



# WINCHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

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## MINUTES OF THE WINCHFIELD ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY HELD ON MONDAY 22 MAY 2017 AT 7.30 PM IN WINCHFIELD VILLAGE HALL

**PRESENT** Cllr A Renshaw (in the Chair),  
Cllr H Dicks, Cllr L Hodgetts, Cllr P Jackaman and Cllr M Williams  
Cllr D Simpson (Hampshire County Council)  
17 members of the public  
Mrs A Ball (Clerk)

### 1 APOLOGIES AND WELCOME

Apologies were received from Cllrs Crampton and Southern (HDC), Cllr Glen (HCC) and members of the Neighbourhood Policing Team.

The Chairman welcomed Cllr David Simpson, who was elected on 4 May as Hampshire County Council (HCC) member. Cllr Simpson had been a Hampshire member for some time, representing neighbouring areas, and following boundary changes the Hartley Wintney ward now included Winchfield.

The Chairman also welcomed Cllr Louise Hodgetts to her first meeting since being co-opted in March.

### 2 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on 16 May 2016 were accepted and signed as a correct record.

### 3 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman reported on the following matters in his review of the previous 12 months:

#### Neighbourhood Plan

The great achievement of the past year had been the making of the Winchfield Neighbourhood Development Plan which was approved at a meeting of Hart District Council (HDC) on 30 March.

This followed a referendum on 2 February which gained a turnout of 61.2%, one of the highest figures in the whole of the country. Of the 305 residents who voted, 294 endorsed the plan and just 11 voted against.

This was a remarkable effort by the whole community which started back in August 2014. The Neighbourhood Planning team had put in an enormous amount of work to prepare the documents following a series of village engagement events.

The Examiner's Report was received on 4 October 2016, when Andrew Ashcroft MRTPI concluded: "The Plan proposes a series of policies and seeks to bring forward positive and sustainable development in the plan area. There is a very clear focus on safeguarding local character and promoting distinctive housing development. It also includes a series of Watch Points. The Plan has been significantly underpinned by community support and engagement. It is clear that all sections of the community have been actively engaged in its preparation."

Mr Ashcroft said of his visit to Winchfield: "I drove initially to the car parking area adjacent to the iconic St Mary's church. I could see why it features so heavily in both the Plan itself and other documents and publications about the village. It is a stunning piece of Norman architecture."

The Examiner concluded: "I am satisfied that the content and the form of the Plan is fit for purpose. It is thorough and distinctive to the Plan area. The wider community and the Parish Council have spent

considerable time and energy in identifying the issues and objectives that they wish to be included in their Plan. This gets to the heart of the localism agenda.”

The Neighbourhood Plan had now become a statutory planning document which had to be taken into account in any planning applications in the parish.

The Chairman placed on record the thanks of the whole parish to all those who were involved in this achievement.

### **Local Plan**

Despite the making of the Winchfield Neighbourhood Plan, the threat of major development had not gone away. HDC was in the process of carrying out a Regulation 18 consultation on its Local Plan which set out the council’s intentions for development across the district up to 2032.

This document proposed a new settlement of 1,800 homes on Winchfield’s doorstep at Murrell Green. While this meant that the focus on a new settlement had been shifted from Winchfield itself, the alternative that 3,000 houses could be located in Winchfield was assessed in the documents. Although the Parish Council clearly understood that ‘Winchfield New Town’ had been ruled out in 2016 as not viable for a number of reasons, HDC had failed to make these reasons public.

The parish council had asked John Boyd Planning Associates to prepare a full response to the consultation which was due to end on 9 June. The Parish Council would continue to work closely with the planning consultants to rebut any attempts to place major development in Winchfield, and by maintaining the parish precept at its previous level the Parish Council was well funded to support this vital work.

### **Community Benefit Schemes**

The two solar farms in the parish at Oakfield Farm and Hungerford Farm not only generated sustainable electricity but also brought valuable income to the parish which could be used for community benefit schemes.

Oakfield Farm provided an annual sum of £3,233 for ten years, of which the Parish Council had received the first two payments.

In February 2017 the Parish Council received a one-off payment of £42,000 for the Hungerford Farm scheme.

It was intended that the first project to benefit from these funds would be an upgrade to footpaths in the parish, with stiles being replaced by kissing gates. Suggestions from residents for other projects were welcomed.

