

## **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL ASSEMBLY HELD ON 11 MAY 2016 AT 7PM IN THE READING ROOM**

**Present:** Chairman: Cllr P Boyles, Cllr M Lennard, Cllr E Pelham, Cllr E Jack, Cllr L Taylor, Cllr Kevin Hawkins, Cllr Sir R Packer, Wilts Cllr B Wayman.

Public Present: 6

### **1. Appointment of Chairman**

The usual protocol is that, if present, the chair of the Parish Council should chair the Annual Assembly. Patrick Boyles was proposed by Cllr ML and seconded by Cllr SirRP.

### **2. Welcome and Apologies for Absence**

Welcome to our Annual Parish Assembly - which we are legally required to hold each year. However, despite it being a statutory duty, it does provide a chance for organisations other than the Parish Council to highlight their activities and allow for questions to be raised on these activities and other matters of interest within the community.

Apologies were accepted from: Mr M Eek and Mrs S Butcher. Just to clarify matters - the Annual Assembly is not a Parish Council meeting – that follows on later, and of course everyone is welcome to attend and observe the proceedings, rather this meeting is intended to be a more informal and interactive occasion – with questions, answers and observations during the event. So, despite the agenda showing a Public Forum aspect, we can take interventions at any time during this part of the evening.

**3. The Minutes of the Annual Assembly held on 13 May 2015** Cllr ML proposed, Cllr SirRP seconded and they were agreed and signed – these have been uploaded to the Parish Council website, displayed on our notice boards and copies are available in the Reading Room tonight.

### **4. ANNUAL REPORTS**

#### **The Chairman**

Good evening everyone.

The members have all contributed to the operation of the Parish Council this year – with six meetings and a lot of activity behind the scenes. Rather than go over these in detail I would like to draw attention to the matter of the Precept.

As you are no doubt aware the Parish Council activities are funded by raising its money, known as the Precept, through an addition to the Council Tax collected on our behalf by Wiltshire Council.

Some of this money is spent on the costs of running the PC, some in making grants to support village organisation such as The Reading Room, The Claybush Playground Management Committee, Village Voice etc. Some is contributed back to Wiltshire Council in respect of required village contributions of 10% towards minor traffic improvements,

extra 30mph signage, white lining and so on. Some is spent on maintenance of the Fricker's Paddock Playground and grass cutting of community land and some is contributed in the region of 10% to Area Board Grants made to village organisations such as Chilmark Cricket Club, Chilmark Horticultural Society etc.

The members of the PC have budgeted to hold the precept level for some years now - but we have been made aware that Wiltshire Council will probably require some 25% rather than a 10% contribution towards Area Board Grants and Community Area Transport Group Costs. It is also suggested that we should increase our reserves against unexpected costs and towards a sinking fund for replacement of Fricker's Paddock Playground equipment now that we are unlikely to have access to what was known as R2 funds arising from housing developments.

It would be helpful to members of the PC for some feedback during the forthcoming year as to whether the community would be supportive of additional precept funding raised to ensure that we are fully able to support the village activities as we have been able to do in the past. Not necessarily right now – but you know who we are and where we live – so please let us know your views.

My thanks as usual to all members for giving of their time and effort in support of the community – and once again to Jenny MacDougall, our Parish Clerk for her guidance and assistance in running our meetings and for preparation of the accounts - along with Mr. Jeremy Oswell who has kindly acted as our internal auditor for the last few years.

I would be happy to take any questions or observations at this time.

Sir Peter Jennings pointed out that the crossroads in the village is becoming increasingly dangerous despite the reduction in the lorries. A number of vehicles are parked there and it is an accident waiting to happen. The Chair replied that CATG have approved the placement of a white line in front of the bus stop to deter parking but it has not yet been applied and Cllr ML with remind them. The white line will extend to the corner but not around it.

