HAMBLEDON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE 2011 ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY held on Friday 7 April in the Village Hall

Present: John Anderson (chairman of the Parish Council, in the chair); Parish Councillors

Derek Miller, Paul Pattinson, Stewart Payne, Philip Underwood and Ron Vickery; Parish Clerk Jane Woolley; Waverley Borough Councillors Elizabeth

Cable and Adam Taylor-Smith; PC David Boxall; and about 70 villagers

Apologies: Arthur and Sue Blackman

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. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Highlights of the report (reproduced in the May issue of the Parish Magazine and on the village website) were as follows:

Parish precept. For the third year running this had been capped.

<u>Planning and related topics</u>. 26 applications had been reviewed, of which Waverley had approved 18. One, the Nutbourne Brickworks, remained pending. Given the importance of this site to the village, the Parish Council had arranged for the application to be discussed at several public meetings; it had also negotiated a restrictive covenant with the developers which had enabled it to support the proposed development. Input to Waverley's Local Development Plan had continued; work would shortly start on a Village Design Statement; and, following the positive outcome of a further housing needs survey, the Parish Council was working with Waverley and other appropriate organisations to try and identify a potential site for another small scheme of affordable housing in the village.

Roads and maintenance. Measures had been taken to counter the effect on the village of further severe weather. "Unsuitable for HGVs" signs had at last been installed at Lane End and the Hydestile Crossroads. Potholes remained a problem but, to alleviate the problem of blocked ditches, the Parish Council and SCC were providing grants to Tim Coleman to enable him to purchase a small digger. Southern Water had completed the scheme connecting parts of the village to mains drainage. Tim Coleman had continued his good work and the Village Clean-Up on Saturday provided an opportunity for everyone to help keep Hambledon litter-free.

<u>In conclusion</u> the Chairman expressed his appreciation of the support he received from his fellow Councillors and the Clerk. He paid particular tribute to Ron Vickery and Derek Miller who were retiring after 35 and 15 years' services respectively; and he commended all villagers for their efforts and interest – it was their help and enthusiasm that created and maintained Hambledon's vibrant and sustainable community.

4. <u>FINANCE</u>

The audited accounts for 2009-10 were circulated to all present. There were no comments.

5. REPRESENTATIVES' REPORTS

<u>Cricket Club</u>. Mic Coleman reported that 1st XI had come fourth and the 2nd XI third in their respective local leagues. The Veterans XI and the Hambledon Colts had both had good seasons, with between 80 and 90 children participating in the latter. The under-9s had won all their matches; the under-11s and under-13s had also done well. Managers and coaches, and particularly the colts' coaches, were thanked for their input.

<u>Football Club</u>. Matt Kiley, the new Club Secretary, spoke about the application to the Surrey FA for funding from the Football Foundation for the new pavilion and thanked Martyn Grove for his work on the ground. The 1st XI was within sight of coming top of its division of the Guildford and Woking Alliance and was also playing in the quarter final of the league cup. The 2nd XI had been promoted to the third division but was struggling to stay there. The veterans (over 35s) continued to enjoy their games.

<u>Village Hall</u>. John Tidmarsh referred to the bookings by the various exercise and keep-fit groups but otherwise was only able to report than that the Hall had had a poor year.

<u>St Peter's Church</u>. The Rev. Simon Taylor stated that his arrival had been immediately preceded by the departure of Stephanie Couvela, Associate Minister. The Church had had a good year but was facing significant challenges, about which he would be speaking later.

<u>Parish Magazine</u>. John Hindley spoke on behalf of himself and his co-editor, Philip Ryland. He thanked all the regular contributors, the advertisers, Pat Williams and her team of distributors and Ray Williams for managing the finances. Some additional features had been introduced, together with more photographs. Responses to a questionnaire indicated that readers liked the overall format and content; and some suggestions for new articles were being followed up.

Oakhurst Cottage. Ion Campbell thanked Norman Gravestock in his absence for all his work. The management committee, which met twice a year, had been so disheartened by the National Trust's lack of reaction to the deteriorating state of the cottage that a letter had been sent to the Trust's Chairman. This had elicited a somewhat anodyne response but a new NT team had attended the last committee meeting and some remedial work appeared to be in the pipeline. Bookings were once again being handled from the Winkworth Arboretum.

<u>Police</u>. PC Dave Boxall reported that there had been nine reported crimes in the village during the past year. He and PC Tracey Taylor continued to hold regular meetings at the Village Shop and were considering organising a local panel meeting. He thanked the Neighbourhood Watch team which was a contributory factor in keeping crime so low in Hambledon and which would in future be co-ordinated by Tracey and himself.

Hambledon Village Trust. Mary Burrows said that the Trust had had a quite year. It had continued to support the Village Shop and Joan Hardy in Pendle Cottage and to host and insure the village web site. It had, however, passed on responsibility for the Hambledon Community Fund. She then summarised the Trust's activities since its inception in 2003. It had secured the future of the Village Shop and undertaken (and secured funding for) two major refurbishments. It had launched the web site which in 2009 had received 100,000 visits. It had establishing the Community Fund which stood at £37,000 after the first year; a a year later the Fund had risen to over £50,000 and was open for grant applications; and the first grant had now been made.

