

MILFORD-ON-SEA PARISH COUNCIL

The Old Clock House ~ 22 High Street ~ Milford-on-Sea ~ Hampshire ~ SO41 0QD



Minutes of the

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

HELD AT ALL SAINTS CHURCH HALL

On Wednesday 29th May 2024 at 7.30pm

MEMBERS

Mr. Bob Bishop	Mrs. Christine Hopkins p	Mrs. Susan Whitlock p
Mr. Bernard Bennett p	Mr. Peter Jennions	Ms. Anne Cullen
Mrs. Patricia Banks p	Mr. Donald Darbshire p	Mrs. Susan Pepper
Mr. Kenneth Cameron p	Mr. David Royle p	Mr. Ian Bliss

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Graham Wells (Parish Clerk), District Cllr Hawkins & 12 members of the public.

Vice-Chair Cllr Bernie Bennett welcomed everyone and opened the meeting.

Each attending Cllr introduced themselves along with the Clerk.

1. APLOGIES: Cllr Jennions, Cllr Bishop, Cllr Cullen. District Cllr Reid. County Cllr Carpenter

2. REPORT BY THE CHAIR OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

Chair of the Parish Council, Cllr Anne Cullen had given her apologies and had prepared a report that Cllr Bennett read out.

The Chair reported that 2023/24 had been a very busy year with some new councillors along with the introduction of a more formal committee structure. Progress on rectifying the land behind the school had been slow due to adverse weather conditions, but it appeared as though some good progress was now being made. A great deal of the Parish Councils time had been spent on the Manor Road outline planning application and she thanked Milford Residents for Sustainable Development (MRSD) for all their assistance with opposing the application.

There had been several storms over the year resulting in some devastating damage to the coastline and beach huts. The huts were due to be removed shortly and the Parish Council continue to be engaged in both the Christchurch Bay and Lymington to Keyhaven projects.

She thanked several volunteer groups for their assistance over the last year, including the MVC, Gardening Club and the committee of the Christmas Lights.

She also thanked the parish office and grounds staff for all their work over the year as well as Mr. Charles Wilson for sponsoring the floral displays in the village.

Cllr Bennett invited Cllr Whitlock, the Chair of the Planning Committee, to come forward with a report.

3. REPORT BY THE CHAIR OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

Cllr Whitlock thanked both Cllr Banks and Cllr Hopkins for chairing several planning meetings during her absence in the last financial year. She also thanked Planning/Deputy Clerk, Niamh Morrison, for supporting her in what has been a very busy time and wished her a speedy recovery as she is currently off from work.

Cllr Whitlock gave an overview of the role of the Planning Committee and their ability to pass comments to the District Council and National Park Authority, with recommendations for approval or refusal. In 2023/24 alone, the Planning Committee had considered more than 100 building applications and over 50 tree works applications.

Cllr Whitlock reported that it was very disappointing that the District Councils Planning Committee did not agree with village residents regarding the high number of proposed properties to be built on the land north of Manor Road. She also thanked MRSD for their professionalism and enthusiasm in fighting this application along with District Cllrs Hawkins and Reid who voiced their individual concerns about the number of properties proposed.

She reported that it was hoped the land behind the school would be in a condition to be transferred to the Parish Council in the current financial year and reiterated that the Parish Council would not accept the land until it was safe.

Cllr Whitlock reported that no further correspondence had been received from Friends of Christchurch Priory in respect of the land behind the church. She also thanked the Gardening Club for keeping the Parish Councils portion of the land looking so wonderful.

Cllr Bennett invited Cllr Royle, the Chair of the Finance Committee, to give his report.

4. REPORT BY THE CHAIR OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Cllr Royle gave an outline of the Finance Committee, this included responsibility for both expenditure and capital budgets. Cllr Royle referred to the Annual Report that showed the last three years of parish budgets.

Cllr Royle explained that the increase in the precept levels for 2023/24 and 2024/25 were due to some services subsidised by NFDC now falling in total to the Parish Council, salary increases that were decided at a national level, inflationary pressures and keeping appropriate reserves.

He suggested that the proportion of a residents Council Tax given to the Parish Council is very low and offers good value for money considering all the services and amenities provided.

Cllr Bennett then invited reports from County & District Councillors.

5. REPORT FROM HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Unfortunately, Cllr Carpenter had sent her apologies. However, she had forwarded a report that Cllr Bennett read out. Cllr Carpenter reported that Nick Adams-King had been elected as the new leader of Hampshire County Council (HCC) and was fully aware of the parking issues at Keyhaven where a second consultation is due in the coming months. Highways have struggled with the number of potholes but as summer approaches it is hoped they can catch up. Saltgrass Lane is due for a top dressing in the next two weeks. County Cllr Carpenter reported that she had recently been elected as Vice-Chair of the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Authority.

6. REPORTS FROM NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

District Cllr Hawkins reported that he was also disappointed in the outcome of the outline planning application for the land north of Manor Road. He thanked Milford Parish Council for their tireless work and that he would continue to support residents in Milford and Hordle to the best of his ability.

7. ANNUAL REPORT

The Annual report had been circulated prior to the start of the meeting and Cllr Bennett referred to the projects completed over recent years and what responsibilities, the Parish Council holds.

