

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS
BILLINGSHURST CENTRE
ON WEDNESDAY 15 MAY 2013 AT 7.30PM**

Those Present: Cllr. Mr P.M. Berry, Chairman of Billingshurst Parish Council, Parish Clerk B. Bell.

Also Present: 13 Members of the public.

Guest Speaker: Mr David Sheldon, Chief Executive, Horsham Matters Limited

David Sheldon gave an overview of the organisation which is a social enterprise before explaining about the Community Youth Worker project as attached presentation. Mr Sheldon said that this project is new and is beginning to attract national attention.

Questions from the public

- Mrs Rodwell asked the date that the Community Youth Worker would be starting in Billingshurst and Mr Sheldon replied 03 June 2013. Mrs Rodwell asked how the Community Youth Worker would reach the young people in the community. Mr Sheldon said that they would rely on people and organisations directing them to the young people. Their first activity will be to get to know the area, get to know the people and visit the schools so that the project is ready to start in September. They will publicise their work as much as they can. Mr Hart said that it falls to the Parish Council and the community to use their publicity channels to publicise the activities and feed back in to the schools.
- Mr Berry asked how the work of the project would be reported back to the Parish Council. Mr Sheldon said there would be monthly meetings initially, then quarterly thereafter and he is happy to attend Parish Council meetings.

Guest Speaker: Nick Wallace-Jones, Litter & Cleansing Manager, Horsham District Council

Mr Wallace-Jones reported:

- The Litter and Cleansing Department is responsible for cesspit emptying, clinical waste, litter, fly tipping, dead animals, small and large sweepers and Horsham town centre crew.
- He said littering is an issue due to the size and topography of the district, for example 7.5 tonnes of fly tipping is dropped per week at Truleigh Hill.
- The cost of litter picking on the arterial roads, A272, A24 and A264 is £105,000 per annum. There is a monthly litter pick cycle and they had training last year to be able to litter pick using mobile traffic works, but there are resource issues.
- Due to changes in the NHS, there are more patients cared for in the community and greater demand for clinical waste collection.
- Fly tipping is an extremely high cost to the Council.
- If you see someone littering from a vehicle, you need to see their face and obtain their registration. It is costly and labour intensive to obtain a conviction.

Questions from the public

- Mr Berry asked if there are any litter campaigns. Mr Wallace-Jones replied that HDC are working with people with learning difficulties to create an anti-littering poster.

- Mr Berry said there are a lot of dead animals on the road at the moment and the Clerk said that the Council has reported them but they have not been collected. Mr Wallace-Jones asked for the details to be sent to him after the meeting.
- Mr Leaney reported the overflowing bins by the Post Office and sighting of rats. Mr Wallace-Jones said that shop keepers are required to keep the outside of their premises and up to 50m clean. All shops had been sent a letter about five months ago reminding them of their obligations. Mrs Wilding said she would take a look tomorrow and inform Mr Wallace-Jones whether the bins had been emptied and black bags removed. She praised HDC for removing the recent fly tipping at Saxon Court so swiftly.
- Mr Grant said other towns had had success with educating young people about not littering who in turn stop their parents littering. Mr Wallace-Jones said the Cabinet Member Cllr. Andrew Baldwin is working on the adopt-a-street scheme and is looking in to education. Mrs Wilding said that she had reported the manufacturers of the litter found at Station Road Gardens to Keep Britain Tidy who are working with the manufacturers.
- Mrs Wilding asked if the green waste charge would lead to more fly tipping. Mr Wallace-Jones said that the scheme is based on a model in Nottinghamshire already running who have experienced no increase in fly tipping. He said the initial take up of the scheme has far exceeded their expectations and 22% have already signed up for the scheme.

Chairman's Report

The Parish Council has had yet another busy year and one of its highlights has been the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations. Sincere thanks should be given to Hazel and Barry Barnes and Ann Rodwell for ensuring that this village participated in the celebrations. The Parish Council installed a flagpole at the front of the Billingshurst Centre as a permanent reminder of this happy occasion.

The past year has been difficult for many organisations in the current economic climate and the Council has been pleased to help village organisations where it can. The Council was pleased to be able to help the committed volunteers of the Billingshurst Sports and Recreation Association with a grant of £6,000 to enable them to purchase a new lawn mower for use at Jubilee Fields. This continues to be an excellent facility for parishioners and is now being enjoyed by more young people using the skate park facility. Facilities for young people has been a strong theme for this Council over the last year and I am delighted that the Council has been one of the front runners in providing a Community Youth Worker shared with Pulborough Parish Council. Whilst some may have been disappointed that the Council rejected the idea of a land swap in Station Road for the Eye Project Youth Facility, the Community Youth Worker project and financial commitment of £10,000 demonstrates this Council's commitment to our young people.

