

Minutes

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly of the Parish of Ampfield held in the Village Hall, Ampfield on Monday, 27th April 2015 commencing at 7.30pm.

PRESENT: Miss M.I.Rothwell (Chairman of the Parish Council)–Presiding

Parish Councillors	Mr E.H. Butcher Mr A. Clark Mr P. Edwards Mr M. D. Hatley (Borough Councillor) from para 5/16 Mr J. A. Jones Mr B. W. Nanson Mr G. C. A. Roads Mr D. Stevens
County Councillor	Mr A. G. Dowden

Approx. 21 parishioners

Clerk to the Council Mrs D. A. Matthews

1/15 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Simon Harris of Gosport Farm and Julie Trotter of Potters Heron Close.

2/15 Minutes

The minutes of the previous Annual Parish Assembly held on 28th April, 2014 having been circulated, were confirmed by the Meeting and signed by the Chairman.

3/15 Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising not covered by items on the agenda.

4/15 Chairman's Review of the Year

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. It had been a very busy year which had brought some changes. She thanked Councillors and others in the community, for their support which had been much appreciated. She also thanked the Revd Peter Gilks who had now left the parish and looked forward to the appointment of a new Vicar. Morleys Green was making progress and funds from

that development would be used to extend and refurbish the Village Hall. The Hall would be closed during the summer holidays to allow the work to be undertaken. New opportunities and challenges would present themselves once responsibilities for the green spaces, allotments and the Hall carpark had transferred from the developer to Ampfield Parish Council. The support and expertise of residents would be invaluable in making the most of this development. The Chairman explained that, due to the restrictions placed on those standing for election in May, there were no written reports in the Annual Newsletter from Councillors Alan Dowden and Martin Hatley.

5/15 Planning

Cllr Clark thanked the many people in the audience and the wider parish who had helped Council in its dealing with complex and challenging planning situations throughout the year. The Broadgate Farm development, which was just off Hook Road, was underway. There were 5 houses planned in phase one and 12 more in phase two, 6 of which were expected to be “affordable housing”. The application had included some office space. The other major development at Morleys Green was for 39 houses and was due for completion in the autumn. This would bring with it allotments, a large village green and substantial improvements to the Village Hall. It was expected that the development would add considerably to community amenities once completed.

The decision about the appeal involving the gypsy & traveller site, at the paddock opposite the Potters Heron, had been delayed until after the election. The earlier, similar application near the campsite on Ampfield Hill had been closed at the end of 2013 and nothing had been heard since. There had been an increase in applications for solar farms in adjacent parishes. Despite a lot of hard work and many discussions with Southern Gas Network, it had not proved economically viable to get gas laid on to the village. In response to questions about the affordable houses at Morleys being intended for those with a connection to Ampfield, Cllr Clark advised that all local people who had expressed an interest in the development were invited to an event by the developer and asked to formally register their interest. That event, and a leaflet drop to local residents, took place prior to the marketing of the properties. It was agreed that the developer & housing associations would be asked to share the data about the eventual occupiers. Anyone interested in the properties could get in touch with Cllr Hatley who would give them contact details.

Concern was expressed about the division of Sheep Field and the building of a substantial barn. Cllr Clark would find about any need for permission for the 2 entrances. Cllr Hatley explained about the consultation process and the proposals for identified sites for the gypsy and travelling communities in the Borough. The report was available to the public; planning inspectors would be aware of the situation.

6/15 Council Finances & Administration

Cllr Nanson presented the following to the Meeting:-

- (a) the Audited Accounts of the Parish Council for the year ended 31st March 2014 together with the schedules and assurances required by the External Auditors
- (b) expenditure details to March 2015 (provisional)
- (c) the budget and build-up of figures for the Parish Precept for 2015/2016

Details of the financial information presented were included in the packs made available at the meeting. Most of the income came from the Precept, which had not been increased for several years, supplemented by modest amounts from rent and fees. Parish Council accounting was highly proscribed but relatively straightforward with no accruals or depreciation to deal with and no land values. An insurance claim had been made following the damage caused by winter storms to a portakabin on the Recreation Ground. Significant expenditure had been incurred in commissioning ecology reports to assist in certain planning objections. Reserves were healthy at £33,250 and were in 3 named funds.

Cllr Nanson explained the vagaries of the loan repayment system used by the Public Works Loan Body which could result, as in this year, in payments dropping into the next financial year due to payment dates falling on a weekend or public holiday. In response to questions Cllr. Nanson explained how the S106 developer fund monies were calculated and allocated. Test Valley Borough Council worked to a formula and Parish Councils rarely had any influence over the outcome. It was important that Parish Councils tracked S106 monies and made best use of it. Cllr Hatley pointed out that if the monies were not used within a certain period they would be returned to the developer. It was noted that a large amount of S106 monies was attached to the Yellow Dot development for highways works. This could have become a tarmac path as part of the cycle way but local residents had wanted a more rural looking path.

The meeting agreed to receive the finance report.

7/15 Transport and Road Safety

Cllr Edwards brought everyone up to date with the existing bus services. S106 developer contributions from the Abbotswood development had helped towards improved bus services. The 66 service now varied its route which included Jermyns Lane. Links to the timetables were on the parish website. Speed monitoring had taken place in Green Lane. This seemed to show that it was more of a problem with volume of traffic rather with speed. Monitoring on the Straight Mile highlighted both noise and speed issues; more work would be undertaken.

Braishfield was due to withdraw from the shared ownership of the Speed Limit Reminder sign from June after which the sign would belong entirely to Ampfield. A new site in Pound Lane, whose speed limit had been reduced to 40mph, would be identified to host the sign. There had been no progress with proposed modifications to the section of the A3090 that goes through the village. The Lengthsman scheme, which was funded by Hampshire County Council (HCC), continued for another year. The 8 person days allocated to Ampfield every year were well used on small projects.

