

## DRAFT REPORT OF THE PARISH ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 5th May 2021, 7pm remote meeting via Zoom

Present: Parish Councillors Hugo Cubitt (Chairman), Tom Horsey, Kevin Rafferty, Alison Stent; Colin Robertson (new parish councillor elect); County Cllr Elaine Still; Ward Cllr Onnalee Cubitt; Tim Lewis (Village Hall acting chairman); PC Reid. Members of the public: 5

### 1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Apologies and thanks

Thanks to Pauline Hedges for hosting. Apologies Footpaths Warden Martin Carfrae. PC Reid has two other meetings to attend and will join shortly.

Parish Assemblies last year were cancelled due to Covid, the last Assembly was in 2019. Thanks to former members of the Parish Council and particularly chairman Lorna Cuthill who was then handing over. Thanks also to Paul French for his contribution over the last two years.

#### 1.2 Minutes of the 2019 Assembly – need to be agreed as a true record.

#### 1.3 Introducing Parish Councillors and Councillor roles

Everyone standing for the Parish Council at these elections has been elected unopposed and so pleased to be spared the wait for the results! The four current members are delighted to welcome Colin Robertson as a new Councillor.

- The Chairman noted that he was elected as Parish Council chairman up to the coming AGM, that will be for another 14 days. He also chairs the bonfire committee and leads on Mapledurwell planning matters.
- Tom Horsey is a longstanding member of the Parish Council leading on all things Up Nately, and Up Nately planning.
- Alison Stent looks after the Village Hall grounds and liaises with the VH Committee.
- Kevin Rafferty has taken on playground inspections and oversees finances.
- Colin Robertson, who has been doing an amazing job at the chalk stream, will now also be overseeing the allotments.

### 2. BRIEF REPORTS

#### 2.1 Chairman's review of projects over the last two years

- 1 Fencing a section of Frog Lane by the former Watercress Beds and now negotiating an long term lease with Corpus Christi to enable this area of chalk stream to be managed for environmental benefit as advised by HIWWT.
- 2 The allotments have a new parking area, all the allotments are now occupied. As part of a management plan (again advised by HIWWT) selected trees have been coppiced and the Community Payback team have begun clearing the watercourses – and also done a good job in constructing compost bays.
- 3 All the grips across the Parish have been surveyed and mapped by Parish Councillors, with a view to getting these on a maintenance rota with Hampshire County Council. There have been various instances of drains and gullies being blocked. These are reported on the Hantsweb online system. Response is often slow but it's evident that chasing doesn't make much difference.
- 4 Extra maintenance / clearing work has been done at the Village Hall grounds.
- 5 An agreement is in place for the plot of land by Up Nately Pond to be managed by the Parish Council for 25 years as Community Open Space.
- 6 Re local planning issues...
  - Developments at the pub have caused concern. The Planning System allows for retrospective applications, such an application is to be submitted for recent works. 'Enforcement' can only be expected if the retrospective application is refused.
  - A PIP (planning in principle) application for nine houses by Mapledurwell's Conservation area has also raised concern and a number of objections.

- 7 Several meetings have been held with the Basingstoke Canal Society concerning the 'last five miles' of the Basingstoke Canal as a walking route. BDBC have maintained a right of access through Canal Reach, but at the moment there is a break between Greywell Road and Frog Lane. The Parish Council is supportive of the scheme – but notes the need to consider the privacy of local residents and parking provision. Greywell was recently gridlocked with walkers and their cars.
- 8 The Parish Lengthman scheme is a useful resource for the Parish, funded by HCC for £1K-worth of man hours (45.5 hours) per year. Suggestions are always welcome for works that could be done to improve 'Village Upkeep' and the appearance and function of the Highway (other than on the 'live' road).

