



## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF THE ELECTORATE \*

Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at 7.30 pm.

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All six members of Hurstbourne Tarrant Parish Council attended the Annual Meeting of the Electorate:

Councillor Ian Kitson (Chairman of the Parish Council)  
Councillor Mark Thomas (Vice Chairman of the Parish Council)  
Councillor Jamie Williams  
Councillor John Bentley  
Councillor Louisa Russell  
Councillor John Partridge

Also present were:

Mrs Miriam Edwards, Clerk to the Parish Council  
County Councillor Kirsty North  
Six members of the public.

Apologies were received from Borough Councillor Phil North, Leader of Test Valley Borough Council.

### **1. PARISH COUNCIL - annual report for 2020-21**

#### **Councillor Mark Thomas provided the following report:**

*“A year when community really mattered”*

The Coronavirus pandemic has really shown the value and importance of local community. This has been a difficult time for many, for different reasons and the Parish Council would like to thank everyone for pulling together over the last year and send out thoughts and condolences to anyone in the Parish who has experienced bereavement and hardship during this time.

It was great to see our village school and others serving the villages navigate through the difficult times and provide stability and encouragement to younger members of the community and our thanks especially to all local essential workers and our own Community Support Group which helped many over the last year. Special mention to Revd Trevor Lewis who kept his daily services of prayer and worship going throughout and has been there to provide pastoral assistance to

anyone who required it. And of course, to our local shop and pubs who have weathered the pandemic and provided valuable services.

We would also like to acknowledge the generous financial donation to the Parish from Vinoth Kandasamy at The Family Shopper in respect of his thanks for the support of the community.

The safety of our local road network continues to be one of the primary concerns of our residents, especially following the recent accident in the Square. This remains a priority for us and we will continue to lobby HCC and our MP for improvements to control speed through HBT on the A343. A working group is being formed to bring additional focus to this. The Community Speedwatch group is very proactive and regularly conducting monitoring using the speed indicator device by The Crescent.

Project Stride has resulted in 5 stiles now having been replaced with gates, and more in the pipeline. We are grateful to HCC Countryside Service and their volunteers for the support and funding with this initiative and to local landowners for completing works to keep local Rights of Way accessible and safe to use. Lockdowns placed additional pressure on our RoWs, and we thank all those responsible walkers who respect the local environment and follow the Countryside Code.

Dog mess is another major concern of residents and local landowners – the PC continues to run awareness campaigns to stress the importance of picking up after our pets, and to ensure that dogs are not being allowed to worry livestock.

The cricket net on KGV playing field has been a great success and we are working with the school to plan replacement of the Trim Trail as well as the possibility of some outdoor gym equipment. Special thanks go to Cllr John Bentley and son Tom for all their work to keep the play equipment maintained.

The Floodwatch working group continues to monitor our waterways. The Netherton valley river did not rise this year so there was less pressure on the Swift which rose and ran well. Riverbed regrading works, for which funding was obtained in 2019 from TVBC, are hoped to go ahead this year once the river is dry and there will be no damage to habitats or private land during access.

Whilst Parish Clean Ups have not been possible over the last twelve months in their usual format, we are grateful to those residents who have signed up with TVBC as litter pickers and help to keep our villages, open spaces and roads clean and tidy.

This year saw the adoption of the HBT Village Design Statement – a significant piece of work and thanks go to the working party led by Andy Watson and Andrew Russell for their work, and to all who contributed to the project. The whole document can be found online at TVBC and the PC website (details below).

The Parish Council continues to monitor planning applications – whilst not having powers, the PC will continue comment upon, support or object to local development as appropriate. We are grateful to Councillor Jamie Williams for his expertise in this area.

Once again, the precept remained at the same level as the past 3 years. The Parish Council maintains healthy reserves to cover smaller projects and unforeseen circumstances as well as sinking funds for areas of possible future expenditure. However, the PC always strives to seek grant funding for projects from various appropriate sources to protect the public's money and increase the potential for improvement in the Parish.

Annual Governance and Accountability reports and all other matters relating to the Parish Council can be found on the website - [www.hbtparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.hbtparishcouncil.org.uk) - Councillor Louisa Russell and our Clerk monitor and manage Parish finances.

As we emerge from the pandemic, we are hopeful of a return to 'normality' and hope that our Village Show, Community Centre, Swifts and other groups and activities can resume normal operations very soon.

Thank you again to everyone for making our Parish a wonderful place to live and work over the last twelve months.

### **Councillor Jamie Williams – Planning**

#### **Village Design Statement**

A huge vote of thanks goes to the working group who have worked tirelessly to make amazing progress on the road to implementing a VDS – a very good response from the survey and open meetings and our thanks for the commitment shown to the project.

