

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL ASSEMBLY FOR THE PARISH OF HILPERTON
HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL, HILPERTON,
on Tuesday, 4th May, 2010, at 7.30 p.m.**

CHAIRMAN: Mr. E. Clark, Chairman of the Parish Council, presided.

PRESENT: Thirty-six members of the public, including parish councillors.

1. APOLOGIES

Mr. Peter Hayes, Mrs. Kate Hayes, Ms. Pam Turner, Mr. T. Carbin, Mr. B. Cradock and Mrs. Jaqui Clark.

2. INTRODUCTIONS

The Chairman introduced himself, Mrs. Marylyn Timms, the Parish Clerk, and PC Mark Hough.

3. MINUTES OF THE 2009 PARISH ASSEMBLY

The Minutes of the Annual Assembly held on the 5th May, 2009, were agreed and signed. (Proposed by Mr. V. Bielecki, seconded by Mr. E. Clark, all in favour).

4. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

5. FINANCIAL BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL

The Clerk reported that the precept for the year ended 31st March, 2010, had been set at £20,301, with no increase in the levy for the eleventh year running. The total receipts for the year amounted to £23,609, with a total expenditure of £34,967.

The major item of expenditure during the year was the purchase of 1.5 acres of land which had now been turned into allotments.

The accounts for the year ended 31st March, 2009, were adopted by the Parish Council in June, 2009, and the audit was completed by the beginning of October, 2009. The accounts for the year ended 31st March, 2010, were in the course of preparation before adoption by the Parish Council. There were no questions.

6. PARISH BUSINESS

Hilperton Primary School and The Mead Primary School

The Chairman said that Parish Councillor Pam Turner was Chairman of the governors of Hilperton Primary School and regularly gave reports on the school's activities. The Parish Council also had close contact with The Mead Primary School.

Grants/Loans made throughout the Year

The Chairman explained that Section 137 of the Local Government Act allowed local authorities to make grants to voluntary bodies where no specific grant-making power existed in other legislation and where, in the council's opinion, the grant would benefit any part of its

area and its inhabitants. Section 19 grants applied generally to village halls and community centres.

During the year the following grants had been made:-

a) Section 137 Grants

130

£300 in May, 2009, to the Wiltshire Bobby Van Trust to assist in their work to support vulnerable and elderly people to help prevent burglary and fraud

£60 in May, 2009, to Age Concern in respect of their 60th anniversary appeal

£250 in September, 2009, to the Bath and District Samaritans

£125 in December, 2009, to the newly-formed Paxcroft Mead Community Forum to assist with the costs involved in setting up the organisation

£50 in December, 2009, to the Giffords Day Centre as a contribution towards the cost of keeping the centre running

£300 in March, 2010, to Victim Support to help support the services offered to victims of crime and witnesses attending court

£750 in April, 2010, to 1st Hilperton Scout Group to assist towards the purchase of new patrol tents

b) Section 19 Grants

£1,000 in July, 2009, to the Paxcroft Mead Community Centre to assist in the purchase of a new stage

£500 in November, 2009, to Hilperton Village Hall to help towards improvements to access for disabled people

£197.50 in December, 2009, to Hilperton Village Hall to assist towards repairs to the slide in the children's play area

£1,992.56 in January, 2010, to Hilperton Village Hall to fund the maintenance of the playing field, and a contribution towards insurance costs for the fields and the play area

Allotments

The Chairman reported that, since last year's Annual Assembly, 1.5 acres of land had been purchased by the Parish Council, a water supply brought in, the site prepared and fenced, and plots pegged out. Tenancy Agreements had been prepared and sent to all 38 plot-holders. By the beginning of April, 2010, the allotments were up and running and it was expected that the allotment-holders would form their own Allotment Association. There was still a waiting list of potential allotment-holders, and the Chairman said that, if the need for plots continued, the Parish Council would seriously consider an option to purchase another one acre of land within five years.

The Parish Council had to date received £1,616 for the thirty-eight plots, made up of twenty-four full plots at £50 each per annum, thirteen half plots at £32 each per annum and a little quarter plot which had been given to St. Michael's pre-school free-of-charge for the first year. The Parish Council's outgoings had been £100 for the valuation of the land, around £800 for the water supply, £10,000 for the purchase of the land, £1,150 for professional fees, just over £1,300 for searches, sellers' legal fees etc., £163 for setting out pegs and £3,600 for all the contract work, including fencing, digging in pipes, supplying water troughs etc. This would be a long-term project as far as the Parish Council was concerned and the outgoings had come from its own reserves.

The Chairman thanked parish councillors Kendrick Jackson, Robert House and Viv Bielecki for all they had achieved over the past year, and also Mr. Roger Pike for agreeing to sell the land.

Planter for Trowbridge Road

The Chairman said that the Parish Council had decided to purchase a planter which would be positioned on the grassed area beyond the sign depicting 'Hilperton' and 'Paxcroft Mead', just past Fieldways. It would also pay for the plants and their maintenance on an annual

131

basis. It was hoped that this would be a colourful way of welcoming people entering the village from the direction of Trowbridge.

