

## Minutes

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly of the Parish of Ampfield held in the Village Hall, Ampfield on Monday, 9th May 2011 commencing at 7.30pm.

PRESENT: Miss M.I.Rothwell (Chairman of the Parish Council)– Presiding  
Parish Councillors Mr A. Clark  
Mr D. J .E. Gilks  
Mr M. D. Hatley (Borough Councillor-from  
Planning Committee report)  
Mr J. A. Jones  
Mr B. W. Nanson  
Mr G. C. A. Roads  
Mr D. Stevens  
County Councillor Cllr. A. G. Dowden  
Approx. 31 parishioners  
Clerk to the Council Mrs D. A. Matthews

### 1/11 Chairman’s Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained how the meeting would be conducted.

### 2/11 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor E.H.Butcher, Revd. Peter Gilks, Mr Derek Allen, Mrs Claire Ludwell and Mr Stephen White. Cllr. Hatley, who was attending an earlier meeting at Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC), would join the meeting later.

### 3/11 Minutes

The minutes of the previous Annual Parish Assembly held on 10th May 2010, having been circulated, were confirmed by the Meeting and signed by the Chairman.

### 4/11 Matters arising from the Minutes

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

5/11 Road Safety and Transport

Cllr. Clark gave a presentation on highways maintenance, road safety and transport. The new Concessionary Fares Scheme was now in place; a change to the starting time from 9.30am to 9.00am for free bus travel was welcomed. Leaflets and application forms were available after the meeting. Bus services remained limited and there was still no direct route from the eastern part of the Parish to Romsey. These issues would continue to be pursued with HCC. Everyone was encouraged to let Cllr Clark have any comments on the bus services so that he could include them in a survey he was due to complete.

The grit bins provided by Hampshire County Council (HCC) had proved to be very useful during the severe winter weather; everyone was reminded that they were for use on public roads and not private driveways. It was thought that the grit bin on Pound Lane was too close to the road and needed to be moved back. Cllr. Clark would pursue this with HCC and also the possibility of placing a bin in Green Lane. The brick bus shelter at Green Pond Lane had been cleaned up and the ceiling was due to be replaced. Cllr. Clark thanked Mr Hatch for providing water and power during the clean-up and Mr Case for the supply of traditional tiles to repair the roof.

Pressure would continue to be put on HCC and Test Valley Borough Council (TVBCV) to review the speed limits on the Parish's roads. The County's "A" roads had been looked at and the A3090 was one of the roads earmarked for an early review of speed limits. Again Cllr. Clark sought comments about these limits so that he could better represent Parishioners' views with the authorities.

Council would join TVBC's new litter campaign-"Love where you live"-if Parishioners wanted to get involved. Anyone interested in reducing litter along verges or elsewhere in the Parish was invited to give their name to the Clerk. Poorly parked cars at Ampfield School were making it difficult for delivery trucks to get up Knapp Lane; this would be raised with the School.

6/11 Financial Report

Cllr Gilks, in his capacity as Chairman of the Finance Committee, presented the following to the Meeting:-

- (a) the Audited Accounts of the Parish Council for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010 together with the schedules and assurances required by the External Auditors
- (b) the anticipated out-turn for 2010/2011, comparing budget with actual figures
- (c) the budget and build-up of figures for the Parish Precept for 2011/2012

Details of the financial information presented were included in the packs made available at the meeting. Key expenditure and income items were highlighted and

questions were invited. It was explained that differences in Road Safety expenditure, comparing one year with another, were due to the purchase of the speed limit reminder sign which was shared with Braishfield Parish. There being no further questions, the Report was accepted by the Meeting.

7/11 Parish Council Report for the Year 2010/2011

The Chairman introduced the Report of the Parish Council which was contained within the Newsletter that had been delivered to every household. Thanks were given to the Watermark Printing Company Ltd once again for the design and printing of the Newsletter and to the team of distributors. Attention was drawn to St Mark's Flower Festival, which was to be held from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> July with a preview evening on 30<sup>th</sup> June, and was in aid of church repairs. It was not too early to think about how best to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in June 2012 and ideas were invited. The Chairman then took each article in turn asking the authors if they wished to update their report and to take any questions.

