

Minutes of the Appleshaw Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 13th of March 2024 in Appleshaw Village Hall at 7.00pm.

Present: Cllr Mrs S Smith – Chairman.
Cllr Mr B Hodgson – Vice Chairman
Cllr L Prince
Cllr Mr M Watts
Cllr Mrs C Wotton
Cllr Mrs D Hodgson
Richard Waterman – Parish Clerk
Borough Councillor Mr P Lashbrook
Members of the Public – 18

Apologies: Cllr Mr T Burden, County Councillor Mr C Donnelly and Emma Moss, HR Manager, Pilgrims UK.

WELCOME.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

The Chairman reminded members of the public that they have an opportunity to address the Parish Council as an item on each agenda. The Chairman understood that not everyone is comfortable about talking in public so, with this in mind, there will now be paper and pencils available at each meeting and a sealed posting box so that issues can be raised.

The Parish Council will try to address any issues they receive but, failing that, will pass on to the relevant authorities.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

The Chairman declared an interest in the village hall.

PARISH COUNCIL VACANCY.

The Chairman introduced Lucinda Prince who had expressed an interest in joining the Parish Council. The Chairman proposed that Lucinda Prince is co-opted onto the Parish Council. This was seconded by Cllr Mrs D Hodgson. All agreed.

Lucinda Prince signed the Declaration of Office and was welcomed onto the Parish Council.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING.

The minutes of the January meeting were approved and signed as a true record.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT.

- ENVIRONMENT – The Chairman invited Mrs Jenny Hopkins, the Appleshaw Flood Warden, who gave the following report:
 1. Groundwater had risen significantly in the last ten days. The previous day's reading at the Environment Agency's Clanville bore was at its highest level so far this year – 91.24 metres and rising.

2. A major concern for parishioners in Redenham was the amount of groundwater spilling on to the road from choked up and too-shallow ditches. Much work had been done by the Parish Council to address this for the future. Cllr Mary Hodgson had put together an excellent plan which is being presented to Hampshire County Council for consultation once the present flooding event is over. HCC had been formally requested to address the problem of unattended ditches from The Horns to the Wiltshire border so they are kept clear of debris on an annual basis.
 3. The culverts at The Tree House and Hillfield Cottage were at capacity with water half-covering the road between there and the corner.
 4. Southern Water's contractors had continued to pump out at their pumping station but had withdrawn two weeks previously from other locations in the villages because the water level had gone down enough to enable toilets to be flushed. This might well change soon with the sharp rise in levels.
 5. Southern Water had championed their Pan Parish Pathfinder project with details available on the Andover Advertiser Website. It was hoped that Appleshaw and Redenham are to be included in future work.
- MAINTENANCE - The Chairman reported that the Parish Council are reviewing the work they need to do in the village and are hoping to bring together a group of volunteers (seven parishioners had come forward to date) who will be able to take on tasks to keep the village tidy and in good repair.
 - GRASS CUTTING – The Clerk reported that Chris Wilkins is returning to the village to take on the grass cutting of the Village Green and the Playing Field. The Parish Council will approach the Village Hall/Playing Field trustees and offer to cut the Playing Field every fortnight. This was proposed by the Chairman and seconded by Cllr Mr B Hodgson. All agreed.
 - CHURCH – The Chairman welcomed the church warden, Lt Col Peter Poole. Col Poole spoke about the church highlighting several points:
 1. Col Poole wished to thank all those who help with the running of the church.
 2. The benefice had changed over the years and our vicar is shared with neighbouring parishes. Appleshaw has an excellent PCC who work tirelessly to keep the church running. There are 49 on the parochial role. The PCC Annual Meeting is to be held on the 13th of May, 2024.
 3. The church building had been improved over recent years with £123,000 raised and a kitchen and toilet installed. A safety rail was added to the balcony and essential maintenance work carried out. The next phase is to tackle the exterior.
 4. The notice board had been re-positioned to the Village Green side of the wall and it's planned to refurbish the gates. Part of the boundary wall had fallen down; it is thought this is due to the large amount of rain we have experienced over the winter.
 5. The Church have good ties with the Appleshaw School.
 6. Since the end of restrictions during Covid, the Church now has three regular events, a family worship and additional services.
 The Chairman thanked Col Poole for his report.
 - 2024 FETE – The Chairman welcomed Alice and Olivia from the Fete Committee. The Appleshaw Fete aims to bring the whole community together with many additional attractions planned for 2024. The Fete Committee are hoping to attract local craft people this year. Help on the day was always needed so anyone wishing to contribute was asked to contact the Fete Committee.

ALLOTMENTS.

Cllr Mrs B Hodgson reported that the Parish Council are actively trying to get water supplied to the allotments.

PLANNING.

There were no new planning application to discuss.

FINANCE.

February and March 2024

INCOME.

Nil

EXPENDITURE.

