

**MINUTES OF COPYTHORNE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**  
**HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11 MARCH 2015 AT 7.30 P.M. IN THE PARISH HALL**

**PRESENT:** Parish Councillors S Bullen-Jarvis (Chairman), J Goodwin, G James, M Moriarty and J Reilly  
County Councillors E Heron and K Mans  
District Councillors D Andrews, L Puttock and D Tipp  
15 parishioners  
Apologies received from Councillors Lady Kara Hawks and Riddoch

**MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2014 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

*Councillor Stuart Bullen-Jarvis* reported on Parish Council matters from the past year. These included the ongoing work on flooding issues following the events during the winter of 2013/14; the appointment of a Lengthsman to carry out various environmental and highway works (a joint appointment with Bramshaw, Netley Marsh and Wellow parishes); and the inspection by members of local footpaths to identify any necessary clearance/repair works..

Highway items included the ongoing noise problems from the M27 and A31 which were now being addressed by resurfacing. Regrettably the Highways Agency had carried out excessive vegetation clearance around junction 1 of the M27 which needed to be remedied.

On Planning, the Council was still engaged with proposals for further affordable housing. Following the housing needs survey carried out in 2014, the Council had agreed that any development should be limited to 15 units, to be spread over at least two independent sites. The units would be for people with strong local connections and for rental only. There would be no shared ownership. Site investigations were now under way and once a definitive list of sites was available this would be published and discussed in public.

On general Council matters, the Council had held its precept at £14,700 for the current financial year and would hold it at the same level for 2015/16. Parish Council elections were due to be held on 7 May and it was hoped that local residents would come forward and stand for election.

The Chairman also reported on the History Society's proposal to add additional names to the parish war memorial. The Council had awarded a £500 grant towards the cost.

**LENGTHSMAN SCHEME**

Unfortunately, the newly-appointed Lengthsman, Kevin Bennett, could not attend this evening. However, the Chairman summarised his general duties which included drainage (clearing and maintaining ditches and flood prevention works) and various highway works (including cleaning of signs and nameplates, clearing of footways, litter-picking, reporting defects and general 'village upkeep'). Residents could report any works needed in the parish to the Parish Clerk.

**COUNTY COUNCIL REPORTS**

*Councillor Heron* reported on the forthcoming county electoral boundary review. Copythorne was presently one of the few parishes with warding arrangements. The Parish Council and local residents could submit comments to the Boundary Commission during the consultation period.

*Councillor Mans* reported that, once again, the County Council had not increased its proportion of the council tax, notwithstanding a reduction in central government grant. The Council had tried to restrict reductions in front line services and continued to look for efficiencies. The Lengthsman scheme was working well and many residents were carrying out ditch clearance to help prevent future flooding. Councillor Mans thanked Councillor Goodwin for his efforts in securing flood prevention measures. He also referred to the high speed broadband project and the shortcomings of BT in this respect. It was noted that, in some areas, local residents had carried out schemes themselves. Councillor Mans also suggested that all new houses should have fibre-optic cable.

## DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORTS

*Councillor Andrews* reported on her responsibilities on various NFDC committees and outside bodies and referred to work on Task and Finish groups including child poverty and flood management. Help to residents on planning matters had included opposition to a small business park at Ower and 24-hour industrial lighting at MacDonalds. Close liaison with Environmental Health had also secured a good design outcome for the salt dome at junction 2 of the M27. The proposed resurfacing works on the M27 at Cadnam were also welcomed. During the year, Councillor Andrews had given small donations to the Copythorne Infant School and CATS and more recently a grant towards the flood warning telemetry system for Bartley.

*Councillor Tipp* expressed thanks to Councillor Goodwin for his work on flood prevention measures. NFDC council tax had been frozen for the sixth consecutive year despite a further reduction in government grant. Cost-savings had included the sale of various assets. NFDC had provided additional affordable housing and continued to work with various agencies. Reference was made to the new 24-hour Care Line service for elderly people and the Brand New Forest Card which encouraged people to shop locally. Councillor Tipp had also given a £200 grant to the History Society for their war memorial project.

*Councillor Puttock* also referred to the NFDC council tax freeze which had been achieved without too many staff reductions. The flooding work undertaken by Councillor Goodwin was a credit to the parish council. Councillor Puttock had enjoyed his time as a district councillor and would be standing again in the May elections, but probably for the final time.

## FLOODING

*Councillor John Goodwin* gave a presentation on the ongoing work in the parish on flood prevention measures. In Cadnam, ditches in Romsey Road and Pollards Moor had been cleaned out and a new pipe installed under the field-crossing to Paddock View (formerly Copperfield). The grille in the culvert under the M27 had been refurbished. In Bartley, the main problems were a drainage bottleneck at Shepherds Road and the need for major clearance of various landholdings in the Forest. A new pipe was to be laid in Chinham Road and a new telemetry system for the Bartley area was to be installed with the help of grants from various sources, including the parish council and Councillor Andrews.

There was still a vital role for HCC in advising households on watercourse maintenance. Many residents discarded grass cuttings in ditches with serious consequences. Any know incidents should be reported to the parish council. Residents could also still take advantage of the flood grant system which was open until June or July. NFDC no longer provided sandbags but these could be purchased if required.

## REDUCED BUS SERVICES AND PROVISION OF COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

*Councillor Mike Moriarty* gave a presentation on this topic. HCC had made further significant savings in bus subsidies which had impacted on various services in the parish. Changes had affected services 10 & 11 and T3/T4. The First no 4 service was no longer funded by HCC and had been withdrawn. The X7 service had also been rationalised with the 34 Romsey service.

With declining services there were a number of alternative options. These included Community First New Forest Call and Go, Fritham/Nomansland/Bramshaw/Brook/Minstead 31 Taxishare, Totton Communicare and Lyndhurst Neighbourcare. There was also a Mopeds to Work scheme available through Community First New Forest.

One of the principal issues was the relatively low number of bus users. However, it was important to cater for those in need of bus services. The alternative community services outlined above could assist but it was suggested that the parish council could consider whether a local scheme specifically for Copythorne was viable. Councillor Heron referred to the Self Help Toolkit on HCC's website.

## OPEN FORUM

*Affordable Housing:* A resident acknowledged the need for affordable housing but was concerned about numbers and locations. Councillors were urged to consider these aspects seriously to protect rural areas.

Councillor Heron referred to developments in other nearby parishes which were modest in size and designed to fit into the local area. Councillor Mans referred to the planning challenges and stressed the importance of accommodating any extra housing needed without urbanising an area. He suggested a more innovative use of brownfield sites.

The Chairman was aware of local people in need of housing and therefore accepted the role of the parish council in addressing this. However, he was anxious to retain as many green fields as possible.