The Council as Sole Managing Trustee of the Billingshurst Centre charity has worked hard this year to help the charity with grants for equipment and expertise to assist the Centre with improvements to encourage new business. The kitchen at the Centre has been replaced using s106 planning obligation funding and future improvements funded by grants are in the pipeline in the new financial year. The Chairman thanked the Clerk and Centre Manager for their work in seeking grant funding.

The allotments at Manor Fields are eagerly awaited following the completion of the necessary legal paperwork by the Parish Council. Station Road Gardens has really taken shape this year and is proving to be a very popular facility for all generations of our community. My thanks to the volunteers of the Friends of Station Road Gardens.

The Council is holding a meeting on Wednesday 05 June to discuss the planning application for 510 houses on land east of Billingshurst and households will have recently received a leaflet from the consortium of developers. People still need to tell the Parish Council and District Council whether they want development or not. People have told us very loudly previously that they object and they need to do so again so that the Council can continue to represent their views.

Looking to the future, the Council is in a time of ever changing legislation and endeavours to keep pace with all the new legislation and powers handed down from central government. The Council has actively embraced the Localism Act of 2011 adopting the General Power of Competence in October 2012 which enables the Council to do anything that individuals generally may do, rather than being restricted by specific statutes to undertake improvements for the benefit of the parish. The Council has nominated five assets of community value to Horsham District Council: Public Conveniences in Mill Way, Mill Lane and Jenger's Mead Car Parks, Women's Hall including the Mothers' Garden and Billingshurst Library. If the Council's nominations are successful, in the future if any of these community assets are made available for sale, the Parish Council will be notified and given six weeks to express an interest that it wishes to bid to purchase the asset.

The Parish Council was sorry to see Mrs Valerie Gray leave this year and welcomed the return of Mr Colin Milne, who has been very helpful to the Billingshurst Centre charity with his knowledge of Sage and accounting.

Your Parish Councillors, Parish Office and Billingshurst Centre staff continue to provide an excellent standard of service for this parish and for this I thank them all.

The Council has also submitted responses on behalf of its residents to the following consultations:

- HDC Electoral Arrangements Consultation
- HDC Green Space Strategy
- HDC Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Preferred Sites Consultation
- Lower Tidal River Arun Strategy
- WSCC Adversane Lane Traffic Regulation Order consultation
- WSCC Alternative Owners for 10 Gypsy and Traveller Sites including Adversane and Cousins Copse
- WSCC Billingshurst Residents Parking Scheme Proposals
- WSCC Draft Highways and Transport Works Programme
- WSCC Proposed Expansion of Primary Schools in the North of West Sussex
- WSCC Waste Local Plan Consultation
- West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service: consultation on Service Plan 2013/14 and proposals for savings

And finally, I would like to record my thanks to all the other volunteers in our community that work with the Parish Council for the benefit of others, and in particular, our District and County Councillors. It has been a pleasure to serve the parish of Billingshurst as Chairman of the Council for a second year.

Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on 09 May 2012

The draft minutes having been circulated previously were taken as read and **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** that they be accepted and signed as a true record. The minutes were duly signed as a true record by the Chairman.

Questions from the Members of the Public

- Mr Leaney thanked the Chairman for everything that he has done and for the staff that he has, he has done very well this year.
- Mrs Rodwell said that Jubilee Fields is an excellent facility but it is not being used as the community originally envisaged. The community would use it more if there was space for kick-about rather than organised sports. More of the ground has been enclosed and there are no public toilet facilities. There is no village green in Billingshurst and there are more people than those who play organised sports. Mrs Rodwell also said that a lot of money was spent on Burnt Row Wood a few years ago, but it is looking derelict and there are few bluebells. The Chairman said the Council would have a look at Burnt Row Wood. Mrs Rodwell said that plans for a children's playground were not progressed, it would be nice to see some wooden play items for smaller children. Mrs Rodwell referred to the banners and the Chairman confirmed that the Council does not receive the sponsorship income. Mrs Rodwell suggested that Councillors should visit Jubilee Fields before their meeting with the Football Club to hear their plans.
- Mr Grantham said he visits Jubilee Fields every morning and said that the pavilion is open to anyone that wishes to use it. He said the Sports Association are looking for more land for hockey, netball and stoolball teams.
- Mr Hart asked if optimum use is being made of the pavilion in the daytime and questioned whether the Community Youth Worker could make use of the pavilion.
- Mrs Wilding said that previously BSRA had agreed to make a single toilet available for community use, but this has not happened. Suggestions were made for a key code lock, mobile toilets and separate toilet block. The Chairman said the Council should find out if people want toilet facilities at Jubilee Fields.
- Mr Homer said the main pitches for football and cricket must be maintained at Jubilee Fields as these clubs were asked to move over there, but the District Council had refused permission for a flat above the pavilion to house a caretaker.
- Mrs Barnes said that this meeting had not been well publicised. Mrs Wilding replied that the Council has a three page Communication Strategy and the meeting had been included in the newsletter sent to every household. Mrs Rodwell said that Residents Associations are really good at communicating.

Meeting finished at 9.15pm.