

Minutes of a meeting of Arreton Parish Council held on-line on **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021** at **7.00pm**.

**Present:** Cllrs Kimber, Calloway, Cooper, Dodson, Healy, Roberts and Verey.

In attendance: IWC Cllr Mosdell, Sheila Caws (Clerk) and two members of the public.

**023/21 Apologies for Absence**

Cllr Orchard

**024/21 Questions from the public**

There were no questions.

**025/21 To receive and confirm the minutes of the previous meetings (11<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021)**

The minutes of January 11<sup>th</sup> were confirmed and will be signed at a later date – proposed Cllr Cooper, seconded Cllr Roberts. The minutes of January 18<sup>th</sup> were confirmed and will be signed at a later date – proposed Cllr Roberts, seconded – Cllr Cooper

**026/21 To receive regular reports**

- (a) IWC Councillor – IWC Cllr Mosdell reported that there have been problems with parking at Merstone Station, which is so popular that cars have been parked on the verges opposite at Newlands. It has also led to problems for Southern Water vehicles trying to reach their site further along the track. This is unadopted and so Rights of Way have been informed. Better signage may be one solution.  
The Cabinet has mainly been concerned with the Budget and public health.  
In response to a question, Cllr Mosdell said that there was a list of priority groups who were invited to fill any spaces left by no-shows for vaccines. These were mostly from the voluntary sector working in the community.  
There are burnt-out cars on St Georges Down which will be cleared at some point. Colin Rowland (Director of Neighbourhoods) is aware of the problem.  
Advertising signs are appearing on the verges in Watery Lane. Cllr Mosdell will investigate.
- (b) Cemetery and Churchyard matters – it was reported that the pedestrian gate at Gore Cemetery is frequently being left open. The Clerk will investigate ways of installing a self-closing mechanism.
- (c) Highways and footpaths – the Chairman reported that he has contacted Island Roads regarding the erosion on the cycletrack at Horryngford. The surface of the cycletrack is breaking up near Redway, which he will investigate and report to the appropriate department.  
After heavy rain there is always significant standing water in the road at Hale Common adjacent to the car dealers. It is assumed that there is a blocked pipe between two gullies, meaning that water ponds and flows to the first functioning gully. The Clerk will investigate and report the problem to Island Roads.  
More potholes are appearing outside the entrance to Arreton Manor – the Clerk will report them.
- (d) Chairman's report – the Chairman reported that it was a very quiet month again but he had been assisting Cllr Verey with some technical queries relating to the UKOG planning application.  
The Chairman has given some thought to the forthcoming local elections when, based on recent history, the Parish Council may struggle to achieve a full complement of councillors if any of the current councillors do not stand again. Councillors will be encouraged to decide as soon as possible if they intend to stand again.

The government has issued guidance on voting, with postal and proxy voting to be allowed, which could be included in the newsletter.

The Chairman has previously commented on litter picking, as the environment of Arreton is relatively litter-free environment. This is probably mainly due to the activities of a local couple and he thought that the Parish Council should try and have their work acknowledged. He would like the thoughts of other councillors.

The Chairman has also done a little investigation into the recent flooding along the cycle path. It would seem that that the key drivers of flooding in the Parish are obviously rainfall but also the level of the weir at Alverstone. This weir essentially controls upstream water levels. The weir was adjustable in the past, with electric motors used to raise or lower the weir. However the motors are now derelict and so presumably the weir is fixed. The property flooding that occurred at Alverstone was probably downstream of the weir, meaning that if the weir level were to be lowered to reduce upstream flooding, property flooding at Alverstone would worsen.

IWALC - There was an Executive meeting held on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> January. The agenda was fairly mundane, covering little other than regular reports and an item raised by Northwood PC over the IW Council's decision to stop advertising planning applications on posts etc. near to the site to which the application applies, relying solely on notices in the County Press.

