

**Minutes of the Parish Council Annual Assembly meeting held on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022  
at 8.00pm at East Boldre Village Hall.**

Present:

Cllr B Hawker (Chair), Cllr I Moyse (Vice Chair), Cllr M Husband, Cllr R Gabzdyl

In attendance: Liz Welch (Parish Clerk)

**1. Welcome by Chairman**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Assembly.

**2. Apologies for absence**

Cllr Holmes

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

The minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 9th March 2021 were accepted and duly signed by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting.

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

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

We have returned from our virtual meetings to holding our meetings in public at the Village Hall. We carry out appropriate risk assessments and make the necessary adjustments in line with recommended good practice.

Recently Cllrs. Lynn Clark, and Debbie Drodge have stood down. Our clerk, Nicola Curzon, resigned in December 2021. I would like to thank them all for their contribution to our community. Liz Welch has joined us as our new clerk.

The Council is actively seeking applications from residents to fill the vacant positions. Cllrs. Mans and Harris are regular attendees on behalf of their respective councils. We are grateful to them both.

Local issues;

- Village shop. We recognized the importance of a shop and post office to our community and supported the community benefit society set up to acquire the local shop, whose future was at risk. The owner has now decided not to sell but to continue to operate the shop. The community benefit society is winding down and +has returned the grant which we had made to them
- School Fields Trust. We recognize the tremendous contribution to the community of the management team at the School Fields Trust. We have supported them through representation.
- Coffee mornings. A group of local volunteers have established a monthly coffee morning in response to an identified need. We support this initiative and provided a

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grant of £100 towards a Christmas function which has been delayed because of the pandemic.

- Speed watch. Several residents have made representations directly and indirectly about the risk speeding vehicles pose to people and animals. The council has been supporting a joint initiative with Boldre Parish Council to acquire a new speed gun. The council has also identified a new leader, Rebecca Gabzdyl, for the East Boldre speed watch team. Rebecca has recruited 8 new volunteers to join with the existing team of 5. The volunteers are receiving appropriate training and we expect to be monitoring traffic at least once a month.
- Hatchets Pond. Residents continue to be concerned about the impact of high visitor numbers to this attractive feature of our parish. These have reduced from the lockdown peak, and we have received briefings from Forestry England about plans to remove the toilet block; relocate the car park; and introduce signage to minimize verge parking and other inappropriate behaviour.
- Emergency plan. Mike Upton and his team of volunteers have maintained our emergency planning process. The council is grateful for their efforts and the assurance it provides us.
- Defibrillators and CPR training. The council acquired its second and third defibrillators so that there is now an even distribution of life saving equipment through our linear village. 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 30 residents in the last 12 months.
- Welcome pack. Annette Hayward, a member of the emergency planning team, has coordinated the development of a welcome pack (with design input from Cllr Lynn Clark) which will be made available to all new residents. The content evolved from the research carried out to support the emergency planning process.
- Broadband. The availability of high quality broadband continues to be an issue for many residents. Cllrs. Husband and Moyes together with local resident Stuart Newey have made excellent progress in their dealings with Openreach.
- Village Hall. The council recognizes and supports the need to improve the village hall. Meanwhile the Council is grateful for the provision of the hall at no cost for CPR training and allotment meetings.
- Platinum jubilee. The Council is planning to support this national celebration. This might involve planting trees as part of the national tree canopy campaign.

#### 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. Harris regularly attends and provides update from the perspective of the NFDC, support and wise counsel.
- New Forest Partnership Plan. Steve Avery, Chief Executive New Forest National Park Authority (NFNPA), briefed us on the plan. The council supported by a number of

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residents participated in the consultation process and volunteered East Boldre as an ‘ambassador’; for this initiative.

- HCC Greening Campaign. The council is taking an active role in communicating information about this important initiative linked to the challenge of climate change; and related to the New Forest Partnership plan.
- Councillors are represented on the New Forest National Park South East Quadrant; New Forest Association of Local Councils; and New Forest Consultative Panel. They provide feedback on matters relevant to the parish.

#### Statutory consultee

- The council dealt with over 20 planning applications during the year. We are grateful to the hard work of Cllrs. Husband and Moyes which informs our own comments on planning matters
- Steve Avery, Chief Executive NFNPA, briefed the council, and provided an insight into the expectations of a parish council in planning matters.

#### Provide allotments

The council continues to meet its obligation to make allotments available to local residents. The over supply of allotments, and the related cost, has been alleviated by the closure of allotment 2. However the provision continues to exceed the demand of parish residents. The Council continues to look to allotment holders to take responsibility for the effective day to day management of the allotments.

#### Set and manage the precept

- The Council increased the precept from £15,000 to £16,000
- The deficit on council business has been eliminated
- The council made grants to East Boldre Community Stores Limited ( repaid as project terminated); the coffee mornings group, New Forest Disability Group, Victim Support and East Boldre speed watch.
- 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 new clerk who has settled in quickly to provide us with support and sound advice.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.30pm.

Chairman’s signature:

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