

ASHURST AND COLBURY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10TH JANUARY 2006 AT THE CHURCH ROOMS COLBURY

Present: Councillors S. Arnold (in the Chair), S. Ardern, D. Bryant, R. Judd, W.Kewley, I. Oliver, P. Sopowski
In Attendance: Parish Clerk L. Griggs, District Councillor L Puttock, and 20 members of the public.
Apologies for absence: Councillor A. Holdsworth and District Councillor D Tipp

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the first Council Meeting for 2006 and commented that it 'only seemed a short while when I said 2000'. The Chairman drew everyone's attention to the plans on the notice boards, one for the redevelopment of the Alldays site and the other for the proposed cycle path to Lyndhurst. There would be a further opportunity to study the plans after the meeting.

Apologies had been received from Councillor Holdsworth and District Councillor Tipp.

The Chairman read out two letters she had received. One from Rev. Tom Johns thanking the Council for arranging the Carols in the Dark evening and also for allowing the Church Choir to participate. He said it had been a great evening and he hoped the event would take place each year. The other letter was from Mrs Margaret Weston, the editor of the newsletter, thanking the Council for inviting her to the Carols in the Dark evening and for making such a lovely presentation to her on the occasion of the 100th Newsletter.

1. Public Participation

The Chairman invited comments from the public.

The Council was asked when the speed restriction signs would be replaced at the Whartons Lane end of the village. The Clerk replied that he had chased Highways but they had a backlog of work. He would remind them again.

The Council was asked about the accumulation of leaves. One sweep had been done but only on the main road, there was still need to clear the side roads. The Clerk said he would pursue the matter with Highways.

The Publicity Officer of the Parish Plan Group, Rosemary McKay, asked if she could update the meeting on progress. It was agreed that in future there would be a specific agenda item for the Parish Plan.

UPDATE ON ASHURST AND COLBURY COMMUNITY PLAN

Our third meeting was held on 3 January 2006.

The constitution was discussed further and will be finalised at the next meeting.

The Parish Snap Shot was discussed further with additional items added. Items include history, environment, schools, population, health services, tourism, transport, housing issues, problem areas etc. Listed buildings in the area were discussed and possibilities for future listings would be considered another time. Working groups are being set up. These are linked to the main areas in the Parish Snap Shot.

The next step is a 'love it hate it' survey which is a preliminary survey targeted in the newsletter and main groups such as schools, church, social groups. Collection boxes will be made available in key areas such as the Post Office and Alldays

We respectfully ask the Parish Council to consider donating a figure towards our costs and feel the sum of £250 would go somewhere towards printing the surveys. We do not anticipate receiving a grant from NFDC for some time.

The Chairman thanked Rosemary for that update and pointed out an article in the January issue of the Local Council Review which advised that grants were available from NFDC of between £2000 and £5000 for Parish

Plan work. After some discussion it was agreed that a grant of £250 be made to the Community Plan Group to further their work. The Clerk would liaise with the Group Treasurer on issuing the cheque when the bank account was opened.

2. Disclosure of interest in an agenda item

The Chairman advised that Councillor Ardern had provided a Form C in regard to the Planning Application for the Alldays site due to the proximity of her property to the proposed development.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 13th December 2005 had previously been circulated and on a proposition from Councillor Bryant, seconded by Councillor Oliver, it was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be approved. The Chairman signed the minutes.

Matters arising. The Chairman advised that the gas container issue had been resolved and the gate at the Recreation Ground entrance had been installed. Councillor Ardern asked if wheelchair access was possible and the Chairman explained that wheelchair access was not possible at the Lakewood Road entrance. It had been a difficult decision to take but it was essential to ensure that horses, motor cycles etc could not be taken into the park for the safety of children using the facilities.

