

**Minutes of the Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 11 March 2025 at 8.15pm at East Boldre Village Hall.**

Present: Cllr B Hawker (Chair), Cllr I Moyse (Vice Chair), Cllr M Husband, Cllr A Rostand, Cllr M Urwin

In attendance: Katie Walding (Locum Parish Clerk); 1 member of public

**1. Welcome by Chairman**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Assembly, explaining the later start of 8.25pm.

**2. Apologies for absence**

Cllr T Morrissey; Cllr L Cranton

**3. Minutes of last Annual Parish Meeting**

The minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 12 March 2024 were approved and accepted as a true record of the meeting at the Parish Council meeting held on 9 April 2024.

**4. Chairman's Report to the Parish Electors**

The Chair offered the following presentation:

This report is an opportunity to reflect on the last 12 months and our performance as a council.

We are expected to;

- Assist parishioners with local issues
- Establish good working relationships with other stakeholders
- Act as a statutory consultee on local planning matters
- Provide allotments
- Set and manage the precept

All our meetings are held at East Boldre Village Hall and we carry out appropriate risk assessments.

All Councillors elected in May 2023 are still in post and can continue to serve the community until the next election in 2027. In November 2024 we co-opted a new Councillor to fill the vacancy previously reported.

We thank Cllr Mans and Cllr Poole for their support and contribution to our debate. They have been regular attendees on behalf of their respective councils. We are grateful to them both.

We recognise the enormous challenge we now face because of the proposed reorganisation of Local Government.

**Local issues:**

## EAST BOLDRE PARISH COUNCIL

- East Boldre Community Stores Limited (t/a Chapel Stores). Recognising the importance of this valuable community asset the parish council was happy to support this venture with a grant and notes the community's support of the share offer. The shop and post office recently celebrated 12 months of trading. The Council wants to acknowledge the tremendous achievement and continuing commitment of the management committee Chapel Stores. We encourage parishioners to use the shop and support it by volunteering; this will assure its sustainability.
- Royal Visit. Chapel Stores hosted a visit by the Duke of Gloucester on 3 October. Several Councillors attended this event which was a great success.
- School Fields Trust. We recognize the tremendous contribution to the community of the management team at the School Fields Trust. Cllr. Rostand has supported them through representation. The School Fields Trust is looking for support from other local organisations for a 'scarecrow' event on 28/29 June; and continues to seek funding to support its activities.
- Village Hall. The council recognizes and supports the need to improve the village hall and made a grant of £2500 towards the renovation of the hall. We are pleased that the project is progressing and grateful for the updates provided by Gina Antczak. Meanwhile the council is also grateful for the provision of the hall at no cost for CPR training.
- Coffee mornings. A group of local volunteers continue to provide a monthly coffee morning in response to an identified need. We note the continuing success of this venture and congratulate the organisers.
- Speed watch. We have established a regular programme of Speed Watch sessions supported by a team of volunteers. This has raised awareness of inappropriate speeding. We continue to seek additional volunteers.
- Hatchetts Pond. We are not aware of any significant problems following the work commissioned by Forestry England.
- Emergency plan. Mike Upton and his team of volunteers continue to maintain our emergency planning process. The plan was updated and presented to the Council in February 2025. The council is grateful for the team's efforts and the assurance it provides us. We now plan to identify the vulnerable residents who might need assistance; and to communicate the provision of back-up batteries for their telephones.
- Defibrillators and CPR training. The council is grateful to the volunteers who regularly check this equipment to ensure that it is fully operational. Mike Upton, chairman of the emergency plan team, supported by the council, continues to organize CPR training for local residents. First responders from the South Central Ambulance Service have trained over 15 residents in the last 12 months.
- Hampshire County Council future services consultation. The council rejected the planned cuts to services because we were not assured about the thoroughness of the cost saving exercise described.

- The Council actively canvassed Royal Mail after the removal of the post box opposite the School Fields Trust. Despite support from our MP we failed to get it reinstated.
- The council has been actively involved and raised concerns where appropriate about the New Forest District Council's plans for waste collection.
- Exxon CO2 pipeline. The council contributed to the consultation about this project which is not now proceeding.
- New Forest local cycling and walking infrastructure plan. The council responded to the consultation. Subsequently the council has also made representations about the enforcement of the charter controlling major cycling events.
- Village appearance. The council continues to monitor the appearance of the village and to initiate maintenance where appropriate. We are very aware that individual parishioners carry out their own 'litter picks'; we are grateful to them.
- Community Policing. PC Mark Roberts and PSCO Nick Robinson have been briefed about local issues; and have conducted surgeries at Chapel Stores. The volume of recorded crime in the village continues to be very low; unfortunately there were break ins recently at the allotments.

#### **Other Stakeholders**

- Hampshire County Council (HCC). Cllr. Mans, the leader of the HCC regularly attends our meetings providing updates on relevant matters, support and wise counsel.
- New Forest District Council (NFDC). Cllr. Poole regularly attends and provides updates from the perspective of the NFDC, support and wise counsel.
- New Forest National Park Authority. Nick Gruber, Tree Officer, continues to provide professional support
- Councillors are represented on the New Forest National Park South East Quadrant; New Forest Association of Local Councils; New Forest Consultative Panel; and attend community forums. They provide feedback on matters relevant to the parish.

#### **Statutory Consultee**

- The council dealt with over 23 planning applications during the year. We are grateful for the hard work of Cllrs. Irwin and Moyes.

#### **Provide allotments**

The council continues to meet its obligation to make allotments available to local residents. However, the provision continues to exceed the demand of parish residents.

The allotment holders have formed a Management Committee and have made tremendous improvements. We will continue to work closely with them to ensure further improvement.

#### **Set and manage the precept**

- The council increased the precept to £16,500 and is recommending an increase of £1000 for 2025/26.
- The deficit on council business has been eliminated

- The council made a grant to the Village Hall .
- The reserves stand at more than £10,000 which meets the minimum level of reserves required to demonstrate sustainability.

Councillors are volunteers and give their time generously on behalf of the community. I would like to thank them for their commitment and hard work. I would also like to thank those members of the public who take the time to join our meetings; raising matters of concern, and suggesting new initiatives for the council to discuss and support.

A special thank you to our hard working clerk who continues to provide us with support and sound advice. Our Clerk recently underwent major surgery and is now completing a phased return. We are grateful to Katie Walding who served as our locum clerk; she is providing support to the Council and to our clerk as she completes her return to work.

#### 5. Questions from residents to the Parish Council

The member of public noted that Hatchet Pond has never been better, since all the work was done. A lack of litter, and many previous issues are all gone away with the re-arrangement of the car park and removal of loos and ice cream van etc. There are fewer inflatables and very little swimming.

The meeting closed at 9pm.