County Councillor's Report (pages 6-7)

The Chairman welcomed Cllr. Alan Dowden and asked about any effects on local councils as a result of the recent elections. Cllr. Dowden advised that a grant had been made to Winchester Relate, which covers southern Test Valley, as deteriorating economic situations put great pressure on marriages. He expressed disappointment that the Hampshire Action Team (HATS) had been disbanded as it had been very active and had achieved a great deal with a small budget. It was always difficult when cuts had to be made and part of the challenge was to find ways of doing things differently. In discussing Adult Social Services Cllr. Dowden advised that he had made visits to some homes for the elderly and was pleased by most of what he found although one organisation could have done better. Improvements had now been made there and a return visit was planned. As part of the election activities Cllr Dowden had visited many people's homes and had identified a few individuals who were in need of care; everyone was encouraged to look out for their neighbours.

Mr Peach of Knapp Lane was concerned about how road signs could be obscured by foliage in the summer months. It was agreed that this could be a hazard; reports about it could be made directly to Highways or through Cllr Dowden or Ampfield Parish Council. Cllr. Clark advised that Highways had revised their website and that such problems could be reported to them on-line and using maps for better accuracy.

Mr Miller of Green Lane reported that the surface of the lane had deteriorated after the bad weather. Also, hedges were not being cut with the result that tractors could break their mirrors trying to get past. Cllr. Dowden explained about the charging process if landowners did not cut their hedges when required. Mr Miller also expressed concern about the speed of vehicles on the stretch of the A3090

beyond the Potters Heron and on Green Lane near Stroud School. Cllr Clark noted the views on speed limits and would continue to apply pressure to the highways authorities. Cllr. Dowden explained that speed reductions needed the support of the Police which, for a variety of reasons, was not always given. He would report the potholes and collapsed areas of Green Lane to HCC.

Friends of Chapel Wood (pages 10-11)

Cllr. Roads thanked the Friends of Chapel Wood for their help and support in maintaining the woodland. Numbers in the group had risen to 8 or 9 on average per session and this had meant that substantial pieces of work, like the planting of the cruciform hedge in the Burial Ground, could be undertake in-house. This would considerably reduce the cost of preparing the ground and planting the box hedge. Work had continued in opening up vistas, clearing paths and expanding open areas. A good working relationship had been developed with the Parochial Church Council of St Mark's, some of whose members also helped in the Woodland. Work would continue on opening up more vistas and areas; everyone was invited to come along to a working party and join in.

On behalf of Ampfield Parish Council, Cllr. Roads also thanked Mrs Butcher and Mrs Herbich of Knapp Lane for their work in maintaining the War Memorial and garden which now looked very attractive.

Test Valley Neighbourhood Wardens (pages 12-13)

The Chairman advised that there had been a suggestion that the Neighbourhood Wardens team might be disbanded as a result of economic pressures. Ampfield Parish Council had written to TVBC in support of the team. The article had been commissioned to help make everyone more aware of the service they provided. Cllr. Dowden reminded everyone that TVBC had to make some very hard financial decisions next year as expenditure had to be reduced; no decision had yet been made about the future the Neighbourhood Wardens.

Cricket Club (page 14) nothing further to add

Ampfield Countryside Heritage Area (page 15)

It was noted that the talk on Ponds, which had been due to take place on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2011, had been re-scheduled to 10<sup>th</sup> October 2011.

Ampfield C of E Primary School (page 16)

The Chairman welcomed the arrival of the new Headteacher and looked forward to working with him. There was nothing further to add as Cllr. Butcher was not in attendance and there were no questions.

Ampfield Pre-School (page 17) nothing further to add

Ampfield Market (page 17)

Regret was expressed that the Swap Shop, which had been a good idea, had not worked out in practice.

