

Minutes of the Amport Parish Council Annual General Meeting followed by the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 15th May 2023, 7.30pm at East Cholderton Scout Hall.

Present: Cllr C Harris – Chairman, Cllr S Coke-Vice Chairman, Cllr A Montagu, Cllr P Waller, Cllr Mrs D Stephenson. Cllr Mrs T Hawkings-Byass, Cllr P Harvey & Cllr Mrs S Baker.

Also present

Heather Bourner – Parish Clerk
HCC Chris Donnelly
TVBC Mrs M Flood
6 members of the public

Apologies

1) TVBC Susanne Hasselman had sent her apologies for absence.

Election of Chairman

2) Cllr Montagu nominated Cllr Harris to be Chairman for the forthcoming year. This was seconded by Cllr Coke. All Agreed. Cllr Harris signed an acceptance of office form.

Election of Vice Chairman

3) Cllr Harris nominated Cllr Coke to be Vice Chairman for the forthcoming year. This was seconded by Cllr Baker. All Agreed. Cllr Harris signed an acceptance of office form.

All other Councillors signed acceptance of office documents.

Neighbourhood Plan

4) Cllr Stephenson confirmed there had been 282 responses to the Neighbourhood Plan survey and in particular there has been a large amount of input from residents of Weyhill. Terms of Reference have been drawn up and a meeting of the steering group held. Results of the survey will be analysed and published in due course. Further work will continue and green spaces will be considered, even if land is in the conservation area. Most of the response so far is from parishioners in Weyhill but work to get other areas to engage continues.

A question was raised about some individuals who are not comfortable filling out documents online. The Parish Council discussed setting up a workshop where assistance could be given. This will be considered by the steering group.

Annual Chairmans Report

5) See report at appendix 1.

Public Participation

6) Three members of the public present were engaged with the Neighbourhood Plan and were striving to engage with those in their areas asking them to complete surveys.

A member of public suggested the notice board at Weyhill was in the completely the wrong place. The Clerk mentioned that the current board is rotten and would likely disintegrate if it was moved. The Clerk will speak to HCC to establish if the PC can site a new notice board in the layby by the post box.

A member of public present said he was the Amport area representative of the Ramblers Association. He said he regularly walks footpaths in the area and had lots of information he could share. Cllr Hawkings-Byass agreed to arrange a meeting with him.

A member of public asked if a dog waste bin could be installed in Amesbury Road near the field just past the railway bridge and before Michaelmas Drove. The Clerk will research the possibility of installing a bin.

Review and agree Standing orders, financial regulations & Code of Conduct

7) All documents had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. These were all based on NALC model documents and the Clerk confirmed no amendments had been published. Cllr Coke proposed all documents were re adopted for 2023-24. This was seconded by Cllr Harris. All agreed.

All Councillors were asked to complete new Register of Interest forms.

8) Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest in matters on the agenda.

9) Minutes of previous meetings & matters arising

Resolved: The minutes of the meetings held on 17th April were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. Proposed Cllr Coke seconded Cllr Montagu. All in favour.

10) Councillor Roles and responsibilities

Areas of responsibility were discussed and were agreed as follows

Cllr Harris-Chairman, The Green & Fen, Southern Water liaison, Village Hall Trustee

Cllr Coke- Vice Chair, Principle & Process & Finance

Cllr Montagu- Solar farm

Cllr Baker- Communications & School Liaison, resilience

Cllr Harvey-Play area checks, projects

Cllr Hawkings-Byass-Projects, footpaths

Cllr Stephenson- Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Waller- Resilience planning

Vacant- highways

There are two vacancies for councillors and Cllr Harris proposed these be filled by co-option at the June meeting one hopefully by a resident of Weyhill who had expressed an interest in joining.

11) Specific reports

Principle & Process-Cllr Coke had nothing to report.

The Fen & Green- Cllr Harris reported the green, in line with the entire catchment, still has a high level of groundwater. However, the contractor has been asked to cut the grass again. A central part will be cut shorter for the Rugby Tournament.

The fete will be held on 8th July and the parish council will have a stall.

Play Area -Cllr Harvey confirmed that he has recently checked all the play equipment and there are no areas of concern.

Footpaths- Cllr Hawkings -Byass has agreed to be the central co-ordinator for footpaths and will approach the contractor to cut these back soon.

Cllr Montagu highlighted a problem with horses using footpaths- this is against the law- a landowner can allow horses on his land but they cannot use the footpath. Cllr Hawkings-Byass will talk to the land owner to establish what he has agreed with horse riders.

Finally, a householder has erected a sign near a public in East Cholderton saying private when it is a public footpath. Cllr Harris agreed to talk to the landowner.

Communications & School Liaison – Cllr Baker reported that the school was having problems getting the funding for a defibrillator. However, the recent Coronation Quiz raised funds which can be used for such a purchase if necessary. She said there were now three working defibrillators in the parish one at Hilliers Garden Centre, one at The Hawk, and one at The Hawk Conservancy although this is only available while the park is open to the public.

Projects- Cllr Hawkings-Byass reported some repair work has been carried out on the telephone box and this should be painted in the summer.

Cllr Baker said she had been approached with regard to fitting some equipment for teenagers on the Village Green. Cllr Hawkings-Byass will research possible equipment and report back to the Parish Council.

Highways – Oliver Vincent had produced a draft report regarding possible sites for speed awareness cameras. Cllr Hawkings-Byass would now review this before sharing with all councillors.

Cllr Harris confirmed he continues to push Hampshire Highways to carry out necessary road repairs in the parish.

Young Persons Matters- nothing to report.

Resilience Plan- Cllr Baker reported a parishioner has stepped forward to help with this project from June.

The Parish has been given the opportunity to acquire a second-hand mobile generator. The cost of servicing this is estimated to be approx. £100. Cllr Harris proposed the cost of £100 be met which was agreed by all present. Oliver Vincent will action.

Southern Water over pumping & water quality

12) Cllr Harris reported groundwater levels in the catchment remain high and have not yet fallen back, which is the norm when leaves appear on the trees. Tankers remain at Mullens Pond, which is by far the most concerning issue in the catchment. A closed trial of UV filtration will begin soon at Mullens Pond. Southern Water advise that there is a low risk of overpumping in the catchment. In the event of overpumping is required both UV filtration and a MITA cloth filter will be used. Due to the high groundwater levels, the tubogel lining work in the north of the catchment (Fyfield) remains on hold at the present time.

Clerks report

13) The Clerk reported as follows-

Quotes for insurance for the 2023/24 year had been received from Zurich Insurance, BHIB and Gallaghers and were discussed. These were all based on the same requirements. The quote from Zurich Insurance over a three-year period was the best financial deal. Cllr Harris had some expertise in this field and agreed to review all the quotes.

The Clerk confirmed a second VAT claim for 22/23 had been made and the refund received.

Thrupton Parish Council were considering hiring a trainer to deliver first aid for a group of up to 15 people. This would be primarily aimed at those who volunteer in their communities. The cost per person will depend on how many participants there are. Cllr Stephenson, Harris, Baker & Hawkings-Byass all expressed an interest in attending. Cllr Harris asked that this be published to the wider community.

Finance

14)

The bank balance as 05/05/2023 was as follows:

Lloyds treasurers £8362.85

Lloyds deposit £13708.12

Payments

Resolved: that the following payments be approved,

H Bourner salary	£437.80
HMRC	£109.40
H Bourner exp.	£32.38
Rob Jones (Coronation quiz exps)	£75.66

Retrospective

Kinex	£16.46
TVBC	£24.00
Ray Welch	£117.00

Cllr Coke had reviewed the year end accounts and audit papers and proposed these were agreed this was seconded by Cllr Harris. Accounts for the year ended 31st March were discussed and agreed. The Audit return was reviewed. Section 1 was reviewed and agreed followed by section 2 which was also reviewed and agreed, both were signed by the Chairman. The internal audit will take place on 25th May.

The Parish Council also agreed it had no conflicts of interest with BDO LLP and it was agreed Cllr Harris should sign the necessary form.

Borough & County Councillor Reports.

