

**PARISH OF WESTHAMPNETT**

**ANNUAL MEETING OF ELECTORS**

**Held in the March C. of E. School on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2016 at 6.00pm**

**PRESENT:** Cllr B Harding (Chairman, Westhampnett Parish Council)  
Parish Cllrs Mrs S Burborough, S James and Mrs J Hardstaff.  
County Cllr J Hunt  
District Cllr M Hall  
Mr G Burt (Clerk to the Council)  
5 Members of the Public

*The meeting opened at 6.00pm.*

**1. WELCOME**

The Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr W Harding, welcomed all those present.

**2. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 16 MARCH 2015**

The Minutes, having been distributed to electors prior to the meeting, were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**3. MATTERS ARISING**

None

**4. A27 UPDATE**

The Vice Chairman of Boxgrove Parish Council, Cllr Mr Lloyd Tooze reported that the Secretary of State had advised Highways England not to include a possible new northern bypass in any forthcoming consultation, and instead to centre on upgrading four junctions.

Cllr Hall asked that it be put on record his thanks to Lord March, Andrew Tyrie MP *et al* for all their hard work in fighting the northern bypass proposal, especially *Chichester Deserves Better*. (WPC to also thank CDB.)

**5. PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT**

The Chairman presented his report (Appended to Minutes - Appendix 1).

Cllr Harding advised that he had recently written to Baroness Williams, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Communities and Local Government seeking her support regarding the housing development at Madgwick Lane.

**6. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S ANNUAL REPORT**

Cllr Hall read out a written report (Appended to Minutes - Appendix 2)

7. **COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S ANNUAL REPORT**

Cllr Hunt read out a written report (Appended to Minutes - Appendix 3)

In addition Cllr Hunt confirmed that the S106 monies for the Stane Street cycleway were still available and the Bus Stop near Claypitt Lane had been moved.

8. **POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT**

PCSO Rob Gillan had submitted a written report (Appended to Minutes - Appendix 4)

9. **ROLLS ROYCE REPRESENTATIVE'S ANNUAL REPORT**

No report.

10. **GOODWOOD REPRESENTATIVE'S ANNUAL REPORT**

No report.

11. **GRANGE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT**

Cllr James reported that Directors were still to be appointed, and until various land ownership-type issues were resolved, there could be no transfer of responsibility.

12. **TRAVELLERS' TRANSIT SITE REPORT**

Cllr Harding reported that the most recent planned meeting had been postponed (although no one had told him beforehand!) The site was officially closed at the present time.

13. **TO RECEIVE THE AUDITED ACCOUNTS OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2015**

The Clerk read out a written report. (Appended to Minutes - Appendix 5)

14. **OTHERS MATTER RAISED BY ELECTORS**

Mr M Tudor made an appeal for volunteers to serve as Trustees on Boxgrove Village Hall Committee. The Committee was being reformed as a stand-alone committee from the Parish Council, and as the hall also serves Westhampnett at the moment, felt that this was something residents may be interested in.

*The meeting closed at 6.42 pm*

**PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT**

I would like to thank all the Parish Councillors and our Clerk for their assistance and support during the past year. A special thanks is due to our Vice Chairman Jean Hardstaff, who intended retiring last year but stayed on to help with all planning matters as well as providing her particular insight into the general running of the Council.

During the past year we have helped form and attend a Management Committee for the Travellers Site and thanks to the cooperation of the site managers, adjusted several aspects of the behaviour exhibited by the visitors. The site is closed for maintenance at the moment which coincides with the seasonal downturn of Traveller requirements.

We are supporting future new management arrangements for the Grange Estate under the chairmanship of Cllr Sharon Burborough assisted by Cllr Steven James. Their efforts will be expanded on later in the meeting.

The proposed Community Hall has occupied a lot of our time during the past year, moving it from leased land and a financial uncertainty to a bespoke location on the new Bellway development, at the old Hanging Basket site. The Hall design took several turns but eventually settled on a proposal put forward by Cllr Jean Hardstaff and negotiated by our Clerk, myself and Bellways Directors. The Council proposal has been priced up by a consultant QS and is awaiting Bellways comparison price to agree a budget for the project.

The Old Place Farm site originally called for 1500 houses spread over the land to the west and east of Madgwick Lane, but thanks to the concerted efforts of the Parishioners and Parish Council the numbers were reduced to 350 houses, this number has been further reduced to 300 on the east side of Madgwick Lane and all development of the land to the west of Madgwick Lane has been abandoned, or so we thought. Chichester District Council in company with the developers have applied for and secured permission for the development of two football pitches on the bend in the Lavant, on the land previously denied permission for development. The developers assured me they did not want to provide the proposal but would rather donate a sum for the expansion of an existing sports facility, however, this was turned down by CDC. As with our 98% protest against the Travellers site, we as a community protested with 50% of the parishioners against this development, only to be ignored once again and witnessed by the approval of 7 votes to 6.

