

Hawkesbury Parish Council



**Minutes of Hawkesbury Annual Assembly Council Meeting
Held on Monday 4th April 2011 at 7.30pm
in the Hawkesbury CE Primary School**

Present:

H Bleaken (Chair), J Otley, C Dixon, S Hope, A Musty, D Higgs, C May P Isaac and H Jones (Parish Clerk)

Apologies

None

Public Participation

Mr P Salenieks, Mrs K Lawrence, Mrs J Treasure, Mrs N McLaughlin, Mrs L Ruthven, Mr R Perks, Miss R Perks, H Heeley, Miss D May, Mr S Hailwood (South Glos Emergency Services), Mr J Bishop, Mr W Fearnery, Mr B Robinson and S Merrit.

Action

1 To accept apologies for absence

None

2 Chairman's Report – Cllr Bleaken

Cllr Bleaken welcomed everyone for attending this year's Annual Assembly.

In the last year the Parish Council has kept up their commitment to the local community and organised many and varied events-Spring Clean, Cemetery Tidy up, Christmas celebrations and Village of the Year entry amongst others.

The Parish Council have brought in line aspirations and paperwork, which is now ably managed by our new resident Parish Clerk; thank you Hazel Jones. With base and back up the Parish Councillors can use their personal skills, labours and knowledge to help our Parishioners. The Parish Council do need the input of the parishioners to tell them their concerns and visions for our community.

Lastly Cllr Bleaken said a big thank you to the retiring Councillors; as election loom for our Parish; and we hope the new Parish Council will go forward in their thinking and abilities to keep our Parish where our Parishioners want the community to be – a thriving, helpful, lively, pretty and happy area.

3 Police Report-Mike Hart

No attendance from the Police

4. Central Networks-Now known as Western Power Distribution.

Alan Donaldson-Quality Supply Manager

Central Networks had been bought out on Friday 1st April by Western Power Distribution and therefore were no longer known as e-on Central Networks.

He thanked the Parish Council for the invitation to speak at tonight's meeting and to give him the opportunity to explain what happened earlier in the year and to answer any questions.

There had been several errors and problems with communication and IT system, all these issues are now being looked into. Compensation has been offered by them to anyone who has experienced damage to their property.

Their aim is to put things right and to learn by their mistakes and to ensure this particular incident does not happen again.

Neil James-Repairs and Restoration Manager

Neil advised that money was being invested in this area due to the condition and age of the network, there is going to be an alternative feed and this should be resolved by the autumn. They will be able to monitor the voltage, isolate any area's and ensure the supply is reinstated as soon as possible. Neil wanted to point out that they provide a reliable supply of electricity.

Carl Henshaw

Carl mentioned that if there are any vulnerable people in our Parish, he would like a list of them and he will ensure they are put on their register. If the lights went out they will receive a proactive call and explain to them what NPD were doing.

He suggested these vulnerable people were given an analogue phone (digital phones do not work when the electric has been cut) to ensure that contact can be made with them.

Due to the rebranding of their company, they were unable to provide us with any crisis packs.

The floor was open for questions;

The biggest issue on the Commons are the overhead power lines; where possible should the new lines be put underground?

Alan-their policy is to replace any damaged overhead cables with new overhead cables-new supplies wherever possible would go underground. He pointed out that to put all cables underground would be very costly to its customers.

If another fault (like the one earlier in the year) happens, how would they improve their communication and restore the power?

They are spending money to improve their systems to ensure these faults do not happen again. Being taken over by WPD will not affect these improvements that are being put in place.

Their biggest concern was WPD (e-on) hadn't realised areas had low voltage.

They would ensure an engineer came out to the area.

Their system had it own faults, they are now looking at changing the system and

processes, which is part of their review.

Neil explained that they need to rebuild our confidence; they provide a quality supply to our area. They spend money wisely, it is a massive rural network, they acknowledge their failure and they have an operational review in draft form, it is not yet complete or signed off. They need to take the necessary action to put it right.

Concerns were raised with regards to the danger of the low voltage supply

It was safe, WPD need to rebuild the trust.

Does it apply to the new management?

The recommendations are all in draft format and procedures/systems will change.

