

## ASHURST AND COLBURY PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 19<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2013 AT THE CHURCH ROOMS, DEERLEAP LANE, COLBURY

**Present:** Cllrs S. Arnold (in the Chair), D. Bryant, M. Coaker, P. Frost, K. Kershaw, P. Sopowski and A. Sturgess

**In Attendance:** Parish Clerk L. Griggs, District Cllr D. Tipp, PC White and 26 members of the public.

**Apologies:** Cllr C. Hubbard and District Cllr L. Puttock

#### 1. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST IN AN AGENDA ITEM

**The Chairman** reminded Councillors that if there was any item on the agenda which would warrant a Councillor submitting a Form C they should do so now.

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

#### 2. MINUTES

The minutes of the last Meeting, which had been circulated to all Councillors, were approved and signed.

#### **Matters arising not on the agenda**

None

#### 3a. PRESENTATION ON VILLAGE AGENTS

**The Chairman** introduced Mr Alan Edmunds of Age Concern who explained that Village Agents were introduced in 2011 with the active support of HCC. Some 34 agents were now operating in Hampshire but none in the NFDC area so he was seeking to find volunteers willing to give 4-6 hours a week to advise people over 55 in their local area, who may not be ready to seek advice or 'surf the net', where they can get advice or help. He explained the role and responsibilities of a Village Agent and the training available plus the fact that travel expenses and other relevant costs were reimbursed. A short Q&A session followed.

**The Chairman** thanked Mr Edmunds for his presentation and asked those present to pass on the message to anyone whom they thought may be interested in being the Village Agent for Ashurst and Colbury..

#### 3b. POLICE REPORT

PC White gave the Beat Report for January copies of which are in the Notice Boards.

#### 4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

**The Chairman** made the following statement. Before I take questions from the public I wish to inform you that the Council contacted Highway Maintenance recently and offered to find all the pot holes in the village so that they would be covered in one job lot.

The reply from highways was as follows "I can tell you where every pot hole is and the contractor has got orders to reinstate all of them. They have had these orders for some time, believe you me. Senior management has promised extra resources to deal with

the back log. Peterscroft Avenue, Ashdene Road and New Road are some of his priority sites.

I hope you will see some results soon”.

**The Chairman** announced she would bring forward Agenda item 5b, **Cllr Kershaw's** statement on Bluestar bus issues, to enable residents to hear that before asking questions about the buses.

**Cllr Kershaw** made the following statement:-

I have recently received a number of emails regarding the buses in New and Ashdene Roads the majority of which voice concern about the vibration some specific buses appear to be causing in dwellings along the route.

I have carried out some investigation into this from which I have determined that vehicles can cause vibration in buildings and that two of the major causes of such are the speed of the vehicles and the condition of the road.

The Parish Council has already adopted a policy to reduce the speed limit on the No. 6 bus route and has recently asked HCC Highways to attend to the condition of New and Ashdene Roads. Both of these matters are currently being actively pursued by the Parish Council.

As of now we are advised that the 20 mph speed limit policy will be considered once a similar pilot scheme for such in Hythe has been completed and the results reviewed. As for the condition of the roads it is believed that some emergency repairs are imminently planned for New Road. Plans to re-surface the route are under consideration.

A resident said the vibration problem was caused by double deck buses and single deck buses did not cause any problem. The buses were also a major cause of the potholes. Another resident,, supporting that, added that some double deck buses she travelled on seemed to have poor suspension, and seemed to "bottom out" when hitting a bump or pothole.

Other residents challenged:-

- the use of double deckers which often appeared to have few passengers and asked why single deckers were not used
- the speed of buses which travelled very fast and were unlikely to comply with a 20mph limit.
- the timings which allowed buses to meet on the narrow village roads meaning one had to mount the grass verges
- there seemed to be more bus journeys since the last time-table changes

In response **Cllr Kershaw** said It appears there is one type of double-decker which causes more vibration than the other type and he would take that up with Bluestar. He had followed buses in his car through the village observing their speed and the greatest speed noticed was 27mph. The frequency of buses had not changed but the type of bus had apparently making them more noticeable. When single deck buses were used residents had complained of being unable to get on hence the use of double deckers. Finally Bluestar had been asked not to route buses so they meet in Ashdene or New Roads. Delays occur at times so it cannot be totally eliminated.

**District Cllr Tipp** added that a similar situation occurred in Fawley and Blue Star had re-routed the bus through other village roads making it a circular route to avoid buses meeting.

On another issue a resident asked if Cllrs had walked through the village recently? It was in a terrible state more akin to a third world village. Not only were pavements in a very bad state but verges had been replaced with slabs or gravel, posts were erected to stop vehicles encroaching on verges and cars parking on verges which she thought was not allowed and some ditches were very messy. She asked if the Council could do something to smarten up the village?

## **5. HIGHWAYS MATTERS**

- a) It was noted that the salt/grit provided in the bins by HCC is for road/pavement use only. Using it on private property is unlawful. A note had been included in the Newsletter.
- b) SID. **Cllr Kershaw** reported that a grant had been received to cover the cost of a SID and he was looking for the most appropriate model for our use. The Chairman reminded Councillor Kershaw of their meeting with P.C. White and P.C. Clark and their concerns of and for individuals if they were operating SIDs.
- c) The Clerk reported that the Parish Council's decision to ask for the proposed disabled bay to be situated on the north side of the service road meant it would have to go in the next Traffic Order for further consultation.

## **6. RECREATION GROUND**

**Cllr Bryant** reported that the continued rain meant that no further work had been carried out in the Recreation ground.