As part of the founding group of Chairmen against the proposed northern route for the A27 we have fielded Cllr Rod Fabricius as Westhampnett's representative member of this action group. A report will be heard later in the meeting.

Attendance at the Goodwood Motor Circuit Consultative Committee and the Goodwood Aerodrome Consultative Committee has provided us with a voice regarding the activities that adversely affect us a village. We have been addressed by the Goodwood Aerodrome and Helicopter companies who have agreed to tighten-up the flight path arrangements and provide us with a suggested new flight path for helicopters and fixed wing planes. Unfortunately the digital maps of the flight plans did not materialise for accurate reports to be sent to Goodwood.

Whilst much of our efforts are centred on the big strategic matters, we have also not been forgetting the smaller matters too. Our fantastic group of volunteers have done a sterling job of keeping our verges and pathways open and we owe them a great debt of gratitude for all their hard work. You may have noticed that Westhampnett has at last received some form of recognition by the erection of new place signs indicating that we exist as a community. These were organised by the Parish Council using New Homes Bonus funds. Similar funds and the Parish's own money have funded additional litter bins at Claypitt Lane, Westerton and Maudlin Bus Shelter in response to requests from residents. A seat is due to be fitted in the latter, and we are also grateful to Goodwood for sponsoring an attractive new old-fashioned finger post by the Aerodrome, pointing to Westerton. Swings at the Westerton Play Area have finally been replaced, and plans are in hand to add some outdoor exercise equipment.

That concludes my report and I am happy to take any questions.

W Harding

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Annual Report by Mike Hall, District Councillor for Lavant**

My first year back in local government has been somewhat a baptism of fire. Starting with the opening of the Transit Site, followed by the Strategic development location at Madgwick.

We are now going through the process of changing the ward boundaries in order to equal out the number of electors to approximately 8,000 in each ward.

It has been proposed that Lavant should join with Funtington and Westhampnett with the Boxgrove Ward. This means that Boxgrove Ward will be made up of the parishes of Westhampnett, Boxgrove, Eartham, Upwaltham, East Dean, Singleton and West Dean. With 6 parish councils to attend this will certainly keep the elected member busy!

Personally, it's my view that Lavant and Westhampnett have a natural affinity with the River Lavant and activities at the aerodrome and motor circuit and should therefore remain within the same electoral ward.

Moving on to the options for the A27 it's a great relief that options for a northern bypass have been withdrawn from the consultation. This option was completely unacceptable in terms of the local environment and the rural economy generated from events at Goodwood.

My personal view is that grade separated junctions would assist in relieving the east / west rush hour traffic, which backs up from the Sainsburys / Portfield roundabout towards Tangmere.

On 6<sup>th</sup> March I emailed a report to John O'Brien, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, highlighting the dangerous state of the Lavant Straight regarding the large amount of deep potholes. To date I have not even received an acknowledgement which is against the Code of Practice.

These potholes occur along the road from the Strettington Crossroads, Madgwick [Kennel Hill Roundabout] and along to Fordwater. It is particularly dangerous on the sharp bend at Fordwater and unless action is soon taken the road is an accident waiting to happen.

Finally, it's been a pleasure to attend your parish council meetings and I look forward to the challenges ahead.

**Annual Report by Jeremy Hunt, County Council Member for Chichester North**

Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen,

Over the last year I have, once again, very much enjoyed representing the residents in my Division, Chichester north, and particularly the residents of Westhampnett. This community is lucky enough to have a very active parish council, who put an enormous amount of time and effort into looking after the interests of their residents.

I obviously represent WSCC, and although I know that we have had to reduce the extent of many of our services, I hope you feel that generally we are able still to do enough to ensure that the fabric of your parish is maintained. This situation of ever reducing grant funding from the Government is going to continue, so a strong parish community is going to become even more important. For example, resilience planning is a very important undertaking. This is something that many parishes have undertaken with support from both WSCC and the CDC. Do you have plans in case of a major power failure, a major flood or a prolonged and heavy snowfall - do you know where the old and vulnerable are in your parish? Who will make sure they are okay in times of trouble? Community resilience planning is vitally important because in times of emergency it could be quite a while before relief comes, especially if the 'disaster' is widespread.

Another project we are promoting and supporting is community volunteers. I know you have a group who help keep the footpaths clear and the verges cut, which is tremendous. Going forward I believe that the work of volunteers will become even more essential in order to support your community.

Moving on to financial matters, I'm sure you are all now aware that in February the proposed WSCC Budget was approved, and this included a proposal to increase our share of the council tax by 3.95% from April 1st. This will mean an increase on an average Band D property of £45.90 per year/£0.88p per week. I would like to point out that WS has not raised their tax for five consecutive years, which means that you have enjoyed six years of no increases, a saving to a Band D tax payer of approx £525 over this period, assuming a tax increase of 2%pa.