15) HCC Chris Donnelly praised Amport Parish Council for all the work they do. He reported he had attended a HCC meeting last week when the lead Highways Councillor was present and made aware of all of the road problems across Test Valley. He confirmed additional government funding to target pot holes has now arrived and will be spent as soon as the workforce is available

TVBC Maureen Flood confirmed she had been re elected for a further four year term. She will be joined by Susanne Hasselman. A TVBC full council meeting will take place soon when roles and responsibilities will be allocated.

Planning

16) The following decisions by TVBC were noted:

23/00608/FULLN-erection of triple garage with loft store, Cloud House, Cholderton Road-permission

23/00687/FULLN- extend garage to form home office, Cherry Tree House, 4a Amesbury Road-permission

Resolved: that the planning advisory committee's approval on the following applications were endorsed:
23/01187/FULLN-erection of Victorian style greenhouse, The Cottage on The Green-no objections

Amport House—to note readvertisement of application and discuss what a robust transport plan should include.

The Clerk had circulated a request from the TVBC planning officer working on the Amport House application asking for more detail from Councillors regarding comments made in particular regarding traffic and road signs. Cllrs Harris, Montagu and Baker agreed to review and report back to all Councillors.

Correspondence

17) None other than that reported elsewhere.

New Items for next agenda

18) Parish Council stall at fete on 8th July

Co-option new councillors

Speed awareness cameras-report to review

Community website

Community News

19) Cllr Harris reported the demolition work on the old Monxton and Amport Village Hall is largely complete, but the north and west walls will remain. However, further work has been done by the architect, builders and the structural engineer to modify the design, and this is likely to provide a saving in the costs. A meeting with the architect to review the current state of play to take into account the changes in the design, and to discuss the updated work schedule, will take place shortly.

A request to hold a child's birthday party on the village green was discussed and agreed.

Date of next meeting

20) The next meeting will be on Monday 12th June 2023, 7.30pm at 2nd Andover Sea Scout Hall, East Cholderton.

Appendix 1

CHAIR ANNUAL REVIEW – by Chris Harris - May 2023

I am Chris Harris, chair of Amport Parish Council. This review is given at the end of a 4-year cycle between PC elections, and the start of a new cycle, following the uncontested election of 8 councillors on 4 May. The last full Parish meeting was held in May 2022, just before the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. That now seems a long time ago. We have since seen the passing away of one monarch and the recent coronation of King Charles and Queen Camilla. We have had two new PMs. Hard as it may seem at this time, we also experienced severe hot weather last summer, and we have apparently defeated the covid pandemic. Amport Parish Council, or APC, is made up of volunteers, here to represent you, the residents, whenever we can properly. It is not party political. It is right that I should also pay tribute to the service of many other

volunteers in the community – thank you. APC is very ably supported by our clerk, Heather Bourner, as well as by Councillors at TVBC and HCC. We welcome Susanne Hasselman as a newly elected ward councillor on TVBC, alongside Councillor Maureen Flood. Chris Donnelly is our HCC councillor.

Members of APC at this time, aside from me, are Stephen Coke, vice-chair; Sally Baker; Alan Montagu; Tessa Hawkings-Byass; Diana Stephenson; Peter Harvey; and Peter Waller. The councillors live in different parts of this Parish. Since last May, Sue Richardson and Oliver Vincent have stepped down, as well as non-voting member Tim Hartigan, all of whom served this Parish well in various ways. Thank you to you all.

There are roles to fill. If you wish someone local to you to serve on the council then please speak up. APC has vacancies for two additional members of the Council. Even if you are not a member of the Parish Council, please be prepared to get involved in community projects. The only qualification is enthusiasm.

There are many tasks that can be and are undertaken by ordinary people that benefit you, your friends and your neighbours. Things – whatever the size and complexity - get done by local people. Public resources are scarce. If you don't get involved in getting things done, who will?

There is a cross-section of people on the Council. Between the members, there is expertise in several disciplines – for example in accounting, finance, law, communications and PR, and travel. There is simply not enough time for the members of the Council to accomplish everything that we would ideally like to do, with not enough time and resources available, but, by way of a snapshot, let me identify just some (not all) of the projects that APC has been involved with over the past months.

First, we are working on a **Neighbourhood Development Plan** (or NDP), which Diana has covered.

