# TO ALL ELECTORS OF HORNDEAN

## You are invited to take part in the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

It will be held at:

**JUBILEE HALL, CATHERINGTON LANE**
**on Monday 03 April 2017 at 7.00 p.m.**

Under the Chairmanship of Councillor Mrs Lynn Evans
(Chairman of the Parish Council)

*Refreshments will be available.*

The Parish Meeting may by law discuss all Parish affairs and pass resolutions about them.

The following matters have so far been placed on the agenda:

1. **Welcome**
2. **Apologies for Absence**
3. **Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 25 April 2016**
4. **Annual report of the Parish Council**
5. **To receive a report from County Cllr Mrs M Harvey**
6. **To receive a report from East Hampshire District Councillors**
7. **To receive a presentation from Fred Deeks regarding the use of the Speed Indicator Device within the parish.**
8. **To receive a presentation from Peter Harvey regarding the Speedwatch group of volunteers.**
9. **General discussion of matters concerning the Parish of Horndean raised by those present.**

Horndean Parish Council, Tyfield House, Blendworth Lane, Horndean, PO8 0AA
Tel: 02392 597766

# HORNDEAN PARISH COUNCIL

## THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD AT JUBILEE HALL, ON MONDAY 25TH APRIL 2016 AT 7:00 PM.

**PRESENT:** Councillor Mrs L Evans in the Chair,
Councillors D Alexander, M Burridge (Vice Chairman) P Beck, Mrs D Denston, D Evans, A Forbes, Mrs C Jacobs, Miss J Murray, Mrs E Tickell, N Wren and Mrs I Weeks

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs Carla Baverstock-Jones, Executive Officer and Clerk to the Council, Sarah Guy, Senior Administrator (Minute Taker)

**PUBLIC ATTENDANCE**: Four members of the public and Hampshire County Councillor Mrs Marge Harvey were present.

1. **WELCOME**

The Chairman welcomed all those present and gave a brief outline of the purpose of the meeting.

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs A Reece. No apologies for absence were received from Cllr R Sowden.

3. **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 20 APRIL 2015**

It was noted that that under the heading "Present", the "D" be removed from Cllr Mrs C Jacobs name.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on 20 April 2015 be duly signed as a true record of the meeting.

4. **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

The attached reports listed below were circulated prior to the meeting and were each taken as read.

- Chairman's Report – Cllr Mrs L Evans (Item 4a)
- Grounds Committee– Cllr Mrs E Tickell (Item 4b)
- Finance & General Purposes Committee – Cllr D Evans (Item 4c)
- Planning Committee– Cllr P Beck (Item 4d)
- Staff Committee– Cllr A Forbes (Item 4e)

The Chairman thanked all staff Committee Chairmen for their reports and invited members of the public to ask questions.

No questions were asked.

5. **TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR MRS M HARVEY**

The attached report was circulated prior to the meeting and was taken as read.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Mrs M Harvey for her report and invited members of the public to ask any questions they may have.

A resident queried if there was a proposal regarding the bus lane at the crossroads near Morrisons. County Councillor Mrs M Harvey stated that officers were going back to see if the sequence of lights could be changed when a bus drives through.

## 6. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM EAST HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

The Chairman stated that no reports had been submitted by the District Council but welcomed questions from members of the public, given that there were three District Councillors present, one being the Chairman herself, Cllr D Evans and Cllr Mrs E Tickell.

No questions were asked.

## 7. TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION FROM LIZ WOOD FROM THE BEFRIENDING SERVICE – AGE CONCERN

Mrs Liz Wood, Centre Manager and Befriending Co-ordinator of the Cowplain Age Concern attended and gave a presentation on the work they do. She thanked Horndean Parish Council for the recent grant funding they received and said that the service they offer relies purely on funding.

She said that the Befriending Service's aim is to work with older people who have been referred to the Service or self-referred and to get them back out into the community, whether that be attending a cake icing course, or anything else they wish to do. She said they aim to help them regain confidence, where they may have lost it due to bereavement or moving into sheltered accommodation etc.

She said that a Befriender is allocated to each individual, who would go out and assess the needs of an individual to see what outcome they hope to achieve and to discuss any possible classes or activities they were interested in attending. The Befriender then works alongside them, for up to a maximum of 6-8 weeks, visiting them for 1-2 hours per week or attending a class or course with them. The Befrienders work on a voluntary basis and the service is free for service users. If it is found an individual needs further support, for a longer period of time, they would signpost them to another agency such as Silverline or another agency offering long term support.

