

**Minutes of Nether Wallop Annual Parish Meeting
held on Monday 26 April 2010 at Nether Wallop Village Hall**

Attendance: The meeting was attended by Cllrs Atkins, Hind, Richardson, Roach, Souter, Young and Whitaker, HCC Cllr Gibson, TVBC Cllr Boulton, PC Beecroft and two members of the public.

Apologies for absence: Mr Williams (Footpaths Officer).

Declaration of councillors' interests: none.

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 11 May 2009: These were unanimously agreed and signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record.

Policing report: PC Beecroft reported that crime is down by 11% and that there are 3,000 fewer victims of crime across the district. Reports of anti social behaviour are also down by 21% compared to last year and the police are continuing to maintain a detection rate of over 25%. According to local surveys confidence is rising and the police are doing better than ever in keeping victims of crime informed regarding progress of investigations. In Nether Wallop itself during the last twelve months there have been no assaults, 2 burglaries from dwellings, 2 other burglaries, 2 incidents of criminal damage and 4 thefts. These are very low figures and would indicate that Nether Wallop is a safe place to live. He enquired about the forthcoming 'Strawhenge' music event to be held on 19 June and its proximity to the Solstice celebrations. The Chairman replied that as this was to be held well out of the village the effect on parishioners would be minimal. This would be a private event it would be comparatively easy to manage. PC Beecroft concluded by giving his mobile number and would be attending council meetings every quarter. The Chairman thanked PC Beecroft for his attendance at the meeting and was grateful for the obvious impact that good community policing had on the low village crime rate.

HCC Report: HCC Cllr Gibson reported that he has been ten months in post. HCC has allocated a substantial amount of money towards improving the roads. Gritting had been a problem during the harsh winter and 4,000 grit boxes have been purchased by HCC for use throughout the county. HCC has fourteen people available for clearing footpaths throughout the county. The Lengthman project is going ahead although Nether Wallop is not one of the councils included. He reported that there is some excess grant money to be allocated to Nether Wallop and requested suggestions on how this could be spent. The clearing of ditches in the village was proposed. HCC Cllr Gibson is Chairman of a HCC committee looking at transportation. Cllr Roach said there is a need for more public transport in the village and Cllr Gibson would get back on how this could be improved. The subject of the temporary repair of potholes after a harsh winter is a subject being looked into by Cllr Gibson. Urgent potholes to be repaired could be reported direct to the HCC website. These are currently in Five Bells Lane, Hollom Down Road and The Dene.

TVBC Report: TVBC Cllr Boulton reported on a saving of £750,00 out of a total TVBC budget of nearly £12 million resulting in council tax increase of a modest 2.5%. His particular responsibility on the TVBC cabinet is the Environmental Service, which topped all the performance ratings in the council. Recycling figures are at 36.5% which compare favourably with any in Hants. Although during the severe winter problems were faced when the snow came TVBC were the first waste collection in Hants to get back to normal collections. Cllr Boulton also works with the planning department supporting 'green issues' within the borough. Andover is soon to have its own Town Council which will enable it to comment on planning issues and take on allotment responsibility in the same way that each parish council. In his planning committee capacity he looks at approximately 500 applications during the year and mentioned the Tesco megashed proposal at Andover airfield. This has now been withdrawn and a more modest proposal by the Co-Op has been approved with all the road and traffic movement restrictions in place. TVBC has now refined developer contributions which enable parishes to provide better facilities or highways improvements when housing is permitted in the community. All parishes have been asked by TVBC to comment on the current village boundaries and to complete and update their Green Spaces strategy. He further congratulated all involved on the Wallops Parish Hall refurbishment and was very impressed on his visit there last week. Cllr Boulton concluded by thanking the parish council and residents of Nether Wallop for their continued support.

Wallop Primary School: Cllr Hind read the Headteacher's report as follows:-

NUMBER ON ROLL: 170

Staffing - Mrs Anna Boakes and Miss Becky Stone joined us teaching Year R and Year 4 respectively following the moves away from the area at the end of 2009 of Mrs Hibbitt and Mrs Coles.

Curriculum - We are in the process of redeveloping our curriculum to ensure a more creative approach, in line with the Rose Report. This is a central element of our School Development Plan and is linked to performance management.

