

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING FOR THE PARISH OF LYNDHURST HELD AT THE COMMUNITY CENTRE ON TUESDAY, 17 MARCH 2015 AT 7.30 PM**

**Present:** Mr Rollé (Chairman), Mr Abbott, Mr Bisson, Mrs Butcher, Mr Cornell and Mr Kaljura.  
County Councillor Keith Mans  
Mrs M Weston, Clerk to the Parish Council  
16 members of the public

The Chairman, Mr Mark Rollé, introduced himself and welcomed everyone present, thanking them for attending.

**(1) APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Charlesworth, Mrs Klaassen, Mrs Trend, the Revd Dr Wilkins, Mr Wiltshire and Mrs Wyeth.

**(2) MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 18 March 2014 were approved.

**(3) MATTERS ARISING**

None.

**(4) DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

In the absence of Mrs Wyeth, the Clerk read out the District Councillor's report. Charges for council tax and car parking clocks have remained the same as last year. Glass bottle collections have been introduced, the green garden waste collection bags are well used and NFDC continue their weekly refuse bag collection.

Cranleigh Paddock will become a specialist dementia unit that will serve the New Forest area and NFDC residents are gradually being moved out of the flats. Residents who have asked to stay in Lyndhurst have so far been accommodated and when the move is completed HCC will submit a planning application for the new build.

The old toilets in the car park will be demolished and discussions are under way to transform this area into a landscaped open space with possible information boards, seating, etc.

Mrs Wyeth's report stated that she had hoped that the resurfacing of the Lyndhurst to Ashurst cycle track would have been completed. It took nine years to install and already it has taken two years to have it upgraded. Funding is in place until September and Mrs Wyeth has been informed that the work will take place. However, this delay does not bode well for the possible cycle track between Lyndhurst and Brockenhurst.

With regard to NFNPA and planning they are in the process of updating their Management Plan and residents' comments have been requested. South View is now completed, Knightwood Lodge flats have been signed off and Stag Yard is nearing completion, although all the flats have an age restriction of over 55s. Mrs Wyeth has been asked why flats for younger people cannot be built so youngsters who wish to stay in the village could at least start on the housing ladder and this is something that she and the Parish Council need to address. The lack of affordable units to rent is also an issue. National Parks have now had the sites reduced to five units but often houses built are on plots of one or two, so again we lose out. Stag Yard will produce three affordable flats to rent, but they will be subject to the 55 year rule.

The NFNPA will soon be looking at the village boundaries and it will be our responsibility to decide if we are happy with the existing boundary or whether we require any changes. The village envelope has an impact on planning issues. At the time of writing we are waiting for an application to come forward for Lyndhurst Park. This is a Conservation Area so the building cannot be demolished until an acceptable alternative is proposed. This is one of the main gateways to Lyndhurst so the building will have to be of high quality. Several ideas have been proposed and it will be interesting to see what comes forward. Mrs Wyeth hopes, in late summer, that she and the Parish Council can discuss the criteria that make Lyndhurst one of the four main villages. Recently there have been some very difficult planning applications that totally change the area and destroy our village identity.

To finish on an upbeat note, Boulton Cottages in Emery Down have been totally refurbished and now provide five individual cottages for local people. The Boulton Cottage Trust worked extremely hard to raise the finances and the builders did an excellent job in record time. These historic cottages are part of Emery Down's heritage.

## **(5) COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

Mr Mans apologised for the fact that he had been unable to attend the last two Parish Council meetings but explained that this had been unavoidable. He reported that the County Council has not increased its proportion of the Council Tax for the sixth year running and continue to look at ways of carrying out their activities. They had tried to restrict the reductions in front line services resulting from the reduction in the grant from central government by continuing to look at more efficient ways of carrying out activities. Many back room operations were now shared with both the Police and Fire Service. They are also increasingly selling their skills to public sector organisations outside Hampshire.

Closer to home the lengthsman's scheme is now working very well in many parishes. In addition many individuals are helping to keep costs down, notably in clearing ditches and generally carrying out work that is reducing the risk of future flooding. John Goodwin has been particularly helpful in getting work done in local parishes.