Mrs Wood said they hope to enhance the lives of the Service Users rather than them just existing in four walls. She said that the Service had received many positive outcomes, resulting in getting 38 people back out into the community, out of 40 people signed up to the Service in Horndean, Blendworth and Clanfield.

## 8. TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION FROM NEIL RICHARDSON FROM SSE SOUTHERN ELECTRIC REGARDING ENERGY ADVICE – INSTALLATION OF SMART METERS

Community Liaison Officer, Mr Neil Richardson attended and gave a presentation. He said his role within the company was to help the Community with energy efficiency and said the government was aiming to have Smart Meters present in all homes by 2020.

He explained how the Smart Meters worked, stating that the gas and electric readings would be accurately sent to your electrical supplier via GPRS, resulting in accurate billing rather than estimated billing.

He explained that there were three phases to the smart meters, with phase one being the installation of the new meters, whereby they would be replaced for the old meters at no cost. He said phase two involved the customer receiving their energy monitor, which allowed the customer the opportunity to view how much energy is being used when switching on a light and using the washing machine etc. He said that the energy monitor helped act as a trigger for a lot of customers, helping make them more aware of the cost of energy being used within the home. He said the third phase was the data being show in a graph format, available to all customers online.

Many questions were asked by both members of the public and Councillors and these were answered by Mr Richardson. There were mixed feelings relating to the installation of Smart Meters, some were in favour of their installation and others felt that in the long run, there wouldn't be much benefit, only cost to the customer over their billing term.

**9. GENERAL DISCUSSION OF MATTERS CONCERNING THE PARISH OF HORNDEAN RAISED BY THOSE PRESENT**

The Chairman invited all those present to ask questions. No questions were asked.

The meeting closed at 8:35 pm

.....
Chairman

.....
Dated

Item 4a

# Chairman's Report April 2016

2015/16 began with the Election of the Parish Councillors for a new four-year term. During the year we have been fortunate to fill all but one of our Ward Councillor vacancies.

Under the leadership of Carla Baverstock-Jones the team continues to be professional, effective and a pleasure to work with. Unfortunately our Grounds Manager decided to move on so we lost a valued member of staff who made such an impact on our Open Spaces in her time with us. We wish her well in her new post.

We continue to complete projects in and around the Parish - notably this year, three defibrillators have been purchased and placed at strategic points, Napier Hall, Jubilee Hall and the third at Nico's in the village centre. Special thanks to Ron Razell of Nico's for allowing us to use his wall and electricity! We planted three trees to mark the Queen becoming the longest reigning Monarch.

Some of the work we are able to do is as a result of grant funding from District and County Councillor devolved funds - so thank you for those grants.

Weather permitting, the upgrades to our playgrounds will be completed during the next few months. Planning permissions have been granted and monies secured. Once these improvements are complete we will have play facilities for a wide age range.

Footpath 26A is due for some much needed upgrading during this year.

Our careful approach to budgeting and reviewing of contracts to achieve good value resulted in a zero precept rise for 16/17.

Land East of Horndean has been and will continue to be a huge challenge with many hours of work being devoted to ensuring that all views are heard and that we achieve facilities which will serve the community for many years to come. Initially, the focus is upon the Cricket Pitch and Pavilion as this is the first area to come forward in the building schedule.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone involved in making the Parish the beautiful safe place it is.

So; Thank you to Councillors, including District and County, staff, our regular bands of volunteers who work so hard for their local community, the police and fire services our litter pickers and all our residents who care for the place in which they live. Let's look forward to even more success in the coming year. I hope that all residents will feel able to help and support us in our endeavours.

Item 4b

Grounds Committee Report for Annual Parish Meeting to be held on 25th April 2016.

2015/2016 has been a busy but very productive year for the Committee and the Countryside Team.

A Bioblitz event was held on the 12th/13th June 2015 at Dell Piece West. The purpose was to record the various plant, animal, insect, bird and bat species at the site. Community involvement was actively encouraged and the event was well attended. The Parish was lucky enough to have a number of experts in their fields attend and share their wealth of knowledge. The management plan has been updated to record the information gathered at the Bioblitz. It is hoped to repeat the exercise at other sites in the Parish. Many thanks to the then Grounds Manager, Carole Burnett for her passion and enthusiasm in ensuring that this event was so successful.

