**The Goring Heath Annual Parish Meeting was held on Thursday 12th April 2018**

 **8pm in the Parish Hall**

1. **Apologies** for Absence were received from Martin Halsall, Hilary Dewey, Robert Simister and Kevin Bulmer.
2. **The Minutes of the previous meeting 13/04/2017 w**ere signed as correct.
3. **Chairman’s Report**. Peter Dragonetti noted three major issues of the past year, two had been settled successfully, one was still outstanding with little progress made. Firstly, Peter thanked all those involved with the successful conclusion of the renovation of the War Memorial, which is splendid. Secondly, he noted the Parish Councils support of the Going Forward bus service, and was pleased to report that the service was popular. He thanked Mr Mike Ward for his hard work. On the third issue of the White Lion at Crays Pond, Peter reported that SODC Legal Department are actively involved, that the SODC enforcement team ranks as one of the best in the country, and that correspondence had recently been received that assured members that progress was being made. To conclude he introduced new Councillors Chris Jessop and Hilary Dewey . He then thanked Caroline Hadley for thirteen years as Parish Clerk, and Theresa Elsome for many years as Parish Hall Manager, who is retiring shortly. Thanks were also made to Lucy Turner for her contribution to the Newsletter, Website and Facebook.
4. **County Councillors Report.** A report was circulated.
5. **District Councillors Report.** A report was circulated.
6. **The 143 Bus Service.** Mr Mike Ward thanked the Parish Council for their financial contribution to the service and reported that usage of the routes was not enough to sustain the service in the long term. It was thought that there may be a need to consider radical changes in the future. Confusion for concessionary pass holders has been resolved, leading to more secure funding for this year to March 2019. Mike is open to suggestions about the service, free timetables are widely distributed, and noted that although passengers numbers were improving, they often fell short of what is needed for a viable service in the long term.
7. **Whitchurch and Goring Heath History Society.** Vicki Jordan reported that the History Society had had a good year, with a new treasurer and much more than monthly speakers. Stories of murders and suffragettes, outings to MERL and Basing House, evenings on place names and the Victoria County History, and a full fun programme for the coming year was approved.
8. **Whitchurch and Goring Heath Twinning Association** hosted our twin town in France, La Bouille, last year, so this year the association will be off to France. They will be celebrating 40 years of twinning, by visiting Monet’s garden at Giverny and drinking champagne. All welcome.
9. **The Village Fete**. Mr John Grey reported that this year it will be held on Saturday May 26th at 2pm on the Recreation Ground. There will be a 25 piece concert band, a BBQ, Punch and Judy, dog agility and ferret racing is also back by popular demand. Donations were made last year to the Parish Hall, St Johns church , flowers for the well, Macmillan Nurses, the War Memorial project and Sue Ryder Care. Mr Grey thanked the village and councillors for their continued support and reported he was open to suggestions for where this years’ profits might be directed.
10. **The meeting was then opened for questions.** Mrs Theresa Elsome reported to the meeting about the continuing success of the Parish Hall, a full programme of maintenance has been carried out and it continues to be used regularly by the community and beyond. The potholes in the roads around the parish were discussed. The traffic speeds through the village and elsewhere were discussed, with particular reference to the main road through Crays Pond and now Goring Heath Road. It was suggested that white village gates would be a good idea to define village boundaries to speeding motorists., and it was noted that some local residents have 30MPH stickers displayed on the side of their bins. Peter Dragonetti replied to concerns by outlining discussions that the Council have had about increasing volume of traffic and various traffic calming options. He reported that speed checks were in the process of being set up to prove that the speed limits were regularly exceeded, and the options of how to proceed were discussed. The new online Next Door scheme was discussed and letters to the newsletter on these and any other matters were encouraged. The funding of the bus service was raised, and concern expressed that the service may be lost. Mike Ward clarified that the bus service was indeed a hail and ride service and would stop where practicable. It was explained that it was clear that although legally the Parish Council cannot spend the amount of money that would be needed to keep the bus service running in the long term, it was totally committed to keeping the bus service funded and running for as long as practically possible. In May, Going Forward Buses will have a service in place which will cover more of the parish. It was agreed that publicity would be important in making a success of this, and that the community and the Parish Council were united in their efforts to promote the service.

The meeting finished at 9.30pm