## 2.2 Parish Councillor reports

- i Alison Stent said she had been a member of the Parish Council for two years and is now liaising with the Village Hall committee and overseeing the upkeep of the Village Hall grounds. She noted the annual maintenance contract and also the extra work done this year – in cutting back trees (mostly from the car park), a general tidy, and clearing the Old Road (thanks to Alan Hutton for hedgecutting). The maintenance contract also covers the areas around the two ponds, this year trialing a reduction in the number of cuts around the Up Nately pond. If anyone notices any issues that require attention to please contact the Parish Council.
- ii Kevin Rafferty joined the Parish Council two years ago and mentioned also deputising for the Parish Footpaths Warden Martin Carfrae, as frequently walking the Parish footpaths – with secateurs or loppers in hand when needed. (Any larger obstacles are reported!) Kevin attended a training course to be RoSPA qualified and undertakes the regular playground inspections at the Village Hall. (BDBC will no longer be providing this inspection service FOC due to budget reductions.) An additional official RoSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) inspection is required annually for insurance purposes. Kevin also oversees the parish finances which are in a particularly healthy position due to a recent CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) allocation. (Brief finance report at **APPENDIX I.**)
- iii Tom Horsey advised that he looks out for the environment and upkeep of Up Nately, reporting on any pot holes, checking footpaths are clear, and looking into planning issues. A consistent problem on the highway is a huge puddle by St Sephen's Close, both he and Hugo have reported, but taking a long time to be rectified. The footpaths continue clear for the time being this year – strange combinations of dry and cold weather seem to have meant less than normal growth. If any areas of paths do become overgrown please let the Parish Council know. There has not been a huge amount of planning activity, though recently an application for a dog walking facility at land on Heather Lane has caused concern. The most exiting recent development has been the purchase, by a group of local residents, of a piece of land by Up Nately pond, a portion of which will be for community use.

**2.3 County Councillor** Elaine Still said she works in close contact with Parishes via the Parish Clerks. There is little she can say at the moment other than County will have some very difficult decisions ahead. Funding for children and adult social services is a statutory requirement; beyond that, questions regarding what can be spent and where won't be easy.

**2.4 Ward Councillor** Onnalee Cubitt thanked the Parish Clerk and Councillors for the work they do. The Parish Council is an incredibly valuable resource for the community. She said the Borough was facing a huge planning problem as Manydown has not yet built out, and the AMR (Annual Monitoring Report) shows less than a five-year land supply of deliverable housing. As such Local Plan housing policies are deemed out of date and the balance tilted in favour of development, making speculative applications more likely and more likely to succeed. Noting the PIP application for nine houses, Onnalee expressed concern over the impact on the historical setting and group of adjacent buildings.

### Questions and Comments

1. *It seems that what the Parish Council says regarding planning issues, or even what BDBC says, is increasingly by-the-by – potential developers can just go to the Secretary of State?*

Onnalee noted that was a very good point. The lack of a five-year land supply reduced the effectiveness of the Local Plan in terms of housing policies. The borough built c1,600 new houses last year, almost twice their allocation, but a large percentage of these on windfall not allocated sites.

2. *BDBC SHELAA evaluations for sites in Mapledurwell south of the motorway indicate this is not an area allocated for development?*

That is presently the case for the Adopted Local Plan but, as noted, Local Plan housing policies are deemed out of date and so carry less weight.

- 3 Re East of Basingstoke, Cllr Still noted that, prior to the adoption of the current Local Plan, she had sought and achieved agreement from HCC that only half the allocation for East of Basingstoke – 450 of 900 houses – would be built in this Plan period. The idea being that the developer would most likely wait to develop the full 900 houses together, by which time, in theory, Manydown would have been built. As it is, the 450 on East of Basingstoke haven't been built but neither has most of Manydown. How this has happened isn't clear. Borough blame County and *vice versa*. (And now facing the five-year review.)

Onnalee noted a likelihood that Taylor Wimpey would soon submit a large planning application for the Loddon Valley. The central argument against developing the Loddon is the value of the watercourse and biodiversity. SOLVE is seeking to reform. Elaine noted that sometimes people power works.

## 2.5 PC Reid Report

PC Reid joined the meeting and presented his report. See **APPENDIX II**.

### *Questions and comment*

1. *It's evident from Neighbourhood Watch Reports how much rural crime there is in the wider Area, in terms of poaching and hare coursing. More support from Hants Constabulary is needed to deal with this.*

*The Chairman gave the news that PC Reid is shortly to retire to Wales. The Chairman on behalf of the Parish Council thanked Andy for his 17 years in this community, and wished him well for the future.*

2. *How do we ensure we continue to receive old-style 'Village Bobby' policing. Or are we to lose this?*

Andy said that community support from all across his Area superb. It will be a huge shame if the Force does not capitalise on what it has here. This is a decision for the rural police inspector, or chief inspector. Some PCs will be lobbying, including to the new PCC.

