

Residents' Association Committee meeting – March 2014

A Meeting of the Committee took place on Tuesday, 11th March 2014. In addition to Committee members, Councillors Bob Gardner, Joan Spiers & Simon Parnall along with PCs Kelly Houghton & Christine Turton were in attendance.

PC Houghton reported on:

- Having been away from the area for about 4 months, she was pleased to be able to say there had been no major crime events in Lower Kingswood.
- Several burglaries that had taken place in Kingswood and urged all residents to be vigilant and report anyone behaving suspiciously.
- Chalk marks, which had been observed outside some local properties, and stated that these were possibly signs to criminals about the properties and/or occupiers; these too should be reported whenever seen. She added that local Police patrols had been increased and unmarked Police cars were in use on the A217 and other local roads.
- Leaflets produced by the Police concerning “cold callers”, general crime etc. could be made available.
- The new yellow lines in the village were discussed and it was noted that it might be necessary to instigate additional Police patrols to enforce them. Cllr. Spiers added that parking enforcement wardens could back them up.
- The proposal to sell alcohol from the new store adjacent to the BP garage was discussed and it was noted that several residents had expressed concern about after-hours drinking; it was noted that if residents were concerned about the matter, objections could be lodged.
- The issue of Police representatives being present at periodic Surgeries in the village was discussed but, given the very low levels of attendance at recent events it was difficult to justify the use of Police resources for that purpose. PC Houghton added that she would, of course, be in attendance at the forthcoming AGM.

Councillor Parnall reported on:

- The recent conversion of a garage into residential use without planning permission had been notified to him by a resident and he stated that the Council was now dealing with the matter. It was noted that the Residents' Association normally only dealt with more substantial residential planning applications or matters concerning encroachment on Green Belt land etc.

Councillor Spiers reported on:

- The Core Strategy – including details of a recent letter received from Crispin Blunt (MP) and the apparent change of focus in terms of housing vs. Green Belt by the Department of Communities & Local Government. She added that she would shortly be attending a meeting on the matter and was concerned that, having taken some 4 years at substantial cost, if the Council's plans were not “signed off” in the near future they could be delayed until after the next General Election.
- Concern was expressed that, if the Councillors did not agree to the Core Strategy as a matter of urgency this delay could be capitalised upon by developers and it was further noted that the lack of an agreed Core Strategy had been quoted in the recent Public Inquiry in respect of ‘Highlands’.

Councillor Gardner reported on:

- Cllr. Gardner was provided with a copy of an email from one of the Committee members who was unable to attend the meeting. These issues concerned the crumbling pathway along the A217, a clanking drain cover and the damaged solar sign (both on the same road) and speeding traffic in Chipstead Lane. Cllr. Gardner undertook to deal with these matters.