High speed broadband continues to be rolled out across the county. However the service from BT is far from perfect although HCC are endeavouring to ensure that the company carries out the work properly and on time.

Cranleigh Paddock will serve as a specialist dementia unit. Mr Mans reported that he had a sum of money available each year (£5,000) under his devolved budget scheme. This was now closed for this financial year although funding would be available again from the end of May.

Mr Mans assured everyone that the upgrading of the cycle track would happen. With regard to the Boundary Commission there may be some minor changes.

Mr Cornell voiced his concern regarding the pavements in the village that were in bad condition, the worst being on the left hand side of the High Street from the Post Office to the bus stop. Mr Mans said he would look into the problem and report back.

Mr Abbott drew attention to the overgrown trees at the top of Foldsgate. High sided vehicles are coming into contact with them.

## **(6) POLICE REPORT**

PC White stated that during the past year there had been 33 anti-social behaviour incidents, four vehicle incidents, three neighbour incidents, 26 assaults (mainly domestic), six burglaries (dwelling) and 10 burglaries (non-dwelling), 32 incidents of criminal damage, 14 drug related incidents (mainly in the Police Station), three public order offences, 61 road traffic accidents (most minor), 40 incidents of theft,

27 theft from motor vehicles, three motor vehicles stolen. Special attention was given to the new skateboard ramp but there had been no offences committed there in the last year.

Lyndhurst Police Station would now be known as the Heart of the New Forest with all response teams working from Lyndhurst. There would be a good deal of co-operation with other council services.

The Beat Areas covered would include New Milton, Ashurst, Winsor, Ower, Copythorne, Cadnam, Brockenhurst, Beaulieu, Exbury and Lepe with another Beat Officer and PCSO as well as PC White and PCSO Quinn.

PCSO Lisa Quinn will be the point of contact for the Speedwatch Team.

Inspector Willoughby is based at Hythe with Sergeant Wilcox at Totton.

PC White said that the current Beat Report would be the last one produced but asked people to log onto Hampshire Alert and register their interest for reports on the type of crime they would like information on as this was a more efficient way of getting information to the general public.

Mr Kaljura asked if the number of burglaries had increased or decreased and PC White replied that they were similar to last year.

## **(7) CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

The Chairman, Mark Rollé, reported that the Christmas Lights had been one of the main memorable moments during the last year. During the year new street lighting had also been installed around the village.

A great deal of work had been done on the Arthur Phillip project and the Governor of New South Wales, Dame Marie Bashir, together with a party of Australian visitors, had visited Lyndhurst on July 14 when a day of entertainment had been organised. Flags and bunting had been erected around the village by the Village Decorations Committee. The Parish Council had organised an exhibition at the New Forest Centre at that time and it had been so successful that it was now being repeated. There was now a leaflet regarding Arthur Phillip and a Historical Village Walk leaflet and there were more commemorative ideas planned including the fact that we have secured 50 bricks from the original wall at Vernals Farm which would contribute towards a lasting memorial to Arthur Phillip in the village. Bev Major had played a very important part in the commemoration but unfortunately he had recently died. Thanks must also go to NFDC, the New Forest Centre and St Michael and All Angels Church. A 10 episode series entitled Banished, depicting the first arrival of convicts to New South Wales, was now being shown on BBC2.

A very successful Picnic in the Park had been held in June and over 2,000 residents and visitors had attended.

Lyndhurst had been awarded second prize in the Hampshire Village of the Year contest, the Community Centre had won the cohesion award and the most inspirational person had been named as Centre Manager and Parish Councillor John Charlesworth. During the year Lyndhurst had become the first Dementia Friendly Village in Hampshire. Shopkeepers were receiving training and signage had started to be displayed around the village.

The Parish Council had taken up ownership of two telephone kiosks from BT. The kiosks at Bank and Racecourse View were now redundant. It was hoped to start refurbishment work shortly although the necessary grant aid was slow in coming.

Lights out ceremonies had been organised at Emery Down Lychgate and Lyndhurst War Memorial and the Parish Council had been represented at both and had laid wreaths to commemorate the outbreak of

World War 1. There are plans to work on a book of remembrance for those that fell during WW1 and WW2.