Now some of you might be aware that until this year we were not able to increase our council tax by more than 2% without triggering a referendum. So what has changed to allow us to now increase our tax by 3.95%? Well, as part of the governments funding strategy going forward they have now allowed us to raise our tax by an additional 2%, providing that 2% is ring fenced for adult social care. So our plans are that 2% of the increase will indeed be used to support funding for adult social care and the additional 1.95% will be used to support services across the council.

Despite these spending pressures there are some really good news stories:

- Firstly, in response to pressure from many of the authorities who were severely impacted by this steep reduction in funding, the government has announced some interim funding for the next two years to help 'cushion' the blow. To WS this means an additional £6.2m in 16/17 and an additional £6.3m in 17/18. (1.1% of our budget of £535m). This interim funding was announced too late to be included in our budget proposals put forward at CC in February. Therefore, we will be putting forward firm spending proposals for approval at the April CC Meeting - and please rest assured that if I have my way this money will go to frontline services -

including to highways. However welcome this additional funding is, we must remember that £6m only represents just over 1% of our total revenue budget.

- Secondly, despite having to bridge a funding gap of £44m this year we are increasing spending - in fact a net increase of spending of nearly £10m, spread across our essential frontline services, such as adult social care and various children's services - and subject to what I have just said about the interim funding the figure of £10m will obviously increase.
- Over the last two years we have invested nearly £30m on our Better Roads Programme. This was a programme of major refurbishment, not just patching, of many unclassified roads across the county. The thinking behind this was that a one off investment in these roads would save us millions of pounds in repair work we would otherwise have to spend going forward. This is already paying off.
- Next, following the great success of Operation Watershed Mk1 and Mk2, we are also putting £0.5m into Operation Watershed Mk3. As I said, Operation Watershed has been a great success across the County and we calculate that the £2m invested so far has leveraged benefit to the county worth around £7m. And just to update you, I understand that after a prompting from our OP. W'shed team, BB have finally responded and confirmed that the project in Dairy Lane will be undertaken once the ground is suitable.
- Finally, we will be continuing with both our CIF grants and our BSF awards.

Just touching on a couple of ongoing issues in the parish, I am in discussions with our Executive Director of Residents' Services over the s106 highways money that we would like to invest in a cycle path running through the village, adjacent to along Stane Street - I have had confirmation this afternoon that the s106 money is all in tact so I will now speak to our Highways team on the best way to move this project forward.

I am also delighted to say that at last the bus stop in Stane Street has finally been moved from the end of this road.

And of course, there is the excellent news that the projected northern option for the A27 has now been shelved and the plans going forward are to concentrate on upgrading the existing junctions. According to Highways England a consultation on the new proposals will come forward late spring or early summer.

Lastly, I would of course point you towards our website which has a wealth of information and guidance on the services WSCC provides. Apart from the details on our services there is also a section containing all our press releases which cover the many initiatives and campaigns we promote. These range from our **West Sussex Matters campaign** - where on Facebook and twitter we are releasing many facts about what we do and the services we provide - to subjects as varied as, and I quote from some of our headlines - '**promoting the recycling of old or worn out textiles**', '**schools join the solar generation**', '**stay warm stay safe say our firefighters**' and finally a campaign to fight against **Child Sexual Exploitation** - something that happens far more often than you would believe.

Well, I think I have gone on long enough, so once again thank you all for your support I very much look forward to representing you for another year.

**PCSO Report by Rib Gillan**

Please find a summary of some of the recent incidents recorded in the ward.

There was a burglary at The Coach and Horses building development. Tools and office equipment were stolen from the site.

Alarm equipment was stolen from the Goodwood Estate.

Suspect vehicles have been reported in the area near to the Goodwood Estate and 7 points carpark

There have been trees blown down on New Road, Dairy cottages, Goodwood House.

A horse reported loose near to the Goodwood air field.

A 2 x vehicle RTC reported at New Road.

A 2x Vehicle RTC reported at Claypit Lane.

**REPORT OF CLERK & RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER**

Copies of the Annual Return for 2014-15, together with a more detailed breakdown of the various budget headings have been circulated. The External Auditor made only two comments on these accounts, which the Council has now addressed.

The Council increased the precept in 2015-16, and plans a further increase in the forthcoming year 2016-17.

This is mainly because the Council wish to be in a healthy position:

1. With the prospect of the new Community Hall moving forward;
2. To be able to call upon professional advice and support to help make the Parish's views known on major planning applications;
3. The legal requirement to offer the Council's sole employee (that's me!) a pension.

The Council, unlike many other parishes, receives no Council Tax Reduction Grant.

The good news is that although our Precept will increase by £500, the amount that a Band D equivalent Council Tax-payer will pay to the Parish Council in 2016-17 will drop from £62.23 to £61.90 - a reduction of 33p, as the Council Tax Base, upon which the Council Tax is calculated has gone up also!

The Council continues to manage its finances prudently, and **significant** capital projects only pursued when grants secured.

I am happy to take any questions.

G.C. Burt