

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Little Horwood
held at The Memorial Hall, Mursley Road, Little Horwood at 8pm. On Monday 24th March 2014**

Present: Cllr. Mrs. M Arnold presided as Chairman, Mrs B Bradford acted as Clerk and there were 23 residents and AVDC Cllr John Chilver present.

Apologies: BCC Cllr Stanier

Minutes: The minutes of the previous Annual Meeting held on Monday 25th. March 2013 were agreed to be an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

Chairman's Report: The Chairman thanked her fellow Councillors for their support over the past year and welcomed Peter Nickoll who was co-opted in January after Steve Streater had moved away from the village. Thanks too to Mike Jones for his work on all the Green Spaces in the village and to Wendy Foster (Recreation Ground Trust) & Margaret Dickson (Little Horwood Trust) who will make their reports at this meeting.

The Precept has been increased for 2014-15 after several years with no increase it was felt to be prudent to maintain reserves at a reasonable level in order to meet the identified financial risks. The Shoulder of Mutton has been nominated as an Asset of Community Value which, if accepted, will mean that were the property put on the market the village would have 6 months to generate a credible scheme to purchase the property and retain it as a pub. The current owner is happy to have the property registered in this way. The garages in Wood End are also under consideration for nomination, but it is more difficult to demonstrate how these contribute to the social wellbeing of the village. VAHT has now admitted that it did not handle the sale of the garages on Mursley Road (now knocked down) well and would handle any similar issue differently in future.

Environmental Issues: The smells of sewerage, having worked with AVDC, Anglia Water & Horwood House revision to treatments have been made and so far the situation is improved, however the situation is being monitored and further action will be taken should the problem return. A Noise Nuisance has been established in Mursley Road and Environmental Health Officers are now taking action. There is very little that the Parish Council can do in these cases, other than signpost and support residents in their complaints to the relevant authorities. LHPC made representations to the Licencing panel in respect of The Retreat (at the Nash Crossroads) application for music and alcohol. The result was that only 4 occasions of 4 days were agreed, rather than a 24/7 licence. IT is important that if residents experience problems they report them to AVDC and the Police, and copy the Clerk at LHPC.

Planning: The Vale of Aylesbury Plan has been rejected and it is currently unclear where it will go from here. The Winslow Neighbourhood Plan is well on its way, but the process has stalled pending the outcome of a similar situation elsewhere in the country. There have been hundreds of objections to the proposed wind turbines at Salden Chase. Gladman's application for 100 dwellings at Little Horwood Road was rejected, as was their application for 200 dwellings at Glebe Farm, the latter has been appealed and the Secretary of State has "called in" the outcome of this appeal. LHPC's policy remains not to comment on applications unless it is objecting or if there is strong local opinion. Council opposed recent applications for 5 and 9 dwellings on Mursley Road and 1 dwelling on Great Horwood Road which were all rejected at AVDC.

Rural Exception Scheme – affordable housing provision for local people. The officer who previously rejected LHPC's preferred site has reconsidered and is now progressing a scheme for the south side of Mursley Road (adjacent to no 26). An update to the survey of need will be required, anyone interested should make their wishes known to Council.

Bus Shelter: This is nearly complete, the glazing will be installed shortly.

War Memorials: It has been advised that these are not listed on national databases and this issue is being addressed. The RAF memorial project is being resurrected with the working party due to report shortly.

Flooding: In 2012 6 properties in the village were identified by AVDC as at risk of flooding, 5 were surveyed and 1 accepted the recommendations in full and has now had the work done. (It was noted later in the meeting that the work to hold back water in the Spinney has worked beautifully

this winter and particular thanks extended to Mike Jones and the volunteers who carried out this work).

Litter Blitz: this was very well attended on Saturday with John Bercow attending. The good numbers made the project much easier, thanks to those who assisted with publicity and those taking part.

Footpath Walk: the October event was well attended and findings reported to BCC Rights of Way. £68 was raised at the linked Coffee Morning and donated to Cancer Research UK. The village footpath map is now available – some here this evening.

Defibrillator: Council has been investigating purchase of a unit that would be available 24/7 in a code locked cabinet in a public place (the 999 service would advise the location and code should their telephone assessment of the patient indicate a need). At the last Council meeting it was decided that this forum should be used to take a straw poll of whether this project should be pursued, due to the substantial cost for a small parish (around £1,400 purchase & installation). After further discussion there was overwhelming support from the floor to pursue the item. Further investigation should include identifying from parishes who already have one what the level of use has been and to establish what ongoing maintenance costs are. The excellent response by First Responders was highlighted and it would not be wished to put this service at risk.

