

HAMBLEDON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE 2017 ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

held on Thursday 27 April in the Village Hall

Present: John Anderson (chairman of the Parish Council, in the chair); Parish Councillors Mary Grove, Mike Parry, Stewart Payne and Philip Underwood; Parish Clerk Jane Woolley; Waverley Borough Councillor Nicholas Holder; and over 60 villagers

Apologies for absence were received from Parish Councillors Karen Jones and Paul Pattinson, Waverley Borough Councillor Anna James and Surrey County Councillor Victoria Young.

The Chairman welcomed all those present, all of whom in turn welcomed back Cllr. Stewart Payne following major surgery from which he was still recovering. The meeting also sent its best wishes to Jan Kilsby who had recently suffered serious injuries in a road accident.

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

These were circulated, taken as read and signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

2. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising that were not covered by other items on the agenda.

3. POLICE REPORT

The Chairman welcome Karen Phillips, Hambledon's PCSO, and John Francis who outlined the new regimes as these affected local policing and Neighbourhood Watch. Recently there had been a spate of thefts from gardens and sheds, including several in and around Hambledon; but a recent arrest had led to the finding of a lot of stolen property.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Parish Council had commented on 23 **planning applications** submitted in 2016 together with eight applications for Certificates of Lawfulness for permitted development. All were for changes to existing properties, ranging from minor alterations to major extensions and one complete rebuild.

Following the submission by the English Rural Housing Association (ERHA) of its planning application for **Orchard Farm**, the Parish Council had facilitated a public meeting to help it ensure, insofar as was possible, that its response reflected the views, concerns and aspirations of all its parishioners. A draft had been discussed at a Parish Council meeting on 4 October and, in the light of several comments, amended prior to its submission to Waverley. The response had made it clear that the Parish Council was aware of the weight of objections and concerns that had been raised by many residents; and it had highlighted a number of specific issues – and in particular drainage – that it felt needed to be addressed. A subsequent detailed report from ERHA's drainage consultants had been submitted in the new year. This had suggested that additional information to be provided might enable Surrey County Council (the authority responsible for drainage) to remove its earlier objections. If this were the case, the Parish Council might be prepared to do likewise on this issue.

A second planning application to build 1,800 houses (which could rise to 3,600) at **Dunsfold Park** had been approved by Waverley but remained contested by all Parishes in the area and by Protect Our Waverley (POW), founded in 2016 specifically to fight the application. Following its call-in by the Secretary of State, a Public Inquiry would open in July. Hambledon and ten other Parish Councils had joined together as the Joint Parishes and they and POW were engaging a QC, a

traffic consultant and a planning consultant to make their case at the Inquiry. It was hoped that most of the costs would be met by POW.

The Inspector heading the Examination in Public of Part 1 of the **Waverley Local Plan** also had reservations about Dunsfold Park. He had published his list of matters and issues for examination: as these picked up all the points made by the Parish Council when it commented on the Plan last October it would not be making further written submissions or requesting an appearance at the Examination in Public.

Very few people had volunteered to get involved in the production of a new **Hambledon Parish Plan**. However, the original 2003 publication, with regularly up-dated inserts, continued to provide a good check-list of action required (and taken) to preserve, develop and/or improve the village.

Infrastructure. Surrey Highways budget had been drastically cut, which could have serious implications for the maintenance of the village's roads and drains. If it also led to a reduction or even a non-payment of SCC's grant for hedge and ditch maintenance, the Parish Council had agreed to meet these costs from its own reserves in 2017-18.

Public transport. Thanks largely to Stewart Payne's good work Hambledon still had its three-times-a-week bus service to Godalming and Guildford; but it was questionable whether the SCC grant that underpinned this would be renewed when it came up for renewal in August.

Superfast broadband. This was now available for residents living at the Hydestile end of the village. The next attempt being made was to get BT to provide the facility, again on a self-financing basis, for the residents of Vann, Upper Vann and Roundals Lanes.

Finance. Waverley continued to suffer from central government funding cuts and was progressively reducing its grants to Parish Councils. This had largely accounted for the five per cent in the Hambledon Parish precept for 2017-18; but it had been only one of two significant rises in the past 15 years.

