

# SHOTESHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Becmead Shotesham St Mary NR15 1UJ 01508550358..

Minutes of a meeting of the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 8<sup>th</sup> of May 2014 at the Trinity Hall at 7.00pm.

*The Chairman John Hope welcomed everyone and outlined the approach he would take for the evening.*

1. In attendance were J Hope [Chairman], J Nott [Vice-Chairman], P Grant, H Walker, S Dinsdale, B Sims...together with CC A Thomas and 10 parishioners. They were Matt Sykes, Patricia Dunmore, Heather and Walter Jackson, Mike Fenn, Christine Burton, Christine Howes, Raz Wollacott, Anthony Lister and Martin Bonsar.
2. Apologies  
Apologies were received and accepted from DC Florence Ellis.
3. The minutes of 6<sup>th</sup> of June 2013- were approved and signed.
4. Election of Officers for 2013/14.

The following were appointed ....

J Hope .....Chairman [ The declaration was duly signed.]

J Nott .....Vice Chairman

J Gough ....Finance Officer and Proper Officer

D and F Mitchell ...Tree Wardens

M Lister .....Footpath Walker

R A Harris ... Internal auditor

5. CC Alison Thomas outlined the key issues resolved/facing the County Council at present ...
  - Better Broadband on track ..completion expect by end of 2014.
  - Highway Rangers highly valued and need to be kept informed of any issues.
  - Significant budget cuts expected in this financial year..especially the mobile library service.
  - Education improvements starting to show ..helped by some schools being formally linked to 'good' schools.
  - Hethel Engineering initiative expanding as the venture is proving to be a success.
  - CC will change its operation from Cabinet to Committee style.
6. The Chairman's Annual Statement.  
The Chairman thanked everyone who has helped maintain standards in Shotesham. He then outlined the key activities of the Parish Council. He advised that a copy of his annual report would be included with the Contact for June.  
[ A paper copy is included with these minutes

A number of points were raised ...

1. Mrs Dunmore expressed concerns about increasing dog fouling in the area of the Trinity/The Grove and repeated the request for consideration for a dog bin at the that end of the Street.

2. The possible conversion of the BT box at the Grove into a bus shelter was raised.
3. A request was made for a grit bin at the entrance to the Grove to help with the difficulties faced with the local bus turning around.

All 3 requests will be put on the Agenda of the next meeting....

#### 7. Update on Playing Field.

John Hope outlined the question to be faced and the history that has lead to the current position.

#### Current agreement ....

- Field rented by the PC on an annual basis ..currently £250 per annum.
- No building, no parking mesh and no playground equipment allowed.
- Despite an approaches to every landowner for alternative space to long-lease/buy no positive response was received.

#### Points of note....

- Field used by school since the 70's
- Tenanted by Parish council since 1980's
- Landowner approached to sell land without success.
- It is understood that the current agreement 'may/will' be difficult to cancel by Landowner.

#### Present agreement on table with confirmation from Landowner... subject to negotiation

- A 20 year lease.
- Parish Council to be leasee and to manage the facility.
- Landowner to share 50% of initial legal costs [estimate £2500.]
- May erect buildings/etc for sporting amenities. Landowner requiring notice and details before final agreement.
- At end of lease Landowner may terminate the lease with the PC clearing the site as its own cost.

NB PC has taken initial advice from a solicitor on the impact of the above.

#### Possible impact on the villagers and villagers in Lease entered into ....

- Need to evolve an active management with the Parish Council retaining all significant control over all significant decisions.
- Need volunteers to share the management workload and matters such as Safety inspection/ general day to day inspection and maintenance.
- Given agreement will take some time to develop whilst grants are sought .PC does not have reserved to fund such expansion.
- Financial impact and thus need for very active fund raising ..
  1. Buildings..planning/design and construction .. £30,000+ possible grants
  2. Securing the site to prevent re fouling..... £5,000+ "
  3. Car park meshing ..... £10,000 "
  4. Recreational area for children/young people.. £25,000+ "
  5. Provision for site clearing costs ..... £20,000 [no grants likely]
  6. Precept will need to be increased to build a fund to meet clearance costs.

The Chairman then put the 2 following questions before the meeting ....

**Does the Parish Council continue with negotiations with the expectation of acquiring a 20 year lease?** [sure in the knowledge that volunteers will give considerable time and expertise to help manage the facilities and more importantly raise the funds to make them happen]

Or

**Stay as we are?** [with the possibility that village can retain its usage but the site remain underdeveloped for the foreseeable future]

A broad ranging general discussion of the points above sometimes seeking historical background and at other times seeking clarification.

With the debate that followed the following points were made/shared

- Mr Sykes indicated that the 'young footballers' he represented would prefer certainty to a short term lease [which is how the 20 years appears.]
- In this context a request was made that the PC seek a firm legal view of the current position.
- Mr Bonsar indicated that from his knowledge/experience with the acquiring of grants doing so for the above developments would not be a problem. This was also seen as an offer to help acquire them.
- There was a need for an amenity space similar to the Trinity in size to allow for functions the Trinity managers no longer allow.
- A number of people suggested the 'offer' from the landowner should be seen as a start to negotiations rather than an end position. The Chairman indicated that was unlikely to be the case.
- Mr Bonsar offered to be Chairman of a Playingfield sub committee to push forward negotiations with the landowner to see how much more can be achieved. The offer was left on the table.
- The Chairman reminder people present that there was a PC vacancy ..no one showed any interest in this role which would place them at the heart of the discussions.
- The Chairman concluded by thanking people for the views/comments/ideas and indicated that the question would be put to the next meeting of the Parish Council in June.

The next Annual Parish Meeting of the PC will be held in May 2015 after the May Parish Council elections.

J K Gough The Clerk