Catherington Pond received a facelift with the help of The Conservation Volunteers. The boardwalk was replaced and the pond cleared in part to ensure its continued health.

Walkers at Catherington Lith were surprised and really pleased when the Countryside Team cleared over twenty years worth of leaf mulch from the paths to reveal a solid base. A lot of bramble and lonicera clearance work has taken place over the year. This revealed more areas of bluebells. Visitors to the Lith at present will see a superb display of bluebells.

Winter grazing took place at Dell Piece, Hazleton Common and on Catherington Down. This was very successful in aiding the management of each site.

The major project of the Committee for the past year has been the upgrade of the Parish' play areas. There was extensive consultation as to what residents of the Parish would like to see at each of the play areas. The main focus is on Jubilee Hall. The toddler area will have a jungle theme and will be totally overhauled and expanded. There will be a new area for the older age groups that will include a zip wire. There will be more minor additions at Five Heads Recreation Ground, Deep Dell and Downs Park. Full details are on the Parish Council website. The major part of the cost was paid out of developer contributions.

We are pleased to welcome Matthew Madill as the new Grounds Manager.

Finally, a very big thank you to the volunteers who assist the Countryside Team on the Open Spaces throughout the Parish. They are all very passionate and turn out in all weathers.

Item 4C

***Horndean Parish Council, Finance and General Purposes Committee Report 2015-16***

Cllr D. Evans

We can report again of continued advances in the Council's financial management.

The Council decided on a £35k reduction in the precept for 2015-16, amounting to a 10% reduction in our share of the Council Tax and this has proved to be quite manageable.

The team of senior Officers and their staff continue to make a significant contribution to improving the financial condition of the Council.

Our RFO, Simon Ritson, has completed his work on improving the budget template which now provides Council with a much improved presentation of the figures and assumptions. The Asset Register review, a large and time-consuming task, is virtually complete.

There will again be an under-spend in 2015/16 which was estimated in March to be about £40,000. Key items are Hall hire receipts coming in at £12k over forecast (2016-17 budget has been adjusted accordingly), the 2015 election cost of £5k was not needed (and can therefore be held as a reserve for future elections), the £4k to build Youth Shelters has not yet been spent as the project has only just gained planning approval plus, there has been a number of operational cost savings. Once the year end accounts have been completed, the Committee will be considering what changes may be advisable to our EMRs.

The Council's earmarked reserves (EMR) now afford considerable security in the event of large and unforeseen spends and for replacement of worn out assets. Net expenditure from our EMRs during the year totals some £49k covering maintenance of the Granary, playground equipment, Lith Avenue resurfacing, IT systems renewal and vehicle replacement. There will be a need to retain reserves, not only for asset replacement but also for future project costs that we can see approaching. The upgrading of Jubilee Hall and Napier Hall are coming forward for consideration and the new facilities at the "Land East of Horndean" development site, although a few years away yet, can be expected to require the Council to invest in chairs, tables and other fitments not provided by the developer.

Further improvements to clarify the Councils Finance Regulation in respect of the need for quotes for supplies and an increase of the Executive Officer's discretionary spending limit were recommended and approved by Council. Various policies and procedures were reviewed and improvements recommended to Council.

The presentation of the 2016-17 budget benefitted greatly from Mr Ritson's revisions which enabled Councillors and the public to have much greater visibility of the details contained.

Finally, our continued prudent financial management, ably exercised by the management team, has enabled us to keep the Council Tax Precept for 2016/17 unchanged from 2015/16.

Item 4d

# Report on the activities of the Planning Committee of Horndean Parish Council for 2015-2016

During this year to date, a large number of Planning Applications that were registered with East Hants District Council, were dealt with. There were also a number from South Downs National Park.

Due to the varying levels of existing development spread across the Parish Wards, this has often resulted in an imbalance in the workload of Planning committee Ward Councillors, and it is possible that a review will take place to try to even out the allocation of applications, if thought prudent by the committee.

In many cases, members of the public who would be affected by the would-be application, attended our meetings, and were given every opportunity to put their thoughts to the committee, and I am confident that in nearly every case, our committee decision was in line with the their thoughts and wishes

As stated on previous occasions, our planning committee is a consultation body, not a decision making one. Our role is to consider planning applications against a set of guidelines and to make recommendations as to the suitability of an application against those guidelines. However it has caused concern for some time that a number of proposals to which the committee recommended objection, for clearly documented breaches of EHDC planning guidelines, have been approved and a system has been put in place to monitor this, in order to get a better understanding of why this is happening, and I would like to thank Councillor Jacobs for offering to take on the role of administering the monitoring.