The PC was asked to approach Wiltshire Council for improved signage for Kents Hill and Hops Close leading to Barn Hill. This is very important especially for the emergency services. The Chairman agreed to place it on the agenda for the July meeting. The PC had asked the residents to apply and the PC will need to make a representation in support of this application.

### **The Reading Room Report from Sarah Miller on behalf of the Reading Room Committee**

It's been a busy year for the Reading Room with a mixture of fund-raising events, including the Table Top Sale and annual Christmas Bazaar, and a variety of entertainments aimed to appeal to as many villagers as possible such as the Supper & Quiz, and more recently, a Russian-style cabaret evening and a popular wine-tasting. In the coming months, we will be welcoming a well known stand-up comedian, plus a sea shanty group

from the Channel Islands whilst this Saturday we are celebrating the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday with a family Tea Party.

Following our Treasurer's concerns a year ago that the internal redecoration in December 2014 had left us with an income-over-expenditure deficit, we managed to end our financial year with a small surplus of just over £150. This was helped by the success of fund-raising events but also in part thanks to generous donations by a number of villagers.

Essential maintenance expenditure this year will include the upgrading of the Electricity fusebox to comply with current regulations, plus the external redecoration of the Reading Room's sash windows. The total cost of these two jobs will be in the region of £900. In addition, we have recently extended the Patio at the rear of the building to provide a larger and safer area for people to use in the summertime.

Looking further ahead, and mindful of the agreement with the Parish Council that the Reading Room should be available as a village Emergency centre, the committee is investigating the provision of emergency lighting and equipment.

Given the increase in insurance tax this year, we were particularly grateful to the Parish Council for the £500 grant awarded to us in July to help cover this annual expense. In addition, we're pleased to have the continued support of the Parish Council for its meetings throughout the year, along with regular bookings from groups such as Social Stitchers and the Art Group. It's also been good to see the Reading Room in use for private family events and the feedback from 'users' following the redecoration has been universally positive.

All in all, the management committee is very appreciative of the Parish Council's continued support in helping it ensure the Reading Room is available for use by residents and village organisations alike. Thank you.

The Chairman commented that the Reading Room Cttee had done a superb job organising all the events and complimented the re-decoration. It was suggested that an emergency lighting beside the defibrillator might be required as it could be needed if there was an incident.

### **The Playground Committee Report from Mary Boyles**

Sally, the Chair of the Playground Committee has been away so is unable to be here tonight so it comes to me as Secretary to give the report.

It has been a good year for us. We had our usual Pimms stall and Lolly Game at the Village Show and last year added Splat the Rat for the first time, which was very popular possibly with the adults more than the children.

In October we had new bark delivered to the Playground. Unfortunately, as the playground is in the school playing field, it had to be dropped outside in the car parking area. We would like to thank Elizabeth and Henry Pelham for loaning us a smaller digger machine (technical term) with a driver who carried the bark to the playground. The Committee, plus husbands, partners and children then spread the bark across the

playground which now looks much cleaner and is obviously safer for the children. We were very lucky to get an Area Board grant for almost half the cost of the bark and are grateful to the Parish Council for adding the 10% that is now needed when applying for Area Grants.

Our Village Quiz in April this year was very well supported and although nobody got 100% (some of the questions were very difficult) it was enjoyed by a large contingent of villagers.

We are still trying to build up funds as we know that one or more of our larger pieces of equipment will need replacing in the not too distant future.

We would like to thank the Parish Council for their support during the year and for the grant that covered our insurance and the inspection, that by law, we have to have annually.

### **The Cricket Club Report**

Ntr

### **Village Voice Report from Sir Peter Jennings**

We would like to thank the Parish Council for their support and encouragement in helping to get this project underway. The primary objectives for the redesign of the old Church & Village newsletter initially were:

- To free the Parochial Church Council of the financial burden of printing the newsletter at Hinton Hall, which it was finding increasingly more difficult due to dwindling funds.
- Change the nature of the content so that it more fully served the needs of all the Parish members' and to be more inclusive to all.
- Upgrade the layout and design to make it modern and appealing to readers.

