MINUTES OF THE 131st ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD

18 MARCH 2026

Councillors Present: Cllr Paul Carnell, Cllr Helen Corben, Cllr Tonia Craig, Cllr Keith House, Cllr John Jupe, Cllr Dave Kinloch, Cllr Ron Nichols, Cllr Jim Paine, Cllr John Shepherd

In attendance:
Three Members of the public

PM43 Apologies: Cllr Maggie Allingham, Cllr Ian Corben, Cllr Cynthia Garton, Cllr Rupert Kyrle, Cllr Jim Mitchell, Cllr Cliff Morris, Cllr Derek Pretty

PM44 Retiring Town Council Chairman's Report
Cllr Ron Nichols welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the housekeeping rules.

Cllr Nichols reported that he has had a wonderful year at the Council meeting lots of people and attending events. He was really pleased to have the opportunity to officially open two new play parks and to see the children playing on them. Cllr Nichols also noted that he has also had a lot of complaints too, including the usual suspects of potholes.

PM45 Town Council Financial Report
Cllr John Shepherd on behalf of Cllr Derek Pretty, Chair of Policy & Resources Committee gave the following update.

Every year the Council are required to prepare and present the audited accounts of the council; they represent the financial activities of the previous year. The Accounts are prepared by accountants and then independently audited by external auditors.

In the financial year 24/25 we reviewed valuations of our buildings ensuring that insurance cover was sufficient in the changing financial climate.

In addition to our normal work, we had several projects during the year including re-roofing the 2000 Centre, agreeing the Fleet strategy and Legionella Policy, Improved the drainage from the 2000 Centre outdoor areas, purchased a replacement vehicle from developer contributions and demolished an unsafe building.

Forward looking projects include replacing two play areas at Nelsons Gardens and Locke Road, Converting the flat above the Old School House into residential accommodation and taking responsibility for several more areas of green space.

PM46 HEWEB Local Area Committee Chairs 2023/24 Report
Cllr Keith House on behalf of Cllr Cynthia Garton, Chair of the Hedge End, West End and Botley (HEWEB) Local Area Committee (LAC) shared some of the successes over the past year.

Grant Funding

With Local Government reform approaching, priority has been placed on allocating developer contributions to strengthen local infrastructure. In 2025/26, the Committee approved £734,129 of developer contributions to support a wide range of community enhancements including Development of a new footpath linking Norman Rodaway and the Kings Copse Avenue development. Installation of new LED equipment at The Berry Theatre. Footpath extensions linking Hedge End Station to the Bubb Lane cycleway

Itchen Valley Country Park

Itchen Valley Country Park has seen another highly successful year, with exceptional performance in visitor numbers and income generation.

Public Art Vision for HEWEB

A collaborative vision for public art has been developed with contributions from Borough, Town, and Parish Councils, as well as local residents. This has created a clear framework for future public art commissioning.

Community & Youth Grants

In December 25 we awarded 10 applicants a total of £4,494 to deliver local projects in the community. We awarded 10 applicants a total of £5,800 to deliver youth projects in HEWEB.

Utilita Bowl

The multi-agency partnership with the Utilita Bowl has now completed its third year. The seasonal review meetings have addressed several of the previous concerns.

Telegraph Woods

Phase One of the Telegraph Woods improvement project began in Spring 2025.

Partnership Working

The Local Area Committee continues to ensure that decisions are made with—and for—the local community. Our achievements are made possible through the valued contributions of partners, volunteers, local organisations, Town and Parish Councils, and Council staff.

We extend our sincere thanks to all who support the work of the Committee, and we look forward to building on these successes in the coming year.

PM47 Reports from Local Organisations
There were no local organisation reports.

PM488 Presentations of 'Serving the Community' Awards
Cllr Ron Nichols read the citations for the nominees outlining their achievements and the reasons for the nominations of the award.

Cllr Ron Nichols invited the winner to be presented with the award.

The winner of Serving the Community thanked everyone for their support noting that to date over £47,000 had been raised for charity and that she would want to give the gift voucher to charity also.

PM49 Public Questions

A member of the public asked about the waste collecting behind Barclays Bank and the shops on Lower Northam Road, having contacted 5 of the local councillors only one had replied. Cllr Paine noted that he was the one that has replied and could not offer any further information than given in his email as it is private land.

The Town Clerk reported that each individual section of the land is in private ownership and the owners have been difficult to contact as they are overseas companies.

Cllr House reported that EBC had tried to establish ownership to try and resolve some of the issues associated with the site. EBC can only enforce through environmental health once the situation has escalated to become a health hazard.

A member of the public asked about Councillor attendance, the Clerk outlined the legislative position. Cllr Shepherd noted that attendance is affected by having other commitments including work, illness, attendance at Borough meetings.

There being no further business to transact, the Chair closed the meeting at 19.56 hours.