Roundabout Sponsorship

The Chairman said that talks were currently taking place between Trowbridge Town Council, the Parish Council and a local business in Hilperton, with a view to sponsoring two roundabouts at either end of the Paxcroft Mead estate. This would mean that flowers would be on display as well as shrubs, making the roundabouts more attractive.

Mrs. Thomason referred to the roundabout by Fieldways, saying that the shrubs there, as they grew, were beginning to have an impact on visibility for cars approaching the roundabout from the Trowbridge Road. The Chairman said Wiltshire Council's highways department would be contacted about this.

Trees

a) Planting

Sixteen trees (eight Copper Beeches and eight Silver Birches) were planted in February in the field adjacent to the Trowbridge Road. The Chairman said that the idea, in the long-term, was to 'mirror' the trees on the opposite side of the road and to enable residents and visitors alike to enjoy their amenity value as they grew and matured. The Parish Council had wanted them to be planted along the road but Wiltshire Council said they would impact on utility ducts, so the Parish Council was grateful to Mr. Pike for allowing the trees to be planted on his land.

b) Tree Warden Report

Mrs. Jean Grayshon reported that since last May she and Ross Kavanagh had made initial contacts with Hilperton and The Mead primary schools. Hilperton School had been successful in their application for 'Free Trees for Schools', and a selection of cherry, rowan and silver birch had been planted in the grounds, with the help of the children.

The tree wardens had had offers of some spindle trees that had yet to be dug up and replanted into suitable places elsewhere. As yet this had not been achieved, mainly due to the harsh winter.

Mrs. Grayshon had compiled a list of tree preservation orders for reference and had a copy of the form required to apply to register a tree.

The wardens had started to identify any ancient trees in the parish that could be recorded on line on the Ancient Tree Hunt.

There was a national project operating to identify hedgerow trees. If there were any trees in existing hedgerows that would be best allowed to grow rather than to be cut back during the winter hedge trimming season, they could be tagged, providing, of course, that permission from the landowner had been sought. Mrs. Grayshon asked to be contacted on 01225 767066 by anyone who considered any trees worthy for this scheme.

Bus Shelters/Notice Boards

A new bus shelter at Leap Gate, Paxcroft Mead, was erected in February, and the Chairman said this was a joint venture between Wiltshire Council, who had paid 50% of the cost, Trowbridge Town Council (25%) and Hilperton Parish Council (25%). This would be a great bonus for the many people who used the bus stop.

132

A new notice board had been erected along the Trowbridge Road last June, at the request of a number of residents in this area of the village, following the closure of the post office a few years ago.

Parish Newsletter

The Chairman said that copies of the latest edition of the newsletter were currently being delivered to every property in the parish.

Trowbridge Library

Concern had been expressed at the proposal to move the library into County Hall, as many people felt it should be somewhere in the centre of the town. The Chairman said that the Trowbridge Area Board was making representations about this to Wiltshire Council, and the matter would also be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting.

Paxcroft Mead Community Forum

The Chairman informed the meeting that the organisation was set up towards the end of last year, its aims being to improve the quality of life for local residents, to act as a forum for the residents of Paxcroft Mead and to seek to represent the views and promote the interests of all Paxcroft Mead residents. The Chairman of the residents' association gave a short report on the forum's activities and thanked the Parish Council for its grant towards the start-up costs.

Village Clean-Up

The first village clean-up for many years took place on Saturday, 17th April, and the Chairman said it was a great success. He thanked Wiltshire Council for the loan of their 'litter-pickers' etc., to all the people who kindly volunteered on the day, and to Mrs. Janet Waring, who organised the event. He said a suggestion had been made to do this on a regular basis, perhaps twice a year, in late March and the autumn.

Village Maintenance/Highways

The Chairman said that the Parish Steward scheme had been operating for three and a half years and was working well. There was to be a slight change to the scheme as the stewards had become very familiar with their areas, in that they would be relying slightly less on local councils to point out problem areas and would become more pro-active in scouring for problems. Parish councillors and the Clerk continued to report defects to Wiltshire Council as

they occurred, in respect of blocked drains, broken manhole covers, fly tipping, graffiti, overflowing litter bins, overgrown hedges, blocked ditches, broken kerbs and other matters. The Chairman reminded people that they could also call the Clarence helpline on 0800 23 23 23 to report defects.

It was suggested that a bigger litter bin should be positioned on the corner of the car park at the Village Hall, now that the allotments had opened, and it was also reported that the bin that used to be along Wyke Road (near Compton Close) had never been replaced.

Concern was expressed at the state of the Trowbridge Road, and the Chairman said he had already approached Wiltshire Highways on this matter. Although they knew that patching was not effective and the road should be re-surfaced, they could not give an indication as to when this could be done.

