

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting Wednesday 26 April 2017 at 7.30 p.m. in the Boxted & Hartest Institute

Chair: Cllr Chris Browning
In attendance: Co Cllr Richard Kemp, Dist Cllr James Long and Various Members of the Village and the Parish Council

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Chairman's Welcome: Cllr Chris Browning extended a warm welcome to everyone.

3 Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 27 April 2016: These were read and approved.

4 Matters Arising: None

5 Chairman's Report: Cllr Chris Browning presented his report on the Parish Council's activities during the year including the co-option of Cllr Malcolm Brearley, which returns the PC to its full complement of seven Councillors, a road layout change along The Row, submission of a request for the extension of the 30 mph speed limit on the roads in and out of the village, the affordable housing situation, s106 available funding of approx. £15k towards outdoor recreational facilities and the possibility of a play area shared with the School, an update re Parson's Walk and Somerton Road. Thanks to Cllr Pask, Mr Stephen Stone and a team of volunteers in getting the overgrown hedge at the junction of The Row with Somerton Road under control. Also mentioned was the fencing erected in the Cemetery, thanks to John Kemp. The Neighbourhood Plan Working Party continues with its sterling work on formulating the Neighbourhood Plan, for which thanks were extended to all, and especially Cllr Price. Cllr Browning also thanked all the Parish Councillors, who give so much of their time. Thanks were also extended to County Cllr Kemp and District Cllr Long.

6 Parish Council Finance Report: Brief details of the draft accounts were presented; the two main expenditure heads being Grass Maintenance (which included £100 to prepare and seed around the new water pump (kindly donated by Jo Pask)) and the Clerk's salary of £3.1k. A precept of £10,921 had been requested for 2017-18.

7 County Councillor's Report: In his report, Cllr Kemp referred to the cost savings of £100m made by SCC during the last 3 years including a reduction in management structure – saving over £2m, reduced back office costs and re-designing the way in which services are delivered, whilst protecting front line services whilst maintaining quality and effectiveness. Cllr Kemp had kindly used some of his locality budget towards refurbishing the School swimming pool, drainage improvements and provision of a Rural Coffee Caravan.

8 District Councillor's Report: Cllr Long reported that Charlie Adan had *stepped down* as Chief Executive. Deborah Cadman (Chief Executive, SCC) is providing cover until Arthur Charvonia leaves his current post. BDC will become a Leader/Cabinet led model from May 2017. BDC is moving from Corks Lane, Hadleigh to Endeavour House, Ipswich – with a local contact office in Sudbury. Boundary Commission to review the BDC Ward sizes (i.e. number of councillors) in May 2017 (likely reduction from 43 to 31). Devolution Plan for Norfolk and Suffolk (i.e. a combined authority) stalled when all Councils in Norfolk could not support the plan. Although Suffolk has continued, it seems unlikely that Central Government will support a scheme for Suffolk alone.

9 Police Report: PC Bourne provided a verbal report for the area.

10 Hartest CEVC Primary School Report: New Head Teacher, Matthew Coombs, introduced himself. He reported that the school roll is growing, with prospective new parents regularly visiting having had the school recommended to them. Behaviour across the School continues to be at least good. The presence of a Head Teacher on site full time will continue to ensure good behaviour. A newly reformed School Council has fostered a sense of responsibility and ownership for pupils regarding the leadership of the school and has given pupils a 'voice'. Most pupils are making good progress and some exceptional progress due to improvements in teaching and investing in training and resources for teachers. Further information is available in the attached full report.

11 Hartest Pre-School Report: The Pre-School's report was delivered by Katherine Lee, on behalf of Megan Driver, who took over the role of Manager. She reported on the staffing changes during the last year and also advised that the occupancy rate had increased from 35% in September 2016 to 62% in April 2017. There are now 6 paid staff and 1 volunteer. It is hoped to recruit more committee members as soon as possible. Funding of £620.83 had been raised at the Village Fete and £2,409.69 at the annual Fireworks Display. A joint Christmas Fayre with the Friends of Hartest Primary School saw a sum of just over £1,000 raised, which was split between the School and Pre-School. Also, hot dinners are being made available to all Pre School children for a small charge. More changes are anticipated as significant cuts in funding for all Pre Schools have been made (from £4.21 to £3.87/hr/child – with a loss

for the summer term calculated as £1.6k.) Central Government has also increased funded hours for children from 15 to 30 from September.

12 **Hartest PCC Report:** No report provided.

