

MINUTES OF THE 120TH ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING OF FARRINGDON

Held in the Farringdon Village Hall on Wednesday 2nd April 2014

Apologies for absence: An apology for absence had been received from Jill Brian and Cllr. Patrick Burridge.

Attending: 29 members of the public were recorded. In addition there were 8 FPC Councillors, Cllr. Mark Kemp-Gee. (HCC), Village Hall Manager David Horton, 2 Representative Hampshire Constabulary and Mr. Adrian Gray, Director of Hampshire Highways North and East.

CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME:

The Chairman, Cllr. Caroline Roe in the Chair.

Cllr. Roe welcomed everyone present to the meeting.

MINUTES OF THE 119TH ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON THE 3rd APRIL, 2013

The minutes of the 119th Annual Parish Meeting held on the 3rd April, 2013 were adopted as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

The Chairman outlined the programme for the evening and that there would be an opportunity at the end of the meeting for an informal question and answer session. The Annual Parish Meeting was an opportunity for all electors of the Parish to discuss a number of issues and topics as well as receive a report from the Parish Council.

Cllr. Roe outlined the Parish Council's role during the recent flooding which had caused so much stress for residents particularly in Lower Farringdon. She outlined how the Parish Council had maintained communication with those Authorities with the Statutory Responsibility for dealing with these major events and also the Affinity Housing Association whose tenants had been affected. She welcomed Adrian Gray to the meeting who would report further on the flooding and the proposals which would be put in place to deal with the aftermath when the flooding receded and the lessons learnt to deal with any future repeat of these weather conditions.

She then went onto explain recent changes in the Governance of the Parish Council and the practical effect on the business of the Council. The Planning Committee held all their meetings in Public and that the Parish Council had limited powers concessions had been gained in some important issues including the Solar Farm in terms of size, height, screening and the protection of rights of way. The Crows Lane Field development had been refused and the Parish Council had commented on a number of proposals throughout the year including the Digester adjacent to the now approved Solar Farm. She thanked Members of the Committee for their hard work throughout the year.

Massey's Folly was part owned by the Parish Council and following 2 Public Meetings joint agreement had now been reached on the Sale Agreement. This positive step forward had been due to the work of Peter Durrant, Honor Garrard and Clive Elderton who had led the process to achieve this outcome.

David Horton, the Village Hall Manager had worked extremely hard during the year in difficult circumstances. The building needed to be maintained and he had now organised a Voluntary Social

Team to help improve income. The first Social Event was to take place on Friday, 4th April with more to follow. The 100 Club also raised funds for the Hall and new members would be welcome.

David Williams had worked hard on proposals to repair Stank Lane and other highway matters. The Parish Council had initially agreed to pay for the repairs to Stank Lane but due to Cllr. Williams persistence Hampshire County Council would now meet these costs. John Jacob had also worked on the funding of new Village Gates and funding for a hearing loop for the Village Hall.

In conclusion Cllr. Roe explained the systems in place to ensure that the proposals in the Vision 2030 Plan would be implemented. The Plan had been welcomed by both Hampshire County Council and East Hampshire District Council and she congratulated Clive Elderton and his team who had carried out the research to complete the Plan.

The Parish Review had also been completed which had finalised the way the Parish Council would conduct its business in the future with robust systems in place including the Office IT System, secure and safe filing, communications with individual email addresses for each Councillor, the development of a Web Site and sound financial management. She praised the work undertaken by Cllrs Oakley and Cowan in achieving these improvements.

The Clerk, Mike Findley had now retired after 11 years' service and she thanked him for his efforts on behalf of the Parish Council. Roger Browne had stepped in on a Voluntary basis until an Acting Clerk, Edwin Macknamara, had been appointed. Progress was now being made to appointing a permanent Clerk.

The Parish relied on many people and she thanked all residents for their help and support and to those who volunteered so that the Church, Magazine, Horticultural Society, Farringdon Biz and Net and the numerous other Groups could continue with their work. She also thanked all Members of the Parish Council as well as Cllr. Mark Kemp Gee and Patrick Burrige for their support during the year. Although there remained many issues to be resolved she felt that the Parish could face the 121st Year with confidence.

FINANCE REPORT

Cllr Oakley reported that he continued to be the Council's RFO and usually a draft set of accounts for the financial year would be presented to the meeting. However, due to recent changes the accounts would be prepared by Wettone Matthews prior to Audit by BDO. These accounts would be available shortly.

The Village had also agreed with the reasons for an increase in the Parish Precept to meet the continued costs involved with Massey's Folly.

EAST HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cllr. Patrick Burrige was unable to be present at the meeting.

