

Minutes of a meeting of Arreton Parish Council held on **Monday 13th February 2023** at **7pm** in **Arreton Community Hall**

Present: Cllrs Gurney-Champion, Dodson, Healy, Mills, Orchard, Roberts and Verey
In attendance: Sheila Caws (Clerk) and 1 member of the public

023/23 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Cooper (on holiday) and IWC Cllr Ellis (unwell).

024/23 Questions from the public

None received.

025/23 To receive any declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest and requests for dispensations under the Localism Act 2011.

Cllr Verey declared a pecuniary interest in the planning application for Merstone Valley Nurseries.

026/23 To give notice of any item to be raised under agenda item 045/23

One item was raised.

027/23 To receive and confirm the minutes of the previous meeting (8th January 2023)

The minutes of the meeting held on January 8th were confirmed and signed – proposed Cllr Healy, seconded Cllr Dodson.

028/23 To receive regular reports

a) IW Councillor – in her absence, IWC Cllr Ellis compiled a report which was read out by the Chairman.

Ward work during January has seen the continuance of working to progress planning enquiries and enforcement, including site visits and meetings with applicants, residents and planning officers. Our Planning Department continues to be under significant pressure and this has inevitably led to delays and difficulties.

IWC Cllr Ellis has been responding to a number of enquiries regarding flooding and drainage issues, working closely with the IW Council's newly appointed Drainage and Flood Risk Management Officer, Mr Youngs, to liaise with landowners regarding their responsibilities under the Land Drainage Act – including looking into ongoing problems in Gatcombe Road. Of particular note is the success we have had in this regard in Arreton, which suffered significant flood and mud damage in the summer. The landowners have now put measures in place on the land on the Community Hall side of the village and to date this appears to be working well as, despite the recent heavy rains, there has been no further run-off from these fields. A drop-in style meeting was held at Arreton Community Centre with IW Council officers and IWC Cllr Ellis being present to discuss flooding and flood prevention - this was a very successful event. Going forwards there will be work with landowners to address a problem with a drainage ditch on the other side of the village – although at the time of writing neither IWC Cllr Ellis nor Mr Youngs have received replies to emails sent to the landowners. Mr Youngs will attempt once more to contact them informally - failing a positive response he will then write a formal letter outlining a request for better watercourse management and ongoing maintenance.

During the month, IWC Cllr Ellis has attended meetings of Full Council and the Appeals Committee in January, councillor development group and councillor briefings – including a session on the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework). She visited Wight Building Materials with IWC Cllr Bacon to officially open their new filter press, which will dramatically reduce the amount of water and land used in the processing of aggregate materials at St

George's Down where WBM have been quarrying for the past 80 years – although she understands there has been a quarry at this site since the Romans!

IWC Cllr Ellis accompanied Donna Jones, the Police and Crime Commissioner to a meeting with Community Action Isle of Wight to hear about their great work with youth teams and is attending one of the 'Eyes Wide' sessions they are running on Tuesday 7th Feb to gain a better understanding of county lines, Child Criminal Exploitation and knife crime. They were also given a briefing on the Ukrainian refugees – of whom 197 are currently being hosted on the Island.

b) Cllr Orchard reported that there no signs of any rabbits in Gore Cemetery but plenty of moles.

As noted at the last meeting, Cllr Verey was pleased to report that the cherry trees in the Churchyard were showing signs of life.

c) Highways and footpaths – it was noted that the Arreton village sign at the Downend Road junction has been knocked over. The Clerk will report this to Island Roads.

Cllr Roberts reported that there was a tree across the path where Shepherd's Lane turns left at the top of the hill.

d) Chairman's report - the Chairman reported that he had attended at Broadfields Farm on January 10th with the landowners, their agent and Russell Chick, a senior planner with the IW Council. IWC Cllr Ellis and a local resident were also there. The Chairman said that it was an interesting meeting and, once on site, it was possible to see how huge the development is and the potential for further impact on local residents.

On January 23rd, the Chairman attended the flooding drop-in meeting at the Community Hall being held by officers from the IW Council – see also agenda item 035/23.

e) IWALC – Cllr Roberts reported on the recent IWALC Executive meeting.

The Draft Island Planning Strategy has been put on hold for another three months, whilst awaiting a Government decision on the new National Planning Policy Framework.