### **Finance**

The precept was maintained at £28,000 because of the need to earmark funds for professional planning advice. As a result of the reserves held by the council, together with the solar farm monies, a total of £72,000 had been placed in two savings accounts in addition to the normal current and deposit banking arrangements.

In March, the council introduced electronic banking for day to day purposes.

### **Clerk and Councillors**

At the end of January, Carole Johnson retired after 24 years of exemplary service to the council, and the community owed her an immense debt of gratitude for all her hard work and dedication over so many years.

She had already stepped in to delay her retirement last year when her intended replacement was unable to take up the role.

However, in January the Parish Council was fortunate to appoint Alison Ball as the new Clerk and all councillors joined the Chairman in thanking her for the very capable way in which she has been fulfilling her duties. She had the benefit of knowledge gained as Clerk to Ewshot Parish Council and she would be continuing in that role.

Unfortunately, Councillor Ian Gavin-Brown had suffered a stroke in May 2016, and in February 2017 stepped down after 43 years as a member of Winchfield Parish Council. By any yardstick this was a remarkable length of public service, and the council had benefited hugely from his wise counsel allied to his legal knowledge. In addition, the wider community benefited in particular from his work as chairman of the Winchfield Festival. The Members thanked him and wished him well.

The Chairman welcomed Louise Hodgetts as a member of the council.

David Simpson had won the election for the Hartley Wintney ward on HCC earlier in the month. The ward had been expanded by the addition of Winchfield and Dogmersfield. The Parish Council looked forward to working with David who had made it clear that Winchfield was not the place for a new settlement.

The ward boundary changes meant that Jonathan Glen, although he was also again re-elected, ended his many years as the parish representative on the county council, and thanks were expressed for all that he had done for Winchfield.

The Chairman's two fellow ward councillors on HDC, Tim Southern and Anne Crampton, were good friends of Winchfield and he thanked them for their support.

Finally, the Chairman thanked Meyrick Williams, Paul Jackaman and Harry Dicks for their very hard work over the past year both in routine business and the many special projects they had been involved in.

#### 4 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

This item was covered under item 3: Chairman's report.

#### 5 HART LOCAL PLAN

This item was covered under item 3: Chairman's report.

#### 6 FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2017

The Chairman presented the Parish Council's accounts for the year ended 31 March 2017, copies of which had been circulated. **In summary:**

Balance brought forward from previous year	£21,202.04
Total receipts	£79,237.98
Total payments	(£14,405.75)
<b>End of year balance</b>	<b>£86,034.27</b>

The year's payments of **£14,405.75** had consisted of the following:

Administration (inc Clerk's salary)	£5,620.69
Grants <i>upkeep of graveyard, Basingstoke Canal, Winchfield Festival</i>	£1,450.00
Local Plan response	£3,135.15
Neighbourhood Plan	£675.04
Section 137 payments	£525.86
Maintenance (bus shelter and noticeboard)	£28.71
Other (gratuity)	£2,160.00
VAT on payments (to be reclaimed)	£810.30

**Reserves:** after taking account of the £810.30 VAT to be refunded, the Council had reserves of £86,844.57 with £86,188.22 being earmarked.

#### 7 OPEN FORUM

**Sharing information:** the Chairman asked if the Parish Council shared enough information with residents including details received from third parties. It was noted that the Parish Council website was kept up to date and had a useful planning tracker.

**Speed limit on the B3016 Odiham Road:** concerns were raised regarding the speed of vehicles on the B3016. It was felt that the section recently reduced to 50mph was still too fast and did not extend far enough. The Chairman acknowledged that there had been some confusion which had meant that the Parish Council had not responded to the consultation on the speed limit, and if the council had responded it would have requested a change to where the speed limit ended. A member of the public felt that the speed limit reminder signs were not in the right locations for warning drivers of the more dangerous sections of road. Cllr Simpson advised that more evidence would be needed to be able to present a case for reducing the speed limit below 50mph. It was agreed that all traffic incidents on this road be reported to the Parish Council in order that this information could be collated to be used as evidence.

**Work by South East Water:** it was reported that South East Water would be closing the B3016 Odiham Road between Whitehall and Potbridge for works to replace the water main. The work would be taking place from Monday 26 June for approximately 13 weeks. A drop-in session would be taking place on Wednesday 31 May between 4pm and 7pm at the Village Hall.

**There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.59 pm.**