

## **LITTLETON & HARESTOCK PARISH COUNCIL**

### Minutes of Annual Parish Assembly 8 May 2017

1. The Chairman, Cllr Patrick Cunningham, welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially the new HCC councillor, Cllr Jan Warwick.
2. Apologies were received from Cllr A Weir, E Bell & J Byrnes (WCC), Cllr Jamie Mead (Littleton & Harestock), Mr & Mrs Bond and Hampshire Constabulary.
3. Cllr Cunningham then explained that the minutes of the 2016 meeting were not to be read out loud, but had been available for all to see on the Parish Council website and hard copies had also been provided for all to see at the meeting. He asked whether there were any questions or queries on them. There were none mentioned. The minutes were then agreed without amendment. Proposed by Cllr Anita Neilson and Seconded by Cllr George Sallis.
4. Cllr Cunningham then gave his report for 2016/17, his first as Chairman of the Parish Council.

Planning and Development: Among the many planning applications that have been received, the major issues this year were the resubmission of the previously refused application by Ecotricity & Sparsholt College for an Anaerobic Digester and the Barton Farm development. Regarding the Anaerobic Digester, after several meetings and consultations with Ecotricity at which Parish councillors demanded curtailments to the Company's traffic & transport schedule, WCC planning committee voted to allow a revised application from Ecotricity. As direct result of the representations of this parish council the revised application specified several restrictions and conditions, including a complete ban on transport movements through Littleton, and both time restrictions and a reduction of traffic movements along Harestock road. To ensure that these provisions are being adhered to, GPS trackers will also have to be fitted to the vehicles. Although not within the boundary of the parish, Barton Farm construction finally commenced in summer last year and the first residents moved in at the end of March this year. We continue to monitor traffic through Harestock Road and Andover Road as it impacts traffic and transport issues for the residents and pedestrian's safety in the parish. Councillors continue to attend the WCC/Cala Homes joint Forum and a further meeting is scheduled after the HCC elections this month. The Parish council continues to monitor and inspect all planning applications and comments and makes recommendations to WCC planning department as required. The MoD announced last autumn that it would be releasing the Sir John Moore Barracks in 2021 from its estate. The Parish Council has since then been working with WCC to ensure that, should this happen in 2021, the land is not developed to the detriment of the local area and the local gap is maintained. The policy of this council remains that we would seek to avoid any new development on the land comprising the Littleton gap.

Highways and Traffic: Following on from our meetings with HCC last year, we attended several more meetings and a tour of the parish with HCC highways engineering department officers to highlight and address our concerns over the state of the roads and verges, and safety of pedestrians. As a result we have now seen some success with additional white painted road markings and 'SLOW' signs, and improved road signage along Main Road and Kennel Lane, and Harestock Road/Andover Road. Hedge cutting tree removal and grass

verges have also been cut back in both Littleton and at the surrounds of the junction of Harestock Rd and Andover Rd. Additional road resurfacing work was carried out on Bercote Close and drainage improvement works in North Drive. HCC completed their feasibility study into the provision of a footpath from Dean Down Drove to Stockbridge Rd. The road traffic accident statistics show that the area is not at a high enough level to warrant such work which would be in the region of £200k, and funding of such an amount is not available. Additional safety measures were requested by the Parish Council which did result in the works mentioned above being carried out in March. The Parish Council has made many representations and impressed upon HCC the danger to pedestrians in the road especially along Main Rd in Littleton near the Running Horse public house and between Dean Down Drove and Stockbridge Rd, and it is regrettable that the safety statistics collected by HCC according to them does not warrant build-outs or further traffic calming construction work.

Flooding: This time last year HCC informed us that a number of parishes in the area would benefit from the introduction of flood alleviation measures. This would include implementation in this parish in a joined up scheme along with Headbourne Worthy and Kings Worthy. We understand that HCC Flood and Water management department have completed the pre-feasibility report in February, and that they are now moving on to the next phase in which the engineering consultancy team will work on the next level of feasibility study. They hope to be in a position to pass information on this to residents in June/July. We are pleased to note that ground water levels at the bottom of the village have remained low this year.

