

BOLDRE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

MONDAY 16TH MARCH 2009 AT 7.00PM

IN THE BOLDRE WAR MEMORIAL HALL

Present: Mr I Wild (Chairman)

Councillors: Mrs Alison Bolton, Mr Tony Broomfield, Mr Tony Corbin, Major Arthur French (Vice Chairman), Mrs Angela Grainger, Mr Paul Tanner, Mr Colin Wise.

County Councillor: Cllr Ken Thornber

Parish Clerk: Mrs Margaret Gaylard

Residents: 13

1. Apologies for Absence

Received from Dr James Horsfall and Mr Ken Thornber

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 17th March 2008

These were approved and signed as a true record by the Chairman.

3. Chairman's report

3.1 General & Finance -In my last annual report I said that the Parish Council had had a busy year. The same can be said for this year and if anything, it has been even busier.

To allow us to carry out the Parish Council's work, a precept of £18,000.00 was levied, an increase of about 2.45% on the previous year.

Expenditure relates to the upkeep of the recreation ground, the pavilion, the play area adjoining Boldre War Memorial Hall and the various area of land owned by the Parish. All of this work is carried out by two groundsmen and outside contractors. Further expenditure covers such things as grants to parish organisations, insurance, affiliation fees, hall hire, the salary and work expenses of the Parish Clerk, as well as the cost of her training course for the Certificate in Local Council Administration. This training keeps the Parish Clerk up to date with the intricacies of the day to day running of the Parish Council and could lead to an application for and the award of Quality Parish Council status. It also enables the Parish Clerk to identify the training needs of the Parish Councillors. In fact such an evening was carried out here two weeks ago for Councillors from Boldre and about eight other Parishes and this proved very useful.

An inspection of the plumbing system in the pavilion was carried out in 2008 to check that there was no danger from Legionnaires disease and I am pleased to say that there was no danger. Whilst on the subject of the pavilion, BPC invited a number of contractors to tender for the painting of the pavilion and the repair of the concrete apron in front of it. The Council has now selected tenders for both of these and the work will start soon.

At the annual inspection of the play area the Parish Council was told that the slide did not conform to current safety regulations. The Council therefore decided to remove the slide and is now in the process of finding a suitable replacement. The aim is to do this in conjunction with the provision of additional equipment for older children elsewhere on the recreation ground using money set aside for this project and, hopefully, a lottery grant. A small grant has already been received from New Forest District Council towards this project.

3.2 Highways - You may remember that some work at 'The Shallows' was carried out in late 2007. However further permission was needed to remove the fallen willow and to carry out remedial work. Finally permission was received from Natural England, Environment Agency and Longdown Estate but none of these offered any financial help. However, the Parish Council engaged a contractor and the work was carried out in October 2008 which cost £1500.00. After discussions with HCC Highways on site and after completion of the work, they offered a grant of £750.00 towards the project; this was quickly accepted.

Continuing with Highways, the Parish Council met with officials from Highways last summer. It was a good meeting and Parish Councillors were able to voice concerns over highway problems. I believe that this has led to a much better relationship between us. Generally speaking, requests to rectify problems are dealt with in a fairly short time although there have been some hiccoughs. The Parish Council is again meeting with Highways tomorrow.

3.3 Planning – Up to Monday of last week, the Council have received 103 planning applications. One of these was the application to build 9 dwellings at Gilpin Close. I am not going to go into the history of this proposal, but I will say that it has been going on for a very long time. At a specially convened planning meeting the Parish Council's Working Party discussed this application in front of approximately 30 people. Although the majority of the Parish Council supported, and still supports, the construction of these dwellings for social housing, the Planning Working Party rejected the application on three issues: access from Gilpin Close as it is at the moment, the proposed connection of the footpath with the new development and the appearance of the new buildings. This decision was approved at the next full Council meeting. Whether or not the planning department of NFNPA will heed the Parish Council's comments I do not know; we will have to wait until NFNPA discusses this application at its planning meeting.

3.4 Speeding -Another issue which has been around for a very long time is speeding within the Parish. I can now tell you that last week, Parish Councillors met with Highways Officials from NFDC and HCC to discuss and agree to the positioning of a Speed Limit Reminder (SLR) unit which will be shared with Beaulieu and East Boldre Parishes. BPC hopes that these sites will be ready in the next few weeks. Deployment of the SLR will be subject to agreement amongst the three Parishes.

3.5 NFNPA Plan – During the summer the council received and were asked to comment on these draft policies. After receiving comments from Parishioners and

holding special Council Working Party meetings, the Parish Council submitted what I considered to be a balanced set of comments. We await results.

3.6 The production of the new Parish Guide has been under discussion for some time. This is now being worked on by the Parish Clerk in conjunction with the Church and, hopefully, it will be produced in the not too distant future.

3.7 Three years ago the Parish Council produced a Parish Plan with the help of ideas from Boldre Parishioners. The main aims were; to maintain the Parish as an attractive place to live, to support an acceptable existing community services and to give residents value for money.