All pupils have 2 PE sessions a week. We also run the 'Huff and Puff' initiative at lunchtimes and a number of sports/activity clubs after school.

Along with the cluster group several sporting activities have taken place this term, including football for Y5/6 girls and the cross-country.

The school runs few extended services directly. However after school clubs are held each evening. We also held first aid training for parents in November.

A number of parents have enquired about the possibility of a breakfast club. I intend to send out a mini questionnaire to find out about the interest and sustainability.

Community - We are delighted to regularly welcome Rev Vanessa Cole, into school; she has already led several assemblies which are enjoyed by the whole school. Christmas seems a long way away now. Our performances were done differently this year in that we had separate performances for Key Stage One (The Nativity) and Key Stage 2 (Snow White). Both Key Stages had an afternoon and evening performance to give as many family members as possible the chance to see these wonderful shows. The choir performed at Winton Nursing Home and all of the children enjoyed their traditional Christmas parties. The PTA once again funded a performance by M & M Productions of Robin Hood.

The PTA are busy fundraising and have already undertaken a Pedal-In, Christmas Fair, Christmas Hamper Raffle, Sale of Reindeer Hay and Christmas Wrapping Paper. The recent Village Quiz was a great success and a Movie Night will be taking place shortly. This will assist funding the improvement of our pond area and redecoration of the school hall. The PTA, under the chairmanship of Ric Francis, is busily planning other events, with our School Fete taking place in June.

We held a Bring and Buy and Cake sale for the Haiti Disaster Fund, raising £515.00, a tremendous effort considering this event was organised within a week. We intend to organise a number of other events to raise funds for our chosen charity, Naomi House, throughout the rest of the school year. We have also supported Children In Need, The Andover Food Bank and "Ran the Mile" for Sport Relief raising £200."

Footpaths Report: In the absence of Mr Williams, Footpaths Officer, the Chairman read his report as follows:- The last 12 months have seen a number of important developments in footpaths in the Parish. Following a visit by Peter Watson, Senior Countryside Access Ranger for Hants CC in September, a major clear and cutting back at the church end of the footpath behind High Street was undertaken. The objective was to cut back encroaching Blackthorn and to give walkers an alternative route round an exposed and potentially dangerous manhole cover; the finger board sign was also replaced. In addition, Peter has promised replacement of many of the older and decaying path signs in the area and assistance with volunteers from the Parish on other projects that need to be undertaken locally.

The footpath to the westside of the Old Post Office has been re-opened and cleared but help is needed to remove the old stile which is no longer necessary. The two neglected Restricted Byways off Hollom Down Road were cleared and fallen trees removed to allow access to both walkers and horse riders. Unfortunately, fly tipping has again been a problem but is promptly dealt with by the County Council once they have been notified. In addition, many hours have been spent by fellow volunteers and myself strimming and cutting back to keep footpaths clear over the summer months.

My thanks to Rachael Wight, Mike Osman and Ivan Royle who have all helped to keep your footpaths in the best possible condition over the past year. Also, particular thanks to John Pearl who has the best kept path in the Parish from Hill Farm to Chalkwell. If you would like to lend a hand, please call Geoff Williams on 781641 or 07973 305776.

The Chairman further thanked Mr Williams and his team of volunteers for their work. Cllr Young reported that there was an increase in fly tipping along the Hollom Down Road but that TVBC have a good response rate.

Finance: Cllr Atkins reported that draft accounts for the year to 31st March 2010 have been prepared and will be presented for approval at the Council meeting on 10th May. The accounts have not yet been audited.

The accounts show a large excess of expenditure over income, but part of this relates to the Village Green Fund which spent all of its income and most of its funds brought forward on the purchase of the marquees and trailer, which are proving great assets to the village.

However the general fund has also gone down by £1,354 mainly due to our contribution of £2,012 to Wallops Parish Hall, double the amount budgeted for. Our General Fund balance is down to £3,245, well below the recommended level. It was anticipated that this might happen in the report last year, and this is why it has been necessary to increase the precept from £10,000 to £11,500. This should start to put the General Fund back to where it should be. However this will probably take 2 or 3 years to achieve. Otherwise, income and expenditure were generally near budgeted levels.