Recreation and Playgrounds: The Parish Council is keenly aware of the importance of grounds and the sports facilities and pitches to all residents, and carries out inspections with the ground maintenance contractors to ensure that the grounds are kept at a high level of presentation and condition. We continue to invest sufficient funds to support this objective, and are satisfied with the services of the current contractor. This year has seen a continued high level of expenditure in the 2 playgrounds in the parish totalling £25.5k. Both playgrounds have had new equipment installed as well as replacement equipment no longer fit for purpose. A comprehensive plan for re-surfacing with rhino-mulch under all equipment and at all the playground entrances was undertaken and completed. Our playgrounds continue to undergo weekly safety inspections to ensure all equipment is safe and in good working order. The standard of the playgrounds has improved beyond recognition over the past 2 years and special thanks go to Cllrs Neilson and Saunders for their commitment and hard work in achieving it.

Communication: The Parish Council was pleased to receive positive feedback on the council's website and format (its main communication vehicle), and the wide range of up to date information and content regarding community and council matters. It is also encouraging to see the significant increase of website traffic or "Hits" accessing the Council website over the past year. The website delivers comprehensive monthly coverage, reports and council minutes which serve to effectively communicate to the Parish information covering Planning, Playgrounds, Flood Alleviation, Recreation Grounds, Finances, Highways traffic and transport, Barton Farm, Community Governance Review, Sir John Moore Barracks, County and City Councillors reports, Police and Community reports, Environment, Millennium Hall, and other matters as they arise. It is felt that the current communication mechanisms of the website, and the availability of the Parish Clerk and office if needed, are more than adequate.

Environment: Paddock View: After 4 years of constant hard work and pressure on Hyde Housing, and using every tool in the box including HCC, County & City councillors, Environment Agency, etc., the defective sewage treatment plant at Paddock View was eventually replaced and the temporary above ground storage tank removed. A special thank you to Cllr Biddlecombe for his tenacity in not taking 'NO' for an answer and taking this long running project to the winning line. Planting: A scheme of revised planting is set for the autumn with the help of our grounds maintenance contractor to improve and enhance the raised shrub beds at the shops in Harestock, and planting has now been completed on the island at the end of South Drive in Littleton. New Notices: New Parish Council notices regarding dog-fouling, the use of car park and recreation ground, disabled parking area, and playground notices have been erected which clarify the position and responsibility of the Parish Council in the provision of these amenities. Information Boards: The Parish Council has commissioned the provision of 2 information boards celebrating the history of the Parish and its historical link with the military establishment on the site of Sir John Moore Barracks and work will commence on this project towards the end of the summer.

Community Governance Review on the Parish Council: Following the Boundary Review on WCC, The Parish Council requested a presentation from Mr D Blackmore of WCC's Democratic Services department regarding the process for conducting a local Community Governance Review. Following this, a long discussion ensued at which the Parish Council was required to express a preference for the outcome of this Review and present it to WCC. 2 options were outlined:

- A) That the Parish Council remains as it is encompassing both Littleton and Harestock, or
- B) That it splits into 2 entities, Littleton Parish Council, and Harestock either become a Parish Council in its own right or join Winchester Town as the residents see fit.

These two options were then voted upon by the full Parish Council and the result was that the Parish Council wishes to see that the outcome of the Review should be that the present organisation split into two separate entities i.e. Option B above. Winchester City Council was then asked formally to carry out this Review with the Parish Council's preferred outcome being Option B.

At the request of Cllr Learney a further vote was taken regarding Harestock's position in the event of the current organisation splitting into 2 entities. It was proposed that Harestock should remain under the control of a Parish as opposed to becoming part of Winchester Town, without formal representation, this was passed unanimously. It is understood that WCC will fund this Review. The Parish Council asked about possible transitional relief for a probable increase in the precept for local residents should the split in the Parish come about. We wait for date for the start of this Governance Review but it should be this calendar year.

