

**Banstead Village Residents' Association**  
**Minutes of the 70<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2017**  
**Held at the Priory School, Bolters Lane, Banstead**

**Welcome by the vice chairmen:**

Sally Hull and Mike Sawyer warmly welcomed all members including Councillors Dr Lynne Hack, Eddy Humphreys, Ken Gulati and Sam Walsh to the 70<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the association, and thanked the Headmaster and staff of the Priory School for allowing us the use of their hall and facilities.

**Minutes of the 69<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting 2016:**

These were presented in summary form, no objections raised and their acceptance was proposed by Ted Palmer, seconded by Graeme Ward and duly accepted as a true record.

**Matters Arising:**

There were no matters arising that were not already covered by the ensuing agenda. Mike Sawyer used the opportunity to thank Catalina Vassallo-Bonner the secretary, for all her support and hard work. She was unable to be present this evening.

He also thanked Richard Saunders, our local estate agents for kindly printing these minutes at their own expense for in excess of the last 10 years.

**Presentation by Simon Bland, Economic Prosperity Programme Manager (Reigate & Banstead Council) and Michelle Cass, a member of the Banstead Business Guild:**

Sally welcomed Simon Bland who gave a most interesting talk on his portfolio which was concerned with the economy and jobs in our region. There are over 6,500 small businesses operating in the borough and he is charged with supporting them through the giving of information on how to access grants, education and training. He talked of the importance of town centres and congratulated Banstead on having an outstanding High Street which is self sustaining. He praised Cllr Eddy Humphries for his role in setting up the Banstead Business Guild in January 2016, replacing the much smaller Banstead Village Shopkeepers Association, and whose members had been so successful in setting up the first Christmas Fair on the 30<sup>th</sup> Nov.2016

At this juncture he handed over to Michelle Cass, whose drive and dynamism was instrumental in the Fair's success. She spoke with great enthusiasm of her love for and commitment to the Village and highlighted her next big challenge which is to raise £10,000 by various means including setting up a Just Giving Page in order to enhance or in some cases replace the now ageing Millennium Christmas Lights.

Sally Hull thanked both Simon Bland and Michelle Cass for their most interesting talks, for giving up their time to attend the AGM and for all their efforts on our behalf.

**Vice Chairmen's Report:**

Mike Sawyer's talk reflected the difficulties faced as we continue to live in a climate of public spending cuts. Although our council was recently given a most prestigious national award to recognise its efficiency and management qualities, these were achieved at a time of severe loss of central government subsidies and he believed that this year there will be no government support whatsoever. This means that non-essential spending is cut back and in some cases environmental improvements and maintenance will continue to be curtailed. Some of this he noted we will have to live with, but for other cutbacks the burden for reversing these will have to fall more locally to the community. In the absence of a Village Council (which would have the ability to raise funds locally) and whose merits have been discussed in the past this will increasingly fall to local volunteers and voluntary bodies such as BVRA and BBG, Rotary and the like.

He then turned his attention to planning matters which constituted his main involvement on the committee. He highlighted all that was being done by the association at the present time to counter the threat to that narrow area of green belt in or near Croydon Lane. The building of 7 houses on land at presently occupied by Hengest Farm has been approved but a number of speculative applications have been rejected including, he was delighted to report, the appeal to build a cemetery in Croydon Lane.

He thanked the hundreds of residents who had supported the protest against the cemetery application and also wished to place on record his thanks to his colleagues on the planning sub group, Sally Hull, Ben Martin, Tony Ford, John Hayns and Catalina Vassallo-Bonner for their support.

In addition he noted the merger of 3 local primary schools into the new Banstead Preparatory School on the existing Greenacre Site and the subsequent question mark over the future of the soon to be redundant Priory site. The former Legal and General buildings in Kingswood are to be marketed for housing redevelopment although the redevelopment of the former allotments site at Wellesford Close has been abandoned for now.

Mike Sawyer stressed that BVRA recognised that the council has had to accept the need for more housing in order to meet the national planning policy requirements but felt that Banstead residents had been inadequately consulted on the new Development Management Policies. These are the detailed proposals to implement the Council's Core Strategy and together form the Council's Local Plan, which although intended to cover the whole borough he did not believe reflected the needs of Banstead Village. In his view he felt there had been no proper

effort to explain to our residents the scale and nature of the potentially substantial development and policy proposals which was why BVRA had mounted an “explanatory” display in the Orchard last autumn. Subsequently there had been one further meeting with the planners but no feedback had as yet been received as to whether these concerns were recognised or indeed were likely to be addressed.

