

THE SHERBORNE AND DISTRICT SOCIETY (CPRE)

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting The Digby Memorial Hall, Digby Road, Sherborne Friday 10th November, 2023

The Meeting was attended by 34 members. Also in attendance was Linda Williams from Dorset CPRE.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from:

Bob Bowmer, John Boodle, Paul Austin, Mark Smallwood, Adrian and Miyoko Thorpe, Beryl Wood, Frank Skinner, Gwynneth Sugg, Janie and Robin Odgers, Julian Dams, Alan Elliott, Alan Combridge, Susan Higginson, Jo Robinson.

2. Minutes of the Last Annual General Meeting

The minutes were unanimously approved and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. Matters Arising

None

4. Chair's Report

Sir Christopher Coville gave a short overview of the key Issues for Sherborne and the surrounding villages in DT9- namely protecting and enhancing our town of Sherborne, the local villages and the adjoining landscapes and waterways.

This was preceded by a toast to absent members.

5. Accounts

Copies of the accounts were made available to the meeting. After a brief resume by David Gidney on behalf of the Treasurer they were approved by Egerton Skipwith and seconded by Shaun Leavey.

6. Team Leaders' Reports

(i) Planning

Peter Neal gave an update on 3 aspects of planning. First, the Levelling up and Regeneration Act came into force in November. A curate's egg where good points included Local Planning Authorities being able to set conditions for build out rate. In addition the revised National Planning Policy Framework should drop the requirement for a 5 year land supply. Good design to be a fundamental part of any development proposal. The duty to co-operate with neighbouring authorities has been removed which could save many houses being allocated to Dorset. Disadvantages include a likely reduction in public consultation and a considerable power reserved to the Secretary of State to

control key policies such as affordable housing and renewable energy through a National Development Management Policy.

Peter said the Dorset Local Plan was not due until 2006. As a result there have been no further discussions with Sherborne Castle Estate over its masterplan for the extension of Sherborne to the west.

Recently Dorset CPRE has worked closely with Somerset CPRE in objecting to a large development proposed in Charlton Horethorne.

(ii) Town Centre

John Stokoe outlined a vision for Sherborne Town Centre with Cheap Street as the link between the Abbey and The Sherborne. A vibrant place for leisure and retail, with a sensible balance between the needs of residents, retailers and visitors.

Improved traffic management, well maintained roads and pavements, development sympathetic to the historic nature of the Town.

Creation of a walk through history, linking the Railway Station, Pageant Gardens, the Abbey and Almshouse, The Museum, Cheap Street, The Sherborne and the Castles.

(iii) Farming/Agricultural

Shaun Leavey stressed the importance of the local farmed landscape to the quality of life in Sherborne town.

He referred to the inadequacy of the Sustainable Farming Initiative Scheme (which was designed post-Brexit to replace the old CAP "single payment") and the extent to which farmers were not "buying into" it.

Our local farm visits have been very successful- of which the last two have been to farms of national repute.

Shaun also outlined feedback from a recent meeting he had attended with the Farming Minister Mark Spencer where he expressed his concern that he (and the government) seemed not to grasp the need for a more strategic approach to food self-sufficiency.

(iv) Listed Buildings

Julia Findlater raised the following:

Newell House- Dorset Council unwilling to use their powers to stop the decay of this important building. It was later reported by the Chair that there was a possibility of David Birley helping set up a meeting with the owner.

Heritage Assets List- half a dozen buildings in Sherborne submitted by CPRE for inclusion in the list. Dorset Council not yet committed to a date for publication.

Sherborne Railway Station- thanks to Giles Harvey for his poster on the impact of the railway on the commerce of Sherborne. Network Rail and South West Railway committed to repairing the parcel office.

Planning Enforcement of Illegal Building Works- worrying increase in works to listed buildings going ahead without planning permission.

Heritage Design Guidance in Cheap Street- some good examples of new replacement signs but too many examples of poor replacements, often without the necessary Listed Building Consent. CPRE pushing for a meeting with Sherborne Town Council to discuss design guidance.

Meeting to be held with Conservation Officer to discuss planning anomalies on recent decisions made on Listed Buildings and to understand the decision making process adopted by Dorset Council which is on occasion threatening our heritage.

(v) Membership

The Chair explained that Ray Hartley had stood down as Membership Secretary due to family illness. It had been agreed that the roles of Secretary and Membership Secretary would be combined with David Gidney taking on the position.

We had about 100 members both in Sherborne and the surrounding DT9 villages.

Gay Fegen and Sarah White were welcomed as new members. It was hoped that the AGM showed the important role that the Sherborne and District Society played and would encourage existing members to persuade their friends to join.

7. Election of Officers and Committee

The nomination of Officers and Committee members was proposed by Mrs Gibbons and seconded by Felicia Wilde.

President	Mr P Neal
Life Vice President	Captain L Bird
Chair	Sir C Coville
Vice Chair	Vacancy
Hon Secretary	Mr D Gidney
Hon Treasurer	Mr J Boodle
Hon Membership Secretary	Mr D Gidney

Committee

Mr P Austin, Ms J Findlater, Mr S Leavey, Mr M Smallwood, Maj- Gen J Stokoe and Mr B Bowmer

8. Appointment of Honorary Examiner

Paul Austin volunteered to take on the role of Honorary Examiner, which was approved by the Meeting.

9. Resolutions

None put forward.

10. Any Other Business

None.

11. Questions

The meeting was then opened to the floor .

Mike Keatinge mentioned the need to support the use of local buses .

Further questions were asked about Newell House which is Grade 2 listed .As mentioned above, a meeting with the owner is being investigated.

David Hayes mentioned the promotion of solar panels on the roof of buildings such as car parks rather than on agricultural land.

The Meeting closed at 7.35 pm.

Conclusion

Sir Christopher Colville thanked the Committee for their work and the Members for their support.