

MERROW RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION
MINUTES of the FIFTY-FOURTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
held at St John's Centre and on Zoom on Monday 4th March 2024

The Chairman Andrew Strawson welcomed 95 members in the room and 20 families who attended by Zoom, Guildford Borough Councillors Joss Bigmore, Jo Shaw, Yves de Contades, Surrey County Councillor George Potter and PC Freya Ingham.

1. Apologies were received from Henriette Whitehead-van Prooije, John Pitkin, Denise Hilton, Deborah Seabrook, Charles Garside, Philip and Jan Wilkinson, Douglas Sutton, Richard Collins, George Gunson, Mike Savage and Peter and Tricia Tappin.

2. The minutes of the meeting of 17th April 2023 were approved

3. Matters arising; an update was provided on a possible new speed restriction in Park Lane, concerns about speeding in Trodds Lane, the possibility of a new Post Office in Epsom Road and progress with the SCC initiative to mitigate the problems associated with drop off and collections of pupils in Horseshoe Lane West.

4. The Chairman summarised the major activities of the MRA in the year which included a fascinating talk by Anne Milton in the autumn and many other issues which are covered in Merrow Life. He thanked the committee for all the work they did on behalf of the community. It was greatly appreciated.

He then introduced PC Freya Ingham our Community Police Officer from the Safer Neighbourhood Team who explained her role and emphasised that she was available to listen to the concerns of Merrow residents on anything to do with the safety and wellbeing of Merrow residents.

5. Planning. Keith Meldrum introduced the item based on the current issues in Merrow Life. Joss Bigmore explained how the GBC Local Plan was to be amended without a wholesale re-writing of the Plan and that in the future Guildford would be expected to build many more homes and that it was imperative that we maintained the housing supply. George Potter commented that more houses needed to be built in the town centre and the Local Plan had to be reviewed every 5 years.

6. Environment. Stephen Rudd the environment officer gave a presentation with slides covering the Merrow Downs, the Merrow Pollinator Reserves, the Yew Tree project and the review of the Surrey Hills National Landscape boundary which was ongoing.

7. Financial Report. This was available at the meeting, presented by Dave Smith and adopted by the meeting unanimously on a proposal from Stuart Letts and seconded by Stephen Rudd. Ian Anderson was proposed as the Voluntary Independent Examiner, seconded and approved with thanks for his work.

8. Elections. The following officers were proposed by Gordon Farquharson, seconded by Jennifer Margrave and elected to the committee for 2024/25, unanimously

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| Chairman | Andrew Strawson |
| Vice Chairman | Keith Meldrum |
| Treasurer | Dave Smith |
| Secretary | Henriette Whitehead-van Prooije |
| Environment Officer | Stephen Rudd |
| Membership Secretary | Claire Rymell |
| Publicity Officer | Vacant |
| Webmaster | Dave Smith |

Gordon Farquharson and Lorna Seymour were proposed as Committee members by Claire Rymell, seconded by Ian Anderson and approved by the meeting, unanimously.

(Denise Hilton, John Pitkin and Clare McVicker continue on the Committee this being the 2nd year of their 3 year terms)

9. AOB A spirited discussion took place and covered:-

- Urnfield playing field development ongoing concerns
- Flood protection schemes in Guildford
- The Merrow Village Hall flooring
- Park Lane and Trodds Lane speed mitigation measures
- Horse and Groom renovation
- Churchyard wall repair
- Clandon House renovations
- Burpham Active Travel scheme

The meeting adjourned at about 9.30pm to allow members to have a drink with nibbles with thanks to all those that had participated in the discussions and provided the refreshments.