Village events. Another highly successful fête held last June had made a profit of over £5,000, nearly all of which had been divided between the Football and Cricket Clubs. On the same day the Queen's Bench had been unveiled outside the Village Shop and an appreciative response had been received from Buckingham Palace. Hambledon had also served as a location for filming a forthcoming TV version of *Howard's End*.

Village groups and organisations. The Parish Council had continued its financial support for a number of these. Overall their activities were many and various: between them they offered something for just about everyone, which was what made Hambledon so special. A very big thank you was due to all of them.

Village of the Year 2017. The Parish Council had entered Hambledon for this nationwide event whose judging criteria included the look of the village; its history and heritage; and village activities that brought residents together. An eventual shortlist of 76 villages would be grouped into four regions for subsequent filming and the regional winners would go through to a grand finale with the opportunity of winning a substantial cash prize.

In conclusion the Chairman thanked his fellow Councillors and the Clerk for their hard work throughout the past year. He also expressed his appreciation of the contributions made by so many villagers to so many aspects of Hambledon life.

5. FINANCE

The audited accounts for 2015-16 were circulated to all present. There were no comments.

6. REPRESENTATIVES' REPORTS

For the **Football Club** Matt Kiley reported that the First Team's promotion hopes had been premature; they had only managed to finish 5th in their league. The Reserves were runners-up in their league, having lost out in their cup final. The A team had won the Tri Village Cup and the Vets had ended up mid-table. Carlo Davico had resigned as First Team Manager; Martyn Grove was in the running to win the Groundsman of the Year competition, to be judged in two weeks' time.

Hambleton still retained a record number of players whilst other villages struggled: it continued to punch above its weight for a club of its size.

Andy Hinde spoke in his capacity as Chairman of the **Cricket Club**. The 1st XI had come fourth in its league, the Juniors remained in great shape and the finances showed a small surplus. He paid tribute to Arthur Blackman, now Vice-Chairman, and Tony Strudwick as powers behind the throne and to Bruce Sleep who had retired after 12 years as Honorary Secretary. He also announced that, as a tribute to the hard work of Club members and villagers at the very grass roots level, Hambleton Juniors had been invited by Surrey County Cricket Club to act as mascots at the International Cricket Club Champion's Trophy, to be played at Lord's on 18 June.

John Tidmarsh spoke about the **Village Hall's** refurbishment: to date nearly £6k had been spent on exterior painting and on redecorating the committee room and kitchen. He would shortly be standing down as Chairman of the Hall Committee and he thanked his team for their hard work and for their fund-raising ideas.

David Jenkins stressed how much **St Peter's Church** owed to Catherine McBride and how lucky Hambleton was still to have its own Associate Minister living in the village. The Church continued its close association with the Nursery School and St Dominic's. During the year it had held various special services including those to mark the Queen's 90th birthday and the centenary of the Battle of the Somme. The Vestry had been refurbished and the Church was now contributing even more to the village by remaining open during the day, particularly to provide a sanctuary.

Tim Parker reminded everyone that **Hambleton Village Shop** was about to celebrate its 25th anniversary as a community venture. Progress made during the year had been substantial and both sales and net profits had increased. Refurbishment work had been completed and the new loo, commissioned by the Hambleton Village Trust and partly grant-funded, would soon be finished. Placements had been given to 15 youngsters as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Awards volunteering experience and work experience had been provided for two pupils from St Dominic's. Tim particularly thanked the 70 or so volunteers and the (very few) paid staff, all of whom donated so many hours of work to the shop, and the Members of the Society who underpinned the whole enterprise.

Mary Burrows provided a resumé of the work of the **Hambleton Village Trust** whose current projects were the provision of the new loo for the Village Shop and a complete refurbishment of Pendle Cottage following the departure of Joan Hardy (now happily living in a retirement home). She thanked individual villagers who had donated equipment and materials to help with the refurbishment. Once this was finished the cottage would be let at an affordable rent to a local resident.

Julie Llewelyn reported that the **Hambleton Community Fund** endowment fund now stood at £171k; that grants totalling £20k had so far been made, most recently of £5k to help fund the construction of the new loo at the Village Shop; and that £3k was available for further grants. Her aim was to grow the fund to £200k and ideas for achieving this would be welcomed. She also sought help in running the Fund.