There have been several applications this year that the Planning Officer would have had cause to refer to the Village Design Statement and likewise the Parish Council would have been able to refer to it to support its comments.

#### **Enforcement**

The Northern Planning Enforcement Team have been busy in the Parish and have responded to 9 reports of potential planning breaches.

#### **Committee**

Two applications in the Parish have been called to the Northern Planning Committee and decided by a vote amongst the Councillors. The process of calling in the application is generally as a result of our Ward Councillor being sufficiently concerned that there is a strength of feeling or grounds that delegated powers (the Planning Officer and their team) are not considered suitable for the determination of the application.

An application is heard by the Councillors as presented by the Planning Officer. Subsequently the consultees who register to speak are allowed 3 minutes (EXACTLY) in which to put their support or objection across. Councillors then debate the application following a view given by the Councillor whose Ward the application lies in.

Debate is often extensive, and the Councillors will refer to the applicant, and the Council's legal advisors and planning policy specialists.

Hearings are often quite involved and sometimes heated. It is a robust system and Borough Councillors will often debate up to 10 applications a month.



## 2. **COUNTY & BOROUGH COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

### **County Councillor Kirsty North:**

*“Thank you to all Parish Councillors for their hard work and community support provided during the Covid-19 pandemic. Over the past year, I have report problems and sought solutions and improvements from the County Council for your area. If re-elected, I will continue that work!”*

### ***Recipients of my devolved budget for 2020/2021 were as follows:***

- Veteran's in Action – Covid-19 response
- Methodist Homes Live at Home Test Valley – Covid-19 response
- Brendoncare Clubs – Emergency befriending service
- Citizen's Advice Test Valley – Covid-19 IT support
- Hampshire Youth Parliament –
- Kids on Track – Summer camp 2020
- Andover Trees United – Harmony Woods Cabin
- Vernham Dean Millennium Hall – Carbon Footprint renovations
- Andover Town Council – Speed Indicator Devices for Andover
- Stormbreak – Mental Health support for Andover Primary Schools

*Due to the pandemic, the budget was extended to ensure community groups could access funding to help with the Covid-19 response.*

*Over the past year I have:*

- Reported potholes and chased up repairs
- Arranged site visits for HCC Highways Operatives and virtual catch-ups to discuss
- Had 'school keep clear' signs installed outside Smannell and Enham Primary School
- Lobbied for (with success) the £2.5million improvements to Icknield School which have received sign-off from the County Council.
- Ensured grit bins were filled throughout the division

- Raised speed limit concerns with Highways officers
- Visited Kids on Track holiday club for vulnerable local children
- Intervened in social care cases on behalf of residents
- Assisted Augusta Park Community Association with their covid-secure Christmas lights switch-on
- Reported footpath signs for repair
- Underseen a replacement traditional Fingerpost to the sign near Vernham Dean
- Reported 2 further traditional fingerpost signs for repair in Bourne Valley
- Served on the Town Mills Riverside Park Panel –delivering a new town centre park as a joint partnership between Test Valley Borough Council and Hampshire County Council
- Reported faulty streetlights and ensured they were fixed
- Planted trees with Vernham Dean Gillum's CofE Primary School at Harmony Woods run by Andover Trees United
- Had additional signage and 'SLOW' road markings installed in Upper Enham

#### HCC's Budget:

The County Council's budget for 2021-22 includes £2.1billion of spending focussing on work associated with the pandemic and public health, supporting vulnerable children and adults, investment into Hampshire road network and infrastructure and schools, countryside services, libraries, environment and climate change mitigation. The annual council tax charge for Band D will be £1350.45."

#### **Borough Councillor Phil North, Leader of Test Valley Borough Council:**

"It's been an incredibly tough year for all of us but with the success of the vaccination programme, which is helping to dramatically reduce case rates, there is now a huge amount of light at the end of tunnel. I'm really proud of how every single one of our communities in Test Valley came together to help each other through coronavirus and Hurstbourne Tarrant is no exception – with a first class community resilience effort ensuring those that were isolating got the food and medicines they required.

The borough council helped to coordinate this effort with our community services partner, Unity – and our Test Valley Community Helpline helped direct people to their local groups. Whilst many councils suspended waste collections at the height of the pandemic, we battled on – collecting bin after bin, week after week. We processed and paid out millions of pounds of grant money to local businesses & organisations and the housing team took the opportunity to coax rough sleepers inside and had great success in encouraging them to stay there. In recent months, we've facilitated vaccine and test centres in Test Valley, playing our part in the recovery.