Transport Liaison and Road Safety (pages 18-19) nothing further to add

Ampfield Recreation Ground (page 20)

Cllr. Nanson advised that the drainage project had been completed and that, as a result, substantial improvements to the playing surface were expected next winter. In the meantime, however, the very dry spring weather had meant that grass had not been able to grow over the drainage trenches which remained cracked and bare. The presence of rabbits repeatedly digging up the trenches hadn't helped. The Chairman thanked Viridor Credits for its generous grant without which the drainage project couldn't have been undertaken. Cllr. Nanson advised that the cost of the project was just under £25000 excluding VAT which would be met by grants from Viridor and TVBC; he thanked Mr Westbrook for his help in the preparation of the invitation to tender.

Electricity had been laid on to the portakabins, the cost of which had been funded by grants. The sports clubs had helped to improve both the interiors and exteriors of the portakabins and to tidy up the surrounding areas. Relations between the clubs and the Council remained good as all parties worked towards improving the facilities. Ampfield Crusaders Cricket Club intended to form a youth team. This would not only broaden the range of people using the ground but would also provide access to a wider range of funds to improve facilities. Council had unexpectedly found itself the owner of the Cricket Club's old pavilion having acquired it inadvertently when it purchased the land. This had necessitated the drawing up of a new lease to regularise the situation.

Planning Committee (page 21)

Cllr. Nanson corrected the figures in the planning article in that the Committee had met 2 more times than stated, considered 57 applications and objected to 7. Retrospective applications continued to be a source of irritation. Mr Selfe of the Straight Mile advised that a recent Supreme Court decision had meant that the nature of retrospective applications could be taken into account, for example, if they were fraudulent or bogus. Cllr. Nanson would discuss this with him after the meeting.

Mr Robinson of Lower Ratlake outlined the problems he had been experiencing with the planning process and the way that retrospective applications seemed to be used to delay or find ways round planning requirements. He was very

concerned that a remedy to a problem involving a neighbour and his own property, proposed by TVBC Planning, had not been carried out as the neighbour could, apparently, take up to 3 years to implement the remedy. The Chairman expressed sympathy at Mr Robinson's plight but this particular issue was now beyond the Parish Council's powers to resolve. Cllr. Hatley agreed that retrospective applications were very frustrating to deal with but most were due to ignorance of the processes and were not deliberate. He had not heard about the 3-year time span and would talk to the Head of Planning at TVBC about it the next day. He was also happy to discuss the situation with Mr Robinson after the meeting. Cllr. Dowden had no previous knowledge of Mr Robinson's situation but agreed that it needed to be sorted quickly, especially the security lights being left on all night in the neighbouring property.

Mrs Benson of Upper Ratlake Farmhouse advised that the field opposite the Potters Heron was up for sale. She had contacted the estate agents who appeared to be suggesting how enquirers could get round planning restrictions on agricultural property. This situation was thought to be reprehensible and people needed to be vigilant.

Cllr. Nanson advised that information had just been received that the Pegasus Planning Group, acting on behalf of the developer, would be holding public exhibitions on 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> June and on 2<sup>nd</sup> July at locations to be announced. Letters would be sent to all householders inviting them to the event. This would be an opportunity to find out about the nature of any proposed development.

Mr Case of the Old Vicarage advised that the Head of the Perbury Group, who had the option on the land in Morleys Lane, was a former Parish Councillor. The Hillier family, who owned the land, had given the Perbury Group a 12-year option to build. He believed that there had been some disquiet about the housing survey conducted the year before and about the fact that there had been no minutes taken of the meetings conducted with the planning agent. Mr Case said that the settlement pattern in Knapp Lane had been changed by the developer and alleged that he had been responsible for planting trees as a screen on the field at Morleys Lane. Mr Case was concerned that he had not known about the existence of Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (SHLAA), which had been started about 10 years ago, even when working on the Parish Plan. A small group of Parishioners had been meeting since the proposed development had become known. Mr Case said that everyone should work together to preserve the centre of Ampfield, which had historic connections, and oppose the development.

