

FAIRLIGHT PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Assembly Meeting held at Fairlight Village Hall at 6.30pm on Friday 13th May 2016

Present: Parish Councillors: Revd. V. Gibbs (Chair of the Parish Council)(in the Chair), Mrs. J. Annetts, Mrs. C. Gallagher, M. Jones, A. King, S. Leadbetter, A. Mier, D. Thatcher, District Councillors R. Bird, C. Saint and about 80 members of the public. Also present was the Parish Clerk, Mr. J Edmunds.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Cllr D. Greenup.

INTRODUCTIONS – Councillor Revd Gibbs opened the meeting and advised that this is a meeting of the electorate of Fairlight, and has its basis in Law. She welcomed everyone, introduced Alistair Fairley and Stephen Hardy who were delivering the two presentations and gave details of the running order for this meeting. She advised that whilst it was a Meeting which she would Chair, it was not a Parish Council Meeting and everyone present had the same status. Cllr Revd Gibbs explained Resolutions could be passed but would not necessarily be binding upon the Parish Council, although any relating to Allotments would be binding.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH ASSEMBLY 2015– There were none

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL – The Parish Clerk delivered the Chair`s report on behalf of The Chair and said that he would not go through the whole of the written report verbatim, but briefly report on the items within the report (The written report is available on the website www.fairlight.org.uk or can be obtained by email or hard copy on application to the Parish Clerk).

Following the reading of the report, one parishioner asked how much the Band D Council Tax was now that the precept had been increased to £47000. The Clerk advised that it is about £1.04 per week or £54 per Annum.

Rother Rural Trust

Stephen Hardy who is the Clerk of the Trust, expressed delight at the turn out for the meeting and advised that he had recently been to other Parish Assembly meetings where the attendance was only a handful of residents. He also thanked the Parish for the generous donation. He then went on to give details about how the Trust was formed (1998) and the aims of the Trust. It was set up to help the Villages of Rother and does not support the residents of Battle, Bexhill or Rye. He also explained that money can be made available to deserving causes very quickly and urged those that needed to help to get in touch so that they can consider the case. The Trust has about £15k with which to help individuals and a maximum of £500 can be made available to an individual. The Trust has a Committee of 6 Rother Cllrs, 1 County Cllr and 1 Parish Cllr. He, as Clerk can be contacted by phone, letter or email.

Mr Rayner questioned Mr Hardy about the filing of Accounts with the Charities Commission, saying that none had been sent since 2014 and also he could not see that Cllrs who are on the Committee had registered their involvement in respect of their Members Interests forms.

Mr Hardy, explained that he had only recently taken over and that the Accounts were in the process of being filed. He would also remind the Cllrs to register their Interests.

JOHN LUTMAN AWARD

This year after deliberation over many nominations, the Committee (Cllrs King, Mier and Revd Gibbs) have decided to award the honour to Shirley Gilbert for her work with Mopps, TLC, the Bowls Club, the WI and other charitable work within the Parish. Shirley`s achievements were read out by The Chair. Whilst very grateful, humbled, amazed and honoured to receive the award, Shirley has chosen to give the £150 to Mopps. She also made a plea to anyone who can spare some time to help out in any of the many clubs which operate within the Parish as they all need help. Janet Lutman made the presentation to Shirley.

RESOLUTIONS

The Clerk advised that no resolutions had been received.

STONELYNK NATURE RESERVE

Alistair Fairley then gave a slide presentation to the assembly about a proposition he and the owner, Mr Sams have to turn the Ancient Woodland, farm area and land at Stonelynk into a Nature Reserve where the aim would be to preserve it and

encourage fresh growth whilst also teaching forestry craft. The woodland covers about 11 acres and will need coppicing by about 20% per year.

He firstly gave an introduction to himself by explaining his background and also a potted history of the area.

Whilst they have to complete a full ecology study and report, they want to encourage local residents to help create the reserve. They have recently repaired a bridge on the public footpath and acknowledge that the land is used by many dog walkers.

The key objectives are: Conservation, Bio-diversity, Woodland Management and Ecology.

He then explained what each key objective would entail.

They also want to improve the access, create better paths, create a wildlife pond, give guided tours and introduce flora that will encourage bees. There will also be interpretation boards sited around the reserve and also work with bodies such as RSPB to cover such things as Animal Watch and conservation training.

They want it to be environmentally friendly with a light touch, have minimal change to the existing area and people friendly. It is realised that people need to be able to get there and he has spoken to Mallydams about the possibility of using a mini-bus facility from the Country Park where they would encourage people to park, use of the main bus route and also it is on National Cycle Route 2. Public safety is the main priority.

The planned training facility will be to make use of the existing timber sheds on the land and teach traditional skills, combining outdoor learning.

They have already achieved better access, repaired a bridge, built a bridge over wet land, created an all weather footpath, cut back some hedgerow, improved the orchard and it will also be a pesticide free site.

What they are looking for going forward is help, in the form of feedback, ideas, volunteers and people to take part in developing the site. The website is also going to be developed soon.

There followed a range of questions from both supporters of the site and those who have genuine concerns over how the site would be both developed and used. Some of the concerns are from historic use of the site. Both Alistair Fairley and Mr Sams gave assurances that the historic use would not be repeated. Questions were also asked about the need to manage the site now when it had lain dormant for such a long time. Mr Fairley agreed it had survived but explained that it now needs managing.

Mr Fairley encouraged those with concerns to discuss them with either himself or Mr Sams.

An interesting discussion was then drawn to a close by the Chair at 8 pm.

Refreshments followed.

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Chair of the Parish Assembly

Date