Key points:

- Subscription to IWALC will be less for 2021 due to lower costs associated with Covid: £146 for Arreton compared to approx. £192 for 2020.
- IWALC are considering an offer from IW Radio to put out news. This did not receive much support although it was felt to have potential for advertising the local elections. The IWALC Bulletin is being revived and it was suggested that Clerks should be assisted in producing material for the newsletter
- The 6<sup>th</sup> February workshop on relations between IoW council and IWALC was discussed. Councillor Roberts 'attended' – see her report below. There is obviously a strong feeling amongst the larger parish councils that the IW Council take little notice of their needs or comments. IWALC see this as a 'visioning' workshop!
- The discussion on planning site notices morphed into a discussion on more general housing needs and social/affordable housing. No obvious conclusion but IWALC will write re the site notices.
- The local council tax support grant was discussed – this is being terminated but with little impact on Arreton.
- There was a discussion over the potential for PCs to assist students with no laptop/iPad by contributing to a fund to buy some. This led to a sub-committee being set up to consider the idea, including talking to schools. (This sounded to me an unlikely idea, by the time anything useful is defined schools will be open again.)
- The local elections were discussed together with the lack of young people as councillors – no real conclusion.

I thought the meeting somewhat uncontrolled leading to a good deal of ignoring the Agenda items in favour of items of more interest to individual attendees. The meeting lasted two hours but could have been wrapped up in considerably less time – although Zoom meetings are difficult.

- (e) Meetings reports – Cllr Roberts attended an IWALC workshop to look at the position of IWALC and the way forward. Eighteen councillors, the Treasurer, the County Officer and two facilitators from the mainland were present.

Twenty-five Town and Parish Councils are members of IWALC, six Ts and PCs are members of HALC (Hampshire Association of Local Council), and two belong to neither. The main reason for belonging to HALC appeared to be that it is cheaper than to belong to IWALC, and also so many statutory bodies e.g. Social Services, Police, Fire etc. are now organised from Hampshire. It was felt that two of the Parish Clerks had particularly encouraged their Councils to become members of HALC or affiliated to neither. Despite the disparity of numbers, there is only one representative of IWALC and one of HALC on the IWC. It was felt that IWC almost favoured HALC rather than IWALC. IWALC's main objectives were to:-

1. organise training for Councillors and, despite the cost in manpower to organise the training, IWC insisted on HALC members being able to come to the training for free if IWALC was using people from the IWC to give the training.
2. provide a newsletter (one of which will be released shortly) and of course to support the T and PCs who were its members and
3. to help with encouraging them to be more ambitious (one example from the mainland was a Town Council who had acquired funding for car charging points on the kerbside where one would put money in the slot to pay for a charge) and various ideas were put forward to get funding for more ambitious projects.
4. to help with things like resilience planning.
5. Another issue IWALC is keen to support is allowing remote or hybrid meetings for council business, which at the moment will be illegal after May.

It was decided to run a meeting after the elections and relaunch IWALC partly to encourage the HALC members to change to IWALC but mostly to show what IWALC can achieve as it was felt we would all be stronger if we were speaking with one voice. Covid in some ways has brought communities together and we should build on that.

Cllr Verey attended a recent meeting of the Local Access Forum. Paul Fuller was elected to Chairman (a post he expects to hold temporarily). He read out the previous Chair's report which covered section 106 payments, the community structure levy and district level licensing. Items covered included:-

The progress of the Coastal Path and the difficulties of connections in the area at Barton. It was reported the new working team were liaising well but there were difficulties due to lockdown restrictions. They were asked if there were any deadlines for the phase around East Cowes, as the Chairman would like the project to move on more quickly.

Greenway from Newport to East Cowes - for commuters. Right of Way through a field used for grazing. Progress in the appointment of a new working team.

Positive discussions on the West Wight Cycle Route; the IWC has put a budget together and the team is working sensitively with landowners.

RoW – have budget of £100,000 up from £60K, they are submitting projects.

ROW -There is to be a new Gunville Greenway through the CofE primary school, from Sainsbury to Carisbrooke Church.

It was reported there are dangerous areas of the coastal paths, blind corners, people walking in the road, no pavements and safety issues, at Newtown and Thorness.

RoW- There is to be a new path at Compton as the old one is too close to the cliff edge.

ROW- statutory obligations for signage in place.

Footpaths – there is an ambiguity concerning the footpaths at Sandown Golf Club, they are waiting to hear before action.

Parkhurst Forestry Commission - problems have arisen with anti-social behavior and fly tipping. It was confirmed that the Police have been contacted.

Updates from the IW Bridleway Group of the British Horse Society on safety issues. ROW- the new for the bridleway has been spray-painted with anti-slip for horses. The representative from Bridleways said the cycle track surfaces which were suitable for bikes were not suitable for horses. It was said tarmac was not appropriate for horses and other options should be considered.

