

## **ASHURST AND COLBURY PARISH COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 19<sup>th</sup> MAY 2009 AT THE CHURCH ROOMS COLBURY**

**Present:** Councillors S. Arnold (in the Chair), D. Bryant, M. Coaker, R. Judd, K. Kershaw, A. Sturgess, P. Sopowski.

**In Attendance:** Parish Clerk L. Griggs, District Councillor L. Puttock and 10 members of the public.

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

The Chairman said “Welcome to the AGM. Before we commence the meeting I offer our congratulations to District Councillor Les Puttock who has been elected Chairman of New Forest District Council”.

#### **POLICE REPORT**

The Chairman welcomed PCs Andy White and PCSO Lisa Quinn and said as they were on duty PC White would give his report.. PC White said that his April report had been circulated but the major item was the burglary at the New Forest Inn when three masked raiders forced entry at 3 am and forced the Landlord to hand over all the cash including that in the fruit machines. Unfortunately this was copied later at a restaurant in Cadnam when again three masked raiders forced entry and stole cash. He reminded everyone of the Surgeries being held in the district and hoped everyone with a query of any sort would take the opportunity to speak privately to him.

#### **ELECTION OF A CHAIRMAN FOR THE ENSUING YEAR**

The Clerk advised that Councillor Arnold was willing to continue as Chairman for another year and there had been no other nominations, therefore Councillor Arnold was elected Chairman unopposed. Councillor Arnold thanked the Councillors for their support.

#### **ELECTION OF A VICE CHAIRMAN FOR THE ENSUING YEAR**

The Clerk advised that Councillor Sopowski was willing to continue as Vice Chairman for another year and Councillor Bryant had also been nominated. A ballot was taken and the Clerk announced that the ballot was in favour of Councillor Sopowski who was re-elected Vice Chairman. Councillor Sopowski thanked the Councillors for their support.

#### **CHAIRMAN’S ALLOWANCE**

Councillor Sopowski proposed and Councillor Bryant seconded that the Chairman’s allowance should rise to £400. The proposition was carried unanimously.

#### **REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER BODIES AND COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

The Chairman announced that Councillor Judd was standing down as a Councillor following this meeting. She thanked Councillor Judd for all her work on behalf of the village and its residents, not only as a Councillor but also as a member of the Community Plan Group.

The following appointments were confirmed:

Age Concern	Councillor Holdsworth
NAFLC	Councillors Arnold and Sturgess
HCC Transport Forum	Councillors Coaker and Kershaw
N F Consultative Forum	Councillors Bryant and Sopowski

**Committees**

Planning	Councillors Sopowski (Chairman) Arnold, Holdsworth and Kershaw.
Newsletter	Councillors Arnold and Sturgess, D C Webb (Editor) and the Parish Clerk.
Recreation Ground	Councillors Bryant (Chairman) Arnold and Sturgess
Flooding	Councillors Arnold and Bryant

**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. The Chairman reminded Councillors that if any item arose during Public Participation which warranted a Form C they should declare it immediately.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

A resident spoke at length on the need to get more residents and young people involved in community affairs and to attend council meetings to be aware of what was going on.. The Chairman said many attempts had been made over the years to involve people, some successful as in the Community Plan, but most without success. .Even with the Community Plan Group, attendance at its AGM had been very poor with only two residents other than the Committee itself. People seem happy to get involved in one off items but not for the longer term commitments.

District Councillor Puttock commented that the trend had been more noticeable over the last ten years. He attended several parish meetings and this was the best attended meeting in this area of the New Forest. While there was a good community spirit in most villages people did not want to attend meetings or get involved in making their views known when asked. NFDC has a Citizens Panel and a Young Citizens Panel but the young people are, quite rightly, committed to their education and did not want to spend time in council meetings..

**MINUTES**

The minutes of the two meetings held on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2009, which had been previously circulated to all Councillors, were approved unanimously and signed by the Chairman.

**HIGHWAY MATTERS**

- a) The Council discussed the quotation for painting and repairing the safety barrier poles by the railway bridge. After discussion it was agreed that the Clerk should write to HCC as follows:-
  - (i) HCC should carry out the painting and repairs as it was their responsibility
  - (ii) emphasise that Health and safety issues required that repairs be carried out as vehicles could easily crash through the broken rails.
  - (iii) If money was a real problem the Council may be willing to consider making some contribution to the cost.
- (b) The Chairman said she would leave the Foxhills parking issues to the next meeting when matters may be clearer.
- (c) The Chairman reported that a lorry had reversed into the tree carrying our Christmas lights breaking a branch and also some lights. Thanks were due to Mr George who witnessed the incident and took details enabling the council to take action to recover the costs of repairs and the Post Office staff who also helped.
- (d) Councillor Judd asked why the new benches had been installed in the opposite position to those agreed at the last meeting. Councillor Bryant explained that when the benches were being installed it became apparent that considerable additional cost would be involved due to the nature of the bench fittings and the existing bases. He said there was additional work to be carried out on the ground under and around the benches..

(e) In response to the Chairman the Clerk said there was no further progress on having yellow lines in Chestnut Drive, the verge outside 64 Ashdene Road and the suggestion of parking restrictions near Vixen Close.

### **RECREATION GROUND**

Councillor Bryant reported that:-

- a) a safety inspection had been carried out and some remedial work was required. The rubber tile squares were lifting again and he requested approval to replace them all with soft pour. Councillor Sopowski asked what the likely cost would be and a figure of £2,000 was suggested. Councillor Sopowski proposed, and it was agreed unanimously, that the decision be delegated to the Recreation Ground Committee.
- b) the fencing contract for the northern end of the site had been awarded to RTS Fencing, the lowest tender at £4,200.
- c) The Chairman announced that the NFDC Childrens' Roadshow would again be visiting the park on 6<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> August between 2pm and 4pm. They would have the Seedlings Children Centre Library van with them this year. She had advised the Community Plan Chairman as they may wish to include one of their picnic days during the visits.