Later, in the second phase the objectives were to:

- Make the newsletter look more professional by improving the printing and paper quality and the readability and legibility of the graphics.
- Reduce the workload on our volunteers by getting the newsletter collated and stapled automatically by the printers.
- Rename the newsletter to 'The Village Voice' to recognise the upgrade with the aim of appealing to a wider readership.

All of the above objectives have been achieved. From the response of many of the villagers the new newsletter has been a great success and no negative feedback has been received. The content has greater scope, villagers are using the classified advertising and local suppliers have booked regular space.

We are actively encouraging those on the distribution list to sign up for an emailed version to reduce print costs, although initially the take up has been slow. Several copies are donated, as in the case of an obituary, where the relatives receive a limited number of complementary copies. The newsletter is also available in pdf form on the Church &

Village website for readers outside the Parish not in receipt of the printed edition:

([www.churchandvillage.co.uk](http://www.churchandvillage.co.uk))

Currently the outgoings to the end of our financial year, at 31 August 2016, are forecast to be £1385; the vast majority of this goes on printing. Advertising will raise approximately £810 leaving the balance funded by the grant from the Parish Council and gifts of some £355, leaving us with a slight surplus/contingency to cover cash-flow etc.

For the next financial year we are plan a slight increase in advertising prices. This should raise revenue at £865, but we have allowed for any increase in printing costs. Therefore we forecast out costs for next year should be £1225, leaving a shortfall of £360 which needs to be filled from fundraising and donations.

The Chairman thanked the team for a superb magazine and commended the electronic version. Would the idea of increased advertising be acceptable? Sarah Miller explained there is a fine balance between including all the articles and advertising.

### **The Chilmark Horticultural Society**

Ntr

### **Wilts County Cllr Bridget Wayman's Report**

As ever, Wiltshire Council is having to prioritise spending in these difficult financial times. The Council's 3 priorities continue to be:

Protect the vulnerable – elderly, children and disabled people who require our care

Boost the economy – ensuring that we have good value jobs and a skilled workforce

Support local communities to be as self-reliant as possible

The likely changes in the future for local government financing means that is probable that the Council will receive no central grant from government and will have to be self-sufficient on council tax and business rates. This will be a challenge.

For the forthcoming year, the Wiltshire Council Budget is roughly

Total (Revenue budget)-	£318m
Adult Social Care	£86m
+ Care Commissioning & Housing Services	5.6m
Public Health	19.2m
Childrens Services	48.0m
And Childrens Disabilities	47.0m
Economy & Planning	3.6m
Highways	17.0m
Transport	17.1m
(Car Parking income = £6.04m)	
Waste (32.8m) + Environmental Services	36.87m
Libraries Heritage & Arts	2.9m

Capital Budget includes £20m for structural maintenance of highways, £3.5m on bridges, 0.5m on flood prevention work, £19.3m on council housing build programme and £12m on refurbishing the council housing stock (from HRA)

There will be a 5% increase in the charge for Garden waste collection from £40 to £42 per annum per bin.

There will be no increases in car parking charges.

### Older People

Wiltshire's Better Care Plan – underpins care and support in the county – developed by the council and NHS Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). It has already been held up as one of the 5 top care plans in the country and fast-tracked for sign off by government ministers. The plan lays out how the council and the CCG will change how health and care services are provided, with the overriding focus being on ensuring people are cared for as close to home as possible, with home always the first option.

In a relatively short time the plan has had a positive impact. Over the past year the number of people delayed in hospital has reduced significantly, with no delayed transfers of care at all in certain weeks. Whereas national figures show an increase in the average for all delays, there has been a substantial decrease in Wiltshire.

### Total Better Care Plan budget for 2016/17 is almost £33m.

Performance targets include reducing permanent admissions to nursing and residential care, continuing to reduce delayed transfers of care and ensuring high satisfaction (at least 85%) with the services people receive. Another target is to ensure that there are fewer hospital admissions from nursing and care homes – this will be by local targets set for each GP locality area.