The Community Speedwatch equipment purchased by the Parish Council continues to be used and we are in the process of purchasing a defibrillator which has been funded entirely from grant aid (£500 from Councillor Mans devolved budget scheme and £1,000 from the Ineos Community Fund). This will be sited at the Community Centre on an outside wall for public use.

Due to withdrawal of some Government funding and increasing costs the Parish Council Precept for the financial year commencing April 2015 will increase by 2.8%.

The Parish Lengthsman Scheme is working well in the care of Kevin Bennett who also maintains our Cemetery. Thanks must go to him and to the Police, our County and District Councillors and, of course, our twelve Councillors.

The Parish Champion Award will be presented at our April meeting. This has been held over as the actual award was out of stock.

Looking to the future, there will be more work on the Arthur Phillip Project, more equipment in the Recreation Ground and celebrations to mark the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publishing of Alice's Adventures Underground (the first of the Alice books).

Mr Herbert asked if it would be possible to place the memorial to Arthur Phillip on the site of the old toilet block and the Chairman said this was being investigated.

## **(8) COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Chairmen of Committees presented their reports as follows:-

### **(a) Planning**

Mr Abbott introduced members of the Committee and said Mrs Wyeth also gave advice but did not take part in decision making or voting due to her position as Chairman of the NFNPA planning committee. The Committee had met on the fourth Tuesday of each month, except December when a quorum could not be met, at 7.15 pm in the Community Centre and had dealt with 70 applications compared with 69 the previous year. Members of the public are welcome to attend but are limited to five minutes in which to speak (or more at the discretion of the Chairman). Members of the public are advised to check for updates with the Clerk before attending. Work is proceeding at Stag Yard (The Boltons) and the application from McCarthy and Stone at 25/26 Cedar Mount was turned down by NFNPA and on Appeal. Bench House has undergone a considerable amount of rebuilding work. There have been several applications to build two dwellings at the rear of 39/41 High Street. These were turned down by NFNPA but an Appeal has been submitted today. There are strong neighbour objections. The Forestry Commission application for extensive wetland restoration meanders, etc at Pondhead was withdrawn when it was pointed out by nearby residents that this could lead to flooding at Matley Cottage, Pondhead Farm and Lime Wood Lodge due to proposals to raise the bed of the stream at the downstream end.

Mr Abbott extended his thanks to members of the Committee, to Mrs Wyeth for her assistance and advice and to the Clerk for keeping the paperwork on the move. He also explained that he would not be standing for re-election in May after nearly 50 years as a Parish Councillor and thanked all other members of the Council and the Clerks who had helped over the years.

## **(b) Recreation**

Mr Kaljura explained that the skatepark had now been installed and was very well used. It has a concrete base and the ramp is made of steel with a painted surface. The galvanised finish acts as a sound barrier. Installation had led to a lot of mud on the existing track as 75 cubic metres of concrete was laid to make a surface of 10 metres by 20 metres. New vandal proof litter bins had been installed. There was now a need to renew the gravel track and plans were also in hand to undertake Phase 2 of the project. The next project would also see the installation of adult/teen fitness equipment. The existing car park would need to be upgraded to prevent residents in Wellands Road being inconvenienced by people using the Recreation Ground parking on the roadside.

## **(c) Cemetery**

In the absence of Mr Wiltshire, the Cemetery Committee Chairman, the Clerk read out his report. Mr Wiltshire apologised for non-attendance at the meeting. He said that the Parish Council had received several compliments on the condition of the Cemetery so thanks should go Kevin Bennett and Harry for their hard work in keeping the place tidy. Two very large trees were cut down and removed because one was dead and the other was in a dangerous condition. Safety is always of paramount importance.

There are plans to level some of the grave stones and kerbs which are leaning at very jaunty angles, this being due to subsidence, and one or two paths also require attention as tree roots are causing disturbance.

The possibility of installing electricity and water to the chapel is also being considered. This is fraught with problems as crossing SSSI land is required. The chapel was heated by gas bottles but these were stolen on a regular basis. The use of solar panels was visited but once again the aesthetics and security would be a problem. Three phase cable is needed due to the distance of the only available supply from the sub-station on the Beaulieu Road. Estimates have been submitted in the region of £24,000 so all that is required now is the money and final permissions from all the regulatory bodies. This is quite a large undertaking in the present climate.

