

Haslemere Town Council

Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting

Wednesday 21st April 2010

Venue Woolmer Hill School

Town Mayor: * Melanie Odell

Deputy Mayor: Bill Douglas

Councillors * present

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| Mrs P Blades | * Mr P Isherwood |
| Mrs M Borwick | * Mrs C King |
| * Mr M Dover | * Mr W King |
| Mr J Edwards | * Mr R Knowles |
| * Mrs F Foster | * Mrs C Lancaster |
| Mr M Foster | * Mr J Mackie |
| * Mrs B Hewett | Mr S Mulliner |
| * Mr B Howard | Mrs J Stevens |

The meeting was opened by the Town Mayor Melanie Odell and sixty three people attended.

1. **The minutes of the meeting held on the 22nd April 2009** were agreed and approved.
2. **The annual report of the Town Council was presented by Town Mayor Melanie Odell.** The following report was presented:-

The year started at the same time as the Haslemere Festival with a fortnight of events including Pam Ayres, a Tennyson Literary Weekend, cycling, dinners, concerts, a fabulous Fair on Lion Green with the classic cars, helicopter rides and talks. Quite a baptism of fire! And with so many other similar events, The Food Festival, Haunted Haslemere, the Christmas Market and Carols we should be very proud of the quality as well as the quantity of projects which are delivered to our town by the town.

One of our statutory duties as a Town Council is to provide allotments and we are delighted to have opened a new site at Clammer Hill in Grayswood. It was a perfect autumn evening last September when as part of the Food Festival we met to formally declare the ground available and were joined by Barbara Steele-Perkins who led us in prayers. Two fruit trees were planted, one for the Town Council and the other for Transition Haslemere to mark the opening.

All of the events such as this have been reported in our newsletter Haslemere Happenings. The next edition will be out in August and features the Food festival. I would like to thank all the advertisers who enable us to produce the newsletter without any cost to our residents and also the hard working team who help to put the editorial together. Well done Councillors!

Lion Green has continued to be a much used recreational area managed by the Town Council. With our In Bloom project covering Haslemere Wey Hill and Beacon Hill the whole area has been looking wonderful. With the support of local volunteers Wey Hill has been transformed this year and we are much indebted to this group for their dedication which has made such a difference.

Last week I was honoured to represent Haslemere at the signing of a bond of friendship with Waverley, Farnham, Godalming and Cranleigh. This was at the instigation of Pat Frost Mayor of Waverley and readily agreed to by our local regiment the Princess of Wales Regiment. It was a memorable evening with members of the regiment old and new there to watch the signing of the bond. We look forward to welcoming the regiment here on the 2nd May at Woolmer Hill Sports Ground for a family fun day and to fulfilling our desire to support the regiment and their families now and in the future.

The past few months have seen members of the staff sub-committee unusually busy. With the impending retirement of our Assistant Town Clerk a series of interviews and a subsequent employment have occurred. We were indeed fortunate to have a very high calibre of candidate and are delighted to welcome Lisa O'Sullivan here tonight.

We are very lucky in Haslemere to have a Town Clerk who wants to be fully conversant with the vagaries of Local Government administration and who is leading us through the re accreditation for Quality status for the Town Council.

At this point I would like to thank all our staff, Mike, Kathy and Hadyn for their help and support during the year. The successful employment has been just one of the projects which have been so ably managed and they do work as a fantastic team. We are indebted to them all for their hard work and we know that the seamless transfer to new staff will be one of their main priorities in the near future. I must also thank my fellow councillors for their co-operation and hard work during the year and their continual support. A lot of effort goes on behind the scenes to bring projects to fruition and I am very grateful for the time and effort which is given so enthusiastically.

I would like to thank our essential services, the police and fire brigade who have served the community so well during the year. In particular their support at our town events which helps us so much on the day.

As a Council we have lobbied hard to maintain our essential services. We have agreed that any change of police presence must be agreed before a move is made. We have been active in ensuring that the temporary ward closures at our local hospital were temporary rather than permanent. We have had good representation at the Hindhead Together meetings and their sub-committees. Discussions are taking place for a community opening and the area leading to the Punch Bowl is the subject of design at present and we are delighted that things continue apace to bring this national project in on time and in budget.

At the Council's January meeting a precept for 2010/11 was set for £206,206, a rise of 3% adding £6006 to the income 49p per elector per annum. The gross estimated expenditure for 2010 /11 Administration £122,419, Premises £8,062, External Maintenance £28,141, Discretionary Expenditure £28,463, Grants £48,300.

