

Newtown Parish council

Hampshire

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Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on Monday 23rd May 2022 at 7:30pm

Present: Chair – Cllr Tony Webb
Councillors - Sean Curry, Jo Exelby, Tom Reseigh and Bob Ward
18 residents

In Attendance: Clerk, Rebecca Cloke

1. Welcome

Cllr Webb welcomed those present and acknowledged that due to the ongoing COVID situation the 2020 assembly had been cancelled and the 2021 had needed to be held virtually so was very pleased that the 2022 assembly was able to be held in person. Cllr Webb welcomed Cllr Carr, the newest Borough Councillor, B&D and PCSO Joshua Revett and thanked them for attending the Parish Assembly.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Izett, Julian Roskill, John Roskill

3. Approval of minutes

The minutes of the last parish assembly on 27th April 2021 were approved by the meeting, proposed by Cllr Curry, seconded by Cllr Reseigh and were signed by the Chairman.

4. Matters arising from the 2021 Parish Assembly

Cllr Webb proposed to comment on matters arising from the prior assembly as he gave his Chairman's report.

Report from the PCSO Joshua Revett

PCSO Revett introduced himself to the assembly and explained the area he covered. PCSO reported some of the crimes that had been reported within the Parish recently including speeding on the B4640, catalytic converter theft at the Swan pub and lead theft from the church roof.

PCSO Revett mentioned an increase in farm equipment theft, particularly in rural areas and urged residents to report anything they considered suspicious.

The Chair thanked PCSO Revett for his time.

5. Chairman's report

Cllr Webb stated he hoped all residents had received the, hand delivered, annual newsletter and stated he was going to cover some of the key areas as his Chair's report.

Cllr Webb briefed on the work that the Parish Council had been doing in light of the seven new house applications within the Parish within existing property gardens and the wider implication these had on the area. He stated that the Parish Council had been liaising with other local parishes and had emailed MP Kit Malthouse but had received no response.

Cllr Webb stated that recently the Secretary of State had upheld Bloor Homes appeal paving the way for the outline for the housing development of half of the site at Sandleford, and 1000 houses would be built. Cllr Webb stated there were six weeks to consider any response but that Newtown Parish Council had responded in support of the "Say No" campaign due to a concern over increased traffic.

Cllr Webb briefed that recently Newtown Parish Council had contacted Hampshire County Council, on behalf of residents, to enquire about whether residents could install electrical charging points near to their properties. Hampshire County Council has approved this at residents expense.

Cllr Webb further briefed that the bus shelter at Jonathan Hill had been removed as it was in a state of disrepair and was cost prohibitive to repair.

He further stated that the Common Management Committee had worked tirelessly in their efforts to maintain the common, utilising the Higher Level Stewardship funding. He thanked the Committee and especially Sean Curry, Simon and Sue Melville who supervise a great deal of work on our behalf.

The Chair thanked his fellow Parish Councillors and the Clerk for their work across the year in everything they do to support the community.

A resident raised a question regarding six trees near Newtown Grange, which were marked for felling and were a concern as they looked like they could fall on the broadband overhead cables. Cllr Curry committed to looking into these and follow up with the concerned resident. The resident thanked Cllr Curry and thanked the CMC for a fantastic job.

A resident raised a concern regarding the track to the Village Hall due to general use. Cllr Reseigh stated that the track will be made good once the planned building works have taken place and signage will be erected to provide instructions as to which track to use to access the Village Hall and planned car park.

6. Report from Borough Councillor, Cllr Carr

Cllr Carr thanked the Chair for the invitation to the Parish Assembly. Cllr Carr briefed everyone present on his focus on the planning issues being faced by local parishes, updating the local plan and in ensuring that Basingstoke and Deane were pushing back on Government targets. He stated that the recent Levelling up bill looked positive but that a five year land supply was an issue within Basingstoke and Deane, hence the speculative planning that had been allowed. Cllr Carr stated that he was striving to ensure that Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty were recognised and protected as such.

Cllr Carr stated that he was pleased a resolution had been found, to allow Hampshire residents to use Newtown Road Waste Recycling Centre but that the £7 charge was higher than they had hoped. Cllr Webb thanked Basingstoke and Deane for funding 50% of the access charge that Berkshire had levied against Hampshire residents visiting the recycling centre. He queried whether any progress had been made in identifying a site in North Hampshire for a waste centre. Cllr Carr stated that was a question for Hampshire to answer.

Cllr Carr further stated that Basingstoke and Deane were looking to freeze any increase in council tax as a response to the cost of living crisis.

The Chair thanked Cllr Carr for attending.

7. Report from County Councillor, Cllr Thacker

a. Facts and figures

Hampshire's population is 1,389,200 (2020) the third most populous county in England (85% is rural and 15% urban). Hampshire CC maintains 5400 miles of roads, 4300 miles pavements, 474 maintained schools for 138,000 pupils, 52 academy schools for 38,000 pupils, 10 residential homes for children and young people, 18 Older Persons Care Homes and 5 Country Parks.

b. Budget 2022/23

Cllr Thacker stated that the budget for the new financial year had been approved with a 2.99% increase including 1% for adult social care. The budget includes £556.2 million of capital expenditure over the next three years. Cllr Thacker further briefed that the capital programme includes The proposed capital programme includes:

- £109 million in new and extended school buildings to ensure there is a school place for every child in Hampshire

- £136 million for structural maintenance and improvement of roads and bridges in Hampshire over the next three years
- £109 million for integrated transport schemes including over £50 million specifically focused on walking and cycling improvements
- £95 million for major improvement of school and other County Council buildings and land holdings over the next three years

c. County Deal

Cllr Thacker briefed everyone present of Hampshire's plan to devolve to a combined authority various powers and propose a directly elected leader, rather than a mayor, to lead a cabinet of County and District members.

d. Waste and Recycling

Cllr Thacker stated that in November 2021, he had written to MP Kit Malthouse, urging him to look into cross border charging for Household Waste and Recycling. Cllr Thacker stated that in April 2022, a paper had been published regarding household DIY waste but without mention of cross border charging and as such the situation remains unresolved.

Cllr Thacker stated that two possible locations had been identified as possible for a new facility in North Hampshire but after significant time and research, neither were deemed suitable.

8. Open Forum

A resident commented that they felt that the HWRC booking system worked well and that the site was now accessible as apposed to previously when there had been significant traffic congestion. Cllr Reseigh commented he felt that charging discouraged people from recycling and that there should be no charges at recycling centres to encourage recycling for environmental reasons.

A resident commented that they felt it was unjust that they had to pay council tax to Hampshire for such services and then were required to pay to use their nearest facility as well.

Cllr Webb asked Cllr Carr why planning decisions could not be devolved to Parish Councils as they were most in touch with local issues and development need. Cllr Carr reiterated that the greatest issue was Basingstoke and Deane not having the land supply and that many Parish Councils were developing their own Neighbourhood / Local plans to strengthen defences against speculative planning.

A resident raised their concerns about traffic and speeding on the B4640. They stated that lorries speed up the road, properties shake, house fronts are showered with road chippings and a wall had been knocked down three times. Cllr Webb sympathised with the situation but stated that the Parish Council have limited powers with regards to this and suggested that residents reported their concerns to Hampshire. He further stated that the Parish Council had recently ordered a new Speed Limit Reminder device which they would be deploying to gather data.

9. Close

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending.

The meeting closed at 20:20.

Signed

Dated