<u>Hambledon Village Website</u>. Camilla Edmiston thanked members of the team who managed the site. It had received a record number of hits during the pre-Christmas snow, when Stewart Payne's daily reports had proved invaluable, and it was the news pages that remained the most visited. The site had been corrupted in December but back-up arrangements had ensured that it was up and running again in 24 hours, though it had taken three months to repair the damage.

<u>Hambledon Village Shop</u>. Amanda Wright thanked Philip Underwood and the volunteers for their input. A number of ideas resulting from last summer's open morning had been implemented; a new coffee machine had been purchased; a new range of ice creams had

been sourced; and a change of suppliers meant that magazines as well as newspapers would shortly be on sale. Input from the Plunkett Foundation had resulted in a new shop layout and participation in liaison meetings for the exchange of ideas with other local shops.

<u>Hambledon Almshouses</u>. Andy Falk congratulated Tim Coleman on the laying of the roadside hedge, An attempt to broaden the qualifications of applicants had proved unsuccessful: they were still restricted to Hambledon residents. A successful application had been made to the Hambledon Community Fund, as a result of which architects had been commissioned and a planning application for extensions and improvements had been submitted to Waverley.

<u>Hambledon Heritage Society</u>. Julie Steele thanked all those who, in conjunction with the recent AGM, had shared their knowledge and memories of the Village School. Using photographs from the village scrapbook, the Society was inputting to the "then and now" series in the Parish Magazine and she encouraged villagers to borrow the scrapbook and accompanying albums. Audrey Monk's booklet "A Pugin Monument Rediscovered", recounting her researches into the monument commissioned by the family of the Rev. Bullock in St Peter's Church, had just been published and the Society was organising the first in a series of guided heritage walks around the village on 26 June.

Hambledon Community Fund. Kath Evans reported that she and Julie Llewellyn had taken on responsibility for the Fund which, as at 31 March, stood at £65,301.09, representing a year-on-year increase of between £11,000 and £12,000. £1,355 was available for grant-making. The Fund continued to be managed by the Community Foundation for Surrey which was currently getting 4.8 per cent pa interest on its investments. The Fund was designing a new page for the village web site, up-dating its PR leaflet, running a logo competition via the Parish Magazine and organising a fund-raising event (on 12 June). The first grant had been made (to the Hambledon Almshouses) and discussions were on-going with several other potential candidates for funding.

<u>Wednesday Afternoon Group</u>. Jan Kilsby gave a resumé of the past year's activities whose hallmark was conviviality: talks, a bring and buy sale, teas, a Xmas party and a New Year lunch. She particularly thanked those who had offered hospitality in their own homes and paid tribute to her fellow organisers, Julie Atkin and Joyce Dougans.

<u>Hambletots</u>. Jo Ingham spoke about the group's craft, musical and other activities but more support was needed and the group had had a poor year.

<u>Hambledon Ramblers</u>. Derek Miller reported that, although the long walks were getting shorter, the quality and popularity of the pub lunches had in no way diminished. The short walks also continued to be well supported.

<u>Hambledon Nursery School</u>. Monica Fisher reported that the school continued to thrive. Because of the age of the premises, maintenance remained a challenge; the most recent work had been a renovation of the store. There was a long waiting list, but preference for available places was given to children from Hambledon.

St Dominic's School

In the absence of Christina Conroy, Monica Fisher, as a member of the Governing Body, reported that the school had undergone a significant improvement during the past two years. Its latest OFSTED report had graded it outstanding in respect of care and support; but, as attainment within special needs schools is measured against the same criteria as are applied to all Surrey schools, the overall grading had been satisfactory. Cuts in local authority funding, which only extends to educational provision, were bound to have an effect – which gave added importance to the forthcoming School fund-raising fete on 16 July.

6. OUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

There were none.

7. THE FUTURE OF ST PETER'S CHURCH

The Rev. Simon Taylor introduced the topic by posing the question "Your church: what do you want?" and asked people briefly to discuss this amongst themselves. Were they looking for continuity? There had been a church in Hambledon for 1,000 years: was it still needed? If so, should it be a family church? A family church needed many services; many services needed many participants. What sort of services – a freer or even a multi-denominational church; or more emphasis on the Book of Common Prayer?

What about the future of the church itself? Could the building be put to additional uses?

A local church needed local leadership to provide the focus for a local vision. A local vicar was a person with whom a village could identify and who had the capacity to build congregations, both spiritual and secular. Without a local vicar it would be difficult for St Peter's to survive. But how to justify – and meet – the costs? The total bill for maintaining the church fabric plus a vicar in the Hambledon rectory would be about £95,000 pa. Currently around 27 people were giving approximately £70,000 pa to the church – an amazing contribution but leaving a significant shortfall which the diocese could not meet.

Therefore the future of a local church ministry in Hambledon was no longer secure. Was the present generation of villagers prepared to countenance the loss of a church presence which preceding generations had nurtured and which had been at the heart of village life for more than 10 centuries? Or did it want to retain an iconic village landmark, by supporting the development of St Peter's church and an accompanying ministry which matched modern day needs and interests and which would endure for the benefit of tomorrow's community?

Villagers were encouraged to take copies of leaflets on the newly-established Ministry Support Trust and, on behalf of all those present, the Chairman thanked Simon for his stimulating and thought-provoking presentation.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and declared the meting closed at 21.30