

WOODCHURCH ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

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MINUTES

Minutes of the Woodchurch Annual Parish Meeting, held on Friday, 5 April 2019 at the Memorial Hall, Woodchurch at 7.00 pm

ATTENDANCE: Nine Members of the Public were in attendance and 4 Parish Councillors.

The Chairman opened the meeting by emphasizing the fact that the Annual Parish Meeting is for Villagers, not the Parish Council and that everyone is entitled to speak but requested that the normal rules of debate be observed.

The Chairman then introduced ABC Ward Member, Mrs Aline Hicks, County Councillor, Mr Mike Angell and Mrs Judith Batt, Parish Clerk.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An Apology for Absence was received from Parish Councillors, Mr N Jones, Mr P Wood and Borough Councillor, Mr G Bradford

MINUTES OF 2018 MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2018 were accepted and it was unanimously agreed that Mr West should sign them.

Proposed Mr Wood

Seconded Mr Spice

UPDATE ON WOODCHURCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mrs Silcock, Chair of PTA reported that the school is going through a transitional period as the Headmistress has resigned and her last day was today. The appointment of the new Headteacher has been challenging but it has been confirmed that the Deputy Head will be the Head of School and the Headmistress of High Halden will act for both High Halden and Woodchurch Schools. She will work in High Halden for 2 – days per week. There are about 180 pupils on the role from about 130 families, some from the new developments in Ashford.

The School faces significant challenges, particularly regarding the question of outside space, which needs to be addressed as the school grows.

Parking at drop off and collection time continues to be a problem and the School regularly communicates with parents regarding this, asking them to park considerately.

The Parish Council has asked the Highway Steward to attend to discuss a possible solution. This is a countywide issue and KCC has just started a consultation with Members of the Public regarding parking outside of schools. At the moment the lines are advisory and cannot be enforced but the law is going to be changed to make parking on them illegal.

BOROUGH COUNCILLORS HICKS TO TAKE QUESTIONS ON HER REPORT CIRCULATED PRIOR TO THE MEETING

Please see reports attached.

Mrs Hicks added that the Borough Council does listen to the public and she was able to report that a developer, who put in an appeal to the Planning Inspector following Ashford Borough Council's Planning Committee's decision to refuse an application for 21 houses in Shadoxhurst, has had his appeal dismissed.

There were no questions or comments from the floor.

Mr West thanked Mrs Hicks and Mr Bradford for their work with the Parish Council.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR ANGELL TO TAKE QUESTIONS ON HIS REPORT CIRCULATED PRIOR TO THE MEETING

Please see report attached.

Mr Angell reported that he had been to a briefing by the Emergency Planning Group regarding Brexit. Kent County Council has been working hard with Medway, Essex, Sussex and Surrey Councils to ensure that any transition goes smoothly.

Mr Angell discussed the issue of Brexit with those present and one of the main concerns put forward is the issue of congestion on the motorway and traffic flow. There were considerable concerns among the members of the public present that the barriers will be left in place if Brexit is delayed. The French have the same problems. Mr Angell said that pressure will be put on Highways England and the Department for Transport to remove the barriers when possible, but it is their decision. Members of the Public were concerned that the barriers will be left in place for the convenience of those organising the roads.

Ashford Borough Council has contingency plans. The main problem will be getting staff to work, and the motorway will effectively cause a north south divide in the town. The collection of rubbish will start an hour earlier, and some areas may have a Saturday collection.

ABC will be governed by the Police as they form the Resilience Team. Officers will move into Gold Command and be in complete charge, but the Elected Members of KCC all have their role in helping their communities.

Mrs Hicks from ABC was asked whether the risk posed by overnight parking problems has been calculated as there were concerns that Ashford and the surrounding area will have a lot of lorries trying to park up overnight. Mr Hicks replied that the recent scheme allowing clamping and fining of lorries parked on roadsides, which has been running for 2 – 3 years might not be feasible in an emergency situation.

Manston Airport has been made ready to accept 2000 – 3000 lorries but this will be the last resort.

Mr West thanked Mr Angell for his work with the Parish Council.

COUNCILLOR WEST TO TAKE QUESTIONS ON HIS REPORT CIRCULATED PRIOR TO THE MEETING

Mr West pointed out that the Council has one vacancy and asked anyone who is interested to contact the Parish Clerk.

Mrs Hicks thanked the Parish Council

Mr Angell congratulated the Chairman on being awarded the British Empire Medal.

PARISH COUNCIL FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The Receipts and Payments Summary for the year ended 31 March 2019 was circulated. The Clerk pointed out that this was as at the last Parish Council meeting as the end of year Bank Statement has not yet been received.

The accounts book and the minute book are available for public inspection on request.

The balance at bank as at 31 March 2019 was £45925.04.

The Precept for the year 2019/20 has been set at £24,800. We are also to receive a Concurrent Functions grant of £ 1150.00 and a Council Tax Support Grant of £1124.00 making a total of £27074.00.

A VAT claim for the year ended 31 March 2019 will be submitted for £ 1495.93.

Propose Mr Spice

Second Mr Nash

WOODCHURCH IN BLOOM

Please see attached report.

Cllr Bradford arrived at this point in the meeting.

WOODCHURCH YARD TOGETHER

The congregation is absolutely thrilled by the response to this scheme and is grateful to everyone involved.

Community Payback will be back in the Village in the next few weeks and will paint the railings and mow the grass.

Contractors have been invited to submit quotes to remove the damaged trees.

The next Volunteers Weekend is due to be held on 20 and 21 April.

ANY OTHER REPORTS

Please see report from PCSO Katherine Richards attached.

A resident wanted to raise the fact that an item posted Next Door Shadoxhurst copied and pasted from a Police Report was somewhat misleading. When police put out these notices can they please make sure that the headlines reflect reality rather than sensationalise them.

OPEN FORUM

Borough Councillor Bradford apologised for being late.

He told those present that he was not standing for Woodchurch in the forthcoming election. He said he had enjoyed working with Woodchurch and had learnt a lot but he but felt his skills were better suited to another ward in the Borough.

There being no other question the meeting closed at 7.34 pm.

Signed Dated