Parish Council Precept: The Parish Council precept for 2017/18 was set in January and sees the Parish tax for Littleton & Harestock Band D set at £63.34 for the year which equates to £1.21 per week. The Parish Council is pleased that the level of the precept in the Parish remains as one of the lowest in the Winchester district and is 20.1% lower than the average (£79.23) for the Parish & Town total. During the year the Parish Council agreed to financially support the continued operation of the Winchester night bus to Harestock in the sum of £500 per annum for two years. The Parish Council was pleased to help financially support the installation of a defibrillator that was placed on the side of the Millennium Memorial Hall in the sum of £730.

Miscellaneous: I would like to thank a number of people on behalf of the Parish Council for their hard work and support over the past year, including:

Tamzin Sallis – Webmaster of our website

David Strugnell – Littleton Nature Reserve and support advice on Paddock View.

Sarah Sibley & Stuart Covill – Cleaner and former cleaner of the Pavilion and Parish Council office.

Katie Massey – Millennium Hall Manager.

Alison & Chris Rice – Tumulus Field Wardens.

Alison Harper & Geoff Toogood – Tree Wardens

Ros & Andrew Hobbs – Pond Wardens

Ray Broughton – Advice on planting on the Island at the end of South Drive and to improve the water quality of the Pond.

Mrs King, Helen Harley & Mrs Street – Gardening and tending to the plants and shrub bed alongside the Parish office.

North Winchester Community Church – gardening and tending to the raised shrub beds at Harestock shops.

WO1 Regimental Sergeant Major J. A. McGrory R Sigs., Sir John Moore Barracks – attending Parish Council meetings and providing escort to councillors on tour of the barracks. And a personal thank you to fellow Parish councillors for attending council meetings and other meetings and events for their appointed area of additional responsibility. A thank you also to City and County councillors for attending our meetings and contributing to the council's work. Finally, I would like to thank the Parish Clerk for all his assistance, keeping your Chairman on the straight and narrow, guiding and dog-walking over the past 12 months, and congratulate him on keeping our affairs and statutory responsibilities in order again.

Cllr Biddlecombe then handed over the Parish Clerk to provide last year's financial report.

## **Financial Report**

5. The Clerk had already distributed copies to all those present of the unaudited accounts for the year 2016-17 and then elaborated on various specific items on the income and expenditure account. It had been a very busy year and the money had all been well spent. These details were agreed without amendment, proposed by Cllr David Fountain and seconded by Cllr Hilary Saunders.

## **WCC Councillors' Report**

6. Cllr Learney reported that this was her report as just covering the Harestock area since the boundary changes and she now represents St Barnabas Ward. It was also a joint report from her and Cllr Weir who could not attend. Over this past year Cllr Learney had chaired the WCC Overview and Scrutiny Committee while Cllr Weir had chaired the Town Forum. There had been more work for all WCC Councillors following the establishment of the new larger wards. Some of the major areas of work had been: Silver Hill; the recent community planning consultation; the acquisition of Winchester bus station by WCC; the refresh of the Local Plan; the new Weeke area car parking scheme (which now needs to be revised); future governance arrangements for the parishes around Barton Farm; redevelopment of Station view and the cattle market car park; the new leisure centre at Bar End and what is to happen to the existing facility in the meanwhile. Mr Middleton then asked about whether the proposed northern park and ride of 200 would be under review as it isn't sufficient. This is to

be reviewed. Mr Lipscombe asked about the extra pressure of traffic on Harestock Road as that road is due to have major closures due to work required for the Barton Farm development. Assurances were given that maximum pressure would be exerted to try and ensure that the closures were well notified and adequate diversions put in place. That concluded the WCC report.

## **HCC Councillor Report**

7. The Parish Clerk then reported that now former HCC Cllr, Phil Bailey, had sent his report by email. These were his words. "You will be aware that my 4 year term is up. I was not seeking re-election due to the pressures of work commitments alongside my Hampshire County Councillor duties. Part of the reason for this is the cuts that are being handed down from central government make the role harder and more time consuming, with less officers and less funding to deliver some of the schemes and ideas that Parish Councils have. This year, as with other years much of my time has been spent on Highways matters.

