

Minstead Parish Council
Annual Parish Meeting
Green Room, Minstead Village Hall
Wednesday 21 March 2018 at 19.30

1. Attendance Register and Apologies

Present: Cllrs W Andrews (Chair), H Bennett, A Ferguson, G Hough, R Taylor, D Wakelin, HCC Cllr E Heron, NFDC Cllr Mrs D Andrews, Mrs P Osborne (Clerk), PCSO R Williams (Hants Constabulary), Shaun Dale (Openreach).

Public: There were 22 members of the public present.

Apologies: Cllr S Cattell, 3 parishioners.

2. Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting (15 March 2017)

These had been published and were agreed and signed.

3. Matters Arising

None

4. Report by Chairman

Cllr Andrews reported the following activities over the last year:

Fabric

- Footpath maintenance work has been carried out when required and most footpaths remain in acceptable condition despite the very wet winter. The roads will soon be swept.
- Housing for village clock on the Shop is still waiting to be replaced, and the clock has stopped!
- Many thanks to our Parish Lengthsman, Stephen Short, who carries out regular maintenance checks of bus shelters, seats, war memorial area, flagpole, footpath signs, PC-owned trees etc. with repairs and maintenance as required. He cleans our road signs, drains and gullies, monitors the condition of our Roadways, Hedges and Ditches and works on our footpaths and their drainage.
- We continue to receive support from Hampshire County Highways both directly and through the good offices of Cllr Heron. Several potholes have been repaired throughout the year and parishioners are asked, please, to use the HCC website or NFDC App to report directly.
- Eroded road edges are still exercising Highways, Cllrs and residents, after more than 6 years involvement. We shall keep trying.
- Householders should remember, please, that they are responsible for keeping their hedges cut back and ditches cleared alongside their properties, even if outside their hedge or fence.
- Drainage (Gullies, Bunnies, Ditches etc) mapping is still on-going, all contributions of knowledge gratefully received.
- Ragwort Clearance in July is proving most effective in keeping this noxious weed in check.
- Our contractor has cut the hedges along Blackwater Road (aka Mill Lane). The Working Group, with Lyndhurst PC, is monitoring traffic conditions there, and still trying to find an acceptable solution.

Community

- We remain pleased with the well visited Minstead Village Community website and have added a Facebook page to our communications suite. Instagram may be next.
- Continued efforts to bring SuperFast Broadband to the whole Parish; various 4G providers found to be effective in “not-spots”. Further developments again expected this year.
- Informal Councillor surgeries continue to be held at the Trusty Servant (Friday evenings).
- Weekly eNewsletter produced and distributed to 310 addresses (plus hard copies kindly printed and delivered to neighbours who are not connected to email).

- Minstead Mail, three issues last year, hard copy distributed to ALL households; first issue for this year coming quite soon.
- Donations made to NF Citizens Advice Bureau, and to All Saints PCC for churchyard maintenance.
- Support of Village Fete, Carols by the Green with Father Christmas, and Christmas tree lights.
- Regular litter picking in/around village and car parks, the delayed New Forest Spring Clean was most effective.
- Continued liaison with local police and police community support officer.
- Representation of interests of Minstead parishioners at various meetings, and we continue to offer support and advice in planning matters.
- We are pleased that the Minstead Community Speedwatch has been active and could be monitoring a road near you at any time.

Council

- Note that in preparation for this year's implementation of new General Data Protection Regulations all Councillors and Clerk have dedicated PC email addresses – see our website.

The Chairman expressed his thanks to all Parish Councillors and our Learned Clerk for their support, industry and effectivity, AND to both County and District Councillors for continued support.

The owner of the Village Shop offered to repair the village clock, an offer the Chairman gratefully accepted.

In response to a question, it was explained that *Community Resilience* is the development of a plan for an emergency in the parish, such as prolonged electricity failure.

