

2nd December 2014

MINUTES OF MEETING

Title:	Basingstoke District Association of Parish and Town Councils	
Held On:	Tuesday 2 nd December 2014	
Present:	Julian Jones Alan Cox Chris Curtis Martin Biermann Les Fryer David Richards Keith Nuttall Peter Bloyce Brian Langer Alan Ball Steve Spillane David Leeks Mike Kean Sarah Curtis	Dummer (Chair) Ashmansworth Baughurst Chineham Chineham Ellisfield Old Basing Old Basing Overton Sherfield on Loddon Silchester Tadley Whitchurch Wootton St Lawrence
Guests:	Alison Edwards Gail Allen Chief Inspector Simon Dodds Assistant Chief Constable David Pryde	Secretary Age Concern Hampshire Basingstoke District Commander Hampshire Constabulary
Apologies:	Martin Slatford Caroline Dee Chris Pottinger Lorna Cuthill Nick Thurlow Sandy Johnston Richard Nicholson	Baughurst Bradley Hannington Mapledurwell & Up Nately Mortimer West End Silchester Woodmancote

1.1 It was requested that the minutes were amended to say that Tony Curtis had retired and not resigned (paragraph 3.3). Other than that, the minutes of the last meeting were approved as an accurate record.

2 Apologies for absence

2.1 Noted as above.

3 Matters arising from previous minutes

3.1 Referring to an action point in paragraph 3.6 of the previous minutes, Julian Jones informed the meeting that there would be no workshops at the Mayor's reception this year.

3.2 Julian Jones and Martin Slatford will meet Laura Taylor, Director of Council Services, on 15th January 2015 to discuss the relationship between the Association and BDBC. Discussions will include holding workshop sessions in the Association's March meeting.

4. Future Neighbourhood Policing Plans – Chief Inspector Simon Dodds, District Commander for Basingstoke and Deane

4.1 Chief Inspector Simon Dodds explained that, between 2010 and 2014, Hampshire Constabulary was required by Government to save £54 million. This has been achieved through collaboration and shared services and the loss of 1500 staff, 1000 of which were Police Officers. Between 2014-2016 Hampshire Constabulary is required to find another £25 million savings, and to do this it needs to look further at staffing. It needs to operate smarter on less money. The Chief Inspector said he needs to prioritise 999 calls, apprehending serious offenders, and keeping the public safe from harm. He has also made a commitment to neighbourhood policing. At present, Basingstoke and Deane has 32 neighbourhood police officers, of which 21 are town-based and 11 are rural, and 24 PCSOs (Police Community Support Officers). Hampshire Constabulary currently employs a relatively low number of PCSOs and so these will be ring-fenced. The proposals for further savings will mean the loss of 11 neighbourhood Police Officers. Of these, 8 will be lost from the town and 3 from rural areas. The Chief Inspector explained that this compares favourably with elsewhere in Hampshire.

4.2 From next year, response and neighbourhood teams – those responding to 999 calls, PCSOs and Beat Officers – will be moved to the Parklands building of BDBC. This will enable them to work alongside CSPOs (Community Safety Patrol Officers). A police investigation centre for North Hampshire will be built at Viables in Basingstoke with 32 cells. This should be ready in approximately 2 years. The current Basingstoke Police Station will remain in use until then. Rural police will have their headquarters at Tadley, but will have bases in the local areas as now. The rural beat officers' vehicles and lockers will be kept in Tadley. Beat officers will travel to Tadley each day to collect their vehicles. PCSOs will work their current beat structure and become more involved in community engagement and other issues for which they have the necessary powers (these powers can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/117572/pcco-powers.pdf). There will always be a Sergeant on duty with them. The Chief

Inspector said that he was conscious of the benefits of continuity and so would try to keep PCSOs and beat officers in their current locations where possible. As soon as a map of who will be working where is available, he will share it with us.

4.3 The floor was opened to any questions. Issues raised included the movement of some Police Officers and PCSOs to the Metropolitan Police – this was due to a recent Met recruitment drive and the lack of opportunity for progression (due to a recruitment freeze) locally; and Special Constables – these remain an important part of policing but the Force is currently focusing on training existing Special Constables before looking to recruit more. Martin Biermann stressed the importance of maintaining a police presence in the less-troubled areas as it is this presence that keeps them trouble-free, and the desire for more opportunities for the public to meet and interact with their local Police Officer. The Chief Inspector stated that he was committed to having staff attend parish council meetings, but that in future this would be PCSOs. This was part of their role and meant Police Constables could be out on the streets using their powers. It was agreed that Annual Parish Assemblies would be good meetings for PCSOs (and Police Constables if possible) to attend. The Chief Inspector said he would take the idea away and do his best to facilitate a police presence at Annual Parish Assemblies.

4.4 Mike Keen asked whether the police station at Whitchurch would close. The Chief Inspector said that it would be there for at least two years whilst the centre at Viables is built, but he could not give a long-term plan for the station. Brian Langer said that he has seen a reduced police presence in Overton, and police surgeries have stopped. This is despite the fact that Overton is a growing community.

4.5 The Assistant Chief Constable said that, whilst there had been a cut in rural police numbers, those remaining would be ring-fenced such that they could not be moved away to help out elsewhere, as was the case at present. GPSs were also being placed in cars so that the control centre would be better informed about which vehicle was closest to an incident, and the police have been working with the Rural Payments Agency to map the owners of rural and agricultural land and help them navigate their way round such areas. PCSOs will be issued with cars that are not suitably equipped for them to be diverted to emergencies.