The Parish Council feels that it has successfully carried out many tasks which are encompassed by these four headings and believes that the Parish Plan should be updated, again with input from Parishioners. Copies of the existing plan are here this evening together with a questionnaire. Please take a copy of both and return to the Parish Clerk, Pilley Post Office, and any Parish Councillor or via the Council website.

3.8 Some of you may have noticed that a working party started to clear some undergrowth at the recreation ground at the weekend. This was organised by Hampshire Probation Service all for a donation of £50.00 to cover some of their costs.

3.8 I would now like to thank Cllr Ken Thornber, leader of HCC who attends our meetings regularly, giving us useful information and fielding complaints in a good-natured way. Thanks are also due to my fellow Parish Councillors; Major Arthur French – the Vice Chairman, Alison Bolton, Tony Broomfield – Chair of Amenities, Tony Corbin, Brian Goodall, Angela Grainger – Chair of Planning & Highways, Dr James Horsfall, Paul Tanner and Colin Wise – Chair of Finance and also our District Councillor. All work very hard doing more than is asked of them – we are a very good team.

I would also like to thank our groundsmen, Rod Machin and Jack Tanner and, of course, the Parish Clerk, Margaret Gaylard; she has been with us only one year but has already proved a great help to the Parish Council.

3.9 Just before I finish, I would like to draw Parishioners attention to the flooding that occurs during prolonged and heavy rainfall. Much of the flooding is due to the lack of maintenance of ditches. Generally, ditches are the responsibility of the person along whose boundaries that they run. Overgrown hedges are also an issue; they often make narrow roads more difficult to negotiate. I am therefore asking all parishioners, on behalf of the Parish Council, to maintain their hedges and ditches please. Also, during the last year I have been surprised to come across parishioners who are unaware that Parish Council meetings are open to the public. Boldre Parish Council meets on the second Monday of each month with a few exceptions. Notices of meetings together with the agenda are posted on notice boards around the Parish. If you or anyone else wishes to know what the Parish Council does, come along to meetings; they are probably better than many TV programmes!

The Chairman then introduced the two speakers for the evening –Terena Plowright from ‘The Greening Campaign’ and PCSO Sean Owens from the local police.

Terena Plowright.

The Greening Campaign started as an attempt to get people involved at a local level and to counteract the mixed messages being given out on climate change. Starting in Petersfield a single list was drawn up on how to combat climate change. A wide response was generated from this and the community worked together where the village saved 24 tons of CO² by making small changes. An example of a village project is looking at how water could be saved in the community. This has spread into other communities and they are now helping other areas to start off. Work is now going on with government at all levels and other organisations. Government has set national targets and in this area, they are supported by HCC. More information is on the website and an initiative could be set up locally– Terena thanked Cllr Thornber for his support.

Sean Owens

The police have set up the Safer Neighbourhood Scheme team which is similar to the old system of beat bobbies. Officers are allocated to specific areas and work with the local communities. They usually travel on foot or on bicycles. Officers in this area cover Brockenhurst, Boldre, East Boldre and sometimes Lymington.

Fraud is of a concern to communities and the following areas were discussed – credit cards, identity theft, 070 phone numbers, cash back on purchases on the internet where the cash and goods are both lost, lotto winnings letters, ‘discovered money’ where cash has to be paid before information is released and distraction burglaries

The point was made to always check identities and if it seems too good to be true then it most probably is!

Questions & Comments

To Sean Owens

A comment was made that fraud can also escalate from lists of timeshare owners. ID cards can be faked so it is often difficult for people to be sure of callers at a house. Telephone calls can fluster people, especially the elderly, into giving out information. Sandy Down has a neighbourhood watch area which has a ‘no cold calling zone’ HCC are keeping lists of preferred suppliers to combat cold calling. Telephone numbers – 101 is still a pilot, subsidised by HCC, and is used for low level crime. It costs 10p per call. The 0845 number is used similarly and also to contact individual police officers.

To Terena Plowright

The value of the levels of savings – these are shown on the card.
Local levels might conflict with national issues e.g. Heathrow airport expansion.
High level of heating public buildings was discussed.

To Boldre Parish Council

Speed limits in the south of the Parish are considered too high – The Chairman replied that SLR's, due to be introduced soon, should help matters and the aim is towards 20-30 mph in all areas. This was confirmed by Cllr Thornber.

The length of time that the gasworks have taken on Boldre Bridge/Lane was mentioned and hope expressed that they do not need to dig it up again.

Council was asked to consider some mechanism of reducing the numbers of lorries and boat trailers using narrow lanes via Undershore Road. (Council are due to have a meeting with Highways on 17/3 09 and this will be discussed)

To Cllr Thornber

Due to Lorries getting stuck under Ampress Bridge Cllr Thornber was asked if an indicator could be fitted to the bridge.

Cllr Thornber mentioned the HCC is considering depots around the forest where larger lorries can offload to smaller vehicles which may improve large vehicle problems. HCC is also in negotiation with SatNav companies

Cllr Thornber was asked about recycling in the area – some is now being stockpiled but only 10% goes to landfill. Some is being used to produce electricity by incineration

Arthur French then gave thanks to Ian Wild on behalf of the council. Marcia Phillips also gave thanks to the entire council for their work on behalf of the community.