A request has been received from the IW Council for local councils to help fund the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector. It was decided that there was not enough information and notice was too short as budgets have already been decided. It was agreed that IWALC will meet with IW Council to discuss their pressures. It was also agreed to hold a workshop to work out relations between the IW Council and the local councils with a facilitator.

e) Meeting reports – Cllr Roberts reported on several meetings that she has attended recently.

Teams meeting with Natasha Dix from Island Roads (12/01/2023). There are 257 unadopted roads on the IW, and Island Roads are looking at 23 of them which have potholes that are a danger to the people collecting the waste bins. The workers walk or run up to 10 miles a day, so it is important that the roads are safe, although the drivers do risk assessments as they drive along. Island Roads will communicate with landowners about repairs in the relevant areas. It was also noted that bridlepaths are managed by the IW Council's Rights of Way department.

IW Council Budget meeting (30/01/2023). It was explained that next year, there will only be enough money to cover the statutory requirements and little else e. g. Adult and Children's Social Care take 63% of the Budget. The Members of the IW Council are pleased that they have a balanced budget, otherwise there would be the possibility of the Council being taken over by Price Waterhouse, for example, who would cut everything. There have been unforeseen problems due to inflation etc. and therefore wages have risen by 6.7%. Also, income is less as leisure centre usage is way down on prepandemic levels, amongst other items.

IW Council Scrutiny Committee (07/02/2023)

There was further discussion on the IW Council's Budget and its difficulties with £3.9 million of cuts. The Council Tax funds 60% of the finances of the Council and that is capped at less than inflation. The IW Council would need £8-9 million to prevent cuts such as the removal of support for stroke patients which at the moment is excellent.

There was anger at the lack of warning of the amalgamation of the IW and Portsmouth NHS Budgets with questions as to how it will work.

There was also a question regarding the existence of a strategy for brownfield sites to be developed?

Meeting with Bob Seely MP (09/02/2023)

It was reported that Camp Hill may be soon the site of a Special Educational Needs school.

A Bluebells Ward has been opened for patients who are ready to leave hospital but have no care package in place. This will free up beds for other urgent cases to come in and so relieve pressure on A&E etc.

Mr Seely said that residents are asking where the big pot of money that was promised for the Island has gone and he replied that there are various pots of money e.g. for Bluebell Ward and still time for the IW Council to apply for more.

f) Tree project – see agenda item 041/23.

g) Clerk's report – Agenda and Minutes Record: all items from the last meeting are covered by agenda items.

Other matters: the planning applications for Budbridge Lodge, Rowan Tree and Bramleys have all been granted. The application for the live/work units at Hale Common has been refused. An application to remove a rotten horse chestnut tree at Chessell Butts has been approved.

Regarding Broadfields Farm, Russell Chick, a Senior Planning Officer with the IW Council, has written to the Parish Council to say that he met the applicant and Cllr Ellis at the site a couple of weeks ago to discuss the proposals. He is expecting a noise report and this will need to cover all four of the planning applications that we have for the site. The applicant is also considering to how to improve on the current proposed bund/landscaping in order to mitigate impacts on the properties on Chapel Lane.

The Clerk wrote to Insp Gooding regarding a return visit to the Parish Council to report on the measures being undertaken to reduce speeding on the Island in general and the Parish in particular but has not had a reply. The Clerk has written again.

029/23 Finance

The finance report for January was received and the balance in the current account was noted as being £4,969.33 at the end of January. The following payments were agreed:

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| Staff costs (salaries etc.) | £652.30 |
| IW Music, Dance and Drama Festival (donation) | £50.00 |
| IW Scout Council (donation – Taylor) | £100.00 |
| Naturezones (donation) | £55.00 |
| IWALC (subscription) | £199.58 |
| Arreton Community Hall M't C'ttee (hall hire) | £226.00 |
| S Caws (retirement gift for the Burial Registrar) | £54.75 |

030/23 Planning and appeals

Cllr Verey left the meeting.

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| Reference | 22/022289/FUL |
| Alternative Reference | PP-11787159 |

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| Application received | Wed 21 Dec 2022 |
| Address | Merstone Valley Nurseries Merstone Lane Arreton Newport Isle of Wight PO30 3DE |
| Proposal | Proposed alterations and conversion of barn to form residential unit; relocation and reconstruction of barn framework and works to form a residential unit |

It was agreed that there was no objection to this application.

As a general comment on all applications, the members agreed that they would like to see encouragement of the use of renewable energy resources where appropriate e.g solar panels, ground heat pumps etc.