5 Emergency Services

Simon Hailwood presentation highlighted the areas the Emergency Team deal with. The Council works closely with community services, transport, marine, operational services and all emergency services. They test their plans to ensure all staff are prepared for any eventuality. Their responsibility is to warn and inform people.

In South Gloucestershire there are few risks, Chemical sites, Terrorism, Coastal pollution-pipeline, flooding, Severn bridges, Severn tunnel motorways, Animal/human diseases and these are critical to the national infrastructure.

They identify the risks and then take forward their plan.

Advice was given to the audience to look after yourself and your family; be aware of the risks, be prepared for risks and respond to emergencies.

How can you be prepared?

Supply of food and water to last three days.

Food that you can eat cold.

Can opener.

Rotate your stock.

Easy to store.

Wind up radio.

Chocolate

Prepare for pets.

Emergency kit in the car.

Water in the Summer.

Hat, sleeping bag, hot drink in the winter.

You can type in your postcode on their website and see the risks that are in your area.

Nuclear Power Stations will be involved with the planning process.

A question was raised regarding a tsunami hitting the local nuclear power station, the design and measurements should be sufficient to withhold any damage.

What have Emergency Services learnt regarding the closure of the motorway due to an incident that kept it shut for over 9 hour's? The response from Simon was the duties will be split with the police and Highway agency.

6 Hawkesbury School Report-Sarah Merritt

Louise Lewis has been the Headmistress for 2 years. She is very motivated and has maintained high standards. She is involved in out of school activities and places an entry monthly in the Parish News. Louise ensures that everyone knows of forthcoming events with regular newsletters and is actively involved with the PTA and After School Club.

There are 99 children attending the school at the moment, in July the School will lose 19 Children and 11 will be joining them in September. The PTA raised money at the Pledge Auction and the May Ball takes place next month.

The Harvest auction in October raised money for the Water aid and Homeless hostel.

Christmas service took place at the Church, mince pies and wine was donated. The School Council arranged a day where the children wore colours of a country to help raise money for the Swimming Pool.

Strong links continue with the Church.

Recently the school children got involved with trying to reduce the speed through the village and made posters to be given out to drivers. This was with PCSO Paul Fortune. The playground has recently undergone a makeover in the garden; a local MP came and planted a tree. There is also strong links with Preschool.

7 Hall Committee

No report received in time to be read out, accounts received.

8 Post Office –Kerri Lawrence

Kerri thanked the Parish Council for inviting her. The Post Office has won an award for top achieving Post Office. Kerri wanted to thank the village and also let everyone know that there will be free internet access available at the Post Office for anyone in the village. Please come and use it.

9 Preschool – Mrs N McLaughlin and Mrs L Ruthven

Preschool is doing well following the appointment of the new Leader Sarah Green in September and good staff. Children from outside of Hawkesbury attend Preschool, which has positive effects. At the moment there are 12 parents on the Committee. The numbers are good for this time of year-12 on the role.

The Committee is involved with fund raising to ensure that the Pre School stays in the village. They are also updating their website and they are strengthening their links with the school.

The move to school has many advantages, however this has been put on hold at the moment due to lack of finance.

Fund raising 14th May 2011 Family Bingo, 11th June family photographs and there is an open morning on Friday 8th April.

Toddler group is on Tuesday mornings, with tea for the parents/carers and play for the children.

10 District Councillors report-Cllr Hope

This has been a year of change, with more changes forecast. During the year Cllr

Hope has served on the following Committees and highlight some of the matters covered:

Health Scrutiny Committee

Breast Cancer Services/closure of Thornbury hospital/Gynaecological Services Review/Development of GP consortia and future of the PCTs and GP Commissioning/Opening of new minor injuries unit at Yate.

Health Select Review on Autism

Transition services for young people with Autism.

Joint Health Scrutiny Committee

Bristol Health Services Plan/closure of Orchard Rise (respite hospital).

Great Western Ambulance Review

The Ambulance service, 17 local authorities have been reviewed, response times rural areas falling in time.

Communities Select Committee

Waste services/Kingswood Leisure Centre/Licensing review/council restructuring/Health Improvements.

