

ASHURST AND COLBURY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 21st MAY 2013 AT THE CHURCH ROOMS COLBURY

Present: Councillors S. Arnold (in the Chair), D. Bryant, M. Coaker, P. Frost, C. Hubbard, K. Kershaw, A. Sturgess, P. Sopowski.

In Attendance: Parish Clerk L. Griggs, District Councillor L. Puttock, and 13 members of the public.

Apologies had been received from County Councillor Mans and District Councillor Tipp

1. ELECTION OF A CHAIRMAN FOR THE ENSUING YEAR

The Clerk said Cllr Mrs Arnold had indicated her willingness to continue in office and he had not received any other nomination for Chairman.

Cllr Sopowski proposed, and **Cllr Kershaw** seconded, that Cllr Arnold be elected as Chairman. The proposal was approved unanimously.

Cllr Arnold was therefore re-elected unopposed.

Councillor Arnold thanked the Councillors for appointing her for another year.

2. ELECTION OF A VICE CHAIRMAN FOR THE ENSUING YEAR

The Clerk said Cllr Sopowski had indicated his willingness to continue in office and that he had not received any other nomination for Vice Chairman.

Cllr Arnold proposed, and **Cllr Sturgess** seconded, that Cllr Sopowski be elected as Vice-Chairman. The proposal was approved unanimously.

Cllr Sopowski was therefore re-elected unopposed.

Councillor Sopowski thanked the Councillors for their support.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ALLOWANCE

The **Vice Chairman** said that the Chairman's Allowance was raised to £450 the last year and Cllr Arnold had asked that in view of the economic situation it should be left unchanged. He therefore proposed, and **Cllr Sturgess** seconded, that the Chairman's allowance for the year be £450 pounds. The proposal was approved unanimously.

4. REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER BODIES

The following appointments were confirmed:

New Forest Association of Local Councils
Ashurst & Colbury Community Group

Cllrs Arnold and Sturgess
Cllrs Coaker and Kershaw
Reserve Cllr Bryant

HCC Transport Forum
New Forest Consultative Forum

Cllrs Coaker and Kershaw
Cllr Bryant and Cllr Sopowski

5. COUNCIL COMMITTEES

The following appointments were confirmed:

Planning

Cllrs Sopowski (Chairman) Arnold, Coaker and Kershaw.
Reserve Cllr Hubbard

Newsletter

Cllrs Arnold and Sturgess, *D C Webb (Editor) and Parish Clerk.*

Recreation Ground

Cllrs Bryant (Chairman) Arnold and Sturgess

Flooding

Cllrs Bryant and Coaker

Village Design

Cllrs Hubbard (Chair), Frost and Arnold

Village Fete

Cllrs Sturgess (Chair), Arnold, Coaker, Hubbard and Kershaw, *Mrs C. Coaker and the Parish Clerk.*

Allotment Committee

Cllrs Arnold and Bryant *and the Parish Clerk*

* Non Councillors shown in italics

6. 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.

7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no items from the public.

8. MINUTES

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting and the Council meeting both held on 16th April 2013, which had previously been circulated to all Councillors, were approved unanimously and signed by the Chairman.

9. HIGHWAY MATTERS

a) Bluestar buses.

Cllr Kershaw said he had no further news but an article would appear in the June Newsletter setting out what had been done by the Parish Council over the last year.

b) Speed Watch.

Cllr Sturgess asked the Council to reconsider its decision not to join the Speedwatch programme. She had recently attended a meeting which reviewed the programme and results so far and felt it would be worth while looking at it again. Cllr Bill Andrews of Minstead Council was willing to come and talk about Speedwatch in the light of experiences since it was introduced.

Considerable discussion followed, the main points being:-

- Speedwatch requires 3 volunteers to operate and car registrations of offenders are passed to the police.
- Previous article in the Newsletter for volunteers had not resulted in any response
- Volunteers have to be vetted by the Police
- Offenders receiving a letter from the police have been known to target volunteers for recrimination.
- Our own SID proposal was purely for warning drivers as they passed if they were exceeding the speed limit.
- Councils operating Speedwatch have found that volunteer numbers decline after the initial set up.

It was resolved not to reconsider using the Speedwatch programme.

Cllr Kershaw said the delay in bringing our own SID into operation was his inability to get necessary information from NFDC. **Cllr Puttock** agreed to follow it up with the appropriate individuals.

c) Damage caused to the verges just east of the Co-op forecourt.

Cllr Bryant pointed out that cars were causing considerable damage to the verges between the Co-op forecourt and the bus stop, in addition to blocking the driveway of the adjoining residence. Tyre marks showed the extent of cars moving far beyond the confines of the parking area. He asked if steps could be taken to prevent cars moving outside the parking area such as railings, flower tubs and even asking HCC to paint some yellow lines in the area concerned. After some discussion it was agreed the Clerk should write to HCC to see what steps could be taken.

d) Report on Cycle Paths and signage in Ashurst.

The report from Richard Barnett on behalf of the A&CCG had been circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting. It was agreed to accept the eight proposals in the report. The Clerk was asked to get the report into the next Newsletter seeking residents' comments and approval for the eight proposals.

10. RECREATION GROUND

a) **Cllr Bryant** reported that inclement weather had prevented several matters being concluded in particular the laying of more wood chips in the Timberline area. This was the only urgent item in the recent Inspection Report. Otherwise all was in order in the Recreation Ground.

b) Replacement fence.

