

MEDSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY HELD ON 19th APRIL 2016

The Annual Parish Meeting was called by the Chairman and was held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 19th April 2016 commencing at 7.30pm.

Present:

Cllr Deborah Jackson (Chairman)	District Councillor Ingrid Thomas
Cllr Roy Pullen (Vice-Chairman)	HCC Councillor Mark Kemp-Gee
Cllr Hans Taylor	PC Peter Kelly
Cllr Peter Buckland	PCSO Matthew Sheppard
Cllr Ken Kercher	Mr E O'Farrell
Cllr Stan Whitcher	Mrs Anya Moore
Cllr Mike Smith	Mrs Sarah Goudie (Clerk Four Marks PC)
Cllr Peter Fenwick	Mr & Mrs P Beresford
Mr Peter Baston (Clerk Medstead PC)	Mrs Tracy Vear (Community Development Officer, EHDC)

1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the Medstead Annual Parish Meeting and welcomed Tracey Vear Community Development Officer (EHDC), Hampshire County Councillor Mark Kemp-Gee, District Councillor Ingrid Thomas, Errol O'Farrell (Mulcock Charity), PC Peter Kelly and PCSO Matthew Sheppard.

It was proposed that the order of the set agenda be changed to allow Community Development Officer (EHDC) and Hampshire Police representatives to leave

2. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER (EHDC)

Ms Vear gave an overview of her role at EHDC and how she felt that she brought a new synergy to the interaction between EHDC planning and the community, including all consultees of planning applications. She highlighted her role as being mainly after planning has been approved and how she can build relationships post this period. She also stated that she would broker negotiations between parish councils and developers and provide advice and support from a community perspective. Ms Vear then received and responded to questions from the floor.

3. NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING TEAM UPDATE

PC Pete Kelly reported that overall crime is relatively low in the Parish. There are some forthcoming changes to the way the area will be policed by the Safer Neighbourhood Policing Team. PC Kelly confirmed that he will be staying in the area. PCSO Sheppard was introduced as the new PCSO covering Medstead. Comments from the meeting surrounded the speeding traffic in the Village and PC Kelly said that if he is made aware of where this is an issue he would make every effort to be more visible with a speed gun. The size of HGV's which are passing through the village centre are becoming an increasing problem, but little can be done as there is not a weight restriction on the roads. Also discussed was the illegal parking on footways.

4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Jean Penny.

5. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 21st APRIL 2015 AND TO CONSIDER ANY MATTERS ARISING.

The minutes of the meeting held on 21st April 2015 which were previously circulated, were confirmed as a true and accurate record of the meeting. It was proposed by Councillor Kercher that

the minutes were adopted by this meeting, seconded by Councillor Whitcher and were duly signed by the Chairman. There were no matters arising from the minutes from the floor.

6. MEDSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

The Chairman of the Parish Council, Deborah Jackson presented an overview of the Council's activities during the year, covering the Council's Standing Committees and their respective work programmes. During 2015, there had been a successful Parish Council election resulting in the election of a full cohort of Councillors. In addition, a new Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) had been appointed following the resignation of the previous clerk due to personal commitments. The Parish office which is shared with Four Marks will be open for "drop ins", with regular days/times to advised.

Full Council meetings now occur monthly on the second Wednesday.

Key projects delivered by the Council during the year include:

1. Improvements to Five Ash Pond
 - Interim dredging work completed
 - Long term - investigate possibility of sinking a bore hole
2. Replacement of the junior playground
3. Reinstatement of the Village Pond. Materials have been financed by Medstead parish council, Medstead parish Plan and through EHDC Ward Councillor Grants. Labour has been provided by volunteers. It is hoped that the Pond would be open for the Village Fete. Councillor Whitcher suggested that the pond be linked to commemorate the Queen's 90th birthday as a lasting commemoration.

The Clerk provided a handout overview of the Council's draft accounts for 2015/16, including details of a number of high value projects that were delivered during the year.

7. COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT

Councillor Mark Kemp-Gee presented his County Councillor report.