The previously called Good Neighbour Scheme has been called to a halt and money devolved to area boards to appoint an Older People's Champion. In the SWWAB area there was funding to cover the cost of 2 Good Neighbours as it was originally a scheme to cover the remoter rural areas, such as ours. Most charities and agencies are based in the larger towns and the Good Neighbours were a useful service in contacting isolated older people and signposting them to services. The Area Board made representations to obtain funding to continue with the 2 Good Neighbours/Older People's Champions as we think they have provided, and we want them to continue to provide, a good service to our residents. Unfortunately, we seem to have lost our appeal. A contract with Age UK has been awarded to provide a similar service and we will watch closely whether we actually receive the service in our area.

Nadder Centre for Health & Wellbeing – there have been construction delays, but it is anticipated that the Nadder Centre will open towards the end of June/beginning of July. Besides the new sports centre and fitness suite, yoga & other exercise rooms, there are ample available multi-purpose meeting spaces of varying sizes, a bigger library, large atrium and café space for socialising, play area, start-up business space and the old Nadder Hall has been re-vamped and can be hired for plays, recitals and as a dance studio. I do hope that people from all over the area will make use of it because it is not just for

Tisbury residents! Anyone who may want to meet a council officer can also book an appointment there to save the difficulties of travelling into Salisbury.

I have heard the Nadder Centre described as a white elephant and Wiltshire Council's vanity project. I completely disagree. The Nadder Centre will replace old facilities which would have needed increasing maintenance with modern facilities to meet today's needs within easy reach of the local communities, helping the sustainability of the communities. People are living longer and want to stay healthy for longer and it is the Council's policy to help them to do so as it should reduce more expensive care (which is already a huge proportion of the budget). I hope that number of people using the facilities will increase significantly and that the local GP surgeries will be referring people to the Centre for gentle and recuperative exercise.

I also hope that local young people will be able to make good use of the Nadder Centre in the future and I know that Jaki Farrell has some very good ideas germinating. Jaki, who was our Wiltshire Youth Worker, is now running a charity called Seeds4Success based in Mere, but providing youth work in Wilton, Tisbury & Mere, has been given area board funding for 2 years to enable her to work full-time for the charity and to increase the amount of youth work she and her team provide. I am sure any financial support from the parish council would be very gratefully received. Jaki provides an admirable service including collecting young people from their villages to attend the youth sessions and return them home afterwards. If you know of any young people who might like to join her sessions, please contact Jaki or let me know.

I have always been a keen supporter of the work Jaki has done; she has a great rapport with young people and is a passionate advocate of their cause.

Getting young people qualified and ready for employment is a difficult task in this day and age, and Jaki will work with any and every child and give them volunteering opportunities as well as getting them involved with Healthy Living programmes and the National Citizenship Scheme, sports and arts opportunities.

Money is always in short supply, and although Jaki is very resourceful and adept at finding funding opportunities, any and every contribution from parish councils is welcome.

I am sure you are all aware of the Public Transport Review consultation.

The Council has made a significant effort to try to reach as many people as possible and there have been about 11,000 responses to the consultation.

Wiltshire Council is probably the only authority in the UK that is not cutting any bus services this year (16/17). The survey is all about finding out the impact of any withdrawal of a service – for example, we need to know if someone needs the bus on a Sunday to get to work, or, perhaps they might say I could do what I need to do on a Saturday and not use the bus on a Sunday. We don't know what the impacts would be, hence the survey. We do know about usage of buses from the bus companies, but we need to know impacts to help make intelligent decisions. The Cabinet member wants to make bus services stable

for a number of years – 4 years at least, with a protected budget, so that people can then make decisions, such as, I can enroll on a college course because I know I can get the bus for the next 4 years, or, I take that job because that bus service will be there for 4 years.