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Cllr. Mark Kemp-Gee reported that the County Council continued to face the need to identify financial savings during these difficult times in the public sector. He praised the fortitude of all residents throughout the County.

The County Council's Budget had been frozen this year despite losing a significant amount of Government Grants over recent years a case of "cutting one's suit according to the cloth available".

Staffing levels continued to fall and he outlined how the County Council hoped to maintain standards in Adult elderly care, Education, Highway Maintenance and other services for which the County was responsible. Improvements to Rural Broadband was also taking place. Cllr. Kemp-Gee concluded by thanking residents for their support over the 10 years he had been pleased to serve the Community.

BRIEFING BY DIRECTOR OF HAMPSHIRE HIGHWAYS NORTH AND EAST

Mr. Adrian Gray presented an oversight of the response to the recent flooding and what had been done, what needed to be done and the lessons learnt for the future. He explained that the severity of the weather had triggered a Multi-Agency response and he set out in detail how this had worked in practice. The problems had first started on the 9th February and worsening conditions had needed all of the Blue Light Services and others to become involved and this work was coordinated by the Police. A decision to close the A32 had to be taken due to the impact of the weather conditions.

The conditions had been created by surface water from adjacent fields and the introduction of pumping and distribution of sandbags with the support of the military had to be undertaken. The manning implications had been enormous and he thanked Garth Nichol the Local Engineer for his diligence during these testing times. The problems had not only affected the A32 but the minor highways used for diversions and he thanked Cllr. Roe for the support given during these conditions.

Once the flooding receded it would be necessary to carry out highway tests and resolve the issues identified to restore the highway system to the required standard. The problems had been countywide and an enormous task now faced HCC who no longer had the support of the Military. Priorities would be established and he explained how this task would be undertaken and the finances available and the likely overall costs.

He explained that the County Council would be unable to repair land owners ditches as the main issue would be to recover the highways throughout Hampshire. The recovery would also include an assessment of how any re-occurrence could be dealt with better in the future.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Mr. Bob Chase reported on the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme and he introduced the local PCSO who explained her role within the local communities.

In the last 12 months there had been 9 cases of anti-social behaviour, 2 of criminal damage, 1 burglary and 1 theft from a vehicle. This was a pleasing and good outcome for the year. All emergency calls to the Police should be done via 999 but non-emergency matters should be reported via the 101 number.

The work of the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme was explained which covered some 276 properties, 24 industrial properties and 14 included in the Country watch system. Communication relied on email with 203 subscribers to the system. 9 Coordinators were in place but 2 more were needed. Farringdon Net supported the scheme.

Door Step Caller Notices would soon be available for distribution.

VILLAGE MAGAZINE

A written report together with the Statement of Accounts was distributed to the meeting. The Magazine is an independent publication and would print all material received and was self-financing. Surplus funds had assisted local initiatives. The Magazine was now a viable publication.

QUESTIONS

The meeting was opened to questions.

1. **HIGHWAYS:** The meeting recorded its thanks to Mr. Adrian Gray for coming to the meeting and explaining the circumstances surrounding the recent flooding.
2. **FLOODING:** A question was asked about the recovery of Shirnall Meadow by the Parish Council. The Parish Council would discuss a Plan of Action now the flooding was receding. The meeting then discussed a number of issues arising from the recent events. One of the problems had been identifying who was in overall control and how to report incidents as they happened. There had been a Control Centre but some residents criticised the response to local reports.
A significant amount of local history was available which could provide a significant source of information including development in the area, the closure of the brewing industry and other matters which had affected the Lavant Stream. This Local Information could help with future planning and a coordinated approach was needed. The meeting discussed these issues at great length and in conclusion Cllr. Clive Elderton offered to coordinate any local information forthcoming.
3. **FUTURE DEVELOPMENT:** A question was asked about the role of the Water Companies in the planning process when residential development was proposed. The capacity to deal with sewerage should be taken into account and the capability of the pumping station to deal with added capacity. The meeting agreed that these factors should be considered.
4. **PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL:** A resident complained about the discrepancies in some of the planning decisions being made particularly in relation to design. The Local Planning Authority was East Hampshire District Council and the Parish Council acted as a consultee but had no other powers. In the specific case raised the Parish Council had drawn attention to the design of the windows and chimney but EHDC had not taken these issues into account when approving the application.

Peter Durrant proposed a vote of thanks to Cllr. Roe for her hard work and involvement in the recent flooding issues and the manner in which she had conducted the Annual Parish Meeting.

DATE OF NEXT ANNUAL PARISH MEETING: Wednesday, 1st April, 2015.

The Meeting ended at: 21.02hrs.

Signed.....

Chairman 1st April, 2015