1. Hampshire's Children's Services Department is one of just 10 in the country rated as GOOD and the only County where the Leadership is rated as "OUTSTANDING".
2. Hampshire has specifically prioritised child social care and added £12.5m to that budget whilst the capital programme for new schools and building improvements is the largest ever at £248million.
3. At secondary age over 98% of children get into one of their top 3 choices. Examination results are above the national average and 84% of primary schools are rated GOOD or OUTSTANDING.
4. Funding for Youth Services has been safeguarded in the budget for this year.
5. Funding for short breaks for children with disabilities also safeguarded for another year. £1.8million added back by Councillors.
6. More Extra-Care places for the elderly. Target increased from 500 extra to 700 extra places plus new build provision for young adults with disabilities.
7. £28million of public investment putting us on target for 95 coverage of superfast broadband across the county with plans being developed to help the final 5 in more remote rural areas.
8. Road users have voted Hampshire roads maintenance top in the country.
9. Hampshire's country parks, through successful Lottery Funding and Capital Funding from HCC, will get an extra £15m investment making them even more attractive, with more modern facilities and attaining commercially viable, while the New Hampshire Cultural

Trust (HCT) has successfully taken museums and galleries out of Council funding, making it easier to attract lottery and other money for these great facilities.

10. Hampshire now has the lowest council tax precept of any county- whilst services are rated as good or outstanding.
11. Councillor Kemp-Gee is investigating the possibility of getting a weight restriction on the roads through Bentworth and requested that Medstead PC re-visited the idea of a 40mph limit along the road connecting the two villages.
12. Councillor Kemp-Gee gave a brief outline of the current local government devolution bid from his perspective as a county Councillor.

8. EHDC - DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT

Cllr Thomas: - The District Councillor grants scheme has been extended so that each Councillor now has a grant fund of £4,500 to use for community projects within their Ward. This is a simpler way to get money to those small local projects which benefit local people so much.

This year my grant pot has been used to help fund the setting up of an evening branch of the WI in Four Marks and also to enable them to plant bulbs around the village; the Bowls Club has had money towards a new surface in Medstead. Also the youth activity area in the recreation ground has had funding, and so has Four Marks Village Hall for much needed projection equipment. Also I have approved several grants towards our forthcoming celebrations for the Queens 90th birthday.

The grant pot has now been refilled for the new financial year, so if you are a group who have a project which will benefit the community, please download an application form from the EHDC website and hand the completed form back to me for approval – it is a very simple system.

I continue to be greatly concerned about road safety in our villages, with the increasingly busy roads raising the potential for serious accidents to a new level. Several years ago it was agreed by HCC Highways that a lights controlled crossing would be installed on the A31 near Telegraph Lane, and a second one near Lapwing Way to make crossing the road safer, especially for our young people getting on and off school buses. Why the second part of the approved project has taken so long I don't know, but just today I have received plan drawings of the project and an estimate that it will be installed at the end of July or early August. Let us hope that the date does not slip, I can think of no reason why it should.

I have been involved in a working group looking at the severe dangers of Boyneswood Road Bridge. The group is a joint HCC and EHDC group because of the planning issues involved. A report was commissioned by Hampshire Highways which illustrates at last that the junctions at Lymington Bottom and Boyneswood Road are “likely” to be over capacity when all of the new house building that is planned takes place, so solutions are being looked at. The report also covered the pedestrian hazard of Boyneswood Road Bridge which I am hopeful will result eventually in a separate bridge for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders. However an interim solution which includes a solid kerb will be designed as was agreed at a meeting with developer William Lacey Group because the separate bridge may take a while - rest assured I will keep pushing for one.

The other area which worries me is the Shrave. Turning into or out of the service road is extremely dangerous, sitting in the middle of the A31 with your indicator flashing hoping that nobody will drive into the back of you is just not acceptable. Nor is trying to get out onto the A31 with traffic speeding up towards or coming off the dual carriageway. EHDC have been persuaded to put a planning condition on the approval of the latest two housing applications in the Shrave that means the

junction should be improved. The condition is that firstly no development can start until the road safety upgrade designs are approved by EHDC, and secondly none of the new homes can be occupied until the work is completed.

My thanks to Mark Kemp-Gee our County Councillor for setting up the meetings and being proactive in helping us to solve some of these serious Highways safety issues.