A word too on our finances. Our loss in income combined with increased costs from the pandemic meant the council was £6.3m worse off last year than would have ordinarily been the case.

Thankfully, various tranches of government grants and other savings helped offset that, meaning a deficit of £1.4m for 2020/21. We decided to use our reserves to plug the gap, recognising that with coronavirus all of our rainy days had come at once. In order to close the budget gap for this year, we also made a further draw from our reserves coupled with a more modest council tax increase of £2.50 on an average Band D.

Whilst our recent challenge has been to support the community through the pandemic – our top priority remains the rejuvenation of our town centres. In the last year we have adopted a Masterplan for Andover and delivered the first phase: a new Riverside Park at Town Mills. Much work is currently taking place to plan for the future phases.

Closer to home, I'm delighted that last month TVBC formally adopted the Hurstbourne Tarrant, Ibthorpe & Upton Village Design Statement as a Supplementary Planning Document. As I said at our council meeting, Hurstbourne Tarrant is full of amazing people, fantastic businesses, has one of the most proactive Parish Councils I've ever had the pleasure to work with - and nestled in the AONB is a stunningly beautiful village. The VDS will help ensure it's kept that way, providing an official design guide to householders and architects, carrying real planning weight. My thanks go to Andrew Russell, Andy Watson and the whole team for putting together such a good quality document.

Thank you for all that the Parish Council has done this year and I look forward to working with you all again next year. Fingers crossed I'll see you inside the Tea Cosy or the George & Dragon soon."

### 3. **LOCAL POLICING** - a presentation by Sgt Richard Taylor

Sgt Taylor was unable to attend online, but provided a video covering the local neighbourhood policing team's work and some statistics:

	2019	2020	2021 (to date)
Burglaries	4	2	2
Assaults	1	5	2
Thefts	2	2	6
Vehicle crime	5	2	2

#### Control Charts - BEAT

Crimes and Incidents

Select	TEST.VALLEY	TA
Select	BOURNE VALLEY	
Select	All Crime	

#### TEST.VALLEY TA BOURNE VALLEY - All Crime

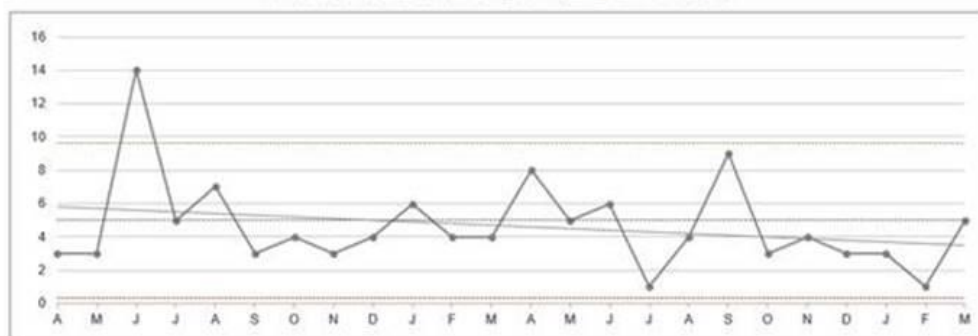
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	TOTAL
Crimes - Current Year	8	5	6	1	4	9	3	4	3	3	1	5	52
Crimes - Last Year	3	3	14	5	7	3	4	3	4	6	4	4	60
Difference	5	2	-8	-4	-3	6	-1	1	-1	-3	-3	1	-8
% Difference	166.7%	66.7%	-57.1%	-80.0%	-42.9%	200.0%	-25.0%	33.3%	-25.0%	-50.0%	-75.0%	25.0%	-13.3%

YTD	52
Last YTD	60
Variance	-8
% Difference	-13.3%

Fixed Average	5
Variance	0
% Difference	0.0%

Maximum	10
Mean	5
Minimum	0

#### TEST.VALLEY TA BOURNE VALLEY - All Crime



4. **VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT** - an update by Dr Andrew Watson

An update was provided on the conclusion of the village design statement, the work involved and the future use of the VDS in planning applications. A copy of the VDS can be found at <http://bit.ly/hbtvds> or a hard copy can be provided by contacting the Parish Clerk (details at the top of the document).

5. **OPEN THE MEETING TO PARISHIONERS** - to raise any concerns, discussions, comments or questions.

There were no questions or concerns raised.

6. **DATE OF THE NEXT ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

The next meeting was due to be held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

29<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Chairman of the Parish Council: Councillor I Kitson

Clerk: Mrs M Edwards

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\* Note: The Annual Parish Meeting is a meeting of the Electorate; it is not a Parish Council meeting.  
This meeting was held virtually via the Zoom app.