Once again, Cllr Atkins wished to express his thanks to Mr Shoemith for voluntarily carrying out all the Parish Council's bookkeeping, monthly financial reports and preparation.

Highways: Cllr Hind reported that potholes have continued to be reported throughout the year with mixed success. Roads are repaired in order of priority therefore farm lanes such as The Dene and Berry Court Lane do not get attention as quickly as others. Potholes in Farley Street and Heathman Street have been patched and stood the test of the bad winter unlike other roads where temporary repairs have meant that they are sinking badly. All potholes both old and new have been reported to HCC Highways and HCC Cllr Gibson.

HCC has offered more grit bins and villages have been asked to supply suitable locations. There was concern this winter that some roads were not being gritted and that where residents used the bins these were replenished with sand and not grit. Grit is for the sole use of public roads rather than private use. HCC were not able to grit side roads.

A concerned resident raised the issue of speed and safety measure in Farley Street and there was a speed test set up in locations along both Farley Street and Heathman Street. The Farley Street average was between 31-34 mph and Heathman Street 27-31mph. These results and the very low incidence of reported accidents show that the village would not qualify for Hants' priority list for traffic calming measures.

There is still concern from residents who have to walk along the faster stretches of Farley Street and HCC's Safer Routes to School team is working with the Wallop School Headteacher on this issue. Irresponsible parking outside the school by a few parents cause the school coach to take a wide sweep around them and hit the bank on the opposite side. The Headteacher has submitted a plan to HCC, which if approved, will attract funding for a bigger car park within the school grounds. He is also hoping that zig-zag lines outside the school can be extended or safety barriers erected. These measures should encourage all parents to use the car park thus improving both the safety of the children and the lives of neighbouring residents.

Village Green: Cllr Roach reported that the Green continued to be appreciated by villagers. This is in part due to income from events and also due to volunteers who oversee general maintenance such as grasscutting, weeding, cleaning benches etc. Two marquees were purchased last year and they are stored on a trailer purchased for the purpose in secure and clean conditions. Although this incurred additional costs that is defrayed in full by the hiring out of the marquees for private functions. Last year's May Fair generated a profit of £1,000 and it is encouraging to see younger members of the community more evident and involved. In June the Green had its first wedding reception for the Souter family. Following on in July there was the Village Market and in September there was a rounders and curry afternoon. For the fourth year Carols were sung on the Green in December. Another year passed with new challenges, a lot of work, but also a lot of fun for many people in the village.

Playing Fields: Cllr Richardson reported that the play equipment is being used and he hoped that the new cricket pitch project would come to fruition. Despite standing down from the council he would continue to collect money from the two teams playing football and pass onto the Responsible Financial Officer.

Chairman's Address: The Chairman reported that the parish council relies on an enormous amount of voluntary work from those who successfully manage its business such as the accounts, the Village Green, footpaths and Neighbourhood Watch. He was sad to report that Cllr Gary Richardson is leaving the council and thanked him for his hard work on the council and for managing the playing fields. There is now a vacancy on the council and looking ahead to May 2011 there will be further changes in councillors. Some new blood is needed!

The Chairman presented the report on the refurbishment of the Wallops Parish Hall and circulated copies to all councillors. The total cost of the project was £378,346. A lottery and other grants had been obtained. The finished hall was a great achievement on behalf of the community who had raised funds itself of over £21,000. The only shortfall remaining is for fixtures and fittings. The handover would be completed in at the beginning of May and the hall would be open to the public on Saturday 8 May 2-4pm. He congratulated all involved particularly mentioning Mrs Day and Mrs Keightley who had put together the lottery grant bid and Mr Taylor Firth as project manager.

Points from the floor: Mrs Grover said that visibility coming out of the Winton Nursing Home is restricted, a mirror was suggested.

There being no further points, the Chairman concluded the meeting at 9.27pm. Refreshments were served afterwards.

THESE ARE DRAFT MINUTES PRODUCED FOR REVIEW BY THE PARISH COUNCILLORS PRIOR TO BEING APPROVED AT THE NEXT ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL