

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING FOR EARNLEY PARISH

Minutes of the Annual Meeting for the Parish of Earnley held at Birdham Village Hall on 18th March 2015; which commenced at 7pm.

PRESENT: Cllrs. Keith Martin (Chairman), Colin Field (Vice Chairman), Chris Charter and Robert Carey.

In attendance: Mrs Louise Chater (Clerk), District Cllr. Graeme Barrett, District Cllr. Peter Clementson, County Cllr. Pieter Montyn, Dr Bill Martin, Drew Allardice (Community Warden) and 16 members of the public.

Apologies: Cllr. Sandy Simpson

A01.15 Minutes of the last Annual Meeting - 29th May 2014

On a proposal by County Cllr. Pieter Montyn it was resolved to agree and sign the minutes; this was duly completed.

A02.15 Matters arising

None.

A03.15 Annual Report from the Parish Council

The Chairman reported that the Parish Council had received 36 planning applications. The Parish Council took the lead in forming the Western Manhood Peninsula Consortium which as a group had worked to fight the increase in housing numbers for East Wittering and Bracklesham in the District Council's Local Plan. The consortium had also applied for Rule 6 status at the planning appeal for 160 properties in Clappers Lane and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Julia Bowering for her research, appearing and attending the appeal and Robert Carey for acting as advocate for the consortium. The appeal was ultimately dismissed on the density of the site.

The developers had now submitted an application for 110 properties on the same site. The parish council remains opposed the application, however, we had engaged with the developer to address the issues that affect the parish.

As you will all be aware the Earnley Concourse closed in 2011, the Parish Council had successfully registered the concourse under the Community Right to Bid scheme which means the Parish Council would be notified if the Trustees decided to sell the site. The Community then had the opportunity to purchase the site or seek partners to work with.

Members of the Parish Council continued to liaise with the Environment Agency and RSPB following the completion of the work on the Medmerry Flood Alleviation scheme. With residents and RSPB volunteers members of the

Council took part in a two day event to plant 500 trees. There continues to be an issue with dog waste on the new footpaths, the Environment Agency had agreed to purchase dog waste bins and the Council are putting pressure on the RSPB to fund the servicing of the bins.

Following the adoption of the Somerely and Earnley Conservation Area report's by the District Council the Parish Council had worked towards implementing some of the recommendations in the report. Following negotiations with West Sussex County Council agreed to resurface the road surrounding the Church. The Environment Agency has agreed to purchase and install two traditional finger post signs which would replace the rusty signs in the centre of Earnley Conservation Area.

The Parish has a good network of footpaths and the Council had recently been advised that West Sussex County Council had reduced their inspection programme from every nine months to 15 months. If you become aware of a problem with a footpath please let us know as we had recently worked with the County Council to get a bridge replaced and an unpassable path cleared.

The Parish Council once again received a clear audit. The loan for the Bookers Lane Flood Alleviation Scheme had been drawn down and together with the funds raised by residents would be passed to the County Council shortly. The Parish Council had taken the difficult decision to increase the precept request in part to ensure the parish council could build reserves to maintain and replace the assets.

The Parish Council elections were due to take place on 7th May. Cllr. Field had decided not to re-stand for election and we would like to take this opportunity to thank him for the work and support he had provided. If you were interested in standing for election please speak to either the Clerk or one of the councillors at the end of the evening. There was also an information evening being held on 30th March at Birdham Village Hall. The Clerk had a copy of the register of electors following a change in the rules it was important that you take the opportunity to check that you are registered to vote.

The Chairman took this opportunity to thank Cllr. Carey, Julia Bowering and Ken Davenport for their drive and commitment and County Cllr. Pieter Montyn for his support for the flood prevention work being carried out in the Parish.

Cllr. Carey reported that the Birdham and Earnley Flood Prevention Group with the support of the Parish Council and other partners were working on the second year of a three year plan.

The work completed so far included Bookers Lane Flood Alleviation Scheme, Holden's Farm lower channel and Drove Lane culvert clearing.

Work was currently being carried out on the Almodington/Grange Rife to re-grade and de-silt.

Future projects included further ditch and culvert clearance in Somerley, Almodington Grange Rife (phase two) to divert water away for the village and Holden's Farm (phase two).

Cllr. Charter said that at last year's meeting it was agreed that the Parish Council would work towards producing parish objectives. This was your opportunity to make the Parish Council aware of the issues that were most important to you.

The Parish Council had conducted a sample questionnaire of about 20% of the parish and following the results of this a more detailed questionnaire was being produced. Chichester District Council had offered assistance with evaluating the results of the questionnaire.

To get maximum participation we need your help and we are looking for approximately five volunteers to help distribute and collect the questionnaire.

A04.15 Questions from the Public

District Cllr. Clementson suggested that the Parish Council contact West Wittering Estate to gain advice as to how they had successfully dealt with the issue of dog fouling.

Q: What are the Parish Assets?

A: Bus shelters, traditional finger posts, street lights, noticeboards and office equipment.

Q: Following the work at the site at the top of Bookers Lane the area had been left in a very poor condition state. Do you know what was happening here?

A: The land was currently in private ownership however, it was included in the land swap as part of the Medmerry Flood Alleviation Scheme and would be transferred to the Environment Agency in due course. The Environment Agency had left the site tidy when they completed their work. It was Portsmouth Water who had left the site in such a poor state of repair. They had further work to complete on replacing the water main and they had assured us that when this work had been completed they would replant the hedgerow.

The meeting closed at 19.53pm

Dr. Bill Martin gave a presentation and showed a short film on the land settlement area in Almodington and Sidlesham.

Signed: _____ Chairman Earnley Parish Council

Dated: _____