*PC Reid left the meeting with the thanks of the Parish Council.*

## 2.6 Tim Lewis for the Village Hall Committee

Tim spoke as Acting Chairman for the new Village Hall Committee, the AGM will be held next week. Thanks to the Committee which comprises new and established members. Particular thanks to Jane Komrower (present this evening), and to Liz Preece, for the many years' service they have given to the Village Hall.

The new Committee has been looking to settle in and get the 'basics' in place, re-registering contacts for utilities, updating the charities commission etc. A full 'Covid' procedure document needs to be created (hopefully this will be less of a challenge going forward), the Government Covid 'restart' grant is to be applied for, also the website urgently needs updating.

They will in time be looking for new projects – for example liaison with Alison re improving the approach to the Village Hall – potentially a bin housing – and possibility approaching Conkers to help with some planters around the hall.

Defibrillator Tim noted the defibrillator registration with South Central Ambulance Service is being transferred to 'the Circuit' a national defibrillator network.

*The Chairman thanked Tim for his update and wished the Village Hall Committee well.*

*No other topics were raised.*

*The Chairman closed the meeting at 8pm with thanks to all present.*

## APPENDIX I

## FINANCE REVIEW FOR PARISH ASSEMBLY MAY 2021

## 2.2.ii Finance Review - 2019/20 - 2020/21

## INCOME

1. Parish Precept. Main funding source – received via BDBC as portion of parish residents’ council tax. Increased by 5% and then 3% respectively over the past two years – This year (2021/22) c£10K, c£34 per band D household.
2. BDBC grants – mostly phased out over recent years.  
Grass Cutting grant of £1,195 still continues.
3. Other grant funding / donations - Thanks to
  - County Cllr Elaine Still for grants from her devolved budget towards Parish projects. Over the last two years, £500 towards the chalk stream planting and £500 to parking provision at the allotments. (Previous year 2019/20 it was £500 for the balance beam and new matting at the Village Hall playground.)
  - Friends of St Mary’s for donations of c£2,250 over the past two years.
4. ‘Other’ income – includes rent from Chineham Tigers, contribution from Village Hall to joint insurance, rent from allotment holders.
5. Community Infrastructure levey (CIL payment of c£7K) allocated this year from the development of two houses at Five Oaks and Heather Bungalow. (One of the first CIL payments made in BDBC.)

**CIL** – The CIL Regulations state that the N(Neighbourhood)CIL portion of funds must be used ‘to support the development of the local area’ by funding:

- (a) the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure; or
- (b) anything else concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area.

This can include community infrastructure, green infrastructure, open space.

CIL funding so far has been allocated to – the allotments – additional maintenance work in the Village Hall Grounds – Frog Lane watercress beds licence agreement – community space at Up Nately Lands.

## TURNOVER AND RESERVES.

Turnover 2019/20 = c£15K; 2020/21 = c£24K largely due to the CIL income.

Reserves Deemed good practice to hold contingency (a ‘general reserve’) up to the level of the Precept. The surplus at the end of last year 2020/21 was over £5K due to the CIL payment, showing a reserve of c£14.5K. (A ‘general reserve’ of £9.25K; ‘earmarked reserves’ of £5.25K.)

Budget for 2021/22 shows year-end reserves of c£10K

## EXPENDITURE

‘Routine expenditure’ is c£10K per year.

This includes insurance, grounds & general maintenance, clerk salary, the *Villager*, affiliations such as Hants Association Local Councils,

‘Project’ expenditure over the last two years has included

- |   |                            |         |
|---|----------------------------|---------|
| 1 | A Village Hall ‘safe box’  | c£1K    |
| 2 | Frog Lane fencing          | c£2K    |
| 3 | Mapledurwell pond pump     | c£1.7K  |
| 4 | Watercress beds – planting | c£0.7K  |
| 5 | Village Hall grounds       | c£1.5K  |
| 6 | Allotments                 | c£2.4K. |

‘Project’ expenditure for this year 2021/22 is planned for the Watercress beds lease agreement and the Up Nately Lands.

**APPENDIX II – PC REID REPORT**