

ASHURST AND COLBURY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18th DECEMBER 2007 AT THE CHURCH ROOMS COLBURY

Present: Councillors S. Arnold (in the Chair), S. Ardern, D. Bryant, R. Judd, K. Kershaw.

In Attendance: Parish Clerk L. Griggs, County Councillor M. Kendal (part only), District Councillor D. Tipp, P.C. Andy White (Beat Officer) and 17 members of the public.

Then Chairman asked everyone to stand and said “before we get down to Council business I have to advise you that yesterday one of the Founder members of this Council, Mr Douglas Harrison, passed away. He was one of the residents who worked hard so that we could have our own Parish Council and he went on to be Chairman from 1987 to 1989.”

The Chairman then read the following:

In Bereavement Christ steers us gently along the path of pain and walks beside us hand in hand, no matter how long the road maybe. Never will Christ’s presence be more powerful and consoling than it is in bereavement. He gives most when most is taken away.

Former Parish Councillor and Chairman of the Council, Eric Bashford, paid tribute to the life and service of Mr Harrison.

The Chairman then opened the meeting and welcomed everyone, particularly the residents who deliver the newsletter to every house each month whatever the weather, adding that the refreshments later on is just a small way of showing our appreciation to them all.

Apologies had been received from Councillor Holdsworth, who is unwell, Councillor Sopowski and District Councillor Puttock.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A resident said that in past years the Newsletter had included details of the refuse collection dates over the Christmas and New Year period but that had not been done this year. He asked if it could be reinstated for 2008. It was pointed out that the dates were printed on the refuse sacks but the Chairman said she would try to ensure it was in the Newsletter next year.

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST IN AN AGENDA ITEM

The Chairman asked if there was any item on the agenda which would warrant a Councillor submitting a Form C. There were none.

MINUTES

On a proposal by Councillor Ardern, seconded by Councillor Judd, the minutes of the meeting held on 20th November, which had been previously circulated to all Councillors, were approved unanimously and signed by the Chairman.

COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE

Mr Arthur Jeffery said the final draft had been submitted to the Parish Council seeking its views on the proposed Actions delegated to the Parish Council. The Council had responded and the plan was now being reviewed by NFDC. The Steering Group still hoped to make the scheduled publication date of March 2008.

The Chairman said that from the minutes of the last meeting you will have read that the Council was preparing to meet and discuss the draft parish plan on 29th November. The Council did meet and as Councillor Holdsworth could not make the meeting a statement from her was read out. Apologies were given by Councillor Kershaw.

Clearly it is an amazing document and obviously put together with great thought and considerable time. To enable the public's awareness of the progress of the plan the Council has studied the document and put forward its recommendations. We now wait for the Community Plan Steering Group to re-submit the final document for the Council's approval before going to print.

HIGHWAY MATTERS

- a) A35 Crossing. Councillor Judd said there was nothing to add on this subject at the moment.
- b) The Chairman said a request had been received from a resident to have a twenty minute parking limit placed at the end of Wood Road. They are experiencing difficulty in shopping at Alldays or to post mail because drivers are leaving their vehicles parked there all day. After some discussion the Clerk was instructed to write seeking such a limit covering the stretch of Wood Road from the end of the present double yellow lines up to the rear entrance of Alldays. However it was noted that enforcement could be a problem as it was elsewhere in the village.

RECREATION GROUND

Councillor Bryant said he had inspected the park on several occasions and it had been relatively quiet since the last meeting. He added that workmen were coming this week to repair the see-saw and carry out maintenance work.

The Chairman reported that Police have detained a youth from this Parish who has admitted destroying the new board installed in park last year. She also gave the following details from the Beat officer's report:

- Poppy Appeal Collection box stolen from the Post office
- Damage to the see-saw in the play area of the park
- Rowdy behaviour following the firework display at Foxhills School. Those responsible were as young as twelve and all were local lads.
- A motor trader had petrol stolen from three vehicles

adding these are crimes that are not wanted in Ashurst and Colbury but are considerably lower than for other parishes. By keeping our eyes peeled and ears open we can keep our parish relatively crime free. We have good Neighbourhood Watch Groups and an excellent working relationship with our local Police Officer and with the Crime Prevention Team at NFDC.

PLANNING

In the absence of Councillor Sopowski the Clerk gave a report on planning issues since the last meeting.

