

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF
BROCKENHURST PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
TUESDAY 25th APRIL 2017 AT BROCKENHURST VILLAGE HALL**

Pete Wales was in the Chair with all but one members of the Parish Council, the County Councillor and 35 members of the public present. Brockcare had a display in the hall.

1. Apologies - Anita Whittle, Thorold Masefield

2. Chairman's Report

The Chairman, Pete Wales, welcomed all to the meeting. He began his report by highlighting the visits to the village by the New Zealand dignitaries, Camila, Duchess of Cornwall, The Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire, Mayor and former Mayor of Pont St. Martin. Pete confirmed no increase in Precept whilst continuing to support local organisations by way of grant funding. Despite residents support for the installation of CCTV, Councillors have not progressed the proposed scheme as they believed that the processing of personal data could not be justified as proportionate or necessary. A hundred planning applications were considered during the year and consultations on Waste Recycling Centres, the Forest Design Plan and two Local Development Plans were also completed. Hampshire County Council Traffic Management cuts have prevented action to dispel residents' concerns about issues on Sway Road. The New Forest marathon course appears to have been successfully rerouted after consultation with the Parish Council. Many cycle events have been run satisfactorily having signed up to the Charter agreed between the Parish Councils but there have still been issues with Sportives. It is hoped that the work on SuperFast Broad Band will be completed during 2017 as envisaged. A flood group has been set up to look at reducing the incidence of road closures.

Pete concluded by thanking the Events Committee, which includes the Business Association, Friends of Brockenhurst and Primary School PTA as well as others, for organising the Garden Party for the Queen's 90th birthday, the Remembrance Day parade, Christmas fun evening and pancake races. Councillors, our Groundsman, Kevin, Mary our Clerk and Mina her Assistant were all thanked for their tireless devotion.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the meeting held 26th April 2016

It was noted that a pavement should be provided at Mill Lane, the depth marker at the Watersplash needs to be improved and that litter continues to mar Waters Green.

4. Report by the County Councillor

The County Council elections will be held on 4th May. Reorganisation will mean an increase of 4,000 residents in the division, which will become the largest in the county and one of the largest in the country. The issue of devolution appears to have gone away for the next few years, other political events having taken priority. Over the last six years the County budget has reduced from £2b to £1.5b but that the precept increased only last year to cover an increase in adult social care. The county continues with work in conjunction with the statutory undertakers to bring Superfast Broadband to the remaining areas, and to maintain the roads despite them being built on old forest tracks and therefore more susceptible to potholes. Cllr. Thornber stated that he had concluded his final report and was standing down on health grounds. It had been an honour and a privilege to serve the community.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Thornber for his report and then addressed him by saying:
I have a huge amount of respect for Ken as a conscientious divisional councillor. I have known Ken for the last 20 years but he joined Hampshire County Council in 1977 some 40 years ago. Ken rose to become a dedicated Leader of the Authority for 14 years and was awarded his CBE for service to politics. Ken became a key figure in the Hampshire Police Authority, New Forest National Park, the Hampshire Ambulance Trust and an Executive Member of the Local Government Association. I would personally like to thank Lin, his wife, for her unflinching support. On behalf of my colleagues on the Parish Council, I extend our appreciation for the dedication and commitment to the people of Brockenhurst and wish them both the very best for the future. I have already mentioned the CBE but Ken has received other honours most

notably becoming President of the New Forest Show, an Honorary Fellow of Winchester University and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. To top it all, at a meeting of the Parish Council it was unanimously resolved to grant Ken Thornber CBE the honorary Freedom of the Parish. The citation reads "We the Council grant you the highest honour we can bestow in recognition of your exceptional contribution to our community over 40 years as a Member of Hampshire County Council for the Brockenhurst Division. We loudly applaud your valuable and sterling service, whilst thanking you most sincerely". This is purely honorary and does not mean that you can drive your donkeys through Ken's bends!! Ken you are the first and only Freeman of Brockenhurst - congratulations.

5. Report by the District Councillor

Cllr. Maureen Holding gave her personal thanks to Cllr. Thornber for his help and kindness over the last eighteen years, and to his wife Lin as well. He has been a good friend and is a selfless, knowledgeable man.

Mrs. Holding noted that there is more planning protection now to counter erosion of the green belt but that housing is needed and a balance must be found. NFDC continue to do an excellent job despite funding cuts.

Cllr. Michael Harris added his thanks to Cllr. Thornber, whose advice to contact the County finance department lead to reduced cost and better performance in some services. He also congratulated the Chairman on the Unsung Hero award given to Solent Dolphin charity of which Pete Wales is a Director. The District Council has a new Chief Executive and a new management team. The recycling centres have been reduced over the last year from 100 to just 20 now, one of which is at Brockenhurst station. Cllr. Harris would like to see more defibrillators and for the village to have o a Dementia-friendly group.

Both District Councillors were thanked by the Chairman for their reports.

6. Report on the Bailey Benefice

The Clerk gave the report of the Bailey Benefice, which meets every autumn to decide how to distribute the interest accrued on the investment. The beneficiaries are identified by local knowledge, referrals from school and the Pastoral Care Team. Last year twenty gifts of £25 were given just before Christmas. The Trustees always include the current Chairman of the Parish Council and the Incumbent of the Parish Church as stipulated in the Will. Monies are distributed without regard to creed or none and recipients must live in the village.