As you should know, our Neighbourhood Plan is almost in place, with the date set for the referendum on May 5th - please be sure to go to vote. I would like to thank the Steering Group of residents and councillors from both parishes, who have worked so hard on the project over the last two years.

Planning is still the issue that is most contentious in our villages. I have been involved in negotiating Construction Method Statements for a couple of the large sites being started, which set the ground rules for things like routes of lorries, hours of work, noise pollution, keeping mud off the roads amongst other things. It is intended that the same rules should apply to all the big development sites, making them easier to manage. We have set strict routes for construction traffic which we will encourage EHDC to enforce.

Sadly we will have to live with the construction of these big developments for a couple of years. The developers must respect our community. With that in mind, liaison groups are also being set up with residents, Parish Councillors, and the Developers. Charles Church at Brislands Lane was the first of such groups for the last year or so. I feel it did help for people to be able to talk directly to the developers about problems being caused, although I would be the first to admit that they did take a while to understand and solve many of the problems.

EHDC has recently had an application for another large site, this one behind Blackberry Lane. I am in contact with EHDC Officers about this site to be sure I understand what is happening, and at the moment I am being told that the site contravenes policy on several issues. Last week the Parish Council Planning Committee voted unanimously to object on many policy grounds, and requested refusal.

There is also a new application on the site we call the SINC at 131 Winchester Road, this is after the most recent one was dismissed at a recent appeal, after EHDC refused it. I am told this new application also contravenes policy on several issues. As Chairman of the EHDC Planning Committee I have to go to the Planning Committee meetings without being predetermined in my approach to any of these applications. However as I intend to speak from the Ward Councillors' table, not as Chairman, should either of these applications come to EHDC Committee, I can say that I am totally against any site which does not conform with national and local planning policies, or would make our villages any more un-sustainable due to over-development.

The main issue apart from continued planning applications for next year is likely to be the ongoing Hampshire Devolution debates. As things are changing so fast with regards to the various devolution plans, I would prefer not to comment on any of the so-called deals that are being spoken about, because information is out of date so soon. Once there is a comprehensive Devolution deal on the table, actually agreed by the Councils and central Government, I will be happy to try and explain what is happening to the best of my ability.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for voting for me last May, and hope that I have been a useful Councillor to you. As ever if I can be of assistance please contact me.

Cllr Jackson – The recent meeting of EHDC saw agreement to adopt the Housing and Employment Allocations Plan, the new Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and the Local Planning Enforcement plan. It is still disappointing that the District Council chose not to exclude the Juniper site within the housing allocations, but we are left where we are and need to make the best of the current situation, particularly as information is starting to be circulated regarding a consultation for the next revision of said Plan.

The new Enforcement Plan takes a slightly more proactive approach to what we have seen in the past, and is described by the Portfolio holder and her Assistant as “having teeth”. This plan will be further developed over the coming year. Additional news on this front is a reorganisation within EHDC, which now has the enforcement team working under the same umbrella as Environmental Health, rather than reporting directly into Planning.

CIL took effect from 8th April and it was interesting to see the flurry of activity, not least of all from planning case officers, to try and get applications approved without the need to recalculate the necessary contributions.

This most recent planning meeting saw a rare success and a strike for common sense in the ward, with the refusal for change of use and building of houses in the industrial park on station approach. I have no doubt that there will be an appeal lodged, but in the meantime it is important to try and get this site developed and used for its original intended purpose. I propose talking with district Councillor Nick Drew, the Portfolio holder for employment and business development to see how we can encourage the use of this site for employment.

Further to our meeting with the case officer for the Northfield Stables application, I have heard that the applicant has requested an extended period to enable additional drainage reports to be commissioned. Susie Ralston has suggested that Cllr Pullen and I meet with her again once this information has been submitted.

Miller Homes still seem to be unable to follow the simple process of informing the Parish Councils of the proposed lorry movements. Whilst I am in the early stages of setting up the residents’ liaison group, I am not sure that this will resolve this particular issue. I am not happy that we just have to put up with what appears to be flagrant flouting of the conditions and intend to follow this up further.

As many may already be aware, the planning permission for the proposed development adjacent to the Hardware Store has been deemed “lapsed” due the applicant not completing the agreed pre-conditions in the required time. It is my understanding that they will now be required to tidy up the site – good things do eventually come to those that wait!!

The Devolution bid is still up in the air. Plans for a combined Solent authority have been put on hold due to the sudden decision of Hampshire County Council not to sign. Further developments are awaited.

9. MEDSTEAD AND FOUR MARKS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Councillor Pullen reported that the referendum on whether to adopt the Medstead & Four Marks Neighbourhood Plan would take place on 5th May 2016. Depending on the outcome, advertising would occur to publicise the Plan with drop in meetings and the printing of publicity material being made available.

10. MULCOCK CHARITY REPORT

The Mulcock Charity is a Charity was set up in the 1800s for the benefit of the poor at Christmas. Errol O'Farrell provided an update in his role as Secretary. He highlighted the difficulty in distributing funds in line with the original intention due to modern data protection legislation. At present, there is around £937 in the Charity plus unit trusts held with a value of around £2,713. However, only the interest generated from the unit trusts can be utilised.

There was a need to confirm the Trustees and at present, Cllr Penny, Mr E O'Farrell and the ex officio vicar of Medstead were the official trustees. Pending the expected appointment of the new incumbent minister, the current trustees would remain in position.

Mr O'Farrell asked if anyone is aware of a need that could be deemed acceptable please inform him as if appropriate recipients are not identified, the Trust may have to be surrendered. This has been considered before but there was a reluctance to lose the total fund which could benefit the community.

11. PARISH PLAN COMMITTEE REPORT

- a. Councillor Fenwick had prepared an update report for the meeting which was read out. 2015/16 has seen significant progress in delivering major projects identified within the Parish Plan.

Playground

After much delay by the equipment supplier, the young children's play area was completed in September 2015. A contribution of £2000 towards the cost has been made to the Parish Council. (Action 4.6)

Defibrillator

The committee is pleased to have supported the installation at the Village Hall of the defibrillator which is now operational.

Village Pond

After much debate and further consultation, the reinstatement of the Village Pond is under construction. The Parish Council have approved the associated landscaping and planting plan for the surrounding area. We are grateful for the support Mr Peter Charles who has provided manpower free of charge and the tireless efforts of various members of the community. (Action 5.6)

Footways

In the interests of pedestrian safety, the county council have constructed a footway along the length of Lymington Bottom Road thus completing another Parish Plan action. (Action 2.2.2) However, there are issues with the construction of northern stretch of the footway which are being addressed with HCC by the Parish Council and our County Councillor.

Future

In view of the expected increase in the number of new residents, the committee have decided to earmark the small balance of funds remaining from completed projects to support future communication activities in order to help with their integration into the community. (Action 1.2 & 1.6)

Finance

Summary Receipts & Payment Account Year Ended 31 March 2016

Previous Year			
£		£	£
3,688.38	<u>Bank Balance as at 31 March 2015</u>		4,127.38
839.00	Income (Grants from District Councillors)	800.00	
400.00	Expenditure (Defib. Cabinet installation & Contribution toward the costs of new Play Equipment)	2,378.92	
<u>4,127.38</u>	<u>Bank Balance as at 31 March 2016</u>		<u>2,548.46</u>

- b. **ELECTION OF THE PARISH PLAN COMMITTEE MEMBERS** - All existing members have agreed to stand again (Martin Gillie, Duncan Pate, Andrew Jackson, Roy Pullen, Hans Taylor and Peter Fenwick). Councillor Jackson proposed they be re-elected, which was seconded by Councillor Kercher and agreed by all.
- c. On behalf of the Parish, Cllr Fenwick thanked Cllr Roy Pullen for all the tireless work he has undertaken with regard to the Village Pond restoration. Thanks were also given to Mrs Lisa Stevenson for all the work and leadership she has undertaken on the project.

12. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Mr Beresford asked about the future of the Convent and the proposed wildflower meadow. Councillor Fenwick responded by outlining the proposed classroom renovations which are planned and the likelihood that the Alton Convent pre-school would be relocating to Medstead in the near future. It was further reported that the Parish Plan Committee had met with the developer regarding the wildflower meadow site and if accepted would be only be the second such site in Hampshire.

There were no further questions the meeting was closed at 8.45pm.