Another live issue is the condition of the **roads** in the Parish. Potholes, in this Parish and in local areas, have caused and are causing much concern to residents. Our roads are the responsibility of Hampshire County Council via the Highways team, whose performance has not been at all adequate in our opinion – they say due to financial pressures. We as a PC are pressing as hard as we can through our HCC councillor, and have received pretty loose commitments that some of the roads in the Parish will be attended to by the Highways team in the next few weeks. Potholes aside, the traffic conditions in the Parish, particularly around the Green and The Hawk, are a risk to residents, with the safety of pedestrians, animals and motorists to the fore. We are seeking to ensure that traffic conditions generally are managed and improvements made. All comments from Parishioners are welcomed.

APC is involved in working with **Southern Water**, as we were last year, to address the sewage problems in the Pillhill catchment area from Kimpton at one end to Upper Clatford at the other. APC leads a forum of 8 local parishes, known as the PPF or Pan Parish Forum, in engaging with Southern Water, with input from the Environment Agency, in seeking significant improvement in the water related issues along the Pillhill Brook. Regular discussions and meetings are held with Southern Water as we seek to hold them to account and to deliver improvements for the community. Janet Wright, who lives in Amport, is the secretary of the PPF, and with representatives of various parishes, engages with SW on a regular basis. Groundwater conditions always affect what can and cannot be achieved in short order, but the hope is that SW's programme of lining all sewers, including private sewers, at the north end of the catchment will help to reduce the level of groundwater that swamps the sewers on an annual basis, causing significant disruption in the Parish and neighbouring parishes. Solutions, including nature-based solutions, may take a couple of years to come to fruition.

Turning to other issues, the community is aware that Another Place wishes to develop **Amport House**, with a view to that company opening another boutique hotel in Amport. APC made representations to the developer and the planning authority, TVBC, and APC understands that its comments mainly concerning traffic movements, have been accepted in principle. The planning process on Amport House, and indeed other proposed developments in the Parish, have taken TVBC a long time to resolve, to the extent that the planning system locally and nationally needs much improvement, including on enforcement. The latest news I have is that the Amport House planning application is finally expected to be before the area planning committee in the next month or so.

APC is responsible for the **Green** and the **Fen**. APC also maintains the play equipment, which has been replaced in part following the fallen tree on the green last year. We arranged a cutting back of dangerous trees some months ago. If you have practical suggestions as to how the green and fen can be improved for all, whilst at the same time maintaining their unique character, please let a member of the PC know.

APC is developing a **resilience plan**, to enable co-ordination of local efforts when a structural problem is encountered, such as a power outage, internet problems, or other adverse weather events, for the benefit of all residents and especially the vulnerable. Some service providers, such as SSE, already offer their services to people in need in such situations, but the proposed initiative is wider than that, and will be carried out alongside TVBC. In the interim, we hope that we may have some positive news shortly on the development of Full Fibre to the Premises in the parts of this Parish where broadband speeds are deficient. APC is aware of the needs of **Young People** in the Parish. The youth can often be overlooked, but they have needs like everyone else. If any youngster has an idea to raise, please contact one of the Councillors.

The current PC knows there is room for improvement in communications within the Parish. We have made some steps to improve things. Communication however remains a two-way process – so this PC welcomes hearing from parishioners whenever they have a concern or idea that should be brought to our attention. Parishioners are encouraged to speak out early when they have a concern or a suggestion.

APC has a **Projects Team** led by Tessa Hawkings-Byass and Peter Harvey, who will consider the viability and cost of any projects suggested by Parishioners. So, for example, the phone box on the village green will be repainted this year. If you have an idea to be considered, put it forward.

The rebuilding of **Monxton and Amport Village Hall** is progressing. APC is involved with Monxton PC in the delivery of this project. And we continue to liaise closely with Amport School on a number of matters. This is a snapshot of APC's activities.

As a resident, you may ask what does the Parish Council do for you? The PC may sound boring. But if you want someone to speak up for you and for the community, the PC is what there is. If you have a group of people your own age, irrespective of what that age is, please think of having someone who engages with one or more members of APC whenever you spot a need. We like to be approached, so approach us. We know there are needs in the community, but we are not all-seeing on all issues, nor do we have a dominance of wisdom, nor of budget. Only with your help can we do our best to make improvements. Please provide us with your support.

APC hopes you all have a good year.