4.6 Alan Cox raised the issue that, though in the past there had been very few incidents, there had been a recent spate of crime in Ashmansworth. The Chief Inspector said that he was aware of this and there was an action plan in place to tackle it. Les Fryer asked how the Force would manage with the extra housing that was proposed for the Basingstoke area. The Assistant Chief Constable explained that this would result in more funding, at least from an increase in precept receipts (30% of police funding comes from the precept).

4.7 Keith Nuttall said that every quarter the PCSO, parish council and community in Old Basing and Lychpit get together to set their priorities, and this works well. In response to a question by Brian Langer, the Chief Inspector said that Hampshire Constabulary works very closely with Thames Valley Police. Police also make regular visits to permanent traveller encampments. The Force no longer has School Liaison Officers. Any visits will be made by PCSOs in the future. Julian Jones pointed out that children are dispersed over many schools and that police attending village fetes could also establish trust between the community and neighbourhood police. Concern was expressed by Chris Curtis over changes in staff responsible for Speedwatch.

4.8 Julian Jones thanked Chief Inspector Simon Dodds and Assistant Chief Constable David Pryde for their time.

5 Village Agent Programme – Gail Allen, Age Concern Hampshire

5.1 Gail Allen is the coordinator for the Village Agent scheme in Hampshire, run by Age Concern and funded by Hampshire County Council (HCC). The project started following research carried out by HCC in 2011 which found that older people often don't like calling 0845 phone numbers and asking strangers for advice. HCC therefore funded the Village Agent project whereby a Village Agent, trained by Age Concern and HCC, signposts older people to information and local services. In the first year of the project, 12 people were recruited in Hampshire. This proved successful and so funding for a further three years, to October 2015, was provided. There are currently 35 Village Agents in Hampshire with five more due to start soon. In the Basingstoke area there are Village Agents in Overton, Highclere, Burghclere (3), and Sherfield on Loddon (2). Age Concern are also looking at Preston Candover and Sherborne St John, and are open to other suggestions. Age Concern does have to check the suitability of areas with HCC before agreeing to a Village Agent for the area, based on demographics and how rural an area is.

5.2 Brian Langer reported that Overton was delighted with its Village Agent. Keith Nuttall asked whether Gail Allen would be willing to attend a Parish Council meeting to discuss the scheme. Gail said she would be happy to.

5.3 Village Agent co-ordinators Gail Allen and Alison Talbot can be contacted on 01962 892451/01962 892443, or at villageagent@ageconcernhampshire.org.uk or gail.allen@ageconcernhampshire.org.uk.

6. Open Forum

6.1 Brian Langer informed the meeting that there was a Transport Forum meeting at BDBC the following day (3rd December 2014).

6.2 Chris Curtis asked what other parishes do regarding Remembrance Services, as his council (Baughurst) was finding it increasingly costly to manage road closures. Other parishes reported that they had scaled back their road closures for Remembrance Sunday but acknowledged that this was harder for Baughurst due to the location of their War Memorial (on a crossroads). Chief Inspector Simon Dodds attended the Baughurst Remembrance Service in 2014 and has committed to a police presence in future years.

6.3 Martin Biermann said he had received a letter from Councillor Roy Perry, Leader of HCC, on devolution issues. There are currently a number of ideas being put forward for further devolution of powers, including making Hampshire a unitary authority, forging a joint council with Portsmouth and Southampton, and bringing together Local Economic Partnership areas. Martin Biermann suggested that devolution would be a good agenda item for a BDAPTC meeting. The Association could then pass its thoughts to HALC.

6.4 Julian Jones reported that he has been in dialogue with Mary Edwards, Chief Executive of North Hampshire Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, regarding proposals to build a Trauma Centre at Deane. Some concerns were raised about the transport and traffic implications of this proposal, although some members also felt that it would be good that local residents in need of such facilities would not have to travel so far.

6.5 Steve Spillane reported on the rollout of high-speed broadband in the area. BDBC has published the phases in which different areas in the borough will receive high-speed broadband in order to meet its target of 90% of areas by 2015. The next target is to have

95% of areas covered by 2017. Steve Spillane said that the 5% not covered by this phase would be largely rural and that providing for these areas by other means could be difficult as BT have been using State Aid legislation to block some attempts of other providers.

7. Reports

HALC

7.1 The next meeting of HALC is Saturday 6th December 2014. HCC has vastly decreased its subsidy to HALC, and this, combined with the recent legal action settled with the landlords of HALC's Chandlers Ford premises (see minutes of 9th September meeting) mean that funds are currently tight for HALC. A new scheme to replace Quality Councils has been adopted by NALC, but the criteria were not agreed with county associations and HALC do not agree with them. HALC hope to have a new legal advice service for parish councils in place by January 2015.

7.2 Steve Spillane reported that the rural LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) is being reshaped and he would like to put himself forward as the HALC representative on the Hampshire Rural LEP Forum (HRF). It was agreed that Julian Jones would ask Steven Lugg (HALC Chief Executive) if Steve Spillane could attend the HALC meeting on Saturday.

Community Safety Forum

7.3 Alan Ball reported on behalf of Sandy Johnston. The CSF met several months ago for the first time in nine months. Sandy Johnston did not see that the Forum had much of a future.

Disability Forum

7.4 Alan Ball reported on behalf of Sandy Johnston. The Disability Forum is acting as an umbrella for a range of disability organisations. This role will be launched at its AGM on 25th February 2015. Brian Langer asked if there could be an update at the next meeting on the progress that South West Trains/Network Rail were making to improve disabled access at train stations. Access at Overton train station is currently very limited for wheelchair users (an inaccessible footbridge). The dispensation granted to stations to provide for disabled users runs out soon.

Voluntary Services Forum

7.5 The VSF is due to meet on 3rd December 2014. There is nothing new to report since the last BDAPTC meeting.

Community Speedwatch

7.6 Nothing to report.

Meeting closed at 9.40pm.