LENGTHSMAN

Nothing to report

ACCOUNTS

On a proposal by Councillor Bryant, seconded by Councillor Ardern, the list of cheques issued since the last meeting was approved.

The Clerk reported that the Audit Commission had completed the audit of the Council's accounts for the year ended 31st March 2007 and had given a clean audit report.

GRANTS

The Council considered a request for a grant from New Forest North Citizens Advice Bureau. On a proposal by Councillor Bryant, seconded by Councillor Judd, it was agreed to give a grant of £150.

REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER BODIES

Councillor Ardern said she had attended a meeting of the Community Plan Group.

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Councillor Arnold had attended the following:

Nov 26 – Meeting of the Heads of Departments NFDC and NFALC

Nov 29 – the switch on of the Christmas lights

Dec 17 - meeting of the NFALC Executive from which the following points are relevant:

- HALC affiliation fees will not be increased this year
- Tiptoe village Post Office has been saved from closure
- Dr. Julian Lewis will be making a presentation in the house this week for Bramshaw Post Office.

CORRESPONDENCE

The list of correspondence had been circulated and copies were available at the meeting.

LYMINGTON FERRIES

Councillor Kershaw said there was nothing new to report since the last meeting.

CHRISTMAS CAROLS ROUND THE TREE

The Chairman asked those assisting with this concert to assemble at 6pm

PLASTIC-BAG-FREE ASHURST PROPOSAL

The Chairman said you will probably have read the article in the December Newsletter headed “a plastic bag free community”. Tonight Mr Richard Barnett the author of that article will give a brief comment on his proposal.

Mr Barnett outlined the proposal to try to make Ashurst and Colbury the first village in the New Forest to be free of plastic bags and gave details of other places where a plastic bag free environment had been achieved. He said NPA were very supportive and finance may be available from the Sustainable Development Fund. He distributed some examples of the type of organic cotton bags printed with organic dyes which he hoped he would be able to distribute free to all villagers if the support of councils and traders could be obtained. He asked the Council to support this project.

Councillor Judd asked if the bag could be a different colour to make it more attractive. Mr Barnett said it could but that would add to the cost and lose some of the benefits of using natural organic cotton.

Councillor Kershaw made three points:

- Mr Barnett had mentioned Ireland in his talk. There was a law taxing plastic bags in Ireland but that was not the case here.
- The County authority is selling our land fill sites to other counties so we would still have plastic bags dumped here.
- Had Mr Barnett considered proposals concerning the use of plastic sacks for both refuse and recycling materials?

After discussion the Council agreed to support the venture and if an appropriate application was received would look kindly on making a grant.

Councillor Kendal had arrived during this item and the Chairman asked if he wished to add anything to this item or make any other comment.

Councillor Kendal said the County supported any move away from plastic bags and plastic packaging materials. However only 15% of domestic refuse in the County goes to landfill and the Council does not take refuse from outside the County.

In regard to the A35 crossing he had seen the draft feasibility study, including preliminary estimated costs, which stated that the best option was signal controlled traffic lights. The crossing would have to be staggered, effectively being two crossings and a short walk on the central reservation. The main problem was that the entrance to Colbury Memorial Hall would have to be changed and that involved permission from the Trustees as well as a planning application to NPA. Those road works would cost in the order of £160,000 and the actual crossing some £40,000 giving a total cost of some £208,000. The costs had to be firmed up with the bodies involved before any decision could be made. He added that apart from budgetary considerations his problem was making sure the County got best value for money when considering whether to spend £208,000 on this crossing or say £100,000 on an equally necessary crossing elsewhere.

Councillor Judd asked if the money would be available for the crossing to be installed quickly once a decision was made? Councillor Kendal said it would come from the 2008/9 budget and if the decision was favourable and all permissions obtained it would probably be late summer.

The Chairman added that the layout detail was the same as she had given to the last meeting following a discussion with Mr Peter Fox. She asked if the Clerk could have a copy of the document referred to by Councillor Kendal but he said it was not a public document yet and he had only taken a copy to keep the Council informed of the latest position. The Chairman said she looked forward to receiving a copy of the final document as promised by Mr. Fox.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AT THE NEXT MEETING

The Chairman gave advance notice that in February Mr Peter Frost and Mr Neil Sanderson will be giving a presentation on “A proposal for Grazing the Costicles Area and completing the Life II Project”. It will be advertised in the February Newsletter and be of special interest to residents living in Woodlands Road

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.15pm

Signed S R Arnold - Chairman Dated 15th January 2008