When this subject was discussed at last year's meeting, Councillor Guy Shepherd reminded us that decisions taken were often decided by an "on-balance" approach, and that case officers were always prepared to discuss and explain the reasoning behind any decision that went against our recommendation, and this remains the case.

Finally I would like to thank all members of the Planning Committee who took on applications, and prepared reports, for their hard work and efforts, and also the Office staff who have worked hard to organise, and collate reports in time for meetings, which, due to time constraints imposed by EHDC, have to occur at three week intervals.

Councillor Paul Beck

Chairman, Planning and Public Services committee

Item 4e

**Annual Parish Meeting** **25 April 2016**

## Staffing Committee Report 2015/16

This is my first report as Chairman of the Staff Committee, a role that I took over from Sara Schillemore who had covered it very effectively for several years and who stood down as a member of the Parish Council in May after many years dedicated service. I am grateful to Irene Weeks for accepting the role of Vice-Chairman who I know will cover the role very well.

We have had fewer changes to the Office and Countryside staff this year than in the recent past, although we were however very sorry that our Grounds Manager Carole Burnett left us in February, as she wanted to move away from Horndean to be nearer her family in the West Country. We are very grateful to Carole for all that she achieved in the eighteen months she was with us as a result of all her hard work, enthusiasm and compassion for the completion of projects. We particularly remember the 24 hour BioBlitz that she organised and managed on Dell Piece West last June which identified numerous rare species and which she saw through to the end despite some most unseasonal weather, sleeping overnight in the van!

We are grateful to our temporary Grounds Manager Simon Howe who managed the team effectively during the period between Carole's departure and the appointment of Matthew Madill as her successor. Matthew joined us on 18th April and we are confident that with his qualifications and experience he will be a valuable addition to and effective leader of the Countryside Team.

To assist our Responsible Financial officer Simon Ritson, who currently works 15 hours a week, to cover the workload he faces, we appointed a new Finance Administrator to work one day a week. We had employed Kim Hall through an Agency to help Simon for several months and as the considerable amount of time and effort he had spent training and supporting her had been very successful, we were keen to take her on as a permanent employee.

We took on a new caretaker and website administrator during the year following the completion of her 26 week probationary period. We would like to thank her predecessor Kay Rainbow who left us during the year for all her work for the Council during her time with us.

To help clear the large amount of work currently faced by the Countryside Team we are advertising for an additional person to be employed on a fixed term contract for eighteen months.

Finally, we congratulate Carla on achieving her CILCA qualification, which she somehow managed to find the time and energy to study for while also successfully managing the Office and its staffing requirements and providing advice and guidance to Councillors through another year.

Item 5

**Report from County Councillor Mrs Marge Harvey**
**Annual Parish Meeting: 25th April 2016**

This has been a difficult year for me personally and for Hampshire County Council.

Hampshire have had to try to make the money they have do as much as possible and some difficult decisions have been made. Despite all this HCC have achieved quite a lot and in Horndean. I have tried to take forward as much as is possible. There is still a lot to be done and I will continue to lobby for my division to get what it needs.

The worst thing for all divisions is that traffic calming is now safety evidenced and not, what for me is obvious, any road that needs to be traffic calmed. White Dirt Lane has been started and hopefully, for the residents that live there, it will be safer. It has taken a great deal of time and effort to get this done, but I hope it will be effective. There is still much to be done in Horndean and I will continue to lobby for this.

The Parish Chairman and the officers from Hampshire and myself met to discuss the problems of the A3 bus corridor and the officers have come up with one idea that may help, but it does need the bus company to agree, so let's just see what happens. I am on four different committee at HCC, each one has its own problems, which are debated and hopefully solved.

The one that most of you will have seen recently in the media is Southern Health. At HCC I am on the Health and Social Care committee which questions what has been happening at Southern Health where they failed to investigate many deaths. The Chief Executive was questioned by our committee and the only thing that she could say, was that they would learn from this. Well the CQC have also investigated them and they seem to still have not have learned and the MP from Fareham, Suella Fermandez, has asked that this is debated in parliament, but from the way the Chief Executive has acted, she still will not take ownership off this problem and resign, which in my opinion is what should happen, after all she is supposed to be in charge.

