



Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting (formerly Annual Parish Assembly) of Sandleheath Parish held on Monday, 29th April 2019 at 7.30pm in Sandleheath Village Hall.

PRESENT:
Chairman Mr JP. Stockton
Councillors Mr K. Andrews, Miss C Kemp and Mr G. Maynard
Clerk to the Council Mrs V Eden

Also in attendance were County Councillor Edward Heron and PCSO Stephen May. There were 7 village residents in attendance as reflected in the Attendance Book

- 1. Welcome** - The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed all to the Annual Parish Meeting.
- 2. Apologies for absence** - Received from District Councillor Ann Sevier and village resident, Keith Bennett.
- 3. To Approve Minutes of Previous Annual Parish Meeting (formerly known as Annual Parish Assembly) held on 26th April 2018** - The minutes of the meeting held on 26th April 2018 were read, approved and signed as a correct record.
- 4. Hampshire Police - PCSO May** - PCSO May opened his talk by referring to the crime figures for 2018-2019 that had been produced by Hampshire Police for the Fordingbridge area. The recent incidents with catapults are currently being looked into. It was also noted that another PC may be employed in the future but that the area could lose a PCSO. Questions were then taken from those present.

Q - What is a seasonal incident?

A - In winter, it is noted that there is less outdoor disorder but more outdoor break ins

Q - Is Christmas usually a quiet time of year?

A - Yes

PCSO May was then thanked by the Chairman for his update and left the meeting.

- 5. County Councillor - Edward Heron** - A short recap was given in relation to matters raised over the past year. It was noted that potential planning may have an impact on the village, including that undertaken by Dorset Council particularly in relation to vehicle movement. Hampshire County Council (HCC) and NFDC are monitoring current developments.

It was also highlighted that the hearing for Ringwood and Fordingbridge Skip Hire Ltd is due to take place on 8th May 2019.

Cty Cllr Heron then reiterated that HCC was under pressure to make further savings. Residents were also encouraged to report any road problems online at <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems>

Questions were then taken from those present.

Q - Are 2400 new houses planned for Alderholt?

A - The last consultation suggested 1000

Q - Is there plans for a new town in East Dorset?

A - This is unknown but the actions of Dorset Council are being monitored. It is noted that this is a protected landscape

Q - Is it the intention to cut services provided by NFDC?

A - There will be changes in relation to how services are delivered. For the county council, the rising costs of adult social care and childrens services remain a priority, with other services coming second.

The Chairman thanked Cty Cllr Heron for his update.

6. Chairman's Report to the Parish Electors -*The Chairman read aloud the following annual Chairman's report for 2018/19.*

This is the final annual Chairman's report before the new Council takes over following the Local Government elections scheduled for the 2nd May. Unfortunately, once again in Sandleheath insufficient numbers have put themselves up as candidates so the Election in uncontested. Currently this means that at the start of the next Council session there will only be 5 members. This is extremely disappointing given that for the last 4 years we have managed to operate with a full complement of 7 members. As things currently stand there is a potential candidate for co-option to one of the vacant positions, but the other will have to be advertised.

During the last year we have held a total of 9 Parish Council meetings. In accordance with the regulations, agendas and minutes have all been published on time, both online and on the village notice board. Key issues which have dominated our agenda are as follows:

Strategic Planning policy

The largest single planning issue facing Sandleheath Parish Council and the surrounding town and village councils is the New Forest District Council (NFDC) review of their Local Plan (Part 1). As part of the consultation process Sandleheath PC along with many others made details representations about the unsoundness of many areas of the plan. We fully appreciate the need for additional housing, but the proposal to build more than 140 homes (now 240 according to the developer) in Ashford to the north of station road will undoubtedly put unacceptable pressure on the road to the west of Fordingbridge and through the town centre. Unfortunately, most of our comments have been ignored so we are now left with putting our case to the Government's Planning Inspectorate who will be examining the whole plan in July. Unlike many other PCs we have stepped up and will put our case directly to him at a public hearing on the 16th July.

Local Plan Part 1 is unfortunately not the whole picture as Part 2, which should be published by NFDC shortly, will cover proposed developments of less than 50 houses in villages such as Sandleheath. This again will focus our attention on the suitability of identified sites and the overall need for them to be proportional and in keeping with the area. Maintaining the unique gaps between ourselves and Ashford and Fordingbridge remains a priority.

To further complicate the planning issues which will affect Sandleheath it has now been identified within Dorset's Local Plan that there is a plan for up to 2400 houses to be built in Alderholt. Given the lack of road infrastructure and employment opportunities in the area, there is considerable concern what effect this will have on Sandleheath. We will in the coming year be supporting Alderholt Parish Council in objecting to this level of development.

Local Planning Issues

In the past 12 months we have received 10 planning requests, all of which have been supported with the exception of 2 sited (14 houses) between Sandle Lodge and the Scout Centre, which is now the subject of a planning appeal.

We also continue to be involved in issues surrounding an expansion of business operating from Courtwood Farm which will significantly increase HGV traffic through the village. Again, this is the subject of a planning/enforcement appeal notice which will be heard the Government Inspector on the 8th May. Again, Sandleheath Parish Council will be directly involved.

The Parish Council is also monitoring closely the stop and enforcement notices put on tree felling in the woods to the West of the village (Courtwood Farm). These are ancient woodlands and we wish to ensure that they are managed sensibly and remain protected.

The Common

The PC remains determined to protect the Common, whilst making it more accessible to villagers for events. In the last 12 months more scalplings have been laid on approach paths and in the allotment's layby. We have also had the trees informally surveyed by NFDC's trees officer to understand how best to protect them for the future. By and large he was happy with what we are doing, however he did recommend the removal of 2 dangerous trees at the entrance to Bishops Lane, which has now been done. Because we have a responsibility to ensure that the Common is a safe place for the public the PC has also taken out a contract with NFDC to survey the trees that we are responsible for on an annual basis. Previous reports of verge damage particularly next to the bus shelter have not developed further, but we continue to monitor the situation. The PC would also like to put on record our thanks to the Sandleheath Community Association for the efficient way the Common was cleaned after the Fete and annual bonfire. Well done to them.

Footpaths/Cycleways

Following the success of the Brickyard Road/Marl Lane cycle/footpath resurfacing the PC actively sort to resurface the footpath from Rockbourne Road through to Marl Lane. Having secured grants (£12K) from Hampshire County Council and NFDC we are delighted to report that this work has now been completed and was opened in time for the beautiful display of bluebells in the woods.

Further work has also been completed on the new bridge and walkway between Hawkshill Mill Farm and the footpath network at the bottom of Bishops Lane.

The PC aims to continue to try and improve these circular footpath routes.

Highways

In general, the condition of the roads in Sandleheath has remained at an acceptable level, however there are some outstanding potholes in Alderholt Road that require attention. Significantly we have employed the Lengthsman throughout this year on cutting back the verge edges on footpaths to restore their full width, for almost the entire length of Station/Main roads.

The Lengthsman has also strimmed and cut back vegetation down Alderholt Road, along with digging out the ditch.

Unfortunately, this year we have had 2 cases of fly tipping, one at the bottom of Alderholt Road, which was cleared by NFDC and one containing asbestos waste off Bishops Lane,

which was on the Common. Specialist removal of this waste cost the PC £565.

Speeding remains a concern for many residents and the PC has been investigating the possibility of installing a form of speed reduction particularly along Main Road. Unfortunately to do so would involve a costly traffic management survey and fully funding of any systems (e.g. pinch points). Currently this is outside PC available resources and cannot be funded by HCC Highways because it is not a priority.

That said there are other measures, such as village entrance gates which do help to reduce traffic speeds. The PC will be investigating the feasibility of these in the coming weeks.

Community

The Parish Council gave grants of £50 each to the Fordingbridge Day Centre and the Rae Straton Lunch Club.

All money that we were previously holding for the Sandleheath Village Hall CIO has now been transferred to them, together with an additional grant of £165 as part of our grant aid programme. This we hope demonstrates our continued support for this project.

The PC also participated in the traditional Remembrance Day service in Fordingbridge laying a wreath on behalf of the village.

Council Administration and Training

In addition to all Councillors migrating to a new Office 365 email system, all Parish Council work carried out by the clerk is now done on a dedicated laptop, which ensures better compliance with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

All our documentation is now also backed up on a cloud-based system.

Unfortunately, our Clerk has given notice to leave the post in June this year. The PC is currently advertising/conducting interviews for a replacement.

Finance

For information a statement of our accounts is published with the minutes of each PC meeting.

The precept for this year was £7575

Our bank balance as of 31 March 2019 totalled £12,733.12

For the coming year the PC requested a precept increase of 5%

Thank you

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the time and work of all councillors and thank them for their efforts. In particular a very big thank you to Simon Daykin and David Wright who are leaving the council this month. They have provided a depth of thought and a very positive input to every decision that we have had to make in the last few years. They will be missed.