### **PLANNING**

Councillor Sopowski gave a report on planning issues since the last meeting.

### **ACCOUNTS**

- a) The list of cheques paid since the date of the last meeting was approved.
- b) The Clerk presented the Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009 and the Annual Governance Statement. On a proposition by Councillor Sopowski seconded by Councillor Bryant the Accounts and Governance Statement were approved unanimously and the Chairman and the Clerk. authorised to sign them on behalf of the Council.
- c) Insurance – the Council noted the premium for the next year

### **GRANTS**

In response to a suggestion by the Clerk the Council instructed the Clerk to write to the Ashurst Station Master advising that the Council would look favourably on any request for a grant to provide plants for the station.

### **CO-OPTION ISSUES**

The Chairman reported that following the comments at the last meeting Mr Barnes had referred the matter to the NFDC Standards Committee. Having considered the matter the Assessment Sub Committee of the NFDC Standards Committee are taking no further action on the allegations made by Mr. Barnes against Councillor Ann Sturgess and this Council. The Council will meet in camera after this meeting to discuss if further action is to be taken.

### **REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER BODIES**

The Chairman asked the Council if anyone had any comments on the minutes of the Community Action Group She added I would point out to Councillors that the Clerk, Councillor Kershaw and myself have asked for a meeting with the Chairman and Secretary of the Community Plan Group, to which they have agreed. It has also been agreed that all future articles for the newsletter and the web site come only from Mrs. Sue Hutchin, the Secretary of the Community Plan Group. The minutes were noted.

**Councillor Sopowski** had attended the NF Consultative Committee. The major issue discussed was that Forest Holidays were proposing to have a van touring the camp sites selling produce. He had opposed the idea, supported by other local council representatives, as although there would be some local produce there could be an adverse impact on local shops. The matter would be considered by the Verderers at their June meeting and they were being urged to refuse permission.

Other matters discussed were:

Accidents with ponies. The worst time was early on Friday evenings and any help with suggestions as to how to reduce the problem would be appreciated.

The cost of the Forestry Commission was around £6m with income of some £3m which he felt was a very reasonable net cost bearing in mind the tourist activity which it generated.

**Councillor Kershaw** had attended the Community Plan AGM which the Chairman would comment on. .

**Councillor Sturgess** said things were coming along nicely for the Village Fete.

**Councillor Arnold** had attended the following:

24<sup>th</sup> April – **Netley Marsh Parish Council AGM**

Copythorne, Netley Marsh and Lyndhurst schools now had a Federation Head Teacher, which means three schools with one head teacher.

Dr. Julian Lewis spoke on Fluoride, National Park and Hospitals.

The Council is happy to work alongside us with the Police Surgery.

26<sup>th</sup> April – **Scouts St. Georges Day Parade and service at Lyndhurst**

This is an event that Roy and I have enjoyed each year. 300 children marching through Lyndhurst behind their own band, taking part in the service and the March past.

5<sup>th</sup> May - **Meeting with Arthur Jeffery**

He informed me that the parish plan will not make any further contact with the Primary Care Trust regarding the Chapel until they hear from the Council. It is vital to maintain good relations with the PCT that no further action is taken by the Community Plan Group.

A gentleman is interested in writing a book about the memorials in the village – no involvement as yet but a meeting in July has been arranged.

5<sup>th</sup> May – **National Park – North East Division.**

General agreement and support for the vision. I have put forward that the National Park forget about zoning and service villages and allow planning policies to control development. This was met with approval from other Parishes present. Bramshaw suggested that all roads apart from the major roads be made 30 mph.

Affordable housing – we were all strongly advised to make sure that the affordable housing representatives stick to their words and make sure the houses are for local people. This was the advice of District Councillor Gentle as he had observed the aftermath of such situations where properties built for affordable housing was sold or rented to people from outside the area..

The National Park representatives were reminded that all Gypsies were housed in the 60's. and that there is still a camp at Marchwood.

7<sup>th</sup> May – **Community Plan Group AGM**

A constructive meeting with reports from the various sub groups .It was confirmed the control of material sent to Newsletter and Website would be handled by Mrs. Sue Hutchin .[secretary]

One item puzzled me was the report of new projects but they were not itemised. Surely the actions in the plan should be achieved first?

13<sup>th</sup> May – Invited to a meeting of the residents of Foxhills. Although I support them, along with District Councillor Tipp, I felt that in my capacity as Chairman of Council it was right that I declined.

18<sup>th</sup> May – This is where my loyalties had to be severely tested. I had two invitations which both meant a great deal to me.

[1] Inauguration at NFDC – Councillor Les Puttock now Chairman of NFDC

[2] Invitation to the Houses of Parliament. It turned out to be quite an historic occasion especially as I was able to sit in the Public Gallery and listen to the heated debates.

**District Councillor Puttock** reported that it looked like being a good summer as the long range weather forecast was good and tourist bookings were up.

He had noticed new permanent signs on the M25 which said 'for Lyndhurst follow the lorry signs', This should be taken up with Councillor Kendal as it was in breach of what was agreed on the signage., which was that only variable signage would be used and then only when the A337 was blocked with traffic. He also reported that the Toucan crossing work was on schedule

#### **CORRESPONDENCE**

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

#### **OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DEEMS IMPORTANT**

The Chairman said this heading was included in case the Standards Committee report was received after the Agenda was issued. It would be included in future agendas but would only be used for important issues which had to be dealt with promptly.

#### **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AT THE NEXT MEETING**

N one

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

**Signed S. R. Arnold - Chairman Dated 16 June 2009**