5. Financial Statement

The Clerk reported on Parish Council finance:

- Internal and External Audits of the governance of Minstead Parish Council and the accounts for financial year ending 31 March 2017 were successful.
- Council has maintained the precept at £10,000 for the coming year despite anticipating an increase in necessary expenditure. In addition to a general rise in costs, council is now responsible for vegetation control along Mill Lane at Blackwater, previously the responsibility of HCC Highways.
- Council is managing to maintain a good reserve for contingencies. Expenditure is often unpredictable, especially the amount. Significant unpredictable expenditure this current year has been for footpath maintenance, snow ploughing and vegetation control.
- Grants were received this year from HCC and NFDC for projects within the parish:
 - HCC Parish Lengthsman Scheme - £1,100 towards Lengthsman salary;
 - NFDC Councillor's Community Grant - £100 towards the drainage on Footpath 5 (by church).
- We also received £100 for the Defibrillator Fund from the Village Fete. The Defibrillator Fund currently has a balance of **£261.68** to be used for maintenance costs and further training.
- Council has made two donations this year to:
 - All Saints PCC towards maintenance of churchyard - £300;
 - New Forest Citizens Advice Bureau - £50.

6. Report by Hampshire County Councillor Edward Heron

- HCC budget: county spending is less visible at a local level being mainly on schools, adult social care, vulnerable children, highways & transportation including concessionary travel. Highways budget continues to shrink yet roads need maintenance. People are living longer, requiring more care which increases costs and is now reaching the point where adult social care is no longer sustainable.
- HCC is changing the way it delivers adult social care by working in partnership with communities and encouraging being good neighbours. This also helps build communities.

Comments

- In response to a comment that the 3% increase for adult social care shown on the Council Tax bills is understated and misleading, Cllr Heron said that government dictates how the figures are presented so HCC must comply.
- A parishioner commented that Minstead is already a caring community where people look after their neighbours.
- In response to a comment about transport – Minstead no longer has a bus service – Cllr Heron said that HCC is providing funds to community groups for local transport.

7. Report by New Forest District Councillor Mrs Diane Andrews

She outlined some of the NFDC matters she had reported on at Minstead parish council meetings this year:

- Discussions regarding re-arranging the car park at Congleton Close, owned by NFDC, and possibly removing the unnecessary pavement to add parking spaces. This matter has now been passed to Traffic Management.
- Changes being made at Community First and New Forest CAB (where she represented NFDC) to cope with budget cuts from HCC and NFDC.
- As a member of a Task & Finish Group, inspection of public conveniences in the NF to decide which needed upgrading or demolition and total re build. It was suggested that the facilities on the quay at Lymington should be moved to enhance the seafront.
- Copythorne Parish Council decided to hand over to NPA responsibility for the bid to build affordable housing in Copythorne. NPA hoped to include the affordable houses in their future plans.
- She donated £300 from her Community Grant to Minstead All Saints Tower Fund.
- She had attended a National Trust project in Bramshaw and visited one of the ancient barrows.
- There was major fly tipping at Stoney Cross. Fly tipping costs NFDC around £60,000 a year. (HCC is NOT planning to close the Recycling Centre at Marchwood any time soon.)
- Minstead parish council requested a Speed Indicator Device (SID) to be put on the C17 and we await the results. NFDC no longer charges parishes for this service. She thanked the Speedwatch team for the work they do in this parish and others.
- Recently some motorists ignored the diversion signs for the road closure at Cadnam and caused severe damage to the roadside verges. Natural England and HCC have promised to restore the damaged verges that include Lower Canterton Lane in Minstead Parish.
- The Local Plan is progressing and will be brought to Cabinet by the summer of 2018. The District Council are confident that they will meet the guideline number of homes the government requires them to build.
- In November 2017 Cllr Mrs Andrews joined the Cabinet of NFDC with a portfolio for Community Affairs. This is a new portfolio that covers: Community engagement, Community Grants and Support, Customer Services, Elections and Electoral Registration, the Community Safety Partnership, CCTV, Careline and Communications. With her new

role she was required to retire as Chairman of the Planning Committee and to leave the boards of Community First and NFCAB due to conflict of interests, grants in particular.

