

**MINUTES OF COPYTHORNE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY 27th MARCH 2018 AT 7.30 P.M. IN THE PARISH HALL (Main Hall)**

Chaired By: Parish Council Chair Cllr Joseph Reilly

In Attendance: County Councillor Edward Heron; District Councillors Diane Andrews; Derek Tipp and 56 members of the Copythorne Electorate.

Clerk to the Council: Mrs Susan Brayley

1. Welcome

Councillor Reilly opened the meeting by welcoming all who were in attendance.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from District Cllr Les Puttock and the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Trust Non-Native Plants Officer

3. Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held on 14th March 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 14th March 2017 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

4. Parish Council Report and Report from H&IOWT Non-Native Plants Officer

Cllr Joseph Reilly, Chairman of the Parish Council presented a report on the Parish Council's work for the previous 12 months and its objectives for the next council year.

Summary as follows:-

- Despite a challenging start, the Parish Council achieved a great deal, including required local government policy compliance and obtaining central government funding to assist with this.
- With assistance from District Councillor Andrews, successfully passed responsibility for our Affordable Housing proposals to New Forest National Park Authority Planning and Policy Department who incorporated into this their 2016 – 36 Local Plan. Whilst unlikely to progress on the sites originally identified, the National Park has adopted the principle for our area going forward.
- The Parish Council continued in its support of the Friends of Copythorne Playground with their fundraising efforts and recorded thanks to County Cllr Heron and District Cllrs Andrews, Puttock and Tipp for their support of the project via their community grants.
- The Parish Council assisted in the relaunch of Copythorne Community Speed Watch and thanks to the efforts of the excellent neighbourhood policeman, PCSO Williams, Copythorne has a group local volunteers that have been turning out twice a month since the beginning of December.
- Recorded the thanks of the Parish Council to the County and District Cllrs for their continuing support of our area. Keeping both the Parish Council and attending members of the public up to date with what is going on at County and District levels by attending as many Parish Council meetings as possible. In particular, District Cllr Andrews successful defence of Copythorne's waste bins with the NFDC.
- Acknowledged the hard work done in the Parish by the Lengthsman and his team.
- With the Parish Council will be taking over legal responsibility for the new playground once built, this would require the Parish Council portion of the Council Tax Bill will rise by £1,615 across the Parish to cover costs including insurance, mandatory inspections and maintenance. The increase represents an increase of £1.36 per year on a Band D property or 2.6p per week.

- Thanks to a grant from District Cllr Tipp, the Parish Council intends to utilise the adopted telephone boxes not being looked after by the History Society as local information centres, providing community information, parish and footpath maps and similar.
- To mark the 100th anniversary of the First World War. The Parish Council would like to commemorate not just the local men that did not return, but all those who went and whose lives were forever changed because of it. With the help of County Cllr Heron who has kindly given a grant of £500.00, the intention is to purchase a commemorative bench, to be dedicated to all those from Copythorne Civil Parish who went to the War. The Parish Council will be working with both the Church and Royal British Legion to have the bench in place at the War Memorial site in time for the Remembrance Day parade on Sunday 11th November 2018. A picture of the proposed commemorative bench was displayed for the meeting attendees who indicated their approval of the project with enthusiastic applause.
- Cllr Reilly completed his report with a reminder that the Parish Council is a team of seven people who all give up their time voluntarily and all achievements were due to the enthusiastic support of all the Council members, and thanked all the Parish Cllrs and in particular Cllr Simon Lucas for all his hard work, with the support of all the Cllrs, in producing monthly articles for Stanley's Own Magazine and the larger Parish Council newsletter."

In the absence of the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Trust Non-Native Plants Officer for the New Forest Area, the Clerk read a full report on progress, prevention and additional information on the two species of non-native plants causing most concern in the area, Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam as provided by the officer.

5. County Councillors Reports:

County Councillor Heron gave the meeting an update on the measures put in place by HCC to address the shortfall in Government Funding (340 million pounds since 2010, 120 million for the 2018/19 year) and the challenges of funding required services (Children's Care; Adult Social Care;) and that there would be cuts to non-essential services *i.e. regular highways verge cutting*, because of this. CCllr Heron reminded the meeting of the "Hantsweb" website as a critical complaints reporting tool, emphasising that the problems couldn't be dealt with if they were not known about.

A member of the electorate asked what proportion of the published 100 million pounds promised by central government to assist with potholes HCC were likely to receive? CCllr Heron was unsure of this, but advised the County had received 10 million pounds towards general road improvements.

6. District Councillors reports:

Councillor Diane Andrews gave the following report:-

Had attended ten out of the 12 parish meetings giving an update of District Council business at those meetings including:-

- NFDC has now started investing in commercial property to assist with business regeneration and supplementing council income.
- Serving on the board of Community First and Citizens Advice (NFCAB) as a NFDC representative, gave regular updates on the changes being made for the future including tackling budget cuts from HCC and NFDC; changes to Citizens Advice Bureau funding application.

