

# CUCKFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Queen's Hall, High Street, Cuckfield, RH17 5EL



## Annual Parish Meeting

held at Cuckfield Village Hall on 23 May 2019

**Present:** Mr Paul Mantrip (Chairman), Mrs Jill Butler, Mr Andy Burton, Mr John Dickie, Mr Will Faas, Mr Colin Mercer, Mr Steve Oversby-Powell, Mr Adrian Podmore, Mr Martin Sheldon, Mr Andrew Symonds  
**and members of the public**

**In attendance:** Caroline Hansen (Assistant Clerk), Jane Forrester (Administrator), Paul Stevens (Caretaker)

**Guest Speaker:** Inspector Peter Dommett, Prevention Inspector, Sussex Police

**In attendance:** Lloyd Bachus, PCSO, Sussex Police

### 1) Presentation by the Chairman of Cuckfield Parish Council

Mr Paul Mantripp gave a presentation on the Council's activities over the last year. The details are included in the Chairman's Report which is available on Cuckfield Parish Council's website.

### 2) Presentation by Inspector Peter Dommett

Inspector Peter Dommett gave a presentation on Police and Local Councils, explaining concerns faced by Sussex Police, summarised as follows:

Inspector Dommett advised that **Fortress "shielding your community from drug related crime"** is a newly established organisation.

#### Concerns

- Increase in organised crime gangs
- 50% of crime recorded in Sussex is related to fraud
- Government has awarded the task of fraud to Action Fraud (of which 10% comes back to Sussex to handle under Operation Signature).
- Violent crime has increased by 10% and often occurs in relationships
- Conviction rate is falling
- Knife crime has seen a 50% increase – children who possess knives are automatically excluded from school. 75 children were excluded in Sussex last year.
- Chances of being injured by knife crime is 1 in 150
- Culprit who caused recent vandalism at CVH is possibly known
- Children hanging around are a concern
- Mental Health is also a concern for police
- Travellers parking on land

### **Practical Actions**

- Sussex Police have shrunk under austerity
- Katy Bourne has confirmed more police officers will be available
- PCO for Haywards Heath and surrounding area will meet Parish Clerk each month
- Neighbourhood Watch – reinstate the programme and get local residents involved.
- Speed Watch – use 30-mile stickers on wheelie bins
- Conduct village audits for neighbourly connections
- Hold events to bring community together which police will attend
- Communicate with offenders and threaten to report to Sussex Police
- Do not report crime on social media as police do not view

Inspector Domett concluded with a story on counterterrorism.

### **3) Questions and Answers**

A member of the public asked what were the latest developments regarding Buttinghill?

Councillor Burton responded that delay in handing the land to CPC was due to drainage problems with the pond. Whilst the developer had been issued with an enforcement notice by MSDC the matter was not moving along. It was felt that Taylor Wimpey were dragging their feet and that MSDC were hit with austerity problems.

Councillor Burton also stated that it would have been preferable if the roundabout at the end of Hanlye Lane had been constructed prior to the houses being built at Penland Farm.

Concern was also mentioned regarding 3,500 new houses being built in Burgess Hill and the impact additional traffic would have on local roads and any further development closing the gap between neighbouring towns.

Cuckfield Parish Council have limited influence. However, CPC were able to influence the District Council on the development at Horsefield Green whereby the public open space and beautiful views have been retained for use by the community.

### **4) Closing Comments**

Mr Paul Mantripp thanked the Parish Council Clerk and office staff for their hard work. He also thanked Councillors, past and present, and members of the public for attending the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 21.50 pm.