The Chairman has researched the history of Henry Francis Bailey with the details being held in the Parish Council files and at St. Nicholas' church.

7. Report of the Nalder Trust

Mark Böckle reported on the Nalder Trust which is soon to be registered as a charity. It provides accommodation for the elderly who cannot provide themselves with a home within the village. The Trust has four flats in Homeforde House. The District Council may have access to some grant funding which we are hopeful will provide the opportunity to increase the number of homes we can provide. He thanked the councillors and co-optees who manage the Trust at present.

8. Report from Brockenhurst Village Trust and Highwood Site Development

Bruce Read reported that the hall has had a good year with strong bookings. Improvements have been made to the kitchen and lighting and a canopy can be installed in the main hall and more are planned to the ladies toilets and the cinema screen. Wedding bookings extend to 2019. The hall is self-supporting and has this weekend received a large donation from the Needlework Fiesta. Four staff are employed, two office staff and the two caretakers. The bar and Moviola are run by volunteers.

Turning then to the Village Trust, Mr. Read reported that over the last year the nursery has left and the buildings have been demolished and he thanked Cllr. Thornber for his help with that. The Trust consulted the village on the future development of that part of the site and a lot of comments were received against the idea of social housing. The MUGA and Scout building are now proposed. Discussion are ongoing with the Parish Council regarding their new office beside the hall. A plea was made for volunteers to help run the Trust and help with the Hall, particularly women and younger people as they are under-represented on the committee.

9. Report from Fire Officer

In the absence of Kevin Baker his report was read by the Clerk. Last year 2016-2017, the Brockenhurst fire crew attended 135 incidents, breaking down into the following categories. 31 Automatic Fire Alarms, 8 Road Traffic Collisions, 28 primary fires which includes house, garage, cars, businesses and chimneys, 18 secondary fires which includes Forest, hedges, bonfires out of control, 6 Special Service Calls which includes lock ins and outs and to assist ambulance crews, 15 water/mud rescues and 1 stand-by call to another station due to larger incidents and 27 animal rescues. The Co-Responder car also attended many incidents. Many people will have seen the new First Response Vehicle which is under trial and so far seems to be a success.

10. Freshwater Trust - Presentation on South Weirs Pond

Unfortunately, our speaker from the Freshwater Trust has suffered an injury and was not able to give her talk this evening.

11. Community Group presentations:

Tim Thomas gave a report on behalf of the RBL to ask for an organiser for the Poppy Appeal each November. The role could be split if it would be easier and he asked for interested people to contact him via the Clerk if not direct. The Chairman presented a cheque to the RBL towards the cost of arranging the ANZAC and Remembrance Day services each year.

Mrs. Isabel Toward gave a report on the WI, the age range of members being from 45 to 91! Activities, events and outings are organised and it was noted that this year marks the centenary of the WI in Brockenhurst, the whole organisation being 102 years old, so Brockenhurst was among the first ones. The WI had served the refreshments at last weekend's Needlework Fiesta to raise funds.

Mrs. Lynsey Davis gave an update on the current situation with the MUGA, planning approval having been gained in December. Veolia have awarded their maximum grant of £50k which represents half the cost. Fund-raising events have taken place at the Football Club, as well as sponsored activities. The Parish Council and local businesses were thanked for their grants and donations. A Table Top Sale will take place at the Masonic Hall at the end of May.

Mrs. Helen Barnett, the new manager of the Brockenhurst and Sway Day Centre gave a report on their activities. The centre runs on Fridays from 10-3 and is entirely self-funding. They organise speakers, visits and activities for the members, and have four cooks, four drivers and twenty volunteers. The running costs are £14k. The local supporters in both communities were thanked for all that they do. There are places available for five more members.

Derek Browne gave a report of the Friends of Brockenhurst. Their next Spring meeting is in two weeks' time. Dr. Browne thanked Ken Thornber for his support over 35 years in assisting with getting the village hall built and acquiring the additional land.

Mrs. Bronya Szcatowska reported on the Primary School PTA. The PTA provides extra items that could not otherwise be financed. Fund-raising is underway for a sensory garden project. The community was thanked for working together and keeping the school going.

Roger Crabtree, Chairman of the Brockenhurst Business Association reported that the Association has decided to continue the map of the village centre facilities to promote the businesses and facilities, and a new website has been launched.

The Chairman presented a cheque to Brockcare towards the cost of putting on the very popular Holidays at Home. This year the theme is a Slowboat to China.

The Chairman asked the audience whether they would like to continue to receive the newsletter as a paper edition delivered to each house. It is difficult to get volunteers to take on the deliveries and an email option is available. Possible combination with the Friends of Brockenhurst leaflet was suggested and the response was evenly divided between continuing with the paper version or not.

12. Questions/comments from Members of the Public

Mr. Purkess noted that it had been a very positive meeting and showed what a flourishing and excellent village we live in. He thanked Cllr. Thornber for his support over the years, particularly for the school crossing and the purchase of the Highwood site.

Parish Councillor John Wingham sent Cllr. Thornber best wishes for his retirement and concurred with Mr. Purkess' remarks. He also congratulated the MUGA group on their success in getting the full Veolia grant and wished them every success.

Dr. Browne thanked the Parish Councillors, particularly the Chairman and the Clerk.

13. Chairman's Closing Remarks

The Chairman thanked the members of the public for attending and Mr. and Mrs. Nolan for serving the refreshments. The meeting closed at 8.50 pm.