

Minutes of the meeting of Arreton Parish Council held on **Monday 11th March 2024** at **7.00pm** in **Arreton Community Hall**

Present: Cllrs Gurney-Champion (Chair), Healy, Dodson, Mills, Roberts, Cooper and Verey.

In attendance: Claire Gale (Clerk), Community Speedwatch Representatives – David Harrison-Wood, John Wersby, Bob Castle, 8 members of the public.

042/24 Apologies for Absence

IW Cllr Suzie Ellis (unwell) and IW Cllr Clare Mosdell (family bereavement).

043/24 Questions from the public

A member of the public asked if the new beat officer PC Liz Clapp will be attending a future Parish Council Meeting. The Chair confirmed that she will be invited to attend.

044/24 To receive any declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest and requests for dispensations under the Localism Act 2011.

There were no declarations of interest.

045/24 To give notice of any item to be raised under agenda item 057/24

Cllr Verey and Cllr Roberts gave notice of items for discussion only.

046/24 To receive and confirm the Minutes of the previous meeting (12th February 2024)

RESOLVED : To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting of 12th February.

047/24 Community Speedwatch

The Chair welcomed David Harrison-Wood (Community Speedwatch Co-ordinator for Arreton and Rookley) and volunteers John Werby and Bob Castle. David thanked the Parish Council for providing the group with their own speed gun. He explained that Community Speedwatch is a scheme supported by the police which has no legal powers but seeks to educate the public and encourage speed reduction. Readings are registered and reported to the South East Centre which issues notification letters. Repeat offenders can expect a visit from the local PC or PCSO. The Merstone group has been active since November 2023 and has registered around 500 offences to date, mainly in Merstone. Additional volunteers would be welcome to join.

Bob Castle reported that volunteers have operated 25 sessions of 1 hour with 398 vehicles recorded at speeds of over 35mph and 104 over 40mph, 8 vehicles were recorded today travelling at over 50mph including one at 58mph. The accuracy of the speed gun and procedures have been checked by PCSO Justin Keefe. The group has noticed that when the PCSO is in attendance rather than just the volunteers there is a drop in the number of speeding vehicles. There is a need for official police speed checks and follow up enforcement action including notices and penalty points. Volunteers frequently receive abuse and hand gestures from motorists and this week had an incident of a speeding vehicle driven at them. This has been reported and will be followed up. The police are always aware of the times when the Community Speedwatch volunteers are collecting data. Volunteers are beginning to feel that they are wasting their time.

John Wersby noted residents' concerns that it is not safe to walk through the village of Merstone where there is no pavement or street lighting. He presented a report setting out possible measures to improve safety including physical restrictions such as speed bumps, signage, visual narrowing such as marking out a carriageway footpath and village gateways (such as those installed in Newchurch).

Cllr Gurney-Champion thanked the group for all their time and effort and encouraged them to keep going with their invaluable work. The Parish Council will write a letter to IWC in support of the Community Speedwatch volunteers requesting further action be taken. David Harrison-Wood agreed to provide the Clerk with statistics to include with the letter.

048/24 To receive regular reports

a) IW Councillor

No report was provided. Cllr Suzie Ellis and Cllr Mosdell were unable to attend.

b) Cemetery and churchyard matters

The cherry tree works and wall repairs in the churchyard have been completed. A burial plot has been purchased at Gore and various enquiries dealt with.

c) Highways and footpaths

Cllr Verey has reported the return of badgers undermining the ground on the cycle track at Budbridge Lane on "Fix My Street".

d) Chairman's report

Cllr Gurney-Champion attended the joint public meeting with Newchurch Parish Council where issues of speeding and flooding were discussed. It was a useful meeting with the Environment Agency, Police, Island Roads, H&IW Wildlife Trust and Natural Enterprise attending. Cllr Gurney-Champion confirmed the Clerk is now a permanent member of staff following a successful Probationary Interview .

e) IWALC

Cllr Roberts attended the last executive meeting which discussed planning enforcement, opportunities for installing tubs to reduce the amount of run-off water and a memorandum of understanding between IWC and Town/Parish Councils. Cllr Roberts has circulated minutes and a power point presentation from the most recent topic meeting.

f) Meeting reports

Cllr Roberts attended MP Bob Seely's online meeting which had reported that a mobile dental surgery is now in use on the island, a mobile abattoir is under consideration, some funding is available for parish halls following receipt by IWC of money from central government.