8. QUESTIONS OR MATTERS RAISED BY THE ELECTORS OF THE PARISH

Q1. *Is the village hall owned by the Parish Council and is it in need of additional financial support?*

Cllr Whitlock reported that the Village Hall is run by a board of trustees independent of the Parish Council.

Q2. *What can be done about the encroachment of growth along the path in Keyhaven Road?*

The Clerk suggested this could be reported directly to HCC via their website and the individual would then receive a direct report from HCC indicating what action, if any, they intend to undertake.

Q3. *Can anything be done about vegetation overtaking a house at the end of Carrington Lane?*

Cllr Whitlock suggested that this house had recently been used for temporary accommodation and that she would investigate this matter further and respond directly to the resident.

Q4. *Why, in the Annual Report is it showing a new allocation for Youth and Community Support?*

The Clerk reported that some allocation within the finances had been grouped together making it easier to understand.

Q5. *When does a village officially become a town and is this connected to the population?*

The Clerk reported that it was his understanding that a town required both a market and a mayor and that a referendum would be required to change the village status, not an increase in the population.

Q6. *Why is the attendance at this meeting much lower than in previous years?*

The Chair suggested that in the last two years there have been more controversial subjects on the agenda, mainly the proposed planning application north of Manor Road and the land behind the school.

Q7. *Should the Parish Council publicise the public meeting more than it does?*

The Clerk reported that the meeting has always been publicised through the same media each year and added that the Parish Council's website was in need of upgrading and that this was being investigated by the assistant Clerk. He agreed that some additional avenues for public engagement would need to be considered.

Q8. *Should the Parish Council be on the "front foot" with regards to the land behind the Church?*

Cllr Whitlock reported that communication had been ongoing with Friends of Christchurch Priory (FoCP) even though this was often sporadic. She suggested that it was a requirement for them to get the best possible return from the land and that the land might be auctioned by FoCP if they felt this was appropriate. She suggested it would be difficult for the Parish Council to purchase the land at auction as the funds would be required instantly.

Q9. *As the Play Park along Hurst Road is very well used, should this be better maintained?*

The Clerk reported that a budget is set to maintain the park equipment and the Parish Council would continue to do this especially as purchasing new equipment is often outside the capital funds available to the Council.

Q10. *Did the play park at the swifts come with a capital sum and will the open space land also attract funds. If so what will the money be used on?*

The Clerk reported that the mitigation funds from the play park was in the region of £39k and that this money does not have any restrictions imposed upon it and can be used for any capital projects including the swifts play equipment.

The Clerk reported that mitigation funds to the value of approx. £150k will be awarded when, and if, the land is passed to the Parish Council. He also reported that the Parish Council does have aspirations for the land which coincided with many of the requests borne from public consultation several years ago. Clarification had been received from the previous head of planning at NFDC on exactly what the land can be used for and as a result it was confirmed that the land had to be used for sports and recreational purposes.

Cllr Banks reported that it was the responsibility of the District Council to ensure that the developer complied with the planning application for the site, which included the open space land.

Q11. *Does the Parish Council have a social media platform such as Facebook?*

The Clerk reported that it does have a Facebook account, but this is seldom used. However, this was due to be reviewed when the Assistant Clerk assesses the requirements for the upgrade of the Councils website.

Q12. *Was MOS2 (Manor Road) part of the local plan?*

Cllr Whitlock reported that this parcel of land had been identified by NFDC for development and was included in its local plan along with 17 other sites. She and other colleagues had attended several meetings when its fate was being decided by two government inspectors. Unfortunately, despite rigorous opposition for any development at the site, this was not agreed by the inspectors who stated that the land should accommodate a minimum of 110 properties.

An initial application was received for 192 properties, this was subsequently reduced to 170 and outline planning permission has been granted.

Q13. *What Community Infrastructure Levey (CIL) money will be awarded for MOS2 (SS7, north of Manor Road)?*

The Clerk reported that this was difficult to calculate as it depended on the number of affordable houses, which does not attract CIL funds, the eventual number and sizes of properties. However, the final amount is likely to be significant.

Q14. *Does the Parish Council ever apply for grants?*

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council does apply for grants. Success in the past includes upgrade to the Pleasure Grounds Footpaths from HCC, refurbishments of the Chris Walford Pavilion from Hampshire Football Association, additional planting at the Community Meadow from Tesco, several small allocations from District and County Councillors, Lengthsman Scheme from HCC.

Q15. *Is there any update on proposals for the Everton Junction?*

Cllr Whitlock reported that due to the expense of placing a roundabout at the junction this was unlikely to happen. However, Pennyfarthing Homes had agreed to fund traffic lights if permission was granted by HCC Highways.

Q16. *Can anything be done about speeding through the village?*

The Clerk reported that a speed indicator has been placed in several key locations but there was little else the Parish could do due to its limited powers on this subject.

Q17. *Is there any further update about parking at Saltgrass Lane in Keyhaven?*

Cllr Banks reported that a good response had been received following HCC's recent consultation and that due to these responses a further consultation is likely soon before a final decision is made.

The Chair of the meeting thanked everyone for attending and **CLOSED** the meeting at 8.45pm.

..... Chair

..... Date