4. Highway Matters

The Chairman read out two letters she had received from Parishioners on traffic issues. One was regarding the danger of collisions at the roundabout at the junction of the A326 and Foxhills/Cocklydown Lane. The Chairman said this was an issue which other people have mentioned. The other was pointing out the danger of entering the access road to the hospital because of cars being parked on the left hand side of the road outside the shops. That caused traffic entering from the A35 being forced to drive in the right hand lane and often coming head on with traffic leaving the hospital or the parking areas. The Clerk was asked to contact Highways on these issues to see if action could be taken to reduce the risks of accidents in both areas.

The Chairman asked Councillor Sopowski to comment on the proposed cycle path plan. Councillor Sopowski said that although the path ran mainly through other parishes it started in our parish and would be used mainly by our Parishioners. His concern was that the plan did not make use of grass verges where it was possible to do so and there was a risk of an unsightly tarmac strip running all the way to Lyndhurst. He asked the Clerk to write on behalf of the Council making that point and urged parishioners who felt the same to also make their views known. The Chairman asked the Clerk to include in the letter a reminder that Simon Found had promised they would pay for a gate sign similar to the one at the other end of the village.

Councillor Judd referred to the uneven brickwork in the Parade and the Clerk said he would chase Highways again.

5. Recreation Ground

a) **Inspections.** Councillor Oliver reported that he had carried out inspections of the Recreation Ground on 13th December, 2nd January and 10th January. One tree had fallen down and he was arranging for it to be removed.

b) **Signs.** The Clerk said he had hoped to bring a mock up of the sign to the meeting but the pdf file he received only showed a small corner. As agreed at a previous meeting he would liaise with Councillor Oliver to finalise this matter.

c) **Whartons Lane Notice Board.** The Chairman asked the Clerk to comment. He said that the Notice Board had been vandalised and replacement boards in hardwood would cost some £750 which, with posts, installation, etc, meant a total cost of about £1,000. A similar board in aluminium would be some £650. After discussion it was agreed to see if a local joiner could fabricate something at a more reasonable price. It was generally accepted that while there was no great urgency to replace the board now, the possible loss of the board by Alldays in any redevelopment would leave the Council with only one notice board, being in the Parade. Councillor Sopowski suggested that if a replacement was obtained it may be more useful if located at the Lakewood Road side of the park. Not only would it be more visible, so deterring vandals, it would probably also

be seen by more people. District Councillor Puttock said there was a fund of some £330 available as a grant from NFDC for this sort of thing and if an application was made he would support it.

6. Planning

a) Councillor Sopowski presented a report on Planning issues arising since the last meeting (Annexe 1).
b) Alldays site redevelopment. The Chairman gave her personal views against this proposed development and said the Council Planning Committee had already sent in their views to the NFDC Development Control Services. She said the Consultation Period ends on 12th January and she urged those present to make their views known to NFDC quickly and before time ran out. Comments were invited from the floor and a neighbour of Alldays expressed concern over further erosion of parking facilities. He said on many occasions cars were parked blocking his drive and even in his drive. With the reduced public parking at the rear there would be even more congestion plus possibly delivery vans having to use the front access rather than as now delivering to the rear. In addition while the work was going on there would be a lot of construction traffic both in front of the site as well as behind and in Wood Road.
Councillor Sopowski noted that the plan now showed a window on the Wood Road side of the building. He also said that if refrigerated food was sold from the shop there would need to be a compressor inside the shop as there would be no room outside and that would be very noisy for those living in the flats.
The Chairman said the Council would keep a close eye on this matter and keep residents informed both at Council meetings and also through the newsletter.

7. The Lengthsman

Councillor Judd asked if the graffiti on the bus shelter near the garage could be removed. The remover used in the recreation ground was not suitable as it interacted with the plastic. Councillor Bryant said white spirit was probably the best. The Clerk said he would contact the Lengthsman and also see if there was any graffiti remover suitable for plastic.
A parishioner said the footpath from Chestnut Drive to the A35 needs clearing. It appears to be used as a dog toilet plus there was a lot of rubbish there. The Clerk undertook to write to NFDC on this matter.