**The Chairman** said that the carcass of a deer had been reported in the Recreation Ground. She had rung the Forestry Commission number in Lyndhurst and reported it but was asked to get some further details. On ringing back with that information she discovered that she was talking to an office in Scotland. The length of time it took for each call to be answered and that no one seemed to know where anyone was or what to do she decided to go to the Lyndhurst Office who immediately said it was not a Forestry Commission matter and gave her the right contact. Unfortunately the delay meant it could not be dealt with that day so she called **Cllr Bryant** who dealt with the matter to avoid children being distressed by seeing the carcass.

She added it appears that there is now a Call Centre for the Commission in Edinburgh to which calls to the Lyndhurst number were being routed but no one has been told nor is it noted on their web site. However unless the efficiency of the call centre is improved it will not be much use to anyone.

## **7. PLANNING**

- a) **Cllr Sopowski** gave a report on the planning applications received and decisions made since the last meeting.
- b) The Clerk reported that the NPA had acknowledged receipt of the Council's views on the proposed change to the time allowed to Parish Councils to talk on any planning application. **Cllr Frost** said the matter had been discussed at the NPA's meeting and 50% of Councils who responded were in favour of a three minute time limit. The Committee broadly supported the status quo but felt a one minute right of reply was appropriate. The Chair, Mrs Pat Wyeth wanted local councils to be limited to three minutes. No decision had yet been taken

c) Letter to the Editor of the Newsletter on 'Infills'.

The Chairman said to make sure that this council was acting correctly I contacted the authority and was advised to inform Councillors to note that the Parish Plan is only an aspiration document and states things that you hope and will try to achieve in the parish. Although J38a states 'to resist infill', it would not apply in this case as the NPA have already set a precedent in granting an infill just a few yards away from the new proposal. It would be a waste of resources for this council to even consider a refusal when the National Park has already set a precedent as it would not have any effect. You have all seen the letter from a resident on this matter. Should it be published and if so should the Council respond?

After much discussion it was agreed not to publish because the Council receives a number of communications from residents asking the Council to support or oppose applications or commenting on them. If it publishes one it would be asked to publish others and the majority of applications are only of interest to the immediate neighbours. The only people notified by NPA of the applications are those directly affected so the majority of readers are not involved.

## **8. ACCOUNTS**

a) The list of cheques issued since the last meeting was approved.

b) The Council considered a paper from the Clerk on the external auditor's views on management of risks. After discussion it was agreed not to take the matter any further at this time.

c) **The Chairman** said I have sent a personal thank you to Cllr. Mans for his grant to the History Project. I am now in the process of buying the equipment. I have consulted with the Editor of our Newsletter about the equipment that has been suggested and, as this is in his line of work, I am able to proceed with confidence.

I also report that my neighbour has given a portable screen for the History Exhibition

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

**Cllr Coaker** attended the meeting of the Fete Committee and also a meeting in the Recreation Ground with Rodeo Leisure on Fete matters.

**Cllr Sturgess** had also attended both those meetings and the NE Quadrant meeting

**District Cllr Tipp** reminded the council that his small grants fund was now £200pa and needed to be taken up before the end of March. He also noted that the NFDC meeting next Monday would approve no change in the Council Tax next year.

**The Chairman** attended the North East Quadrant meeting for the New Forest National Park Authority and said it was an evening tinged with sadness as the Chairman Mr. Bob Morris will shortly be retiring from the National Park.

James Brown gave an interesting talk on the 'New Forest Remembers' Portal

The Chief Executive of the New Forest National Park gave a summary of findings of the recent peer review of the NPA. The NPA are drawing together an improvement plan reflecting the findings of the review.

## **10. COMMUNITY PLAN**

**Cllr Kershaw** attended the A&CCG meeting in January and reported as follows:-

- The availability of cycle paths in the village had been reviewed and an article for the Newsletter was being prepared.

- The Committee Chairman to meet with Cllr Bryant regarding the exercise equipment being considered in the Recreation Ground
- The right of way over the 5metre wide strip of land from the Railway Station into the forest was being pursued.
- The following dates were noted, Apple Day 2nd June, Big Lunch 5<sup>th</sup> October and the Village Fete 7<sup>th</sup> September.
- The next meeting would be on 9<sup>th</sup> April
- The AGM would be on 7<sup>th</sup> May.

### **11. VILLAGE FETE**

**Cllr Sturgess** asked if any Cllr had come with suggestions for the Charity to be supported this year. **Cllr Coaker** said the Committee had proposed the Air Ambulance or St John Ambulance. **Cllr Sturgess** then proposed the Hampshire Search and Rescue, a local charity supporting the police in finding people who were lost in the New Forest.

After discussion it was referred back to the Fete Committee to make a decision.

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

**The Chairman** said you will have seen in the NFDC Forward Plan a proposal in the Off Street Parking Places Order to the effect that disabled badge holders would no longer be able to park free of charge in off-street parking places. I draw your attention to this change in case residents and councillors [as individuals] wish to comment. The deadline for comments is 5<sup>th</sup> March 2013. Also your February Newsletter gave the dates for the next History Exhibition as March of this year, which at the time of the Newsletter going to print was correct. Due to unforeseen circumstances those dates have had to be changed to April 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Cllr Tipp** said the feeling was that some disabled drivers were able to afford the cost whereas some able bodied drivers could not which seemed inequitable. Also the time allowed for each session would be longer for disabled drivers.

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

New Forest Access report on special locks to the entrance of Recreation Ground.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.10pm

**Signed S. R. Arnold - Chairman**

**19<sup>th</sup> March 2013**