

**MINUTES OF THE OTTERBOURNE PARISH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY HELD IN
THE BIANCHI ROOM, OTTERBOURNE VILLAGE HALL
MONDAY 11 MAY 2015 AT 7.30 PM**

Present: Cllrs W Jones (Chairman); M Acton (Vice-Chairman); R Kelly; R Stansbury; D Stirrup; T Rodford; S Brabham.

In attendance: District Cllr M Southgate (also advising as Chair of SOCCT); PCSO Michelle Wilkinson; 18 Parishioners; Guest Speakers: Mary Davis, Gail Allen, Elizabeth Foulds. Clerk.

1. **Apologies for absence:** County Cllr Phil Bailey (arriving late), Mrs K Mantell
2. **Welcome:** The Chairman, Cllr Will Jones, welcomed all to the meeting.
3. **Minutes of the 2014 Annual Assembly.**
These had been distributed to those attending. The Minutes had been approved for presentation to the Annual Assembly by Councillors at the May 2014 Parish Council meeting. Proposed at the Annual Assembly as an accurate record: Mrs M Davis; seconded Mrs V Standfield, approved and signed.
4. **Chairman's Report for 2014/2015**

Parish Council Matters

The Parish Council was made up of nine Councillors and there was one vacancy at present. Six Parish Council meetings were held during the year plus the Annual Village Assembly and on months between Council meetings Working Parties progressed items. Since the last Assembly, Wendy Doherty and Richard Reeves had both resigned due to changing work commitments and the Chairman thanked them both for their input. Cllr Sandra Brabham and Cllr Tracy Rodford had recently been co-opted and in the May elections all eight Councillors had been re-elected unopposed. The Chairman thanked his fellow Councillors for their support: Cllr Mary Acton in her role as Vice-Chair and for her work relating to the new WCC Local Plan, Cllr Russell Kelly for his role as Chair of Finance and Administration; Cllr Stirrup for his work on the Common, footpaths and the new website; Cllr Stansbury for his work with the Conservation Group; Cllr Barton-Bridson for his responsibility for the Lengthsman and Allotments and Cllrs Brabham and Rodford for their support as new members. The Clerk was thanked for her work and the help of the many volunteers in the village was acknowledged with appreciation to: Keith Smith for his ongoing work on airport matters, Ron Emery as Chair of the Allotments Association, Kathy Mantell for leading the Neighbourhood Watch team, Valerie Etteridge as Chair of the Conservation Group, Parishioners involved with SOCCT and the litter pickers who helped at the recreation ground. Appreciation was also given to County Cllr Phil Bailey and District Councillors Mike Southgate and Jan Warwick for their work in representing the village.

There had been two major events during the year: the Jalopy race and village event organized by the PCC which had been very successful and was being taken forward for a third year; the commemoration of WW1 which included a major refurbishment of the War Memorial and a very successful Faces of WW1 Exhibition held over the Remembrance Sunday weekend

5. **Report by Cllr Will Jones, Chair of Planning and Highways Committee**

Planning Matters

Planning Applications in 2014/15 consisted of the following: 11 alterations/extensions; 1 Conservatory, 1 Change of Use and 5 TPO applications. The application for Change of Use was still current and a recent Planning Committee meeting had been held to determine response. Cllr Acton was invited to speak on the WCC Local Plan. Part 1 had been adopted in March 2013, Part 2 was at consultation stage with closing date of 5 December. Part 2 focused on the details of the sites and those areas targeted for development. The submissions made by the Parish Council in Part 1 had been noted as supporting WCC's view that the MTRA3 designation was appropriate for Otterbourne. When Part 2 had been agreed it would first be submitted to a public hearing by the independent examiner before adoption by WCC. The changes in the Local Plan impacted on the ability to use the Village Design Statement as a supplementary planning document and it would need re-writing in due course. Consideration of a Neighbourhood Plan might also be required if the MTRA 3 status of Otterbourne was challenged again by developers. The Village Survey results had shown there was support for some small developments of affordable housing for purchase and such a project was being explored by WCC in conjunction with a developer to replace the Coles Mede garages. The developers proposed to undertake an exhibition prior to any planning application and villagers were encouraged to attend and comment.

Highway Matters

The speed of traffic through the village continued to be of great concern to villagers. The Parish Council had examined the possibility of repeat 30 mph roundels on the highway throughout the village, but this had not been agreed. It had added a new position for the shared speed restriction sign, which came to Otterbourne every five weeks, to Sparrowgrove. Reports of damage to bollards and the road surface were constantly made, but Parishioners were encouraged to also make reports via a simple form on the HCC website. The shared Parish Lengthsman continued to visit four times a year and requests to add items to the Worksheet should be directed to the Clerk. Lastly, a request was made for householders to attend to boundary hedges and other vegetation as may be overgrowing onto pavements and preventing full and safe use by others.