In response to questions Cllr Clark advised that average speeds in the Straight Mile were recorded as 52mph although there were some in excess of that; at the Hook Road /A3090 junction at about 3.15pm in the afternoon many drivers were recorded as doing 80mph. It was explained that the Police and other agencies used their equipment where it would be most effective. If the Straight Mile had a speed limit then a monitor could be used there.

Problems with parking continued at the School in lower Knapp Lane. The voluntary one-way system was not observed by everyone. It was noted that the School encouraged parents to follow the system and to use the parking facilities at the Village Hall. However, concerns remained about walking along the pavement at the A3090 with young children. Much of the increase in trucks was due to the Abbotswood development. Cllr Hatley advised that until the A34/M3 Junction was improved trucks would continue to divert through Ampfield. It was hoped that the modifications to the A3090 would generally improve walking and cycling through the village section of the parish. Cllr Dowden thanked Cllrs Edwards and Clark for the work they did for the parish and the help they gave him. Cuts in public transport services were of great concern as the population was getting older and many would no longer be able to drive.

8/15 Ampfield Recreation Ground

The customised kitchen container, which replaced the portakabin damaged by the winter storms, was functioning well. The management of wildlife was a constant activity and unavoidable if the area was to be kept safe and playable. Cllr Nanson welcomed any ideas to extend the sporting activities available to the community and to increase usage of the Recreation Ground overall. However, it was accepted that until a sports pavilion was built opportunities were limited. The closing of the playground during cricket matches was unfortunate but the decision was taken to protect children who could be at risk from balls. It had been difficult to get solid advice on who was responsible should any incident occur. It was likely that the matter would end up in court. Council had considered various methods with the Cricket Club, including erection of nets, but they had not proved practicable to operate.

9/15 Friends of Chapel Wood

Using slides Cllr Roads showed the progress that had been made in the Burial Ground in clearing unwanted vegetation, pruning shrubs and opening up views. The soil in much of the Burial Ground was poor and waterlogged. As a result some young box plants had been lost and would need to be replaced in the cruciform hedge. Work was planned to delineate the ground and provide a better structure to mark out the graves so that best use could be made of the space. A 2-metre, unconsecrated piece of land on the western side of the Burial Ground needed to be cleared and levelled. A natural hedge using coppiced Holly had been made around the glade behind St Mark's. During the summer months effort would be concentrated around the pond area and making plans to rebuild the dipping platform. Cllr Roads thanked the Friends of Chapel Wood very much for the time and effort they spent on maintaining and improving the community Woodland and the Burial Ground.

10/15 Ampfield Countryside Heritage Area

The Ampfield Countryside Heritage Area had been rejuvenated and various talks and activities were planned for the coming year. Cllr Roads thanked Barbara Jerrome, the Footpath Warden who, with support from her husband, walked and monitored the paths in and around the parish. It was recognised that work was needed to improve the signage and the condition of some paths which were very muddy. Dog owners were reminded of the need to pick up after their pets.

11/15 Allotments

Cllr Stevens updated everyone on the progress with the allotments since the publication of the newsletter. It was emphasised that this was a parish amenity and that the allotment plots were not linked in any way to ownership of houses on the Morleys development. There was discussion about the likely size of the plots, the amenities available and the cost of rental. In view of the fact that sheds and other structures would not be permitted there was concern that those with cycles would have nowhere to park them. It was expected that the allotments would be available next February. Should there be more applicants than plots a draw would be held and a waiting list drawn up. An association would be formed once the allotments were up and running; in the meantime Ampfield Parish Council would manage the site.

12/15 Communications and website

Cllr Jones advised that the website structure and look were updated about every 4 years. The Parish website had to keep up to date with user technology; about one third of visits to the site were made using tablets and phones. Planning issues remained the single biggest interest for users of the website. He thanked local businesses whose continued support for the website made it cost-neutral. It was

recognised that broadband capability for the village sector of the parish was very poor. Cllr Edwards explained that work continued in developing communications in various ways. The single sheet, coloured newsletter produced the previous autumn had been well received and would be developed further to keep everyone up to date with key issues. There was an email news alert facility which kept users up to date with events in the parish; anyone could join by giving their email details via the homepage.

13/15 Other Reports

There was thought to be very few bins for dog waste around the parish. Cllr Hatley advised that he had just been told by Test Valley Borough Council that ordinary waste bins could be used as long as the waste was contained within a plastic bag. Two defibrillators were being purchased for the community; one would be placed on the outside of the Village Hall and the other on the outside of the Potters Heron Hotel. This was possible due to a generous donation from the Potters Heron and a grant arranged by Cllr Hatley. A familiarisation session had been arranged for parishioners on Monday 18th May at 6pm in the Village Hall. It would be run by the Ambulance Service. It was noted that a new Head of School had taken up post and that the number of children attending Ampfield School was expected to rise to 60 in September. The Village Market was still going strong and the Chairman thanked everyone for their support. The next market would be on 3rd September subject to the refurbishments and building works being completed in the Village Hall

It was expected that the recruitment campaign for a new Vicar would start shortly; first interviews were planned for end June. If all went well the new Incumbent would be appointed in the autumn. It was expected that the Hall would close once the Pre-School had finished for the summer. Regular users had been advised of this. It was possible that the Bridge Club, which was one of the few clubs that continued during the summer, might still be able to meet 2 or 3 times providing that there were no health & safety concerns.

14/15 Open Forum

There were no further questions or comments. The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.30pm and invited everyone to stay for refreshments.

Chairman.....

Date.....