Cllr. Nanson believed that it would be better to wait to see what the proposal entailed rather than oppose it regardless. Cllr. Hatley explained the history of the SHLAAs and that they were areas that landowners had put forward to TVBC as possible development sites. There were restrictions on development within the countryside but exceptions could be made if there was an identified need for housing. The pattern of development in Ampfield had meant that residents had

extended their homes over the years to the extent that young families could not afford to buy properties in the area, and older residents were not able to downsize and stay in the Parish. Information from the housing survey would help establish any need.

Mr Hughes of New Barn expressed concern that no information from the housing survey had been published yet and that people were not acting fairly within the planning laws. Cllr. Hatley assumed that the public exhibitions just announced would be where the outcomes of the survey would be made known. TVBC would also be interested in the outcomes. He confirmed that, had the developer not funded the survey, TVBC would itself have commissioned one in due course and would have probably used the same survey firm. The focus of such a survey, however, would have been more limited. He informed everyone about a similar survey which had recently been conducted in the neighbouring Parish of Braishfield; this had identified the need for a modest number of affordable homes.

<u>Ampfield Football Club</u>	(pages 22-23)	nothing further to add
<u>Footpaths</u>	(page 24)	nothing further to add
<u>St Mark's Church</u>	(pages 24-25)	

Mr & Mrs Knight of Birch House were soon to leave the Parish. The annual Church fete had been successfully held in their garden for several years; the Chairman expressed appreciation for their support and help in community matters and wished them well in their new dwelling in Kings Somborne.

<u>Finance Committee</u>	(pages 26-27)	see Minute 6/11
<u>Village Hall</u>	(page 25)	nothing further to add
<u>Borough Councillor's Report</u>	(pages 8-9)	

Cllr. Hatley reported that a lot of the 30mph speed limit signs on Baddesley and Hursley roads had been removed thus making it difficult to enforce. These had now been replaced and the Police could once again monitor speeding traffic. Cllr Hatley confirmed earlier statements that, following the preliminary review of "A" roads in the county, the A3090 had given cause for concern and that greater consistency of speed limits was needed; this might result in some limits being reduced.

Mr Selfe thought it would be helpful if special meetings could be held to consider major planning applications such as the one discussed earlier. The Chairman advised that all planning committee meetings were advertised and were held in public; Parishioners were always welcome to attend. Cllr. Nanson added that, in the past, major developments such as Broadgate Farm, had been the subject of

public meetings facilitated by Council with the developers in attendance. This had resulted in development proposals which had the broad agreement of the community.

08/11 Other Reports

There were no reports not contained in the Parish Newsletter.

09/11 Open Forum

The following matters were discussed:-

- Caravan site on Ampfield Hill

Mrs Richards of the Straight Mile asked about the developments on the field at the bottom of Ampfield Hill. Cllr. Hatley advised that the TVBC Enforcement team were monitoring activities on a weekly basis. Warnings had been issued to the occupiers. The Caravan Club had been made aware of breaches in their regulations. The situation was not ideal. Everyone was asked to keep an eye on the situation, to take notes and photographs if the numbers of caravans exceeded 5 and send any data to TVBC.

- Preservation of architectural details in buildings

Mr Peach expressed concern that 2 cottages in Knapp Lane had changed hands recently and the traditional “Hursley” windows had been replaced. Mr Case advised that UPVC windows were not allowed in the conservation area. Cllr. Hatley agreed that the loss of the traditional windows was regretted but that the buildings were not listed and that UPVC could be used in an extension but not if they were simply replacement windows. He would, however, check the planning conditions of the applications concerned.

- Maintenance of footpaths

Mr Miller asked about how to stop walkers wandering off designated footpaths and letting their dogs foul the fields. Mr Trotter, Footpath Warden, explained that the footpath in question- from Green Lane to Crampmoor – was not well marked and it was not always easy to see where people should walk. It was the land owner’s responsibility to keep footpaths in good order. He would discuss this with Mr Miller at the end of the meeting.



10/11 Closure

The Chairman closed the Meeting at 9.50 pm having thanked everyone for attending and inviting everyone to stay for refreshments.

Chairman.....  
Date.....