Cllr Bryant outlined the current situation, in particular the variation between the two quotations received, one from our usual contractor and the other from the residents contractor. The other issue was that there was a dispute in regard to replacing the gate. The Clerk was awaiting some further information as to the legal position.

After discussion the Council agreed to accept the higher quotation because the contractor's work and quality is known to us and the fence would provide a match to the existing fence. The Council also agreed that when the legal situation was clarified the Recreation Ground Committee was empowered to make the appropriate decision, place the tender and report to the next Council meeting.

c) Access to the Recreation Ground. The Clerk reported that he was still waiting for news from the Big Lottery organisation on its views of the request from NFNPA to remove the combination locks from the disabled gates. He had been promised an answer before this meeting but would report to Councillors as soon as he received the information.

11. PLANNING

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

12. ACCOUNTS

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

b) The Council considered the Annual Return and Governance Statement for the year ended 31st March 2013 which had been circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting.

Cllr Sopowski proposed and **Cllr Bryant** seconded that the Annual Return be approved and signed by the Chairman and Clerk. The proposal was agreed unanimously.

Cllr Coaker proposed and **Cllr Sturgess** seconded that the Governance Statement be approved and signed by the Chairman and the Clerk. The proposal was agreed unanimously.

13. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER BODIES

The Clerk said the current representative on the National Park Authority for the NE Quadrant, Cllr Bob Morris (Landford), was retiring and had recommended that Cllr Arnold stand for election. Cllr Arnold had advised she was willing to be a candidate for election if the Council was willing to support her candidature.

Cllrs Sopowski and **Bryant** said they were willing to nominate her and the Council agreed to propose her as a candidate. **Cllr Arnold** thanked the Council for its support and said Netley Marsh Parish Council had indicated willingness to second her nomination

Cllr Hubbard attended the Village Design Statement meeting with NPA, the NE Quadrant meeting, and the Fete Committee meeting.

Cllr Coaker had attended meetings of the Fete Committee and the A&CCG.

Cllr Bryant attended the NF Consultative Panel meeting. It was announced that the Forestry Commission had spent some £5.5m on its New Forest activities with an income of £2.5m from the sale of timber and other items.

Funding for the Higher Level Stewardship Scheme was in place for the current year.

The cause of the dog deaths in the forest was still not known. Similar reports had been received from other parts of the country.

At the next meeting the issue of housing for Commoners was being discussed. If Councillors or residents had any comments or queries on the subject to let him know.

Cllr Sturgess attended meetings of the NE Quadrant and the Fete and Recreation Ground Committees

Cllr Puttock reported on the Switch Hampshire scheme to reduce energy costs and recommended residents to go online or ring up to get a quotation. He also reported that NFDC was to introduce a glass collection scheme probably on a monthly basis. A grant had been received from Government to fund the purchase of the necessary equipment. Existing bins would remain in place for the time being. Netley Marsh Steam fair would be taking place as usual this year.

The Chairman attended:

the meeting of the North East Quadrant.

Sarah Kelly from the NPA promoted two action plans currently in progress. The Landscape Action Plan and Landscape character plan. Action plan not planning but aspirations, the Character Plan will add weight to planning applications. Both documents can be downloaded from the NPA website.

Sustainable Transport by Mark Holroyd is another action with regards to walking, cycling and horse riding in the NPA. The NPA want to monitor the growth of cycling events, and possibly set up a code of conduct for event organizers. Commoners Dwelling Scheme was a heated debate and all commoning building applications will automatically go to the development control committee. This has been a regulation since March 2013. The NPA website promoted by Hilary Makin welcomes events in the village to be advertised on their website.

meetings of the Fete and Recreation Ground Committees.

14. COMMUNITY GROUP

Cllr Coaker reported that the AGM had been a positive meeting. All Officers and Committee members had been re-elected. The Group now had three apple presses and all were being let out and proving very successful.

15. VILLAGE FETE

Cllr Sturgess said things were going well and a full report would be in the Newsletter.

16. VILLAGE DESIGN AND CHARACTER APPRAISAL

Cllr Hubbard reported that she and the Chairman had met with Nick Evans to consider all the comments received by NPA during the Consultation period. The document would now be finalised by NPA and submitted for adoption on 27th June, a meeting she would attend.

The Chairman added the VDS Committee have worked tirelessly to provide this document for the village. It has been submitted to adjacent Parish and Town Councils, HCC, NFDC, English Heritage, Natural England, Forestry Commission, Verderers, CPRE and other environmental bodies. Comments were received from some of these bodies as well as villagers, all of which have been dealt with according to the National Park Authority's Policy on VDS,

17. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DEEMS AS URGENT

The Chairman said Hampshire County council are collecting data about what Councils consider to be the top issues we have, or would, refer to HCC. They only want generic descriptions such as highways.

The Clerk was asked to reply

Highways , particularly in regard to potholes

Overgrown vegetation which obstructs footpaths and highway signs.

NPA has published a Draft Landscape Action Plan and Landscape Character Assessment. The Consultation period is extended to 31st July 2013

21. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AT THE NEXT MEETING

None

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.46pm.

Signed S. R. Arnold - Chairman

18th June 2013