Cllr Verey returned to the meeting

031/23 Budget

Two budget precept figures were presented - £16,250 (an increase of 56.25%) and £15,000 (an increase of 44.23%). Following a discussion, a majority of 5 to 1 with one abstention agreed to the lower figure. A budget precept of £15,000 was proposed by Cllr Roberts, seconded by Cllr Dodson and agreed with one abstention.

032/23 Burial fees

Following a discussion it was agreed to increase the burial fees by 10% - proposed by Cllr Gurney-Champion, seconded by Cllr Orchard and accepted unanimously.

033/23 Burial Regulations

Following a request for a metal headstone, the members agreed to consider it in principle but would like more details. It was also agreed that, should the request be granted, no metal should be inserted in the ground but be mounted on a plinth.

034/23 Defibrillator

Two meetings have been held with members of the Methodist Church, including one with a representative from the charity IoW Defibrillators. A machine can be installed at the Church by IoW Defibrillators at a cost of £1,000 to include installation costs and monthly maintenance. Two possible locations were looked at. It was agreed to go ahead subject to the Methodist Church arranging insurance, an electrical supply to the agreed location and a letter of agreement being drawn up.

035/23 Flooding

A drop-in meeting to discuss flooding issues was held by the IW Council on Monday, January 23rd 2023 at the Community Hall between 4 and 7pm. Both the Chairman and the IW Councillor attended during the session, as did around 15 residents.

Cllr Verey reported that water levels had been very high recently and over the bridge at Budbridge. Residents at Stickworth and Fulford had been cut off for three hours until the level subsided. The Clerk was requested to contact the IW Council's Drainage and Flood Risk Management Officer.

036/23 Planning Enforcement

The IW Council have produced a draft Planning Enforcement Strategy, which is in two parts, the approach to planning enforcement and strategies with town, parish and community councils. With regard to the first part, it was noted that enforcement is not statutory. However, given that the IW Council has given a commitment to it, it was felt that wording could be stronger and the IW Council could list current enforcement actions. Other councils,

such as Cornwall and Southampton, use the same software and have a separate tab for such a list to make enforcement more visible. Other wording could also be stronger.

With regard to part two, there are proposals on how town, parish and community councils could contribute towards the cost of enforcement. There are particular concerns about this because, as yet, there does not appear to be any provision for contributions by smaller councils such as Arreton. As presented, the costs would be prohibitive and would create a two-tier enforcement system for those that can afford to pay and those that cannot.

The Clerk will draft a response for circulation before submission.

037/23 Risk Register

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

038/23 Gore Cemetery shed

The Clerk has arranged a meeting later this month to obtain a second quote for work on the shed.

039/23 Bank mandate

It was agreed to remove Martin Kimber and Heather Calloway from the signatories and add Nicholas Gurney-Champion and Annette Mills – proposed by David Healy, seconded by John Orchard and agreed unanimously.

040/23 Events

It was agreed to hold an event to mark the coronation of HM The King Charles III in May. It is understood that the members of the Methodist Chapel and Arreton Cricket Club are willing to participate and the Clerk will also contact members of St George's Church. A meeting will be held on March 6th at Haseley Manor at a time to be arranged.

041/23 Trees

An application has been approved by the IW Council to remove those trees showing signs of ash die-back on the land opposite the *White Lion*. The Clerk was requested to enquire as to who owned the land and were there any proposals to replace the trees.

042/23 Parish information leaflet

Cllr Roberts has produced an initial draft of a parish information leaflet. Councillors were requested to make suggestions for other possible inclusions.

043/23 Retirement of the Burial Registrar

An event was held at Haseley Manor to mark the retirement of Mrs Pat Phillips as the Burial Registrar for the Parish Council. Mrs Phillips served as Clerk and Registrar from 1978 to 2010 and carried on as Registrar following her retirement as Clerk, therefore serving for 44 years. Mrs Phillips was presented with a card and gift to mark the occasion.

044/23 To note the date of the next meeting, 13th March 2023

045/23 Any other matters raised by councillors for discussion only

i) Cllr Healy raised the question of the Arreton Community Hall Trust. Several of the current Trustees wish to stand down, having served for a number of years and the members of the Trust therefore need to consider the future of the Trust and should it continue to be run in its present form. As the Custodian Trustee, the Parish Council has a direct involvement in the future of the Hall. Cllr Healy will therefore obtain as much documentation as possible from the current Chairman and Treasurer and the matter will be considered at the next meeting.

There being nothing else raised, the meeting concluded at 9.12pm.

Sheila Caws, Clerk to the Council

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20th February 2023

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Chairman

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Date