- Serving on a Task and Finish group looking at public conveniences in the district and deciding which needed upgrading, demolition or a rebuild and decisions on the budget spending.
- Despite a negative reaction from the NFDC Street scene team, ensuring new litter bins were put in place at Copythorne hall and more recently at Winsor Rd/Pound Lane junction.
- Following a request for information on how much fly tipping cost the district council, was able to provide the following figures: - Costs are approx. £65,000 each year over the last five years. Though it is anticipated to rise to £75,000 in the future. In addition, there is no truth in the rumours that the recycling centre at Marchwood will be closed by HCC at any time soon.
- Attended meetings to discuss traffic problems and discussed extending the double lines on Southampton/Winsor Rd junctions and explained that there were concerns about parking on verges, this was passed on to HCC travel management and they will determine appropriate measures.
- Had been advised by the Chairman of the grants panel that following a polished presentation by Friends of Copythorne Playground they were awarded £23,000.
- Reported regularly on the progress of the NFDC Local Plan and the Council are confident that they will meet the guideline number of homes the government requires them to build and the plan will be brought to cabinet by the summer of 2018.
- Was invited to join the Cabinet of NFDC in November 2017, with a portfolio for Community Affairs, however this required giving up the role of Chairman of the Planning Committee. The portfolio is a new one and covers :- Community engagement, Community grants and support, Customer Services, Elections and Electoral Registration, the Community Safety Partnership, CCTV, Careline and communications. In November I left the boards of Community First and NFCAB due to a conflict of interests, in particular grants.
- Advised had Chaired Safer New Forest Strategy and Delivery group, a Statutory body which includes, at the highest level, members of NFDC, HCC, NPA, Probation Services, Police, Fire and Rescue. Every year four areas of concern are highlighted and this year it will be Children at Risk, Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking, Drug related harm and to develop consistent access for victims of Domestic abuse.
In addition reported that despite the worrying sound of these chosen subjects, to quote from the front page of the report:-
“The New Forest is one of the safest places in the UK to live in, work in and visit. “and” The Safer New Forest Partnership is working to make it safer.
- Was invited to welcome the Explorer Scouts back from their visit to Gambia in January. Enjoying every moment of the morning, was left in no doubt what an inspirational time it had been and how worthwhile the visit, not only for the schools in Gambia that benefited from the varied projects but the very powerful way it had effected all those who visited, for me it was the highlight of the past year.

Councillor Derek Tipp gave the following report.

Over the last few years the Council has had to live within ever tighter budgets. Savings have come from reducing the number of senior officers and cutting out some non-essential services, such as tourist information centres, which are now largely done using the internet. Thanks to these prudent savings NFDC is still in a good position with strong reserves and a balanced budget.

Advised that the NFDC are looking closely at one of its biggest costs - the five leisure centres. A comprehensive review is being carried out by a group of councillors (including

Dist. Cllr Tipp), with the intention of reporting back on what is possible in terms of new ways of delivery while still maintaining the service which both residents and schools rely on by September 2018.

As well as saving money the Council is looking at new ways of generating income. One new way is by investing in both residential and business property. This should give us better returns than the current low rates available in the bond market. Investing in bonds is also a greater risk to the Council as its capital is no longer protected in the event of a future banking collapse.

The new local district plan is nearly ready for examination in public by the inspectorate. If it is approved the District will allow about 500 homes to be built each year for the next 20 years. The numbers could even be increased if the council's figures are not accepted. In any case it will mean a general increase in traffic and more pressure on local services. Councillors are powerless to set lower numbers as they must be set using statistics independent of the Council. The government is determined to increase house building rates and it is understandable in light of the massive immigration numbers (in excess of 250,000 net per year) which show no sign of abating. An estimated 64,000 new households are expected in Hampshire by 2023.

The future of local government itself is still very much under review. While plans in Hampshire are not as advanced as those in Dorset, it is still likely that some changes will occur in the next decade. This is being driven by the pressure to keep costs down in the face of increases in budget requirements. I hope that the necessary savings can be made by a greater sharing of back office functions and that the local districts and boroughs can remain in place. I know that there are discussions between councils to try and bring this about.

Finally, advised was delighted to be able to give some grant funding towards the Copythorne playground and was looking forward to its opening later in the year.

6. Parish Awards

Cllr Reilly advised that the Parish Council had nominated Bartley Post Office for recognition of their outstanding community service to the Countryside Alliance Awards. They didn't win, so Copythorne Parish Council had decided to institute their own award and were proud to invite Mr and Mrs Hole of Bartley Post Office to receive the first Copythorne Parish Council Parish Award. The presentation of the award was enthusiastically applauded by the meeting attendees.