13 **Neighbourhood Plan:** Nick Price reported that the Working Party had spent much of the year completing various environmental assessments and developing the draft Plan, the policies and community actions for which were created under the guidance of the professional planning adviser, Ian Poole with additional input from Rachel Hogger of BDC. The first full draft was sent to BDC Officers in December, who confirmed that it was compliant with local and national policies and provided an acceptable approach. The Parish Council then agreed that the Plan could go forward for a Pre-Submission Consultation (a statutory 6 weeks' consultation of Hartest residents, landowners and business owners), which was launched at an event in the Boxted & Hartest Institute on 3 March. Due to a technical issue, the on-line survey, used to collect responses, was not working correctly until 16 March, so was extended to 20 May; all residents and stakeholders have been informed. On completion of the consultation, the Working Party is required to produce a report detailing the comments; whilst the consultation is ongoing, Nick advised that a number of concerns have been raised re the 'Cluster' policies; these will be carefully reviewed. Nick added that a recent statement confirms that BDC no longer has a 5 year housing supply, which has significant implications as the Local Plan is now deemed out of date and, for villages without an adopted Neighbourhood Plan, there will be a presumption in favour of development. We are seeking clarity from officers at BDC, but this certainly adds an element of urgency to the process. Once the Plan has been updated (after consultation), it will be submitted for external examination, when residents will have a further opportunity to comment if required. If successful, the Plan will be put to a local referendum, where it must be supported by at least 50% of those voting.

14 **Hartest Women's Institute Report:** Jo Pask presented the report on behalf of the WI's Secretary, Liz Depper; membership has remained stable at 25 with two more people likely to join. Activities had included a tour round Lodge Farm at Westhorpe along with ladies from Mendlesham WI. In September, Hartest WI hosted the WI Group Meeting, which takes place annually and involves a number of local WIs. The event was rounded off by a talk by an auctioneer from Lacy Scott & Knight, who considered that a ceramic poppy from the display at the Tower of London in 2014, is the most likely antique of the future.

15 **Local History Recorder's Report:** As the Official Recorder for Hartest, Jo Pask presented her report covering all the local clubs and their activities, births, deaths, houses bought and sold, road works etc, etc.

16 **Boxted and Hartest Institute Report:** This report advised that the Institute continues to *maintain an even keel*. We have installed emergency lighting, and a new the dish washer and water softener. We have four weddings booked for this year and Eastern Angles returning. The 'Coppers for Coffers' project has raised in excess of £1k since its introduction. The cellar is due to be cleared to create additional storage space. Thanks were extended to all Members of the Committee, and to Bob Moore, who has left.

17 **Tree Warden Report:** Michael Feather delivered his final report before retiring from the role. He advised that a Parish Tree Warden is a local resident, who has an interest in, and knowledge of, trees and so is able to help the Parish Council and residents with advice and information as well as encouraging the planting, and care, of trees generally. Unfortunately Storm Doris blew down two trees on the Green. The Parish Council and local residents are discussing the long term planning, and management, of trees. Michael also thanked James Long and Gavin Tattershall for their work cutting the footpaths in Hartest Wood and the volunteers for tidying the wood again this year. John Kemp has already started as our new Tree Warden.

18 **Charities Report:** This noted that the Sparkes Charity is for "the buying of books for, and schooling of poor children of and within the parish of Hartest". The net annual income is £88 (paid by Boxted Farm Partnership on behalf of the Executors of J H Weller-Pooley for the annual rental of Wick Meadow. The Trustees comprise; Rev Prigg, Mrs S Howell, Mrs S Feather and Miss J Pask. The Trustees did not meet this year, however, the Head Teachers at All Saints' Primary School were reminded of the Charity and encouraged to put children forward, who may be eligible for financial assistance. The James Corder and the Thomas Wright's Charities unfortunately receive no income. The Trustees are continuing the process of reworking the schedules of all three charities.

19 **Gardening Club:** A report, on behalf of the Club Secretary, Geraldine Ross, was delivered. Although our monthly attendance has dropped slightly, it still averages around 30 per meeting – reflecting the excellent speakers. New members are very welcome; the programme for the year is displayed on the notice board in the Institute entrance and also on both the village and Club websites. Our Annual Show will be held on 9 September; information available from May. The sale of seed potatoes, and seeds, at heavily discounted prices, continue to be popular. This year the Plant Sale will be held on Sunday 7 May.

- 19 Carpet Bowls Club:** Meeting each week, for two hours, the Club currently charges £3 per session, which covers the cost of the hall and refreshments, and currently attracts between 12-18 people. Three separate functions are being arranged this year; New Eve's Dinner at the Crown, BBQ and a 'Pie and Pint' evening (with members going free, as this is paid from any profits made).
- 20 Web Site:** Sue Lewis's report mentioned the transfer to the 'one suffolk' website (the small charge for which is paid by the Parish Council). Sarah Rands has taken over the village 'Facebook' page and plans to re-invigorate it and create more interest. Any suggestions regarding improving the web site are always gratefully received.
- 21 Any Other Business:** None