



Minute of the Annual General Meeting (AGM)

17th October 2021 16:00- 17:30, Old Woking Community Centre

1. The Chair, Robert Shatwell, welcomed attendees to the AGM. Apologies were received from Bill Corney, HVNF Treasurer, Cllr Deborah Hughes (Co-opted member of the Committee) and Lorin Adams (Co-opted member of Committee). 12 people attended in addition to the Chair, including Nic Pretty (Committee Member), Cllr Louise Morales (Co-opted member of the Committee), Cllr Will Forster and Cllr Liz Bowes.
2. Cllr Forster and Cllr Bowes both welcomed the continuation of the Forum and the drafting of the local plan. Cllr Bowes remarked that there needed to be a balance between preserving green spaces and allowing for development to gain access to the associated CIL funding.

Chair's Report

3. The Chair reported on activities from the past year:
 - a. The planning application for the redevelopment of the Woking Football Ground and associated Land on Kingfield Road. The Forum had participated in the Planning Inquiry and the Chair had given evidence. We were still awaiting the Secretary of State's decision following submission of the Inspector's report. However, the Planning Inspector that had been considering the Woking DPD had independently assessed the site as suitable for 93 dwellings and had stated that any development must include a new stadium for the football club and improved highways infrastructure at the entrance to the club, and that retail should be limited to local amenity and/or associated with the football club¹. It was known that the developer had put an alternate planning application however this had not yet been submitted as a planning application.
 - b. The Chair updated on progress with the application to for the green open space between Elmbridge Lane and Queen Elizabeth Way classified as a local village green (LVG). Woking Borough Council (WBC) had objected on the grounds that the residents already had a statutory right to use the land. The Chair had appealed appeal against this on the grounds that the council had never informed the residents of their statutory rights. The Chair would be addressing the WBC Executive Committee on 18th Nov 2021 suggesting that, as landowners, WBC should voluntarily agree to have the site redesignated as an LVG. The Chair further reported that applications for LVG status for the Recreation Grounds in Loop Rd and St Peters Rd have been refused by Surrey County Council on the grounds of 'trigger events' , i.e. previous planning applications which date back to 1948 and all of which had either been completed or were out of time. The Chair would be addressing the Joint Council Executive meeting on 10th Nov 2021 on this issue.

¹ The Report can be viewed here: [Inspector's Report - Woking 2021](#)

- c. The Chair reported that following concerns from residents regarding the pedestrian crossing points outside the 6th form college, he had surveyed the area and held a site meeting with the local head of highways at SCC. It had been agreed that a reduction in speed limit would not have any effect as the problem was the reluctance of drivers to give way to pedestrians. The Head of Highways had agreed that the solution would be to install three pedestrian crossing points at strategic locations to allow pedestrians to safely cross Rydens Way, Shackelford Rd and Sundridge Rd. The Chair would address the joint local committee on this matter on 10th Nov 2021.

Update on the Local Plan

4. Nic Pretty gave an update on the development of the local plan. She said that over the past year the Forum had run two large scale consultations of residents and local businesses. The residential survey had gained a decent response and showed that residents liked the open village-y and semi-rural feel to the Hoe Valley area. Primary concerns included maintaining and preserving the green open spaces, traffic issues and parking issues. All of which were addressed in the draft policies which were displayed in the hall and that would be made available on the website.
5. The response to the business survey had been disappointing. The Committee had spent a considerable amount of time compiling a list of businesses and local groups, such as local churches, from open-source information. All identified businesses had been contacted using a mix of email, Facebook and leaflets but no responses had been received. This indicated that the business community in the Hoe Valley did not want to have any issues specifically included in the plan and therefore the Committee intended to focus entirely on residents' issues.
6. The Committee had therefore drawn up some draft policies. The next steps were to finalise the policies and finish drafting the plan. It would then be subject to a longer consultation before being submitted to the Council for their views. After this, it would be subject to a statutory consultation and a local referendum.

Treasurers Report

7. Nic Pretty gave a brief Treasurers report including income and expenditure for the last year. The HNVF also provided the banking facilities for the South Woking Action Group (SWAG), but after separating that out, HNVF funds stood at £1056.84 although there would be some expenditure associated with the AGM that would need to be paid.
8. The treasurers report showed that although the HVNF appeared to have sufficient funds for our purpose, it may prove not to be sufficient to consult and publicise the local plan prior to approval. If this was the case we might need to find some form of additional financing.

Re-election of Officers

9. All officers were re-elected unopposed and would continue for another year. The Chair appealed for someone to step forward as a secretary and for more people to volunteer on the Committee.

Discussion of Local Plan Policies

10. The Floor was opened to discussion of the policies in the local plan. The following points were made:
 - a) All present agreed, through a show of hands, with the polices. Attendees liked the proposals regarding parking. Nobody explicitly disagreed with any policy, although the policy on

consideration of an SSSI on Milmoor common was queried (nb. as drafted the policy was to consider an SSI further rather than an explicit endorsement).

- b) Cllr Forster remarked that to rank the policies that would cost money would be a good idea so that CIL money spending could be prioritised.
- c) Cllr Forster remarked that some of the policies with regards to Highways improvements could be achieved ahead of the plan. The improvements to the junction of Kingfield Road and Westfield Avenue was already on the priority list for highways improvements.

11. Other issues raised were:

- d) The importance of preserving wildflowers and green spaces: Some residents were already working on around 30 wildflower spaces in the Borough. Norman said that it was concerning that Serco were not trying to preserve these areas and had recently mown Robin Hood roundabout for example.
- e) The development on Sutton Green Golf Course: Cllr Morales updated that the Woking DPD had been adopted at the full council meeting on Thursday 14th October². This included the recommendations of the site inspector for the Woking Football Club and the green belt allocations for Woking. Cllr Morales thought this meant Golf Club land would not be released from green belt for development, therefore she did not anticipate development on the site gaining planning approval.
- f) Parking and congestion on Elmbridge Lane, especially around SJB school and the College: residents were facing a lot of inconvenience due to congestion on Elmbridge Lane and inconsiderate parking by parents at drop off and pick up time. The number of events held at both SJB and the College at weekends meant that this was now an issue at weekends as well. SJB parents had previously been asked to drop off and pick up in the Leisure Centre Car Park. **ACTION: The Chair undertook to write to the Head of SJB asking if parents could be asked to park considerately and drop off / pick up in the Leisure Centre Car Park rather than using Elmbridge Lane.**
- g) Hedges overhanging and obstructing paths: this was thought to be an issue in Sundridge Road, Westfield Avenue and Loop Road. The Chair reported that he had previously contacted WBC who wrote to the owners and resolved the issue very quickly. **ACTION: The Chair said that if people brought these issues to his attention he would try and get them resolved.**

Meeting Ended

² See here for agenda and webcast: [Agenda for Council on Thursday, 14th October, 2021, 7.00 pm \(woking.gov.uk\)](https://www.woking.gov.uk)