In conclusion he wished to thank John and Shirley Conacher, who had stood down for reasons of ill health, for all their many years of service and also to recognise the huge contribution given to the community by Ron Phillips, who died earlier this year.

Sally Hull then thanked individual members of the committee for their particular contributions including David Talbot, who in addition to setting up and managing the website has been instrumental, together with Marion Hayns in revamping and editing the new-look newsheet which has been so well received. She thanked David Gradidge for all his continued and sterling work in organising the distribution through the network of road stewards, to whom as always we remain grateful for their valuable support. Catalina Vassallo-Bonner, in addition to supporting BVRA as secretary is also Chair of the Federation which has grown into a very strong voice locally and is a huge support to its members. She also serves as a member of the Management Committee of NORA (National Organisation of Residents’ Associations).

Our Clean for the Queen in March and subsequent Autumn clean in November attracted much support and Sally Hull took the opportunity to flag up June 17<sup>th</sup> when we are organising a mega clean as part of our involvement in the Banstead in Bloom Competition. Brian Ransom, in addition to his contribution to this initiative has continued to coordinate the Winkworth Woodland Community Project where wild flowers and hedgerow plants are beginning to make their appearance. Traffic surveys have been undertaken with respect to the Winkworth Access Roads Traffic Calming Proposal but as yet we have not been given access to all the results. She thanked Councillor Ken Gulati for all his support with this and said any updates would be disseminated via the website and the newsheet. Cliff Glanfield has been very successful with a tree planting initiative in his own road and is now bringing this experience to the committee and in leading the Village Centre sub group which is looking at the High Street and surrounding areas that need attention, repair or enhancement. If any members felt so inspired Sally Hull urged them to volunteer their services and come forward to join with us.

She concluded by announcing that she was stepping down from role of vice chair due to increased work commitments and thanked her co vice chair Mike Sawyer and the rest of the committee for all their support over this past 2 years. Marion Hayns and Cliff Glanfield had announced their willingness to stand as Vice Chairmen subject to election at the Executive meeting, with Mike Sawyer being willing to stand as Chairman for one year only.

#### **Treasurers Report:**

David Gradidge was pleased to report that there had been an increase in giving of almost £1400 due to the raising of the subscription and he thanked Richard Saunders for their generous contribution towards the cost of printing the newsheets which has allowed us to use colour photographs. He thanked Cliff Houghton for his willingness to continue to be our honorary independent examiner.

A proposal to accept the audited accounts was given by Cllr Ken Gulati, seconded by Gerald Bridge

i) **Election of Executive Committee:** Gerald Bridge, Roger Collins, Tony Ford, Cliff Glanfield, John Hayns, Marion Hayns, Richard Heath, Ben Martin, Brian Ransom, Mike Sawyer, David Talbot - (Proposed Audrey Carty, Seconded Mary Palmer)

ii) **Election of Hon. Secretary** – Catalina Vassallo Bonner and **Hon. Treasurer** - David Gradidge (Proposed Gerald Bridge, Seconded Brian Ransom)

#### **Questions to Councillors:**

Sally Hull welcomed our local councillors who took the floor and then replied to members’ questions. Cllr Dr Lynne Hack thanked Mike Sawyer, together with Gillian Hein from the CPRE, Catalina Vassallo-Bonner and Ben Martin for representing BVRA at the Cemetery Appeal last month. She announced that the new cast iron litter bins and planters should be in place in the High Street by the 6<sup>th</sup> June. She was hopeful that the community pay back team would be drafted in to repaint the bollards and announced that Brian Cowle, a long standing local councillor now retired is to be appointed an Honorary Alderman.

Further topics covered included planning, Banstead Countryside Day, Recycling Bins in public areas, trouble in the Lady Neville Park and nuisance car parking in North Acre.

#### **AOB:**

Mike Sawyer thanked Sally Hull for her sterling and energetic work as co-vice chairman for the last two years.

There being no further business the vice chairs thanked both Residents and Councillors for attending and invited all to continue their discussions over refreshments. The evening concluded at 10pm.

Marion Hayns  
29<sup>th</sup> May 2017