In my division a few years ago, I managed to get them to come to a residents home for a meeting of the way they acted over a young man who was I severe problems and Southern Health did nothing to help, with the young man leaving the country without the carer knowing. This could have ended up in a very much more serious outcome and in fact, it was quite a serious outcome anyway.

They also give care in the community and I have been contacted by a few residents who have been very unhappy with the way they have acted, with no apology forthcoming!!!With care being pushed out into the community more and more, I really worry about what sort of help the residents in my division will get.

One other committee that I'm on is the Children's Committee and I was very glad that the government decided to change their minds about cutting the help for disabled. I wrote to the minister giving my reasons why they should re think and I'm glad that they did. It doesn't seem right that we take money away from the most needy on our society. I do realise that they are trying to change some of the ways that money is spent, but it should be done fairly. Mental health in children is another thing that I'm concerned about and I do have some children in my division that need help and I have been meeting with the head of children's services to try and get what is needed for these children.

As you can see, it is not just roads and potholes that are part of what I do and I would just ask that if you have any concerns about anything, that you contact me and I have always been happy to meet with you and to try and solve any issues that you have. Whilst speaking about roads, I think you will all agree that Victory Avenue and footways leading off are looking better and I hope that I will be able to get some more footways done in the near future.

I am happy to answer any questions that you may have and if I don't have the answers, then I will make sure that I find the answer and get back to you.

County Councillor Mrs Marge Harvey

# Chairman's Report April 2017

Individual committee Chairman reports will provide more detail but I would like to highlight one or two of our achievements this year.

We have our full quota of Councillors and no vacancies within the staff team. So important to the achievement of our plans and aims.

During the year Cllr Amanda Reece resigned and we thank her for her work. We have welcomed two new Councillors, Cllr Richard Veitch and Cllr Peter Little.

Mr Matt Madill, Countryside Team Manager, Mr Derek Barham and Mr Callum Fenegan joined the team so we are very fortunate to have a professional group of staff ably led by Mrs Carla Baverstock-Jones.

Our playground projects are complete and all the new and improved areas are well-used and much appreciated by those who visit them.

Again we have been able to achieve a zero precept rise for the coming year without reducing what we do.

During the year I have worked on recruiting new volunteers to operate our Speed Indicator Devices (SID) and we should be able to restart the placement of these effective units during the next month or so.

We hope to move forward with an extension to Jubilee Hall and Napier Hall condition is under review.

Footpath 26A continues to be a priority but has not progressed as we wished during this year. We await a report from Hampshire County Council which should enable us to move forward.

Land East of Horndean has not visibly progressed but a lot of work is continuing in the background.

Finally, I would like to thank all the people who continue to keep the Parish of Horndean a safe and beautiful place to live: Councillors, Parish, District and County, all our staff, our Thursday volunteers, those who regularly pick litter (and those who don't drop it in the first place!), the police and fire services and all the residents who work to keep Horndean a desirable place to live.

Chairman's Report: Grounds Committee 03.04.17

The Council Year 2016/2017 saw the completion of one of the biggest projects undertaken by the Grounds Committee in the upgrade and refurbishment of the play areas across the Parish. Jubilee Hall was the main focus with the existing play area being made over with a jungle theme. A new area for older children was built that included a zip wire. The aim was to have a destination play area for a wider age group of youngsters in the area. The formal opening in the October 2016 half term was very well attended with all attendees (including adults) enjoying the party and various activities put on for the event. We continue to receive good feedback on the upgrade. The upgrades on the other play areas such as Deep Dell and Downs Park have also received favourable feedback. Developers Contributions funded the bulk of the cost.

The Grounds Team headed up by Matthew Madill has proved to be a successful team. They have an unmatched dedication, passion and enthusiasm when working on both the Open Spaces and the more formal recreation areas of the Parish. The Grounds Team is now focussing on the Village Centre. That includes the provision of planters by the Parish Council. In full bloom, the Centre should look stunning.

Last year's Bioblitz event at Hazleton Common was a very successful event carried out over a twenty four hour period. The aim was to sight, identify and record the various species living and growing on the Common. A variety of experts were present at various times of the event. Members of the public were encouraged to attend and participate in the various activities. It was lovely to see so many people attend and enjoy themselves. The next Bioblitz will be at Catherington Down on the 7th and 8th July 2017.

