Petts Wood, then the Council would be happy to promote it, but as there was no such provision in Petts Wood the toilets would remain open. Mr Stanley reported that the toilets in Willett Recreation Ground had been vandalised recently and all the copper fittings stolen, but to the Council's credit they were repairing them at the moment, so the Council did care about toilet provision. Another member said that the community scheme was a much better idea, as the toilets in Station Square were unpleasant to use, but Mr Charsley repeated that shopkeepers did not want to open their toilets up to the general public even with the incentive of £1,000 from the Council.

Back garden development A member said that she was concerned about the forthcoming Budget as it had been reported that the regulations on back garden development were to be relaxed and it was so important for them to be kept. Cllr Fawthrop said that the Council was against back garden development as well as the Mayor of London and any changes in the Budget tomorrow would be more likely to affect public areas, not back gardens. The Minister in charge of planning was local MP Bob Neill who was passionate about protecting back gardens from development and all the evidence pointed to a commitment to this. Both front and back gardens were very important for guarding against localised flooding and encouraging biodiversity and quality of life. Mr Cleverly endorsed the councillor's statement and said that he would be very surprised if anything in the Budget tomorrow affected back gardens. Mr Stanley said that as an Association we had always opposed back garden development.

Chislehurst Road bridge Mr John Rich of Footbury Hill Road stated that in his lifetime this was the fourth time that the bridge had been renewed. He could not understand why it should take 18 months to complete when bridge replacements at the time of Eurostar were achieved in weeks. Cllr Fawthrop agreed that it was surprising that it should take so long and it would affect a huge area, not just Petts Wood. Once contracts had been signed the situation should be clearer. Cllr Owen said that there would only be short periods of time available for working on the bridge when trains were not running and most of the work would be done at night. It would be done as quickly as possible.

In conclusion the Chairman thanked guests and members for attending the meeting and invited them to enjoy the wine and refreshments which had been provided by a local resident, Nicky Holmes. The formal business of the meeting closed at 9.32 pm.