Julie Steele spoke about the **Heritage Society** which continued to maintain the village albums. The Village Scrapbook had been digitised and would shortly be available on the village web site. The Society would be defending its proposal for formal recognition of one of the footpaths connecting Hambleton Hurst with Coleman's Copse at a forthcoming public inquiry. The guest speaker at the AGM in March had been Peter Cross on Hambleton's links, via Bryony Hill, with M&Ms department store in Moscow, which prompted her to wonder what other famous connections Hambleton might be able to boast.

John Hindley reported on the recent uplift in the quality and size of the **Parish Magazine**, the older issues of which were now being digitised. Advertising revenue was on the increase thanks to Derek Miller and Mary Parker had taken over as manager of the distribution team. He paid tribute to her predecessor, Pat Williams and thanked all regular columnists, other contributors and distributors.

Andy Falk spoke about the **Almshouses**, now renamed Russett and Bramley Cottages with the appropriate tree planted in each of their gardens. Following their refurbishment some landscaping remained to be done and plaques would be commissioned to commemorate their refurbishment/extension.

In his capacity as a School Governor, Andy also spoke on behalf of **St Dominic's** whose 90 pupils were matched by an equal number of staff. The School retained its Good Ofsted status. It

remained keen to maintain good contacts with the village and this was being helped by occasional articles in the Parish Magazine and news items on the village website. Its next fête, together with a music festival, would be on 1 July.

Nicola Collett, head teacher, reported that the **Nursery School** had had a good year and remained profitable. All windows had now been replaced, which had significantly reduced heating bills, and both internal and external maintenance programmes were on track. Of the 64 children currently enrolled, 11 were from Hambledon. The 18 staff included three fully qualified teachers and some with special educational needs qualifications. The focus was now on the forthcoming Ofsted inspection and the importance of maintaining the two previous Outstanding accreditations. Nicola herself was in her 17th year as head teacher and she spoke warmly of the great team, including the Trustees, who supported her.

Anthea Edwards said that, after four years, she was stepping down from **Hambletons**. It continued to attract children from adjacent villages as well as from Hambledon. Funds had been sufficient to purchase some new toys and a cash donation had contributed towards heating costs.

Norman Gravestock reported that **Oakhurst Cottage** was in better condition than ever due to the substantial structural repairs that had recently been funded by the NT Three Counties Association. He warmly thanked them for their support and for their promise of a further grant which would enable much-needed work to be carried out on the barn.

Derek Miller said that the **Ramblers** continued to flourish. The “long” walks were perhaps a shade less long – but the pub lunches remained as important as ever and both the long and the short walks remained equally – and important – sociable occasions.

Philip Underwood stated that he and Sue Blackman would be standing down from organising the bi-annual **Village Fete and ball** respectively and he made a plea for new young talent to come forward to run these events (next date: 23 June 2018). The names of several people who might be willing to take over had been mentioned and both he and Sue would be happy to help them in an advisory capacity.

Finally Mary Grove reported progress in developing an **informal play area** on land above the Village Pond, adjacent to the footpath running along the side of the Village Shop. Steven Dean, as owner, had consented to use of the land as such; Tim Coleman would give a day’s work to create it; a Parishioner had offered to meet the costs; and the Parish Council would insure it. The aim was to have it in operation by the end of May.

7. QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

On behalf of the Trustees of the Cricket Green, Arthur Blackman asked what action could be taken to prevent the cars of those visiting the Village Shop from encroaching on the grass verge alongside the Cricket Green. The Chairman undertook to look into the matter.

8. HAMBLEDON VILLAGE WEBSITE

Jon Petersen, webmaster, gave an excellent presentation on the content of the website, how to contribute to it and make it work for you, and how to keep it up-to-date. He illustrated its various sections and how to access and add to these. It was free to use, had over 200 active subscribers and was linked to over 200 Facebook followers. During the past month 11,809 unique – and probably worldwide – visitors had accessed 72,416 items, with the village graveyard survey being the most visited. The website calendar included all forthcoming village events and an increasing amount of historical information was being digitised and added to the site.

9. VILLAGE CLEAN-UP AND BARBEQUE

The Chairman invited all present to take part in these events, on Saturday 29 April. He then thanked them for their attendance and brought the formal proceedings to a close.