R. N Waterman	Admin – Feb & March	= £ 600.00
R.N. Waterman	½ Year Expenses	= £ 137.50
Bulpitt Print	Signs	= £ 162.00
SBPC	Storage	= £ 20.00
		<u>£ 919.50</u>

Summary of Accounts 2023/2024

Opening Balance	1 st April 2023	= £ 1,346.45
Plus Income –	April and May	£ 7,195.18
	June and July	£ 30.00
	August and September	£ 9,517.45
	October and November	NIL
	December and January	NIL
	February and March	NIL
		= £ 18,089.08

Less Expenditure

April and May	= £1,722.75
June and July	= £5,747.42
Aug and Sept	= £1,822.29
Oct and Nov	= £3,809.70
Dec and Jan	= £1,390.39
Feb and March	= £ 919.50
	= £15,412.05

= £2,677.03

FUNDS AVAILABLE

Allotments	=	£ 398.00
Parish Council	=	£2,209.03
	=	<u>£2,677.03</u>

VILLAGE HALL.

Dr G Legg reported that the Village Hall now has a new treasurer. The new Village

Hall/Playing Field Charity Constitution does not require representatives from the users, but the trustees would like to continue with this practice. There is a new rate for community events secured by a donation from the Fete Committee.

WALNUT TREE COMMUNITY EVENTS COMMITTEE.

The Chairman confirmed that the £500 grant the Parish Council gives each year to the Walnut Tree Community Events Committee is to provide two free events for the residents of Appleshaw. Other events that raise money for local charities are self-funded. Free events for 2024 will be a Scarecrow Trail, an Easter event and a Big Lunch to celebrate the D-Day Landings.

ROAD SAFETY – Report from Mr Andrew Smith.

Mr Andrew Smith gave a brief update on safety improvements on the village roads:

- A questionnaire for the village on a 20 mph speed limit was being produced and would be delivered to every house and also accessible through social media.
- The Parish Council have funded temporary signs to warn drivers there are pedestrians in the road. Hampshire County Council have agreed to install permanent signs, but this could take up to 6 months to organise.
- Influencing behaviour of drivers from high density village organisations (Pilgrims and St Peters School) at start and finish times.
- The Parish Council will continue to liaise with TVBC and HCC.
- It is hoped that a road safety event can be organised in the village in 2024.

BOROUGH COUNCILLOR MR P LASHBROOK.

Borough Councillor Mr P Lashbrook spoke about the Draft Local Borough Plan:

- The Plan is available for comment on the Test Valley Borough Council website.
- The Draft Borough Plan removes existing settlement boundaries in some parishes.
- There are plans for 3000 to 4000 homes in and around Ludgershall and Faberstown in a Hampshire/Wilshire proposal. This would see a large increase in vehicle movements on the A342. Five hundred houses are proposed on land behind the lay-by in Faberstown with access to the A342 through the lay-by.
- There is concern that there is not the infrastructure in the area for this large number of proposed houses.
- Cllr Mr P Lashbrook urged residents to view the plan and make comment.

Cllr Mr P Lashbrook reported that Test Valley Borough Council have confirmed that their part of the Council Tax Bill will be 3.4% increase – this is the lowest rise in the country.

PARISH COUNCILLORS' REPORTS.

CLLR MRS C WOTTON – Read out the following report from Nina Pertwee on the Appleshaw and Redenham Environment Improvement Plan:

- We are intending to have a three-year project funded by a small part of the funds raised by the fete on certain aesthetic and ecological projects to leverage both Appleshaw and Redenham's natural beauty as well as encourage traffic to slow down.
- The recent storms have uprooted one of the walnut trees on the green and as part of this proposal we are intending to plant 2 new fruit trees (which are more suitable to the soil & site) – these will be planted in the autumn – if anyone would

like to help with the planting (as the trees will be large and established) it would be very helpful. Access to a small digger may be required.

- Elevating the aesthetics of our village boundary, we are looking at some sort of white verge gate design that harmoniously blends beauty and functionality. Through the incorporation of aesthetically pleasing patterns and durable materials, we aim to create a welcoming visual transition that enhances the village's character. This thoughtfully-crafted fencing not only would mark the village's edge but also serves as a symbol of community pride, seamlessly integrating into the natural surroundings while fostering a sense of unity and identity. We will share the designs and allow people to have a view.
- These gates or fences have been shown to encourage and remind people of the speed in our community thus promoting a harmonious co-existence between the community, people walking & cycling and wildlife; we will be looking at a design that prioritises ecological balance and safety. In addition, we will be looking at integrating natural elements into any green spaces, with the aim to create a village environment that encourages biodiversity and safeguards local fauna.
- Adding other extra trees, maybe some new wild beds and other ideas are also possible. Additionally, implementing anything that encourages traffic-slowness measures ensures a safer habitat for both residents and wildlife, fostering a sustainable and interconnected ecosystem that we can all enjoy whatever our age and whatever the weather.

We will come back to you with design ideas when the plans are more developed and will of course do everything in consultation with the Parish Council and any landowners that may be involved.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

Mrs S Clement raised the issue of the flooding in Redenham. Cllr Mr P Lashbrook reported that landowners have not undertaken their riparian responsibilities and this is why the ditches through Redenham were not coping with the large volume of water. Hampshire County Council was being urged to exercise their powers to get landowners to maintain their ditches.

Cllr Mr B Hodgson reported that the Parish Council are doing what they can to assist but their hands are tied due to insurance and litigation.

Dr G Legg reported that vehicle users are driving at speed through the puddles on the road and on many occasions soaking pedestrians. This was noted and the school and Pilgrims would be made aware.

CLOSE OF THE MEETING

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING.

8th of May 2024.