E-Scooters – the IW Council is working with Beryl. There have been some reports of anti-social behavior, no need for valid driving license and scooters left lying down on pavements. Beryl have been asked for an update for next meeting.

Concern was expressed about the image the Diamond Races could have on youngsters and the number of teenagers killed on motorbikes.

Councillors are pushing for mobile average speed cameras, not fixed cameras.

ROW- it was noted that if the Diamond Races take place rights of way will need to be closed.

Cycle Track - maintenance is the responsibility of the IW Council and Island Roads and there is concern that the right decisions are not being made.

Ramblers have been very active and have completed a review and detailed submission for ten or 11 sections of RoW. There have been 31 representations and they hope to get extra improvements. Parish representatives have all helped with the survey.

Ramblers association have a web page *Lost Paths* and many miles of old paths that were not part of the last definitive ROW route map have been identified in the region. There is a process of review to see if any of these lost paths maybe re-opened.

**CLA** Landowner association – there has been a large increase in access in all areas of the countryside due to the three Covid lockdowns. Whilst members are positive, it is difficult to get people to understand the countryside is also a working environment.

CLA is supporting rural business, sustainable farming and the tourism economy; currently they are lobbying government re the hospitality industry to keep the VAT at 5%.

Hedges - there were a number of parishes concerned about the recent hedge slashing, affecting biodiversity and micro habitats. It was reported the IW Council have a fixed resource, i.e. one tractor with slasher.

It was reported that Island Roads have in the past been helpful when Parishes have made specific requests for their own hedge cutting timetable, for example as used by Gatcombe & Chillerton, although this year the instructions to the contractor seemed to have been ignored. Havenstreet reported their hedges having been cut in November. It was noted that one hedge cutter has the potential to slash 1,000 saplings in an hour.

IWC Cllr Steve Hastings had in the past been to Dorset with Cllr Hobart to see the regime they have in place for verges and hedge schedules. The IW needs a policy in order to to go to Cllr Ward and have an agreement with Island Roads.

Cllr Verey was proposed for a Hedges Sub Group.

There was a suggestion that LAF set up a newsletter to improve communications. It was agreed that a small working group be set up. Other suggestions included a website, social media and being a conduit for other groups). The secretary asked if

there was a budget. Meeting participants asked this would be measured in terms of success and if it would join the National Local Access Forum and Natural England. A small working group was elected and suggestion was made for a press release so more people become aware of LAF.

- (f) Clerk's report – Agenda and Minutes Record: the Clerk has contacted the Head Teacher at Arreton Primary School regarding computers and laptops for home-schooling and has received a reply to say that the School has adequate provision at present. The Clerk also contacted Gift for Nature regarding the new tree plantings at Arreton Cross but they know nothing about them.

Other matters - the planning application for two houses on land adjacent to Moorfields, Blackwater has been refused. The application for a barn at Great East Standen Manor Farm has been granted, subject to it only being used for agricultural storage purposes in relation to the Farm.

The Clerk has submitted the annual VAT claim and has also invoiced the IW Council for the annual burial precept.

The death has been announced of Mrs Isabel Favell, a former Parish Councillor and Vice-Chairman of the Council from 2005-2009. Mrs Favell stood down from the Council in May 2013.

Training - the Clerk will be attending the SLCC Practitioners' Conference later this month.

Several councillors have expressed an interest in attending a session on the 'Environmental aspects of planning' being organised by IWALC later this month.

**027/21 To receive any declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest and requests for dispensations under the Localism Act 2011. To give notice of any item to be raised under agenda item 036/21 – nothing was raised.**

**028/21 Finance**

The finance report for January was received and the balance in the current account was noted as being £7111.21 at the end of January. The following payments were agreed:

Staff costs (salaries, expenses etc.)	£418.59
Brighstone Landscaping (grounds maint.)	£331.20
IWALC (subscription)	£145.40

**029/21 Planning and appeals**

Reference	21/00016/RVC
Alternative Reference	Not Available
Application Received	Wed 06 Jan 2021
Address	Land opposite Bardon Vectis site to east of Stone Farm Blackwater Road Newport Isle Of Wight
Proposal	Variation of condition no 11 on P/00941/13 to extend the life of the solar farm by 15 years (southern site)
Reference	21/00016/RVC

Alternative Reference	Not Available
Application Received	Wed 06 Jan 2021
Address	Land opposite Bardon Vectis site to east of Stone Farm Blackwater Road Newport Isle Of Wight
Proposal	Variation of condition no 11 on P/00941/13 to extend the life of the solar farm by 15 years (southern site)
Reference	21/00004/HOU
Alternative Reference	PP-09382334
Application Received	Mon 04 Jan 2021
Address	Sanbara Chapel Lane Merstone Arreton Newport Isle Of Wight PO30 3DD
Proposal	Proposed alterations and extensions to existing bungalow to form a chalet bungalow; single storey extension and conversion of existing garage to form additional living accommodation
Reference	20/00513/FUL
Alternative Reference	Not Available
Application Received	Wed 18 Mar 2020
Address	Land to the North East of New Barn Business Park Sandown Road Arreton Newport Isle of Wight PO30 3BT
Proposal	The construction, operation and decommissioning of a well site for the exploration and appraisal of hydrocarbon minerals from one exploratory borehole (Arreton-3) and one side-track borehole (Arreton-3z) for a temporary period of three years involving the siting of plant and equipment, the construction of a new access track, a new junction with the Newport to Sandown highway (A3056), the erection of boundary fencing, entrance gates and other ancillary development with restoration to agriculture - revised plans and information relating to means of access and rights of way mitigation measures, site layout, sections and restoration; clarification relating to ecology and environmental health issues; revised location plan/ red line boundary (readvertised application)

It was agreed that there were no objections to the solar farm applications.

With regard to the application for Sanbara, it was agreed to object on the following grounds:-

- i) The application is rather light on detail, particularly with regard to parking arrangements. No indication is given as to how many cars can be accommodated on the site at present and the loss of the garage would potentially remove a parking space from the site. There is little room for parking elsewhere in the lane.
- ii) An increase in the number of bedrooms suggests an increase in the number of people using the house. Chapel Lane is a narrow country lane that is well-used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders and is particularly narrow at this point with a passing place opposite the house. The lane already carries quite a considerable amount of traffic, especially as tractor drivers and others use it to gain access to an industrial estate further up the lane. Any increase in traffic would therefore be unwelcome.

- iii) The house to the east of the site is unusual in that it does not face the road but is at right angles to it and all the windows are on the side adjoining Sanbara. Any increase in height to the adjoining property would result in a loss of amenities to the house to the east, including loss of light and privacy.
- iv) With regard to the garage element of the application, the garage itself sits right on the eastern boundary and would further contribute to the loss of amenities next-door.
- v) No details are given concerning the disposal of foul sewage, especially from the new garage element. Is the presumed existing septic tank of a sufficient size to cope with increased use? This is an important consideration as this is an area with no mains drainage.
- vi) The chosen construction materials do not appear to fit well with the existing setting.
- vii) There is already a shortage of two-bedroom houses in the Parish and a surplus of those of three bedrooms and more. Such a development does not fit in with the known requirements in the area.

The application for the oil well was considered again as councillors had further points that they wished to add to those agreed at the meeting on January 18<sup>th</sup>. The full submission is as follows:-

- i) The most recent comments from Island Roads have been noted and the various proposed conditions are supported.
- ii) Moving the entrance and creating the required splay will result in the loss of hedgerow and also some of the topographical screening of the site.
- iii) The lighting, which will be necessary 24 hours a day at times, will be more intrusive than first thought. The fact that the site is above the road and the oblique angle of the hill means down-shot shrouded lighting is visible from in valley and on road. The night-time lighting will cause intrusive glare to road users and from distant viewpoints (such as behind Godshill Church) the impact of the site is clearly visible day and night.
- iv) With reference to the wheel wash, there is concern that the water run-off may be contaminated but there are no apparent means to contain and dispose of it.
- v) The disposal of contaminated water is a general issue as there appear to be no definite arrangements for disposal, as noted in our original objection nos.vi, vii and xii.
- vi) There is also concern that there do not appear to be any plans in place to deal with a potential oil or other contaminant spill on the access road to prevent any run-off into adjacent fields.
- vii) The Ecological Report refers to a Dust Management Plan. How will this dust be disposed of as it may also contain contaminants?
- viii) Given the date of the current ecology plan and the date of the Ecological Officer's last comments, has the EO commented on the most recent plan?
- ix) With regard to the ecology, it is noted that most of the research is now over two years old and may need re-visiting.
- x) There is the possibility of air pollution, which is of particular concern as the village and particularly the school are in the prevailing direction downwind of the site. Due to the geographical location of the site, this might have the unfortunate effect of exacerbating any existing pollution from the anaerobic digester site as noted in our original comment no. xiii. There is a possibility that this pollution may contain methane.
- xi) Should this application be approved, the members would like to see lichen surveys undertaken in several areas, particularly downwind of the site, before work commences and at regular intervals thereafter, as lichen is an internationally recognised indicator of air pollution. A current baseline needs to be established before any work commences.
- xii) Likewise, the members would like air quality and emissions of Nitrogen Dioxide to be measured on the main road outside the Arreton Primary School to establish a baseline.

