

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of BEECH

Held in the Village Hall on Monday, 19th MARCH 2018 at 7.00pm

PRESENT: Councillor David Woodroffe, Chairman
Councillor David Fazakerley
Councillor Ian Hardy
Councillor Colin Childes
Hampshire County Councillor Mark Kemp-Gee

Louisa Thomson, Clerk to the Council

OPEN MEETING -The Chairman welcomed everyone and declared the meeting open.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Apologies were received from East Hampshire District Councillor Tony Costigan, Councillor Kevin Lamb and Councillor Ruth Duffin.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20th March 2017, copies of which had previously been circulated, **were proposed as a true record by Cllr Ian Hardy, Seconded by Cllr Colin Childes and agreed by all, and signed by Chairman David Woodroffe.**

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

Copies of the Chairman's report were made available to all present and would appear in full in the next Beech Newsletter. Copy below:-

Beech Parish Council

Annual Report 2017/2018

As we approach the end of the council's year, I have pleasure in providing a summary of the matters addressed over the past twelve months.

Neighbourhood Development Plan

Work has continued with the completion of the first round of evidence gathering which took the form of a village questionnaire. The results have been collated and draft policies are in the process of being written.

Highways

We continue to monitor and inform HCC on road maintenance issues that arise from time to time such as potholes. In July we had a meeting with Hampshire Highways to discuss additional traffic calming measures and we await their recommendations.

Development

In the past year the council has considered 21 planning and tree preservation order applications; these included:

Extensions to existing properties, new developments and the pruning of trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders.

Each application is considered in detail and the merits or detriments of each development assessed.

The loss of mature trees remains of particular concern to the Parish Council, and the ability of applicants of new developments to clearly demonstrate that all surface water run-off will be retained and disposed of on site.

The council have made comments on applications to this effect.

In July Council completed an online survey concerning the growth of rural communities in Hampshire.

Footpaths, Bridleways, Community and Environment

The parish council produced a leaflet to promote the village's footpaths, the colour leaflet was distributed to all the homes in Beech and can be downloaded from the parish council's website.

We continue to monitor the state and accessibility of the footpaths and bridleways serving the village. Last year Beech PC paid for clearance work on the footpath leading down to the A339. Where necessary we encourage those responsible to undertake maintenance and clearance of footpaths.

At our August meeting council agreed in principle to purchase a defibrillator unit that will be positioned at the village hall.

Finance

We are pleased to confirm that the Council's reserves remain safe and regular external and internal audit checks are undertaken to ensure correct financial procedures are followed.

Representatives

We thank our EHDC District Councillor, Tony Costigan, and Mark Kemp Gee our Hampshire County Councillor for their work in keeping Beech Parish Council up to date with what is happening at District and County Council levels and for all the lobbying they have done on our behalf.

Acknowledgements

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Beech Parish Councillors and our Parish Clerk for their hard work and support.

QUESTIONS ON REPORT – There were no questions.

REPORT FROM HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR MARK KEMP-GEE

Mark N Kemp-Gee reelected to HCC in May 2017, receiving over 70% of those voting, some 40% of the public voted - very high for a local election.

Reappointed as Chairman of the Hampshire Pension Fund (including all district councils in Hampshire) valued at £7 billion.

Reappointed as Chairman of the Members Code of Conduct Panel'

County Matters:

Council Tax has gone up by 5.4% for those of us in East Hampshire – but Hampshire has the lowest Council Tax of all English Counties except Somerset.

Central Government Grant to help pay for all County Services is less than half what it was in 2010 and by 2020 it will be eliminated and replaced by allowing us to keep some of our business rates but not ALL our business rates unfortunately !

We are now spending over £500 million alone in adult social care a year and keenly await the Government White Paper to be produced this summer to learn how we are to cope with this overwhelming problem and the inter-action with the NHS going forward.

Four County Councils in England are thought to be under great financial pressure, including Surrey, we are proud that Hampshire is one of the best managed despite the acute cutbacks we have had to make as our Government Grant has been cut to ribbons.

County is once more attempting to put together a Combined Economic Authority including Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight for greater (in size) Hampshire whilst continuing its opposition to try and split Hampshire into two local authorities and consign East Hampshire to Solent City !

Beech Matters:

Spring/Summer resurfacing is planned for parts of Medstead Road between Alton Abbey and the A339.

Despite much agitation, no progress has been made in trying to get speed cameras installed to act as a deterrent to speedsters on Medstead Road and Selborne is in a similar position. East Hampshire's MP – Damian Hinds, now Secretary of State for Education incidentally, has been trying to further this as well without success as the police remain completely obdurate.

MATTERS TO BE REFERRED TO PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS - There were no matters to be referred.

CLOSE OF MEETING -There being no further questions from the Public, the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and formally closed the meeting at 7.30pm.

Signed:.....
Chairman Beech Parish Council
Date: March 2019