## **(d) Allotments**

In the absence of Mrs Klaassen the Clerk read out her report. The Allotment Committee consists of Helen Klaassen (Chairman), Adrian Wiltshire, Karl Kaljura and Anne Butcher. We have 105 plots in three sizes. Rents have remained the same in the current financial year, ie £21 for a starter plot, £32 for a medium sized plot and £64 for a large plot. In recent times starter plots have become more popular.

Adrian Wiltshire, together with Peter Timmis and David Webb have again undertaken work to the internal track and have filled potholes on the track over the open forest leading from opposite the Fenwick Hospital to the allotment gate. The cost of this work was £234.00 for materials – all labour free of charge.

Three plots at the Romsey Road end of the allotment gardens were vacated following the sudden death of an allotment holder and, again Adrian Wiltshire has done a lot of work to tidy the plots and two transit van loads of rubbish were subsequently removed from site.

Some asbestos, including a shed made from asbestos content material, was removed from the allotments by a registered contractor. The cost of this work was £360.00.

A large area of ground at the top of the allotments that has fallen into disuse was strimmed and cleared and the ground has been levelled which will allow for easier maintenance. It is hoped that this area can eventually be turned into a small orchard if grant aid can be obtained for the trees.

Thanks must go to the Committee, particularly Adrian Wiltshire, and to Kevin Bennett who has undertaken a great deal of work for us. Thanks also to James Malcom who keeps the grass paths cut for us and to the Clerk for keeping the paperwork and accounts in order.

## **(e) Amenities**

Mr Bisson reported that it had not proved necessary to convene many Committee meetings but there were many items around the Parish that are the responsibility of the Amenities Committee that the public are not aware belong to us. The Parish Council provide and maintain the majority of the seats around the village and out on the open forest. On average it costs £1,000-00 to provide and install a new seat. Some seats are in memory of certain individuals and while the cost of supply and installation has been donated the Parish Council is still responsible for the maintenance. Bus shelters are also provided by the Parish Council and as the average replacement cost amounts to £7,500 it is necessary to allow £1,000 each year as a contingency sum for their replacement and maintenance. We provide and maintain noticeboards at Emery Down and Bank and there is also a noticeboard which we have provided at the Community Centre. £800 per annum is the sum allowed for this work. Another sum of £300 is allowed each year for the supply and planting of Spring bulbs. Maintenance work has taken place this year on the area of land in the Parish Council's ownership at Great Mead. This is a public open space and an oak tree with seat surrounding it has also been supplied. £2,500 has been allowed for grasscutting and maintenance. Dog waste bins are supplied by NFDC but the Parish Council has responsibility for the cost of emptying them for £700 per annum. The Parish Walk mapboard in the car park was supplied by the Parish Council and £300 is allowed for its maintenance and for the cost of leaflets to accompany the walk. We have upgraded the path between Silver Street and Blackwater, Emery Down, part of which lies in the parish of Minstead and the sum of £500 is allowed annually for maintenance. An additional sum of £100 is allowed for administration and consumables. This makes a grand total of £7,200 – only £2.90 per elector or £5.60 per household.

## **(9) PAROCHIAL CHARITIES**

### **(a) Lyndhurst Welfare Charity**

Mr Herbert reported that the aim of the Lyndhurst Welfare Charity was to alleviate hardship among parishioners. The submitted accounts were 12 months old but this could not be avoided. Some applications had to be turned down due to the terms of the scheme and the amounts given do fluctuate. During the past year it had been possible to provide a cooker, washing machine and fridge freezer to each of the five newly refurbished Boulton Cottages and money had also been given to the Lyndhurst and Ashurst Cricket Club for their pavilion. There were also anonymous personal requests where assistance had been possible. The Charity continued to maintain good links with the village.

### **(b) Saltarn Treat Fund**

The Chairman explained that the accounts were attached to the pack distributed to all those attending the meeting. The accounts were left in situ to gain interest.

## **(10) RESOLUTIONS**

No resolutions had been received.

## **(11) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None.

Chairman \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_