- Potholes – general state of the roads.
- The visibility at junctions – when grass cutting budgets are being cut back.
- Road safety issues either at certain junctions – where road layout could be improved for better cycle/pedestrian/car users safety/
- Or speed reductions measures where road safety of school children or pedestrians is an issue due to cars travelling too fast through villages.
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Cuts in spending also have a negative impact on finances with the Insurance Bill now for trips and falls £0.5m due to Pavement surfaces. This why I have been fighting many of the cuts, such as the amount of weed treatment which will mean bigger problems ahead.

Bus Cuts: 1 in 5 subsidised buses cut over the last 5 years. This has had a bigger impact for some residents.

### **Hampshire Waste Recycling:**

Another area I have been outspoken about is potential cuts in the Hampshire Waste Recycling centres. I will watch with interest how this plays out, again the saving by cutting hours or charging for recycling is not the way forward and will lead to problems and costs elsewhere. I would like to pay tribute to the Parish Councillors for their hard work. They also have to try to deliver improvements in a tough this environment where expectations from the public are very high about what can be delivered, and also how quick they expect they can be implemented.(!)

### **Potholes – reporting:**

If there are any problems please do use [Fixmystreet.com](https://www.fixmystreet.com) to report any issues:

<https://www.FixMyStreet.com> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/FixMyStreet>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/fixmystreet>

Cllr Burgess in Phil Bailey's absence proposed a vote of thanks for his four years of work as a HCC councillor which was unanimously supported.

### **Hampshire Schools:**

The next challenging area is School cuts and I am surprised this has not been given more publicity yet, but if you question any school governor I am sure they can give you the budget

cuts perspective and what it could mean. It would appear that there is a £63m to be cut from Hampshire Schools funding. If you go to [Schoolcuts.org.uk](http://Schoolcuts.org.uk)

You can search your local schools and this will give you an indication of what may happen. Once again a big Thank-you to the Parish Councillors and I have enjoyed the way we worked together to try and get matters resolved. Despite the cuts mentioned above a lot of good and positive progress has been made.”

The Parish Clerk announced that was the end of Phil Bailey’s last report and then Cllr Jan Warwick, an existing WCC councillor, who had just been elected to be the HCC councillor for the area introduced herself and stated that she would be working on pavement and flooding issues since she now represented both WCC and HCC. She also mentioned the joint HCC/WCC study to collect traffic data from across Winchester which has been running since January and is due to finish at the end of August. She also stated that work is needed to improve the air quality in Winchester city centre and WCC have recently committed to nine actions to do this.

### **Public Participation**

8. Mr Thompsett asked whether anyone knew what the building work was opposite the Barton Farm development along Wellhouse Lane and it was explained that it was the linking of the development to the sewerage facility there. Mr Lipscombe apologised for not having attended one of these meeting for some years and asked whether the Harestock sign at the Stockbridge Road end of Harestock Road could possibly be replaced with a new one. This would be looked into. Mr Highfield wished to compliment the Parish Council on undertaking a leaflet drop to advertise this event which seemed to have help increase attendance. Mr B Middleton asked whether it might be possible for the Parish Council to obtain a strip of land alongside the existing Sir John Moore Barracks to provide a footpath from one end of the village to the other. Cllr Cunningham explained that in order to do that it would be necessary for the Parish Council to offer something in exchange as part of a negotiation and, at present, the Parish Council wishes to ensure that any future change of ownership of that land does not try to impinge any development on the existing gap, so the Parish Council is currently not in a strong bargaining position on this, but would see what might be possible as the MoD’s intentions on this land become clearer. Other uses for the barracks by other central government departments are yet possible, so for something like this might be possible to happen, but not yet.

9. There were no further questions. Cllr Cunningham then thanked all those present for their attendance and the meeting was declared closed. The next Annual Parish Meeting will be on 14 May 2018