Lastly, the Committee would like to extend a very big thank you to the volunteers who assist the Grounds Team across the Parish. It means that we can do more to maintain and enhance our recreation areas.

# Report on the activities of the Planning Committee of Horndean Parish Council for 2016-2017

During this year to date, a large number of Planning Applications that were registered with East Hants District Council, were dealt with. There were also a number from South Downs National Park.

Due to the varying levels of existing development spread across the Parish Wards, this has often resulted in an imbalance in the workload of Planning committee Ward Councillors, and I would like to thank all Councillors who took on applications other than their own to help out

In many cases, members of the public who would be affected by the would-be application, attended our meetings, and were given every opportunity to put their thoughts to the committee, and I am confident that in nearly every case, our committee decision was in line with the their thoughts and wishes

As stated on previous occasions, our planning committee is a consultation body, not a decision making one. Our role is to consider planning applications against a set of guidelines and to make recommendations as to the suitability of an application against those guidelines. It was apparent that some of our interpretations of the guidelines were slightly at odds with EHDC interpretation, and we are very grateful to have had Mark Webb, Planning Communications Manager, and Simon Jenkins, Head of Planning visit us and give expert guidance on the regulations to members of the Planning Committee

Finally I would again like to thank all members of the Planning Committee who took on applications, and prepared reports, for their hard work and efforts, and also the Office staff who have worked hard to organise, and collate reports in time for meetings, which, due to time constraints imposed by EHDC, have to occur at three week intervals.

Councillor Paul Beck

Chairman, Planning and Public Services committee

**Annual Parish Meeting** **3 April 2017**

## Staffing Committee Report 2016/17

We have had few changes to the staff this year. As I mentioned last year, Matt Madill was appointed as our new Grounds Manager on the 18 April 2016, taking over from Simon Howe who had covered the role on a temporary basis following Carole Burnett's departure to move to be nearer her family. Matt has been supported in his new role by Jordan Walker whose recent promotion to Assistant Grounds Manager is making excellent use of the knowledge and experience he has gained as the longest serving member of the team.

The Countryside Team was augmented by the appointment of Derek Barham and Calum Fenegan as Estate and Horticulture Wardens who joined existing Estate Warden Mark Iglesias on the 13 June 2016 on 18 month fixed term contracts. Derek and Calum replaced Paul Edwards who retired in June after working for the Council for 12 years. We are grateful to Paul for all he did for the Team during his time with Council.

Our Finance Administrator Kim Hall was appointed as a permanent member of staff in September having completed her 26 week probationary period. Working one day a week, Kim assists the RFO Simon Ritson with general financial matters and has also undertaken additional duties during staff leave or sickness.

Our Senior Administrator Sarah Guy continues to provide energy and enthusiasm to all aspects of her role. She supports the Chief Officer and her colleagues in all aspects of their work in a thorough, accurate and timely manner and took the lead role in organising the Carol Service which was a very successful event.

Our Responsible Financial Officer Simon Ritson applies a high level of professionalism to every aspect of his role and the exceptional standard of his work frequently exceeds the requirements of his position. His work on the Budget was just particularly appreciated and valued by the Council.

Finally I would like to thank our Chief Officer Carla Baverstock-Jones for the extremely professional and effective way she manages the Office, providing support and guidance to the Staff, as well as sound and clear advice to the Councillors who appreciate all that she does for the Parish Council.

Andrew Forbes
Staff Committee Chairman

# Horndean Parish Council,
# Finance and General Purposes Committee Annual Report
# March 2017

Jubilee Hall
Work continues on the project to develop Jubilee Hall with the possibility of adding junior changing rooms, extra storage space and facilities and providing Council offices and a workshop/store for the Countryside team.
The RFO has established the broad financial viability of the project and it has been ascertained that significant funds would be available from developer's S106 contributions. There are reserves set aside for the project and it is expected that the balance would come from a Public Works Loan at costs no greater than the rents on our present premises.