Annual Reports:

Recreation Ground Trust Report from Wendy Foster: The Committee of 10 continue to oversee operation of the hall and grounds that are well used and appreciated by residents. Income comes mainly from the regular uses by Montessori Nursery and the Bridge Club, with children's/family parties, tennis subscriptions, the bi-annual ball, Citroen Car Club rallies and the Photovoltaic panels providing the balance. Due to the Parish Council Grant and regular income the village Fete , Entertainments and Church committee events can be held at the Rec free of charge, or for a small donation. Significant outgoings are for the regular cleaner, maintenance (repainting, new thermal blinds/curtains and an easily operated barrier are all coming shortly). The accumulation of funds has enabled the specification of a new storage shed to be decided, grant applications are being made and clearing of the site will commence soon. The Cricket Club will not be playing this season (it is believed to have amalgamated with Winslow CC so will no longer be using the title LHCC), therefore a grass cutting contract will need to be placed. The continued support of LHPC and the Recreation Ground Committee is appreciated with special thanks to Treasurer Wayne Wilson and Bookings Secretary Barbara Jones.

Little Horwood Trust Report from Margaret Dickson Copies of the 46th Annual Report were distributed giving details of the current trustees, grants given totalling £3784.10 (to the Entertainments Committee for Children's and Over 60's parties, LHPC for the bus shelter and the PCC for emergency repairs & the new organ) and net income from SAA subscriptions & donations leading to a balance carried forward of £3,322.94 as at 28.2.2014. LHPC is requested to appoint a replacement trustee for Steve Streater as a matter of urgency.

Little Horwood Estates Report from Mike Jones Grass cutting of the Millennium Wood has been undertaken by a contractor this year, funded by LHPC this arrangement will continue. Hogweed was controlled by cutting before it seeded. The meadow was cut and raked to assist flower proliferation. The final section of hedge along the permissive path was laid. Phased and thoughtful thinning of the millennium tree planting has been continued to allow trees to meet their full potential and trimming of hedges and grass alongside paths has kept them clear. The Community Orchard produced a reasonable crop including plums, pears, quince and lots of apples.

The Nature Reserve has required very little work during the year.

The Garden of Peace – it has been established that LHPC owns the access path and planning permission has now been sought to trim the lower horizontal branches of the beech tree at the entrance. The path around the garden has been kept cut and a spring clear up is about to be undertaken.

The Spinney, as mentioned earlier, has held back a lot of water this very wet winter preventing flash flooding in the village. Paths are cut and brambles kept in check regularly, winter fallen debris has been pushed back to maintain good access in the wooded areas. No ash dieback has been spotted in any of the above areas thus far, paths are now drying out and wildflowers opening, so it's a good time to get back into the habit of a regular walk around our green spaces.

The Chairman joined residents in thanking Mike and Barbara for all the work they do to maintain these areas and a resident wondered whether there were any thoughts of Mike's taking on an "apprentice" to ensure the continued good husbandry of the valued community assets. Mike indicated he would welcome the opportunity to work with and pass on his vast local knowledge to anyone interested in helping.

Questions from the floor and any Other Business:

Camping & Caravan Club Licence application for up to 5 touring caravans & 10 tents on land at 1 Warren Court: Residents were invited to sign a petition against this application on the grounds that there is insufficient demand, the existing site at Tile House on Winslow Road is under used (it was noted that LHPC had opposed that application) and that this proposed site is unreasonably close to neighbouring properties. It was also noted that the proposed access is inadequate for the likely number and size of vehicles and would present a danger on a busy, fast stretch of road.

BCC Cllr Chilver encouraged residents to raise any BCC issues with him. The recent tour of Shucklow Hill repairs with the LAT had given rise to issues to be addressed. It is hoped to get problems at Winslow Bridge and the Shoulder of Mutton drainage addressed on this year's work plan. Additional budget has been allocated to road repairs for the 3rd year running and there may be further funding from central government towards flood damage. Pavements and footpaths are also to receive higher priority this coming year. Mursley Rd bridge issues will be addressed as part of the EWRail project. BCC efforts in respect of HS2 are now concentrated on trying to get a better deal for communities that will be impacted by this development.

Vehicle Activated Speed indicator device: what data has been collected and how can it be used? Data from minute 14/14 were re-stated and the next Local Area Forum agenda includes a session from TVPolice detailing how parishes & TVP can work together to maximise the effectiveness of these devices. A resident urged LHPC to consider traffic calming measures for Winslow Road, one of the most walked routes in the village with no footways. It was explained that no VAS ground anchor was installed here because of the required line of sight for effective functioning of a device.

Future Councillors: what steps are in hand to publicise and encourage residents to stand for election in May 2015 given that the Chairman has already indicated that she intends to retire? After this meeting Councillors will be available to discuss what is involved in being a Councillor and how to become involved. Also to discuss any issues that those present wish to raise privately, rather than publicly. Publicity and efforts to encourage new candidates will continue throughout the coming year.

The Chairman invited those present to remain for a glass of wine, donated by Cllr Cowdrey, i.e. not charged to LHPC.

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm.

Signed: Chairman

at 2015 Annual Parish Meeting on