However, we will be pleased to welcome Graham Lacey as a new councillor at the first meeting of the new term on the 9th May.

Also, a very big thank you to Mrs Vicky Eden who will leave us in June. It is not easy being the clerk, especially in these times of changing regulations and GDPR etc and she has been outstanding in the role. We wish her well in her next project.

On the future I have to say that I was extremely disappointed that insufficient candidates came forward seeking a position on the council. Just like other organisations who are seeking to improve our community like the SCA and the Village Hall CIO, it seems difficult to find volunteers willing to take active administrative roles. I know people are busy with families and work long hours, but some need to step up if we are to preserve this wonderful community.

7. Matters to be Raised by the Public

A short update was provided in relation to Sandleheath Village Hall. Support from the parish council, NFDC and HCC was noted and much appreciated. The hall is now being made safe and compliant with regulations, with further grants being applied for. The financial donations and voluntary work undertaken by villagers is very much appreciated.

The Chairman then thanked those who had attended and closed the meeting at 8.25pm.

These are draft minutes until approved at the next Annual Parish Meeting

Sandleheath Parish Council

Summary of Receipts and Payments Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 2019*

(Last) year ended 31/03/2018	Description	(Current) year ended 31/03/2019
	<u>Receipts</u>	
£ 7,214.00	Precept (including discretionary grant)	£ 7,575.00
£ 2.90	Bank Interest	£ 9.86
£ -	VAT repayment	£ 738.22
£ 116.33	Wayleave payment from SSE	£ 116.33
£ 35.00	Donation	£ -
£ 900.00	Grants	£ -
£ 24.00	Other	£ 7.00
£ 8,292.23		£ 8,446.41
	<u>Payments</u>	
£ 575.21	Gen admin/misc expenses/postage/mileage/affiliation fees/training	£ 529.68
£ 2,779.65	Clerk's fees & expenses	£ 2,821.01
£ 235.00	Sec 137 payments	£ 700.00
£ 482.68	Insurance and audit costs	£ 519.59
£ 824.77	Meeting Room Hire and Common management/flowerbed	£ 931.96
£ 266.30	VAT payment	£ 305.08
£ 483.32	IT	£ 92.32
	Other	£ 1,395.00
£ 5,646.93		£ 7,294.64
	<u>Repayments and Payments Summary</u>	
£ 8,936.05	Balance bought forward as at 1st April 2019	£ 11,581.35
£ 8,292.23	Add total receipts	£ 8,446.41
£ 17,228.28		£ 20,027.76
£ 5,646.93	Less total payments	£ 7,294.64
£ 11,581.35		£ 12,733.12
	<u>These cumulative funds are represented by</u>	
£ 4,277.77	Current account no. 21013270 HSBC Bank	£ 5,403.68
£ 7,319.58	Deposit account no. 51088440 HSBC Bank	£ 7,329.44
£ 16.00	Less unrepresented cheque (s)	£ -
£ 11,581.35		£ 12,733.12

Support statement for the year ended 31st March 2019

Disposals in the year - 1 x Toshiba Laptop		£1 (notional value)
As at 31/03/2018, the following assets were:		
1 x Wooden Bus Shelter		£1 (notional value)
1 x Two seats (one on Common and one on Elms Close)		£1 (notional value)
1 x Parish Noticeboard		£1 (notional value)
1 x HP laptop. mouse, software and case		£538
1 x Epson Digital Projector		£1 (notional value)
Speedwatch equipment (1/4 share)		£400 (PP)
Common Gate and overhead barrier		£1283 (PP)
The Common		£1 (notional value)
Borrowings		
Debts outstanding - VAT debtor		£ 305.08
Tenancies		£ -
Agency work		£ -
Advertising and publicity		£ -
Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables a parish council to spend up to a product of £7.86 per head of the electorate for the benefit of the people in the area on activities or projects not specifically authorised by other powers **		
Donation to British Legion for annual Poppy Appeal		£ 35.00
Rae Straton Lunch Club/Day Centre		£ 50.00
Fordingbridge & District Day Centre for the Frail and Housebound		£ 50.00
SVHCIO		£ 165.00
		£ 300.00
* These are draft accounts. Internal audit arranged for 11th June 2019		
** £400 earmarked in previous financial years		