6. **Report of Recreation and Amenities Committee**

The Chairman invited Cllr Acton to report on the Parish bench replacement project and the anti-dog fouling measures. Six Parish benches funded from the previous and current financial year were on order. The benches agreed for replacement were: the Reservoir; next to bus stop by Reservoir; under tree on the Common; by Old Deeds on Main Road; on Cranbourne Drive open space at the Coles Mede end; the recreation ground near to the play park. Three of the benches carried commemorative plaques and the dedications would be retained on the new benches. In addition the bench on the Common would be dedicated to Michael Warne who had had been a founder member and Chair of Otterbourne Conservation Group, a Parish Councillor for many years and Chair of the Parish Council 2003-2007. The remainder of the benches would be replaced as finances allowed in future years. Dog fouling in the village continued to be a problem and the Parish Council was always seeking new measures to reduce this. The most recent campaign 'We're watching you' had been employed throughout the village as posters and bin stickers. The WCC dog warden had also been requested to make visits, but this was a very limited resource and in high demand.

Cllr Stirrup was invited to report on the Common, the new MUGA at the youth facilities and Open Spaces. He advised that last year the Common had been reduced from six to four cuts per year, but following complaint this had now been increased to nine cuts which enabled much greater use for recreation. The posts surrounding the common were in a constant programme of repair and replacement from damage by service vehicles using the narrow lanes and unauthorized parking. Noise complaints had been received about model car racers using the western area of Common and WCC had been asked to enforce Bylaws restricting use. The new MUGA construction had started well, but the lack of some final parts being received and the requirement for their delivery from overseas had held up completion. It was hoped the facility would soon be finished and the line markings down ready for an Opening Event later in June or July. The major item of discussion for Open Spaces had been in relation to the Greenacres 'triangle'. This piece of land off Greenacres Drive had now been properly transferred by the developers to WCC as should have occurred upon completion of the housing development. It was designated public open space and WCC was considering best option for use, along the lines of a natural space such as Winnall Moors, with some footpaths for walking.

7. Report by Cllr Russell Kelly, Chair of Finance and Administration Committee

Audited Accounts 2013/14

The accounts for 2013/14 as presented had been returned by the External Auditor with no recommendations made.

Unaudited Accounts 2014/15

The unaudited accounts for 2014/15 were presented. The main items of income were: the Precept £32,302 (41% of total income); WCC Open Spaces fund, grants and donations £37,996 (48% of total income); Sports Club rent and footpath ground rent £2,354 (3% of income); Allotment rents £796 (1% of income); Bank interest £430 (0% of income). The main items of expenditure were: Administration costs including the Clerk's salary, insurance, audit fees, subscriptions and office running expenses £14,713 (24% of expenditure); Recreation and Open Spaces £30,944 (50% of expenditure); Amenities including street furniture £5,697 (9% of expenditure); Highways including village signs, hedge and verge maintenance £2,396 (4% of expenditure); Churchyard maintenance and donations to the Parish magazine and War Memorial wreath £1,475 (2% of expenditure). The total expenditure for the year at £55,226 (ex VAT) had finished slightly over the budgeted sum of £54,203 but it had not been necessary to use Reserves. The major item of expenditure for the year had been the Youth Facilities Project which was 57% complete. The cost of the Project had been funded primarily through grants and donations, and thanks were recorded to the Veolia Environmental Trust for a grant of £19,203 and Compton & Shawford Parish Council which transferred £15,000 of its WCC Open Spaces account to Otterbourne.

Spending plans for 2015/2016 and Reserves

The Precept had been set at £33,122 which represented a 0% increase on last year. Assessment of Overheads and achieving best value were of primary concern and a major tender for the parish insurance and the cost of dog bin emptying had been among items evaluated last year. The budget for 2015/16 included taking forward the Parish bench project to replace a further three benches. Reserves had been held at £36,500, one third of which was a set aside as an emergency fund, and the remainder a sinking fund to contribute towards replacement of some of the more expensive parish assets. Suggestions for expenditure for the 2016/17 budget were welcome as soon as possible, but by October 2016 latest.

Administrative Matters

The Committee had attended to administrative matters to ensure procedures complied with regulations. To this end, review of the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, the insurance of assets, risk assessment, the internal audit procedures and banking arrangements had taken place. The Clerk, as the Responsible Financial Officer, was thanked for her continued good work and help with administrative matters.

8. Police Report, Questions from the floor, County and District Matters

Police Report:

Annual overview of the incidents reported to the Police from 11 May 2014: 12 reports of anti-social behavior/noise nuisance; 3 burglary other than a dwelling; 4 dwelling burglaries; 15 criminal damage reports; 9 driving complaints; 12 road traffic collisions; 20 thefts; 3 thefts from a vehicle; 1 theft of a pedal cycle. Residents were encouraged to continue reporting any suspicious behavior on the 101 number. Change in Organization: Hampshire Constabulary had undergone an organizational restructure and had implemented borderless policing. Although Otterbroune was still within the Winchester District and covered by the team at Alresford, supervised by Sgt Andy Fisher, urgent assistance would be provided by the nearest unit to the incident. There were two Police Constables within the Winchester Rural Neighbourhood Policing Team based at Alresford; PC Paul McShea and PC Jon Worsdell, plus 5 PCSO's who had become the local beat officers and were the main point of contact for Parishioners. There were also two Country Watch Officers based at Alresford, PC Lynn Owen and PCSO Mel Rowell and a Special Constable, John Wilding. Questions arising: a Parishioner requested an update on Elderfield and was advised that the funding arrangements had been improved which enabled service users to remain for up to 12 months. A new 'Food up Front' initiative had been started in conjunction with a grant from HCC which engaged those interested in food production and this was open to volunteers from the community. A Parishioner requested an update on the deployment of a speed camera van in the village and was advised that this had been deployed on rotation and had been effective. A Parishioner raised a complaint about the number of cyclists not using the cycle path up Otterbourne Hill and was advised that this was not something that could be legally enforced.

Questions from Parishioners

The main questions arising related to the footpath through Oakwood Copse which had recently been fenced off by the new landowner of the adjacent land. It was brought to the attention of the Parish Council that the Countryside Access Board was not now correct and should be amended. Cllr Jones agreed, but advised it had been important to first establish where a new major route could be formed through the Copse. There was concern raised about some of the trees being cut back. Mike Southgate as Chair of SOCCT advised that the landowner had decided to fence off his land which he was legally allowed to do; the trees on his land carried TPO's, but those on SOCCT land, which had been cut back to initially form a path alongside the old one, did not. The landowner had been helpful in creating this new path, but it had not been successful as the gradient in some places had been too steep. It was acknowledged that the introduction of barbed wire, fencing off the land had not been helpful. In terms of taking forward the situation, a new path, termed the 'middle' path, had been selected as best for improvement, although this too had problems with spanning a drainage channel. The improvement to a standard for use by pushchairs and wheelchairs would be expensive; the landowner had offered to help, but more funding was required and was being discussed with the Parish Council. A Parishioner asked about the Section 52 agreement on the land advising it had been a condition of the new Sparrowgrove development for Southern Water that residents had access to the recreation ground and Itchen footpaths. It seemed that this had not been discharged and/or transferred over past sales and effectively lost. Cllr Jones advised that whilst

enquiries were still ongoing, it could take several years and, in the absence of clarity, a new major path would be formed to reinstate a usable route to the recreation ground for residents. The Parishioner requested that to avoid such occurrence in the future, Section 52's and equivalent agreements should be noted in Parish Plans. A Parishioner advised that if a S52 had not been discharged, the Local Authority would have information on it. A Parishioner pointed out that residents should be vigilant about any potential planning application from the Landowner advising that a previous application on the land had been refused at Appeal by the Inspector.

9. **Developing Community Support Groups**

The Parish Council had been asked if it would promote or support voluntary initiatives in the village and had invited three guest speakers to the meeting. Feedback from the Village Survey had shown that the village demographic was changing with an increasing number of older residents and those living alone. 76.5% of respondents to the survey had considered a Good Neighbours Scheme beneficial with 20% saying they may volunteer to help.

Twyford Patient Participation Group – presented by Mary Davis

The PPG was made up of members representing the villages in the catchment area served by Twyford Practice. It was initiated to give an opportunity for input into how the Practice's services were planned, developed and evaluated and to develop a good working relationship with the staff and GPs. The work of the Group had now started to look at education on health matters and had held several open meetings on Dementia and Stroke. It also had started a Breath Easy Group which helped patients to manage their condition at home and also an Exercise Scheme. Voluntary drivers from the villages of Compton and Shawford helped with 20 current patients from Otterbourne who required transport to the surgery, a dental practice or hospital and it was hoped that the Good Neighbours Scheme might help in bringing forward volunteers from Otterbourne village.

Hampshire Village Agents Scheme – presented by Gail Allen, Project Co-ordinator, Age Concern

The Scheme had started in 2011 as a joint initiative between HCC and Age Concern Hampshire and it had grown to 48 in number across the County. Both Twyford and Colden Common currently had two Village Agent volunteers. Agents acted as a signpost for elderly people, advising them on how to access or use local services and thereby helping them to remain as independent as possible. Full support and training was offered to volunteers including promotional material to help publicize the Scheme and to identify those older people in the community who may be in need. Volunteers were DBS and reference checked.

Hampshire Good Neighbours Support Service – presented by Elizabeth Foulds.

The service helped to support small voluntary groups to set up and be sustainable by providing things such as start-up grants, and costs for Public Liability cover and DBS checks. It was supported by the Church of England Dioceses of Winchester and funded by HCC Adult Services and the NHS. The two main Support Service roles involved finding co-ordinators and developing the campaign. It was noted that the demographics both nationally and locally were changing with far greater numbers of older people needing support to aid their independence. The Good Neighbours Group was a recent volunteer scheme in response to this. It was aimed at responding to simple personal requests from local people, such as befriending, help with shopping, help with transport and sitting for Carers. As part of the group, volunteers were supported in order to help them in turn to carry out their service.

The Chairman thanked all three guest speakers. Councillors and the Clerk were thanked by Mrs Valerie Standfield for their work in the village.

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.