

MINUTES OF THE 128TH ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD

16 MARCH 2023

Councillors Present: Cllr Paul Carnell, Cllr Helen Corben, Cllr Ian Corben, Cllr Cynthia Garton, Cllr Cliff Morris (Chair), Cllr Ron Nichols, Cllr Derek Pretty, Cllr John Shepherd, Cllr Jane Welsh

In attendance:

Brett Athow – Operations Manager
Carolyn Badman – Office Manager
Sue Slattery – Marketing Officer
Members of the public

PM22 Apologies: Cllr Tonia Craig, Cllr Leigh Hadaway, Cllr John Jupe, Cllr Lucy Jurd, Nigel Patterson - KCC

PM23 Retiring Town Council Chairman's Report

Cllr Cliff Morris welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the housekeeping rules. Cllr Morris noted this is the first time he has been asked to give a retirement speech as he comes to the end of his year as Chair of Council. It is a year he has enjoyed tremendously. He started with the knowledge of Platinum Jubilee Celebrations with a picnic in the park and tree planting to provide a lasting reminder. It was a year of extreme weather similarly to 1976. If I had known at the start that I would be on the 3rd Prime Minister, I wouldn't have believed it.

Later in the year I was lucky enough to be invited to celebrate the 100th year for the allotments and to be able to watch people do something I can't, I felt very humbled.

And then there was the death of the Queen, at the start of the year the Clerk sent me the notice about what happens in the event of a death of a Royal, we discussed this was routine, just refreshed every year. I'm sure neither of us thought this was the year it would be used. I therefore had the honour of representing Hedge End at the various events to mark her passing.

In November we held the Christmas Lights switch on an event that goes all too quickly.

There was then the opportunity to join with the conservation volunteers, council staff and local children to plant 300 Trees on Dowds Farm as part of the Queens Green Canopy. Cllr Morris thanked Cllrs and staff for organising the event. The children liked the idea that they are planting something for the future but very much in the present.

The year has gone in a whirl, at the start of the year I was told it would go quickly. Cllr Morris thanked the other town Councillors for their incredible work year-round. Thank you to the staff for all the effort that goes on in the background how much organisation takes place every single day without whom the council couldn't function. And finally, thanks were given for giving the opportunity to be Chair and thank everyone for all that they have done this year.

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PM24 Town Council Financial Report

Cllr Derek Pretty, Chair of Policy & Resources Committee. Every year we are required to present audited accounts for the council. These accounts are for the year 2020/21 prepared by the Town Clerk. During that year of Covid, income took a substantial hit and with the support of a grant from Eastleigh Borough Council we were able to end the year with a balanced account.

The Council is responsible for managing a number of services including sports, parks, play areas and buildings. Cllr Pretty extended his thanks to all the staff for the work they do. As I sure many will agree there are not many complaints on the standards of provision. The preparation of recreation areas and playing fields require a lot of care and can be quite costly but in the current economic circumstances these are always carefully considered.

This year we achieved a long time held condition to remove the bund around the community hall and the soil was used to infill the redundant pond at Beattie Rise. It looks so much better now and has been landscaped with soil and fencing. Trees from the EBC tree nursery were also planted.

The opening of Deer Park has bought forward the long-held ambition of additional sports fields. The intention is for Hedge End to be responsible for the upkeep and bookings.

Several years ago we began a programme of maintenance for buildings to ensure they are kept in good order. This continues to be ongoing and works scheduled and prioritised.

In conclusion our Town Clerk and the team, look to continue to provide local facilities in a more efficient manner and although we are committing ourselves to fewer projects.

The audited accounts are available on the website. If you have any questions, please direct them to the Clerk.

PM25 HEWEB Local Area Committee Chairs 2022/23 Report

Cllr Cynthia Garton as Chair of the Hedge End, West End and Botley (HEWEB) Local Area Committee (LAC) opened with thanks for the opportunity to share some of the successes of the past year.

Itchen Valley Country Park

Following planning permission being granted and a grant of £3.3m funding, EBC have now appointed contractors to deliver a range of improvements.

Berrywood Fields & Deer Park School

Hedge End Rangers were able to play their first games on the three grass community football pitches that that been provided by the Council. These pitches,

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together with the Artificial Turf Pitch, are now being used by Hedge End Rangers as a home ground, and as the grass pitches establish fully, other community clubs will be able to benefit.

Public Arts Projects

Two public art projects have recently been completed. The West End Heritage Markers and the Hedge End Green Routes Wayfinder projects have both been well received by residents.

Community Project Funding

As a committee, we have continued to support local organisations in the HEWEB area with over £3,700 of grant funding awarded. In addition, the committee has approved the allocation of £11,000 for the coming year towards additional health walks and community fitness classes for older people and people with long term health conditions across the local area.

Partnership Working

Many of the successes that have been achieved in Hedge End, West End and Botley have been achieved through close working with key partners in the area, particularly Hedge End Town Council, West End Parish Council and Botley Parish Council. We are grateful to everyone involved with these organisations for their hard work and dedication.

The Local Area Committee enables local decisions to be made at a local level. However, we could not carry out our work without the help of our partners, staff, local organisations and volunteers – you have the gratitude of the Committee and we look forward to continuing to work with you this coming year. I would also like to thank the Local Area Manager, Kitty Budden, and Assistant Local Area Manager, Siobhan Strand, for the help and support they give to the Chair, Committee, Town and Parish Councils, local groups, organisations and residents.

PM26 Reports from Local Organisations

Jane Welsh spoke on behalf of the Village Hall Management Committee. This is an organisation independent of the Council and has been running for approximately 60 years. Lots for hirers are accommodated in the hall which is well used and during Covid times we were stuck for funding. This year's AGM has seen an increase in the balance of £4,000 which is heartening. Thanks were passed to all the hirers for their continued support.

Paul Rattan spoke on behalf of the Carnival Committee as some will know the committee was close to disbanding after 100 years of the committee and following promotion on social media there has been a core group of new members joining. It's been difficult learning process. If anyone wants to help, become a member then the committee meets monthly. The Carnival this year will be the first week of July with a scavenger hunt, a barn dance, and then the parade and carnival on the Saturday.

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The Sunday will host a dog show and Locks Heath Classic Cars. Both days will have craft fairs and local market stalls. It would be great to see people there.

PM27 Presentations of ‘Serving the Community’ Awards

Cllr Cliff Morris read the citation for the winning nominee outlining their achievements and the reasons for the nominations of the award. The winner of the award Rose Spink was presented with a certificate and a gift card of their choice.

Rose spoke that it was an absolute pleasure to build it back up, they come in with smiling faces and we hope that they have something that they look forward to every week. I have twelve wonderful volunteers without which we could not function.

The two runner ups, Sara Nater and Kathy Moore were invited to receive certificates.

PM28 Public Questions

None recorded.

Cllr Cliff Morris brought the meeting to a close and thanked everyone for attending.

There being no further business to transact, the Chair closed the meeting at 19.50 hours.