Our grants panel has met three times this year to consider funding applications from organisations and awarded grants to Haslemere Lawn Tennis Club, Transition Haslemere, Beacon Hill Heavy Brigade, Woolmer Hill Sports Assc'n, Waverley Hoppa, Haslemere Educational Museum, Vitalise, Haslemere Music Society, Sickle Mill Allotments, St Stephen's Church Organ, the Haslemere Hall and our Town Crier. A wide and varied group of people for whom we hope we have made a difference during the year. On the subject of Town Crier, we say a sad farewell to Terry Burns who has faithfully served this town for many years as Town Crier. At the Charter Fair, on May 3rd, Terry will hand over to his successor who has been chosen and we are delighted that the Chamber of Trade has found such an able replacement for our long serving Town Crier.

The Town Council has this year helped to ensure that the Charter Fair will take place. As is so often the case, a few people have for many years organised the event and have been asking to be relieved of their duties. This year we were in danger of not having an event, so the Town Council has agreed to take the mantle of management and Councillors and office staff have been actively involved in the organisation. We look forward to fine weather and a great day for the community – please join us on May 3rd.

And on the subject of weather! We were all surprised by the amount and the length of time the snow stayed and it served as a timely reminder how mother nature will always rule. There were questions to be answered – who can clear what – what are the liabilities – who owns what land, road, car park and how can this be cleared. As a Town Council the most frustrating thing was not be allowed to help where we thought we could. However as a community, we did all pull together and now we have been involved with discussions with all levels of council and have formed an emergency committee at our own level which will serve us to be better prepared in the future.

On a personal note, in my year as Mayor I have hosted a series of receptions for local groups. These have included other local Mayors, Chairmen and their Clerks, People in Uniform, the sports clubs, youngsters, the elderly, and Snow Grateful those who helped with the snow clearance. It has been a joy to have been able to meet and spend time with the people who make this community so special.

I have supported two charities, the Haslemere Educational Museum and Everyman the male cancer charity. Four years ago I stood in this very hall as Chairman of Sport Haslemere in a very distressed state having just learned that Jonathan, my eldest son, had been diagnosed with testicular cancer. Today, whilst we all still keep our fingers crossed at every check up, I am very proud that he has been my consort this year and we shall celebrate Sophie's, Jonathan's and Buff's daughter, birthday in May. So chaps I would urge you all please to keep an eye on your bodies and if you are at all concerned please see your doctor quickly! And ladies if you are concerned – pester them! My other charity The Haslemere Educational Museum is an independent charitable body managed by a group of trustees with a professional curator, a handful of paid staff and a mass of volunteers. With a superb educational programme in place and regularly changing exhibitions the Museum offers children and adults alike opportunities which are second to none. But an institution such as this needs vast amounts to stay open and it has been my pleasure to support them during this year. To date we have five thousand pounds raised for the charities and I would like to thank everyone who has helped, especially the Museum, Eden Hair & Beauty and the Haslemere Pet Company.

My final fund raising fling will be at Haslemere's Got Talent which is at the Haslemere Hall this Sunday at 6pm. I am appearing as a guest act lying on a bed of nails for not too long hopefully! If you feel inclined to add to the pot, there are buckets at the back!

Now before we get on with the more exciting part of the evening that you've all been waiting for, this is your one opportunity of the year to question the Town Council on any subject you'd like to raise. Who is going to start?

- 3. OPEN FORUM** – Electors of Haslemere were invited to raise any matters connected with the work of the Council. None were received.

4. PRESENTATION OF THE SPORTS PERSONALITY AWARDS 2009

Chris Grimes Chairman of Sport Haslemere acted as the presenter for this section of the evening's business. A summary of his address is set out below:-

Sport Haslemere goes from strength to strength each year and from very humble beginnings some 9 years ago we now have over 30 affiliated schools and clubs in membership.

Following a successful project run by Sport Godalming entitled Go for Gold, Sport Haslemere together with its partner organisation Haslemere Sports Association has agreed to launch a similar scheme in this area entitled CREATING A STAR. This project is aimed at supporting young sportsmen and women who have international potential and we will be looking to local businesses to sponsor these individuals.

Haslemere Sports Association/ Sport Haslemere will be organising a stall at this years Charter Fair in Haslemere on Monday 3rd May where further information about this initiative will be available. Full details will be presented at the Sport Haslemere open meeting on Monday 21st June so this is a meeting all of our member organisations should attend.

This is a very important development for Sport Haslemere and we will be carefully monitored by Active Waverley who would like the scheme to be developed across the Borough – indeed possibly across the whole County of Surrey. Active Waverley is chaired by Nick Chilton who as you know was the first Chair of Sport Haslemere and all of the 4 Waverley Sports Councils are represented on that group.

The following awards were presented:-

*Woolmer Hill School.
Sport Impact in Schools.
Young Volunteer of the Year.
Specific Services.
Junior Sports Team of the Year.
Sports Team of the Year.
Young Coach of the Year.
Sports Coach of the Year.
Sports Club of the Year.
Junior Sports Personality of the Year.
Sports Personality of the Year*

Meeting closed 8.30pm