7. Presentation – 2nd New Forest (Stanley's Own) Scout Group, the Stanley's Own heritage building refurbishment and the Scouts Organisation

The Group Scout Leader gave an excellent presentation outlining the programme of and progress made on the challenging refurbishment of the Stanley's Own building, followed by a flavour of Scouting in Copythorne for all age groups, followed by the Explorers Scout Leader giving a report on the work carried out on their visit to the Gambia.

In recognition of the important role the Scout Group building plays in helping the young people of the parish, Cllr Reilly presented a cheque for £500.00 to the GSL to assist with the current stage of the refurbishment of the building on behalf of The Parish Council. A copy of the full presentation is available on the Council website (Community Projects).

8. Presentation - Copythorne W.I. – 100th Birthday Celebrations

The President of the WI gave a short presentation of the work and innovations instituted done by the WI as a whole and Copythorne WI in particular, in the 100 years since the Copythorne WI was set up in 1917. This was followed by a video presentation of their 100 year birthday celebrations and continued success in Copythorne Carnival.

9. Presentation - Friends of Copythorne Playground

A representative of the Friends of Copythorne Playground group gave an excellent presentation detailing all the hard work and enthusiasm that had gone into achieving the target funding, despite not managing to obtain hoped for grant from the landfill tax funding pot. Having thanked all those who had contributed to the funding pot, including Paulton's Park, County and District Councillors, the Parish Council and the final top up from the NFDC, to the Mum who ran the marathon and also the children themselves who had found all sorts of ways and means to raise money, and acknowledging the help of the Parish Hall Committee with the site for the playground, the FOCP representative was then able to finish the slide show with the proposed playground layout. A copy of the full presentation is available on the Parish Council website (Community Projects).

10. Presentation – Copythorne Parish Hall - A Community Asset

A representative of the Parish Hall Committee presented the meeting with an amusing but serious update on the plans for desperately needed improvements to the Parish Hall. Advising that the award winning designed hall which had been built in the 1960's was now facing real maintenance issues requiring updating in many areas including the toilets, kitchens, heating and the main hall, plus hopes to extend the present footprint to increase provision and that whilst plans were in the very early stages, current estimates suggested costings in the region of 150 to 200 thousand pounds. Reminding the meeting that the Parish Hall was at the very centre of the community (hence being the chosen site for the playground), and provided the facilities for all sorts of community groups from the Pre-School to the Sundowners, the representative requested that residents actively get involved, making sure that the improvements were what the community wanted and making sure that the Parish Hall continued as a great community asset for the next 50 years.

11. Northern New Forest Neighbourhood Policing and Copythorne Community Speed Watch

PCSO Richard Williams gave a presentation on neighbourhood policing in the area and advised that he continued to attend regular beat surgeries in the area and that the monthly newsletter was widely available including on the Copythorne Parish Council website. Warning of an increase in rural burglaries, he was also able to advise of one offender being detained at HMP after being "caught in the act" locally.

Several members of the Public raised concerns over speeding vehicles on the Parish's roads. PCSO Williams acknowledged the problem and advised that since being reinstated at the beginning of December, Copythorne Community Speedwatch had been out regularly and data they were collating fed back into the Police to help identify problem areas.

The Copythorne Community Speedwatch Co-Ordinator advised that the aim of CSW is to educate not enforce i.e. to deter & educate and that the volunteers had been out regularly around the Parish, for approximately an hour and a half at a time with SID (speed indicator device) since December. And that Copythorne held the dubious record of recording the highest speeding vehicle (84mph) in the New Forest area back in January. Observing that

Copythorne was a beautiful area, where there are children walking to school, dog walkers, horse riders & cyclists and that if concerned with speeding vehicles, encouraged meeting attendees to volunteer to come and help at the sessions.

12. Copythorne Area Village Agent

The Village Agent advised that Village Agent funding was now only funded via Age Concern as it HCC had had to cease its funding input. Despite this, Village Agent volunteers would continue in their role to help elderly people to remain independent for as long as possible. Advising that local area information was available via the Age Concern help desk, the Agent representative advised that locally, the Methodist Church had instigated a "Soup" lunch on the last Thursday of the month and coffee morning get together in Totton.

13. Logo Competition

Advising that as Chairman of the Parish Council, Councillor Reilly was aware that unlike neighbouring Parish Councils, Copythorne does not have a Chairman's Chain of Office and he would like to spend his "Chairman's Allowance" allocation on having one made for future use. However, as Copythorne had not formally adopted a Parish Council Logo, the Council were launching a Competition; open to all our residents to design a Logo with entries to be judged at a community event, with prizes to be awarded for both the chosen design and runner up.

14. Close and invitation to enjoy refreshments and meet the presenters

Cllr Reilly thanked the Clerk to the Council for all her hard work in the preparation of the meeting and invited all those attending to enjoy the refreshments kindly provided by the ladies of Copythorne WI and also to take the opportunity to talk to the individual presenters.

The meeting was formally closed at 9.30pm

Chairman SIGNATURE REDACTED.....

Date March 26 2019.....