g) Clerk's report

Following the February meeting the IW Cllr was requested to attend March meeting, Rights of Way issues on cycle track and footpath issues were reported. The nomination for Royal Garden Party was submitted. Residents were emailed re Half Term Activities and subsequent traffic notices. The King's portrait has been ordered. Gretel Ingham has been invited to attend April meeting. Arreton Primary School has been asked about use of their parking for D Day event. The Community Speedwatch Group was invited to attend March meeting. Quotations were sought for works on Holm Oak tree at Gore. Arrangements were made for wall repairs and cherry tree works. The Air Ambulance was advised the agreed donation. The current account bank mandate has been changed, confirmation of use of internet banking approval is awaited. The approved February minutes will be sent to conclude changes to mandate for savings accounts.

There have been no notifications of planning application approval.

The Clerk attended a website training session with Paul Webb, Foundation Media and an IWALC training evening at Riverside Centre on Ethical Practice, Welcoming Differing Opinions and the Civility & Respect Pledge. Various Burial Registrar inquiries have been dealt with. A burial took place at Gore on 28th February. The cherry tree and wall work in churchyard have been inspected. The March newsletter distributed. As no election has been called for the process to co-opt a new councillor can now go ahead.

049/24 Finance

The finance report for January was received and the balance in the current account was noted as being £6,194.59.

RESOLVED: To agree and approve the payments were as presented.

050/24 Planning and Appeals

There were no applications. Cllrs asked whether the IW Cllr could be asked whether any progress has been made on the use of lights at night on premises adjacent to The Fighting Cocks and an update requested about the outstanding landscaping at Downend Chalkpit.

051/24 Burial Regulations

Cllrs considered revisions to clauses 9 and 10 of the Burial Regulations and the addition of a fee of £50 per visit under clause 10.

RESOLVED: To agree the revised Burial Regulations with effect from 1st April.

052/24 Freedom of the Parish

Cllr Gurney-Champion presented a draft Policy and Procedure for Granting the Honorary Freedom of the Parish which the council considered.

RESOLVED: To approve the draft Freedom of the Parish Policy.

053/24 D Day 80th Anniversary

Cllr Dodson reported that the bell ringers will be available but will confirm the time of 6.30pm with Jacqui Gill. Cllr Gurney-Champion has made contact with Julie at the White Lion regarding the fish and chip supper which would follow the bell ringing. The Clerk will contact the church regarding possible use of the coach house and contact Kim Powell about possible entertainment and activities that might be provided.

054/24 Donation

Cllrs considered a donation towards the valuable work of the Youth Trust.

RESOLVED: To agree a donation of £100 to the Youth Trust to be paid after 1st April.

055/24 Councillor Co-option

As no election has been called the co-option process can go ahead. Notices will be placed on the council noticeboards, website and emailed to residents. Applications will be invited by 5th April with applicants to be considered during the week beginning 8th April to enable attendance at their first meeting in May.

056/24 To note the date of the next meeting 8th April 2024

The April meeting will be at 7.30pm following the Annual Parish Meeting at 7pm. The dates and times were noted.

057/24 Any other matters raised by Councillors for discussion only

Cllr Verey requested that previous minutes could be checked to establish when a decision was made to write to Rookley Parish Council asking for their support in encouraging local businesses to highlight the benefits of a dark skies approach and to follow this up.

Cllr Verey asked whether it was possible to find out who owns the orchard at Merstone station. It was noted there have been some fly-tipping incidents recently. Cllr Gurney-Champion offered to carry out a land registry search and Cllr Roberts stated she would approach Gift to Nature.

Cllr Roberts asked whether there are spare copies of the Arreton Information leaflet. The Clerk provided some to councillors for distribution to new residents. It may be necessary to update and reprint the leaflet.

058/24 To pass a resolution to exclude the public and press under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to discuss contractual matters.

The council considered quotations received from 4 contractors for the work to the holm oak tree in Gore cemetery. The chosen contractor will be required to provide their insurance certificate, confirm that the

neighbouring graves will be protected during the work and a site meeting will be arranged to agree an area for creation of a small haven for wildlife with some of the cut wood.

RESOLVED: To approve the quotation received from Nigel Earley Services Ltd.

The meeting concluded at 9.03pm.

Claire Gale, Clerk to the Council
E-mail: arretonpc@outlook.com Telephone: 07587 008183

25th March 2024

..... Chairman

..... Date