Policy changes were debated and subsequently agreed in Full Council in respect of:

> Electrical safety of Portable Appliances: A scheme was devised in accordance with HSE guidelines that will eliminate unnecessary testing and thereby reduce costs.
>
> Finance Committee Terms of Reference: These were reviewed and amended to include the delegation of various powers from Council to the F&GP Committee in areas such as detailed financial scrutiny which can be satisfactorily and more efficiently dealt with by the Committee. This is in accordance with Best Practice advice for making the best use of Committees.
>
> Policy regarding the Sale of land owned by HPC: Occasionally, residents ask HPC to sell them parts of its landholdings. Investigating and producing a report for Council's consideration absorbs considerable officer resource and Council time and requests are almost always refused. This policy was drawn up to clarify the Council's position in order that residents avoid spending time and money making requests for HPC land that have no reasonable prospect of succeeding.

The Council's finances continue to be very strong. The out-turn for 16/17 is forecast to be an underspend of about £40,000, made up largely of a salary underspend due to staff vacancies, a better than expected Halls income, lower tree maintenance and vehicle running costs. In addition, the Chief Officer and her staff continue to be watchful of expenditure and their excellent work in reducing costs has contributed to the underspend. As always, the 2017/18 budget has, where appropriate, been adjusted accordingly.

The Council continues to set aside reserves, funds allocated for various uses such a replacement of vehicles, playground equipment and major halls projects and these are now substantial but within recommended limits. With these funds, the Council will be able to carry out significant upgrades to the facilities it operates for the benefit of residents without making large increases in its precept.

Over the last few years, Council has monitored closely the financial security of the Co-op Bank where substantial HPC funds have been invested for many years. In light of recent increased concerns raised in the press about the Bank and notwithstanding that it remains, we are told, most unlikely actually to fail, the Council decided to adopt a cautious policy and remove funds to another bank leaving the operating current account at the Co-op at a level below the £85k guaranteed level. The work of opening a new account has now been completed and the necessary transfers made.

The RFO completed his work on the draft budget with input and discussions with Councillors and Committees. The resultant budget draws a small amount from the general reserve amounting to less than half the forecast underspend and is therefore easily affordable. Council decided to leave the precept unchanged for the third consecutive year at Band D figure of £72.04,

As chairman of the Finance and general Purpose committee, I would like to conclude by paying tribute to the excellent work done by Simon Ritson, our RFO, in running the Council's finance department in an exemplary manner and in providing the Committee and Council with accurate and easily understandable reports and highly professional advice.

Cllr David Evans, Chairman F & GP Committee

# HORNDEAN PARISH COUNCIL

## ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

**3rd April 2017**

## SUBJECT OF REPORT: HORNDEAN PARISH TWINNING ASSOCIATION

Horndean Parish Twinning Association was formed in May 1990. An official charter declaring our twinning with Aubergenville, Yvelines, France was signed on 2nd May 1998 in Aubergenville and on 16th May 1998 in Horndean.

The aims of the Association are to

- Promote and foster friendship and understanding between the people of the Parish of Horndean and those of the town of Aubergenville, Yvelines, France.
- Encourage visits by individuals and groups to and from our twinned town, particularly by young people, and develop personal contacts to broaden the mutual understanding of the culture, recreational, educational and commercial activities of the linked communities.

The Association raises all the money it spends on its aims and activities from an annual membership fee and from fund raising events,

This year we were accompanied on our visit to Aubergenville in May by Paul Ferguson, a reporter for the Petersfield Post who wrote a report about Twinning for the Paper the week after the trip in connection with a series of articles on Europe that the Post was doing during the run-up to the Referendum last June.

The Hoe Down and Ploughman's Supper on Saturday 18th June 2016 at Blendworth Church Centre was enjoyed by around 50 members and friends.

A barbecue followed the AGM on 16th July 2016.

The French Visit to Horndean on the weekend of 23rd to 26th September 2016 started with a visit to the Mary Rose exhibition on their arrival in Portsmouth. This was followed by visit to Whitchurch Silk Mill on Saturday morning and a pub lunch in the village and the Blendworth Band Concert in the evening. On Sunday, there was a visit to Hambledon Vineyard on the morning followed by a barbecue at the home of Chairman.

The Quiz Nights at Jubilee Hall on Saturday 15th October 2016 and Saturday 11th March 2017 included a fish, chicken or sausage and chips meal and were very well attended.

The Christmas social was a 'traditional Christmas dinner' at the Chairman's home on 15th December, which was enjoyed by all

The next visit to France will be 2nd to 5th June 2017.

More Quizzes, Hoedowns and Concerts are also planned for the coming year to raise funds to enable the Association to continue to maintain and develop its strong and long standing links with our friends in Aubergenville.

Report prepared by Cllr Andrew Forbes