8. Accounts

a) The list of cheques paid since the last meeting had been issued to each Councillor and was approved unanimously.
b) The Chairman asked the Clerk to deal with the Travel and Subsistence Allowances. The Clerk highlighted the main issues and points to be noted, in particular that this matter had not been discussed by the Council in 2003 when allowances were first proposed for Parish Councils. After some discussion it was agreed that the Council would like to adopt the principle of paying such allowances and the Clerk was asked to contact NFDC in order to see how to implement this principle.
c) The Clerk was asked to leave the meeting and on his return the Chairman said that a Contract of Employment had been approved by the Council and that on a proposal by the Chairman, seconded by Councillor Sopowski, it had been **RESOLVED** that his salary be increased to Spinal Column Point 17 in accordance with the NJC Circular 02/05. The Clerk thanked the Council for their confidence in him.

9. Grants

The Clerk had received no requests this month.

10. Reports from representatives of other bodies

Councillor Sopowski reported that he had attended a New Forest Park Authority Stakeholder Event on 7th December. Consideration had been given to 13 priority areas and four had been selected as being the most important to take forward over the next two years. They were:

- (1) Develop strategies and support schemes to help sustain commoning including programmes for housing, back-up land and buildings, livestock improvement, local processing and marketing initiatives etc.

- (2) Produce a recreation and visitor management strategy to cover the National Park and surrounding areas taking into account likely future recreational needs and the protection of its special qualities.
- (3) Conserve, restore or recreate landscapes which reflect the special character of the National Park.
- (4) Protect the existing affordable housing stock, and help increase the number of affordable houses for rent and shared ownership giving priority to local people and key workers.

He also reported that a Sustainable Development Fund was available for grants to encourage sustainable ways of living in the New Forest National Park. A pamphlet was given to the Community Plan Publicity Officer and a leaflet would be placed in the Council Notice Board.

Councillor Judd said the Community Plan Group wanted a liaison person from the Council to help them with transport issues. Councillor Sopowski said that he had dealt with transport issues but was happy to pass it to any other Councillor. The Chairman pointed out that there was a meeting on Bus Services included in the List of Correspondence and after further discussion it was agreed that Councillor Judd should attend the meeting both on behalf of the Council and the Community Group.

Councillor Oliver reported that in addition to the inspections previously noted he had also attended the Carols in the Dark.

Councillor Arnold 14th December we had the Carols in the Dark which was a great success. Several villagers have said that this was the right place for the village and asked us to book again for next year. 20th December, went to the Church Rooms and assisted with the childrens fun day - making 81 paper baskets in one day is enough for anyone. I must congratulate Bev Winch and her band of helpers for the excellent way this work shop was organised.

District Councillor Puttock said there appeared to be a problem with rats in various parishes including Ashurst and Colbury particularly now that people have to pay for Pest Control services. Also the poison used did not appear to be as effective as formerly. However these services had to be paid for and while many neighbours benefited from one person paying, it was inevitable that someone had to find the funds for pest control services. Concern was expressed by several people present that one of the contributory factors was that while collection bags have dates printed on them, people were putting rubbish out long before the collection date. The Chairman enquired if those present were willing to pay more council tax in return for free pest control services and the majority of those present indicated they would be willing. The Clerk was asked to write to David Yates, Chief Executive of NFDC, stating that in Ashurst and Colbury residents were willing to pay more in Council Tax in return for free pest control services. Councillor Puttock said that an Appeal regarding development at 20 Woodlands Road had been allowed. The Inspector had decided that the proposal would not set a precedent for other properties in Woodlands Road. The appeal on an application for work at 4 Woodlands Road had also been allowed.

He also said he had received a cry for help in collecting toys and crockery for use at the NFDC Refuge for those suffering from domestic violence. The Chairman agreed to put a note in the Newsletter regarding the items needed.

11. List if correspondence

The Clerk had provided a list of correspondence to all Councillors which was available on the table.

12. Items for discussion at the next meeting

The Chairman asked all Councillors to suggest any good and interesting speakers to address the Annual parish meeting in April

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.55pm

Signed...S R Arnold.....Chairman

Dated 14th February 2006