

HAWKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Hawkley Parish Council Hawkley Parish Hall, Wednesday 11th April 2018 at 7.00 p.m.

Draft

PRESENT: David Caukill (Chairman); Jo Humphrey; Jilly Caesar; Susan Sinclair; Geoff Brighton; Robin Crittenden; Simon Dixon.

Sue Harwood (Clerk) was in attendance, also Russell Oppenheimer, Hampshire County Councillor and Keith Budden, District Councillor.

Apologies were noted from Charlie Butcher.

There were 20 residents present.

1. Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone present and thanked them for coming.

2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 20th April 2016

These were confirmed and signed as a true record.

3. Chairman's Annual Report

The Chairman thanked members of the planning committee namely Geoff Brighton Jilly Caesar and Jo Humphrey for the time and effort they put into responding to planning applications. Half Acre continues to be a problem and while an application to make permanent their temporary permission was successfully rebuffed, the site may unfortunately, despite ongoing efforts of the parish council, become an authorised site in the SDNPA Local Plan.

Keith Budden will unfortunately be lost as the representative District Councillor with the just-announced Boundary Commission report on forthcoming changes, with Hawkley moving to become part of the 'Ropley Hawkley and the Hangers' ward. The Chairman thanked Keith for his excellent service.

With regard to broadband, there are grounds for optimism as BT has announced that the Hawkley exchange will be upgraded in the next 12 months. The parish council will continue to monitor the situation and will lobby for the Empshott exchange to be upgraded too.

Thanks to HCC for responding to parish council pleas and repairing the Snailing Lane BOAT. Its condition will be monitored.

The parish council funded an additional verge cutting in November. This is considered to have been a great success and the plan is to do so again this year.

Project ideas for the lengthsman are always sought.

The Upper Green Chestnut tree has now been removed and it is hoped that its replacement can be planted in the autumn.

The childrens' play area is now a parish council responsibility and work is ongoing to ensure that it remains in good and safe condition.

Thank you to Charlie Knowles and Dom Palmer for mowing Upper and Lower Green.

The parish council made donations this year to the Rosemary Foundation, Homestart Butser and Hawkley PCC, finances remain in good health.

Many thanks to all parish councillors and to the clerk for their hard work throughout the year.

4. Report from District Councillor

EHDC's finances remain in strong health not least due to investment in commercial property which has brought strong returns and allowed a freezing of council tax following last year's cut. Front line services have been maintained while back office functions have been rationalised. There have been no redundancies. Keith was involved with negotiations

with Southwestern Railway which has resulted in an improved timetable, in particular with more trains stopping in Liss.

5. Report from County Councillor

Russell introduced himself to those residents who had not yet met him. Subjects he then discussed included the new 7 year highways contract with Skanska, encouraging residents to report potholes and other defects online for prompt repair, his support of proposed traffic calming, revision of the SD Local Plan, increasing support at a national level for a review of BOAT legislation, the 3% rise in council tax primarily in order to fund social care while preserving vital community services. Strong reserves permit ongoing capital investment in roads and schools for example. Finally he highlighted the rapidly ageing population of Hampshire and the challenges this presents.

6. Open Forum

Councillor Jo Humphrey gave a slide presentation on the progress to date of the Traffic Working Party. A small number of issues arose from the floor: Q: Why have no measures been proposed for Lower Green (A: the working party had proposed “SLOW” road markings inbound from Upper Green; the monitoring survey did not suggest to the team that any more measure are necessary but nothing is yet decided); Q: Maintenance of any measures will also need to be budgeted for (A: Noted); Q: Can any measures be achieved more cheaply by using alternative contractors (A: No, HCC contractors must be used); Q: These measures will have a strong visual impact in particular on Pockocks Lane which may detract from the rural beauty of the village (A: Agreed); Q: A 30 mph limit is the best measure (A: No chance of HCC tabling a traffic regulation order (TRO) in any case would have no real impact on speeds because the vast majority of traffic travel at or less than 30 mph. In any case there is little hope of enforcement. County Councillor Russell Oppenheimer supported this stance); Q: Can the parish pay for a traffic regulation order (A: No, nor would it be the best use of public funds; Q: This is a beautiful rural area and a special place, please don’t ruin it.

The Chairman thanked Jo and her small team for the immense amount of work they have put in over the last few months. The presentation will be placed on the website and a note placed in the parish magazine encouraging as many residents as possible to share their views. Meanwhile, the Chairman noted with pleasure that the very raising of awareness of this issue appears to have slowed much traffic.

The ongoing erosion of the smaller areas of land on Upper Green by carelessly parked cars and passing traffic was noted with regret.

There were no more questions and the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.30pm.

_____ Chairman

_____ Date