The question of speeding along Devizes Road was raised. The Chairman said that the Parish Council knew this was an ongoing problem and PC Hough would speak about it when giving his report.

133

Best Kept Village Competition

Hilperton had come first in the Large Village category in the West Wiltshire round of the competition, beating Bowerhill, Holt and Atworth, and had then gone on to become fourth in the county round. The Chairman said that the village had received considerable praise in all categories, and the judges thought that Hilperton proudly retained a wonderful rural atmosphere, despite being so close to the ever-expanding town of Trowbridge. Certificates had been presented to the Parish Council by Mr. Peter Crane from the Campaign to Protect Rural England, in November, 2009, and a planter referring to Hilperton's success in the competition would be put in place on the new planter planned for the Trowbridge Road.

Sponsor a Kiosk Scheme

There appeared to have been a 50/50 split at the last Annual Assembly in the number of people who felt the BT kiosk in Greenhill Gardens should be removed, and those who felt it should continue to be sponsored by the Parish Council. At the June, 2009, PC meeting, the Parish Council had heard that BT had reviewed the costs on their 'sponsor a kiosk' scheme and had decided to significantly reduce the annual cost in this case from £500 to £300. When this came up for review in November, 2009, it was therefore agreed that the sponsorship should continue for at least another twelve months.

A short discussion followed, at the end of which the Chairman asked for a show of hands to indicate peoples' opinion of the sponsorship, and it appeared that most were in favour of its continuing.

Wiltshire Councillor's Report

Mr. Ernie Clark had been elected as a Wiltshire Councillor for the Hilperton division in June, 2009, and he said that, although things had settled down since the abolition of the district councils and the creation of the new unitary authority, money was still tight and the grant from central government was not large. Despite being promised that the merger would save money, council tax payers were faced with increases and it did not seem the situation would improve in the short term. The IT system needed a complete overhaul and the £12million that

had been invested in the Icelandic Bank by one of the former district councils had not yet been paid recovered.

Councillor Clark said he was now Chairman of the Trowbridge Area Board, and he sat on the Western Area Planning Committee and the Standards Committee.

Mr. Ross Kavanagh referred to the Local Development Framework, and Councillor Clark gave an update on where the village stood in relation to 'Village Policy Limits'. A second public consultation would be coming up soon and he said that in his opinion it was vital for the VPL to be retained to stop any development which would 'merge' Hilperton with Trowbridge. He encouraged people to attend a presentation to be included at the next Trowbridge Area Board meeting.

Police Report

Police Constable Mark Hough introduced himself as the Rural Trowbridge beat manager. He said he had quite a large area to cover, with the help of one PCSO, Neil Osborne.

PC Hough gave a report on incidences of crime over the last year, including anti-social behaviour issues and burglaries, and referred to the problems of parking and speeding, which all villages experienced. In relation to Devizes Road, he said that many vehicles were driving over the speed limit, he had many times pulled drivers over for speeding, and he was doing all

134
he could to encourage camera safety units to have a presence here. Trowbridge Road would shortly become a 'community concern site', whilst Hill Street and Marsh Road were already adequately policed.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS NOT HAVING A LEGAL CONSEQUENCE ON THE COUNCIL

Reference was made to the incidences of graffiti on the Paxcroft Mead underpass. Whilst the local authority were always quick to remove it, PC Hough said it was, after all, criminal damage, and he would look into it.

8. CONCLUSION

The Chairman said that members of the public were always welcome to attend parish council meetings and to visit the website. Eleven full parish council meetings had been held throughout the year and seven planning committee meetings.

As usual, the Parish Council had been consulted on a wide range of issues throughout the year including:-

- * The future of Wingfield C of E Aided Primary School
- * Harmonisation of concessionary travel throughout Wiltshire
- * Meeting venues for Area Board meetings
- * Trowbridge Area Core Strategy
- * Wiltshire Council's planning development control six-month review
- * Wiltshire Local Development Framework
- * Wiltshire Council Speed Limit review
- * Wiltshire Council's delegation of services to Town and Parish Councils
- * Wiltshire Council: Flooding issues

- * Wiltshire Council: Gypsy and Travellers issues
- * Wiltshire Council: Contaminated Land Strategy for Wiltshire

The Parish Council continued to give small donations to needy, elderly people at Christmas from the Sir William Roger Brown's (Coal) charity.

The Chairman said the Parish Council was sorry to hear of the death last summer of a former parish clerk, Mr. Alan Phillips, remembering the years of dedicated service he gave to the parish.

In conclusion, the Chairman thanked:-

*Mrs. Lesley House for the upkeep of the War Memorial and planting; also for the care of the trees before they were planted along the Trowbridge Road.

*Mrs. Kate Hayes and other parish councillors who had attended meetings and seminars throughout the year.

*Mr. Kendrick Jackson for continuing to represent the Parish Council on the Trowbridge Community Area Parish Councils' Liaison Group

*to all parish councillors and the Clerk for their support throughout the year

The meeting ended at 8.45 p.m.

Signed

Date