- A peer review of NFDC was undertaken and in considering their recommendations the Council will develop an action plan, to be presented to Cabinet in 2018. It is intended that both the report and the action plan, along with the Council's position statement, will be published on the Council's website.
- NPA and NFDC planners will meet to discuss mutual interests.
- She attended a briefing on the development of Fawley Power station.
- She now chairs the Safer New Forest Strategy and Delivery group, a Statutory body that includes, at the highest level, members of NFDC, HCC, NPA, Probation Services, Police, Fire and Rescue and Clinical Commissioning groups. Each year four areas of concern are highlighted and this year it will be Children at Risk, Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking, Drug-related Harm and the development of consistent Access for Victims of Domestic Abuse. She quoted from the front page of the report: "The New Forest is one of the safest places in the UK to live in, work in and visit. The Safer New Forest Partnership is working to make it safer". It does what it says on the box!
- She thanked Minstead parishioners for supporting the NF Spring Clean - now that the snow has gone we can see the great results of that very cold and wet day

Continuing the theme of our clean and beautiful New Forest Cllr Mrs Andrews then showed a short film called *Through the Wardrobe* promoting the New Forest as a destination for film companies. Some of the new *Star Wars* movie was recently filmed at Fawley Refinery and a company can spend up to £42,000 a day when filming!

In response to questions:

- Plastics and recycling – refuse is collected by NFDC but processed by HCC; recycling facilities are increasing; items are sorted and some are sold; sometimes it is better to incinerate. NFDC has no plans to change from bags to wheelie bins.
- C17 – speeding is a problem yet Speedwatch cannot operate there. Cllr Heron explained that Speedwatch operation is prevented on 40mph roads due to insurance problems. However, they feel they are nearing a solution. PCSO Williams added that both NFDC and HCC provide funding for speedwatch equipment.

8. Police report by PCSO Richard Williams

- Mill Lane – speeding is a problem and Police are working to get speed enforcement.
- New Forest is a safe place to live. Minstead has minimal crime, the main offences being shed thefts and breaking into vehicles in car parks. Police continue to work in car parks.
- Problems of anti-social behaviour in car parks have been dealt with.
- Policing is changing and his role as PCSO is more about safeguarding, looking after people.
- He suggested that, as a deterrent to burglars when away on holiday, we should ask someone to go into the house regularly.

9. BT Openreach update

Shaun Dale (Openreach) reported on progress with the Hampshire Programme:

- Wave 1 - £11m – 64,500 premises upgraded 2013 - 2015
- Wave 2 - £18m (£9.2m from HCC) – 34,500 premises 2016 - 2018
- Wave 2 extension - £6.8m – 8,500 premises 2018 – 2019
- Community Match Funding Scheme – £1m match funding scheme

He outlined the objectives of Hampshire, DCMS and BDUK:

- 90% Superfast by the end of 2016 (>24Mbps)
- 97.4% coverage by the end of 2019 (>24Mbps)

- Universal Service Commitment of 2Mbps – Better Basic Broadband Scheme
- Universal Service Obligation 10Mbps from 2020?
- £1m Community Match Funding Scheme
- Gap funding model
- LFFN Vouchers launching April 2018

He explained that above 24Mbps is Superfast and a typical home today uses: 15Mbps for a 4k TV stream; 5Mbps for iPlayer/Netflix; 5Mbps (2 people) web browsing/e-mail. Homeworking requires around 15Mb for Mail/Browsing and Video Conference calls.

He responded to comments/questions:

- The scheme currently being developed for Minstead parish will provide fibre to nearly all properties. This is a match funded scheme and will require some element of community funding.
- How long it will take to implement the scheme will depend on several factors – time taken to raise funds, planning, operational organisation.
- There is no difference being on Lyndhurst or Cadnam exchange. Broadband speed depends on length of cable from cabinet. More difficult to provide in low-density housing like Minstead.
- We cannot tap into fibre laid through Minstead some years ago.

10. Items requested by the Public

- a) Degredation of verges at the top of Bridleway 13: Parish Council has been unable to put up barriers because the area has multiple Protections.

The meeting closed at 21.20

The next Annual Parish Meeting will be on 20 March 2019.