We need to know what services are essential, what are needed and what could be done without.

I am completely aware that young people in rural areas are most disadvantaged when it comes to transport. Many of them cannot afford cars and need the rural bus services for employment and social activities. They are transported to and from school in buses, but often cannot access after school activities if there is no other means of transport. That is why the area board has supported the youth charity to buy two minibuses, but we must ensure they can access college courses and jobs.

Councillors, be they parish or Wiltshire, can only represent your views if you keep us informed. If anyone wants to tell me anything, I want to hear your views. I particularly want to hear your views on public transport – not we must save all the buses, but specifically which buses you use, when and why and I can feed that into the council machinery.

As a member of the Environment Select Committee, the results of the bus consultation will be reported to us and be very carefully scrutinized. Indeed, we already have a Task Group that is looking into the issue, so be assured that councillors will be looking at this matter in detail.

Over the last few years I have been a member of the Wiltshire & Swindon Fire & Rescue Service and I am now a member of the new Dorset & Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service, the two services having merged to make savings. It is not just Wiltshire Council that is affected by cuts, but the fire and police services as well. The fire service has some particular issues that still need to be resolved. All the rural stations are manned by retained firefighters, but as the number of fires reduces, thank goodness, they are not called out so often, but being retained on call but not receiving any call-outs reduces their income. The CFO is committed to looking at ways to encourage people to become retained firefighters with a guaranteed income. The fire service will also carry out many more fire safety surveys, particularly for older and vulnerable people to ensure that when they remain in their homes they can do so safely. This was a service that was provided far more in Dorset than in Wiltshire, but will be rolled out across our County; one example of the benefit of the merger in improving services.

The new highways maintenance contract with Ringway has just commenced. After the poor performance by Balfour Beatty, their contract was terminated in June last year, with them leaving at the end of March, and I hope we will see an improved service with the parish steward scheme returning, amongst other things. The contract is more expensive than the Balfour Beatty contract, but the council has not reduced the structural maintenance highways budget which is in addition to the general maintenance. The capital investment was set at £20m per year for 6 years and we are now entering year 3

and the area board has received the list of proposed works for the year. It will take the full 6 years, I think, to see any marked improvement but we are getting there.

The B3089 is to be resurfaced for 827m in Chilmark as part of the capital, major maintenance programme and the road running through Teffont. I also mentioned that Wessex Internet is about to be one of the approved providers in Wiltshire and thus people with a broadband speed of less than 2mbps will be able to use a grant of £300 towards an approved provider installation. This could be either for an individual installation when a house is in line of sight of a Wessex Internet pole, or a group of people can pool their grant and use it to have a pole erected to serve their properties (all subject to survey and feasibility, of course).

#### **4. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR 2015/16**

The Clerk explained in detail the breakdown of the accounts for the FY 2015-16 as per attached summary. As at 31 March 2016 the total expenditure was £7,501.32 and the total receipts £15,329.40. After the final Bank Reconciliation this leaves a balance of £7,828.08. There were no unrepresented cheques.

Of note, last year was the cleaning of the Millennium Cross for £110.00. Maintenance of the play area cost £414 and grass cutting at Fricker's Paddock cost £1,240. £100 was made as a grant in respect of the work done by the Leisure Credit Scheme as a grant to the Seeds for Success charity that Jaki Farrel is running. £300 was paid to Jordan Parson's for strimming footpaths. Grants to various parish bodies came to a total of £1,250.

Grant Thornton are the National Auditors and the accounts will be audited on 17 June after an internal audit. In accordance with Electoral Rights the accounts will be available to the public for inspection as publicised on the noticeboard from 3 June – 14 July. They will also be available to view on the website in accordance with the Code of Transparency.

Cllr ML proposed the accounts for adoption and Sir RP seconded and all agreed. A letter of appreciation will be sent to Mr Gerry Oswell for kindly carrying out all the recent internal audits.

**Date:**

**Chairman**