Communities Select Committee

Tackling child obesity which is a big problem at the moment.

Frome vale Area forum

Meets three times a year, prioritise Traffic Management issues/award small and capital grants/public forums

Complaints panels.

Employee Appeals Panel

As the SGC representative on the **Cotswolds AONB Conservation Board**, Cllr Hope has served on the Executive, and the Conserving & Managing Committee. During this time the CB has opened a visitor centre at Northleach, carried out with RSPB a survey on farmland birds, produced a Farming & Forestry framework document.

Cllr Hope has worked locally worked with residents and officers on addressing traffic management issues, and raised matters at the **Safer Stronger Community Group** meetings, as well as campaigning for the retention of our local rural services.

The South Gloucestershire Council Core strategy – which provides the planning framework for the future - has been developed during the year; Cllr Hope has been involved in working with others in developing policies, which protect the countryside as well as ensuring we have viable communities for the future.

During the year Cllr Hope has worked with Natural England, South Gloucestershire Council, residents, graziers and Commoner's on trying to find a way forward for a Higher Level Stewardship for Inglestone & Hawkesbury Commons. Cllr Hope is pleased to say the contract between SGC and Natural England has been signed, and ways forward to meet the prescriptions are being progressed. An Open meeting to discuss the management will be held later in the year.

Thanks to the two Hazels – the parish clerk and the Chair.

11 Hawkesbury Parish Council Financial Report

Hawkesbury Parish Council has stayed well within its finance for 2010/2011 and therefore HPC remains in a good financial position.

Large purchases made during this financial year have been a laptop and printer for the clerk and also a lovely bench which has been placed in the cemetery.

Following last year's financial report and subsequent meeting held on the 26th April it was agreed that the money ring fenced to purchase additional land for the Cemetery will remain ring fenced. It was agreed by the Parish Council that this money would be used for Cemetery matters (for example new drainage, wall repairs etc).

Results from the Audit of 2009/2010 made suggestions for an Asset Register to be held on file and also for a full list of all signatories on the Bank accounts to be held on record both these requests have now been completed.

Once again the parish Council has been able to provide £1500 of grants for several local groups and organisations for example the Rainbows, Guides, Youth Club and victim Support.

Finally, it was agreed that the precept for 2011/12 would be £11,500 being a 1.1% increase. This was supported by predicted income of £3010 from the Cemetery and Allotments and expenditure of £14571.

12 Gardening Club Report

Hawkesbury Gardening Club was officially launched on 23rd June 2008 when some 45 people turned up for the evening which was a very pleasant surprise. We have joined the Gloucestershire Federation of Gardening Societies and we have set up a webpage.

We have had speakers on lots of horticultural subjects, such as Westonbirt Arboretum, community composting, colour in the garden, shaded gardens etc. We have also been well looked after by local experts such as Brian Noble and Keith Player who are keen to pass their knowledge on. Some speakers really stand out for their enthusiasm and sense humour.

The Hawkesbury Horticultural Society Show Committee kindly agreed to allow us some space in the marquee for a Gardening Club class entitled 'A Vase of Mixed Herbs' which caused some consternation for the judges because it was too ambiguous and we received a gentle slap on the wrist for that. Subsequently we have changed the description to 'A Vase of Mixed **Culinary** Herbs'. I don't like to infer that someone might be in cahoots with the judges but the same person seems to win the prize no matter what description we specify.

In May each year we hold a Plant Sale to boost our funds and this is well attended by the village.

We organise several trips each year to places like RHS Wisley and Rosemoor and also to local gardens of repute. In July we visit members gardens.

Our current hard-core membership stands at around 35 and we get around 20 – 25 at the meetings. Curiously we have a dearth of male members but that's OK just come along and be entertained.

13 Youth Group-Bill Fearney

Youth Club is held on a Tuesday Evening with 30-40 members from the age of 11 upwards. There are a range of activities for the children and various trips organised. They have only received half their grant from South Gloucestershire because they are cutting back, however, the Parish Council gave funds to help and this was very much appreciated.

The Youth Group committee members would like younger members to join and would very much welcome any volunteers.

The meeting was then closed and refreshments offered.