It is noted that the IW Council Air Quality Report of June 2019 into levels of Nitrogen Dioxide does not include any rural measurements taken in rural areas.

- xiii) Should the application be approved, who will monitor the various potential environmental impacts, who will pay for the monitoring and who will pay for any remedial work that may prove necessary? Is there a 'polluter pays' policy in place, as is the case with incidents in a marine environment?
- xiv) The financial aspect, particularly the costs of returning the site to its original condition, is of considerable concern, as stated in our original objection no. xxiv. It is understood that the costs could run into many millions of pounds, much more than we originally envisaged.
- xv) It is not clear from the remedial action plan how the original land will be restored. Will it be restored to agriculture or chalk? The suggestion is chalk but the soil analysis show it to be ferruginous sands therefore their suggestion appears contrary to reality.
- xvi) Are there other exploration methods that could be considered other than drilling?
- xvii) Given the direction indicated in the borehole deviation plan, are the results of the drilling at Perreton not indicative of reserves in the vicinity? It is understood that some core samples are available for consultation locally.
- xviii) It is also noted that the deviation plan includes land under the village of Merstone and parts of Arreton village.
- xix) It is noted that the IW Council has recently stated an aim to become carbon neutral and also has a long-running commitment to reducing waste and the cost of waste disposal. This application would appear to run counter to both those aims in terms of contaminated waste products, flaring of gases, increased HGV transport on land and sea.
- xx) The effects of the current COVID-19 pandemic make it vital that any planning permission should take into account how any future event of this kind could be dealt with; emergency planning, sickness affecting oil production staff, long-term problems affecting vehicle and ferry transport etc.
- xv) The members of the Parish Council re-iterate their objection to this application, as outlined by their original statement from July 2020.

#### **030/21 Budget**

The Budget for 2021/22 was agreed at the precept of £10,400, which is no increase on last year.

#### **031/21 Trees**

It was agreed to form a working party to look at the planting of trees in the Churchyard and Cemetery. This will consist of Cllrs Calloway, Dodson and Verey and terms of reference will be drawn up.

#### **032/21 Resilience planning**

It was agreed to form a working party to look at a resilience plan for the Parish. This will consist of Cllrs Healy, Kimber and Roberts and terms of reference will be drawn up. The Clerk contacted the other clerks in the new Central Rural Ward with a view to some form of co-operation but so far, only one has replied. It was suggested that linking up with Newport and Carisbrooke Community Council might be a way forward.

#### **033/21 Gore Cemetery**

It was agreed to ask Brighstone Landscaping to undertake infilling work in the Cemetery at a cost of £140.00 plus VAT. However, it was decided to wait until the problems with the pedestrian gate are solved – see Cemetery and Churchyard report above.

**034/21 Beavers**

Cllr Mosdell reported that the Hampshire and IW Wildlife Trust hopes to undertake a project to introduce beavers to the eastern Yar. However, this is unlikely to take place for at least 18 months and she will request that someone from the Trust comes to speak to the Parish Council.

**035/21 To note the date of the next meeting, 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

The meeting will be held on-line as Covid regulations are unlikely to be lifted before then.

**036/21 Any other matters raised by councillors for discussion only**

The subject of the junctions at the Hare and Hounds and Arreton Cross were raised and the Clerk will contact Island Roads again.

There being nothing else raised, the meeting concluded at 8.51pm.

**Sheila Caws, Clerk to the Council**  
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11<sup>th</sup> February 2021

..... Chairman

..... Date