

**Minutes of the Fifth Annual General Meeting
of the Woking Association of Neighbourhood Watches
held on Monday 8th July 2013 at The Training Room, Parkview Centre, Sheerwater, Woking**

Present:	Chairman:	Mr. Tony Kremer
	Treasurer/Membership Secretary:	Mrs. Fui Ling Bolton
	General Secretary:	Mr. Geoffrey Johnson
	Committee Member:	Mr Alan Taylor
	Committee Member:	Mr Martin Stilwell
	And 28 members of the Association.	
Guests:	Jeff Harris:	Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner, Surrey.
	Geoff McManus:	Neighbourhood Services Manager, Woking Borough Council.
	Camilla Edmiston	Community Safety Officer, Woking Borough Council
	Mark Saunders:	Crime Reduction Advisor Woking, Neighbourhood Police.

1. Welcome.

The General Secretary welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly the guests. He thanked those who had organised the evening and everyone for their attendance.

2. Apologies for Absence.

Approximately 40 apologies had been received from members.

3. Minutes of the AGM held on 4th July 2012.

Acceptance of the minutes of the above meeting, copies of which had previously been circulated, was proposed by Martin Stilwell, seconded by Fui Ling Bolton and accepted.

4. Chairman's Report.

Mr. Kremer thanked the Committee & the general membership for their support during what he felt had been a momentous year.

The Chairman's report focussed largely on how WAN had responded to the new regime following the election of Kevin Hurley, the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Surrey. He described the successful efforts made to build a relationship with the new team; this included the PCC addressing a well attended meeting of WAN members in March.

PCC funding had been received to pilot a new method of recruiting residents to Watches in Surrey. This would be based on an online membership system for Residents' Associations. This would allow newcomers to register to join NhW. The Pilot had started & was due to run until the end of next year. Mr Kremer reported that he sat on the Surrey NhW Association as Deputy Chair.

He also reported that the WAN committee had worked to improve communications. Members were now kept up to date via the newsletter Watch over Woking & the refreshed website.

He reported that in the coming year WAN planned to develop a deeper relationship with Woking Borough Council (WBC) as the Boroughs are one of the main channels to be used by the PCC to invest in crime prevention programmes. Here in Woking this is the Safer Woking Partnership.

Mr Kremer also commented that to prepare for potential future reductions in Police staffing, he would like to see more cooperative approach between WAN members & crime prevention specialists such as Mark Saunders. He felt that in future, the Police may not be able to maintain the current level of support to WAN members.

In view of the above comments Mr Kremer was particularly pleased that our guest speakers were key representatives of both the PCC & WBC.

5. Treasurer`s Report.

Mrs. Bolton presented the accounts for the year to the end of March 2013, copies of which had been circulated to members.

The accounts had been independently examined. Whilst total expenditure had further reduced to £139, income had increased to £854. This had the effect of increasing the Association`s Balance Sheet to £1118.

The principal source of income was a grant from the Woking Safer Partnership Fund. In addition donations had been received through the easyfundraising.org.uk, an internet purchasing route. This rebates a small percentage of members` internet purchases back to the Association. The identity of the purchaser is not revealed.

Acceptance of the accounts was proposed by Chris Rousell & seconded by Alan Taylor. The accounts were duly accepted.

6 .Election of Officers.

The current committee comprising:

Mr Tony Kremer: Chairman

Mrs Fui Ling Bolton: Treasurer/Membership Secretary

Mr Alan Taylor

Mr Martin Stilwell

Mr Geoffrey Johnson: General Secretary

were offering themselves for re-election.

In addition the following three members had agreed to stand for election:

Paul Salt, Area Co-ordinator Sheerwater,

June Weaver, Area Co-ordinator Maybury,

Angela Williams, Former Committee Member.

Mark Wilson was also willing to continue as Independent Examiner.

In the absence of any additional nominations having been received by the General Secretary prior to the Meeting or from the members present, the election of all of the above names was proposed by Tony Noel and seconded by Geoff Sweeney.

All the above officers were duly elected.

7. Area Co-ordinators.

The Chairman mentioned that Area Co-ordinators were still needed for several of the Woking Police areas including St Johns, Hook Heath, Knaphill, Mayford & Brookwood. In addition, the Area co-ordinator for Goldsworth Park had resigned due to ill health.

The role involves acting as the main WAN contact point for the area, developing relationships with the Neighbourhood Police & the WAN members .

8. Guest Speakers

The Chairman closed the formal AGM & introduced the guest speakers.

9. Jeff Harris Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner for Surrey.

Mr Harris spoke about his & the PCC's role which significantly differed from that of the previous Police Authority. He mentioned the challenges facing the public services & particularly the Police where in addition to financial restraints applied over the last few years, there were projected further cuts & a change in the method of calculating Police National Insurance contributions. The combined effect of these is that further savings in operational costs will be necessary.

The PCC's response to this was to press hard & review back-office costs & look to share them with neighbouring Forces.

Mr Harris said that he couldn't promise that the present level of neighbourhood policing would be safeguarded despite strenuous efforts from the floor to obtain such a commitment. However, he strongly emphasised the importance of roles such as that of Mark Saunders.

10. Geoff McManus, Head of Neighbourhood Services, Woking Borough Council.

Mr McManus mentioned the wide range of activities managed by his team, one of the most important & relevant to this meeting being community safety. He was pleased that Camilla Edmiston the Community Safety Officer was present. He felt that this area underpinned everything the Council aims for.

He explained that the 'Woking Partnership' brings together all the agencies including Surrey Police Woking BC, Surrey County Council, Surrey Fire & Rescue Service, together with the Probation & Health Services. Currently the main priorities facing the Partnership are Antisocial Behaviour, Crime, Drugs & Alcohol & reducing reoffending.

Mr McManus stressed the importance of communications between the Neighbourhood teams & residents' forums such as Neighbourhood Watch. He welcomed further discussion with WAN to see how more watches & residents' associations could be set up in the Borough. Should funding for such an initiative be required, the Council had the skills to assist with the bids, whether aimed at the PCC or other funding bodies.

It was agreed that more effort needs to be made to promote increased participation by the Asian communities, particularly in the Sheerwater & Maybury areas.

Finally, Mr McManus asked that members to focus on some of the positives of living in Woking & celebrate the successful aspects of the Borough.

Both guest speakers encouraged everyone to play a full role in supporting the community & their neighbours. Being in a watch was more than crime prevention, it could also involve supporting vulnerable residents. During the following discussion some members present felt that WAN should promote this message. However, the Chairman was cautious about being too directive as this was not always universally welcomed by the membership.

11. Any Other Business.

The question of providing support & training for new co-ordinators was raised from the floor. The Chairman agreed that the Committee would review the use of mentors & available written guidance.

Mr Kremer thanked the Guest Speakers & members for their attendance & contributions. The meeting was closed at 9.30pm.