

**HALE PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of Hale Annual Parish Assembly held at 6 pm on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021  
held remotely using Microsoft Teams**

**Present:**

Councillors Harrison, Gemmell ( Chair) and Lavis

**In attendance**

Councillor Heron

Amanda Johnson– Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer

19 members of the public

3 Speakers – see below

**The meeting was preceded by a minutes silence in respect of the recent death of HRH Duke of Edinburgh.**

**1 To receive apologies for absence –** Jen Sutton (National Trust) Sharon Barnett (Hale and Woodgreen Neighbourhood Watch and Steve Whitmarsh (Tree Warden).

**2 To consider and approve the Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2019 -** The minutes of the meeting were approved.

**3 To receive the Chairman’s Annual Report for 2020/21 –** Cllr Gemmell reported as Interim Chair.

- Cllr Gemmell expressed condolences to the Queen.
- The year has been dominated by Covid 19 to which the village responded by setting up the Hale and Woodgreen Support Group to ensure all villagers were able to access food, medicine etc. Many thanks to Chris Fairgrieve, Jacqui Hartas and the many parishioners who were involved.
- The affordable housing project led by the CLT has progressed; a survey was carried out in August 2020 by HPC to gauge parishioner opinion and a planning application for two affordable houses at Folly Hill paddock, Hale Purlieu has recently been submitted to NFNPA by the CLT.
- The Parish Plan was completed and adopted, many thanks to all those involved.
- Cemetery – many thanks to John Mangan, Sue Witt and all the volunteers who have made improvements to the cemetery. Deer fencing has been installed around the perimeter.
- A new website was launched; many thanks to David Keniston for the initial set up and ongoing support and also for help in setting up the housing survey.
- Hale Parish Council submitted an application to the Community Fibre Partnership Proposal to deliver full fibre broadband to the majority of premises in Hale. Many thanks to John Mangan for leading this project, the results of which are still pending.
- Three recent resignations have occurred in the council and Cllr Gemmell would like to thank Sarah Delves, John Mangan and Jacqui Hartas for their work and commitment. The process to recruit new councillors has begun.

#### 4 To receive a report from Councillor Edward Heron, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Planning and Infrastructure, Downlands and Forest Ward, NFDC

Cllr Heron expressed condolences to the queen.

- NFDC responded very efficiently and quickly to the Covid 19 pandemic supporting more vulnerable residents by delivering food and medicines.
- Cllr Heron praised all council staff who continued working throughout the pandemic, for example collecting refuse and organising emergency accommodation.
- Work continues within NFDC in helping to deliver the vaccine programme.
- It has been a turbulent year within the council with changes to leadership and cabinet and the loss of some senior officers.
- This will impact all geographical areas e.g. the waste strategy consultation will be slightly delayed.
- The planned New Forest “freeport” will impact the whole area.
- Pop-up campsites have become a significant topic across the whole area and will, from July 2022, be subject to full planning consent.

#### 5 Representative reports from local organisations:

- i. **Jacqui Hartas – Hale Village Hall Committee** JH thanked NFDC for the grant which has compensated for the lack of income during the pandemic, the school have also continued with payments throughout and the 100 Club continues to raise funds. The committee kept updated with all the new Health and Safety requirements due to Covid 19 and were able to open safely for some bookings between lockdowns. General maintenance has continued, the fence and gate replaced and new outside lighting installed. The roof will be cleaned this summer, the outside decorated and a garden created. The hall plans to reopen fully at the end of June/beginning of July, with the AGM planned for the 13<sup>th</sup> July.
- ii. **Jen Sutton – National Trust (Written report)** We have lost two members of our local team and the remaining New Forest and Mottisfont portfolio rangers have joined forces, working across the whole 7,000-acre portfolio. We will be spread wider but will work to our best ability and deliver work to our highest standard. We are also all working across 7 days a week, meaning that there will always be a ranger on call to respond to fly tips, accidents, and emergencies. We are focusing on ‘essential tasks’ including keeping all of our planted and natural trees alive and healthy, countryside furniture safe for our visitors, fencing secure for grazing livestock, collecting fly-tips, keeping our health and safety up to date, keeping machinery maintained, and our car parks clean, and accessible for our visitors. Most recently we have been tackling ash dieback. We have added new signage to all our car parks, including our Hale car park on Ladies Mile. It is hoped that the new signage will better inform visitors to Hale on why this place is so special, keeping their distance from livestock, keeping their dogs under control, and what is and is not permitted on SSSI land. Our ground nesting bird signs are also now up around Hale Purlieu, again encouraging people to keep their dogs on leads around livestock. We are busy tackling verge parking, if anyone sees verge parking, blocking of gateways or obstruction of the highway on National Trust land at Hale, I ask them to take a photo (whilst always staying safe) and email it to me [Jennifer.sutton@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:Jennifer.sutton@nationaltrust.org.uk) with a time and date. We have recently put in

some verge control measures at our car parks; however, we are aware of the ongoing problem along Ladies Mile. We are in discussion with Highways and the Verderers about this. The more evidence we have of verge parking the easier it is to ask for help from the highways and the National Park to stop it. I am also in the process of setting up some local community ambassadors to help us with litter picking and talking to the general public about issues such as dogs on leads during ground nesting bird season and keeping a watch on the Purlieu for us. If you are interested in joining this scheme, please email me and we can talk more about what we could do for the Purlieu.

iii. **Sharon Barnett – Hale Neighbourhood Watch (Written Report)**

Neighbourhood Watch has seen many changes in the past few years, particularly in this "new age of Social Media" – so it was felt that we perhaps needed to slightly adjust the way NW currently operates to accommodate this. NW is perceived differently these days, which is mainly due to the increasing usage by local people of the popular Social Media website, Nextdoor – so in an effort to, hopefully, rejuvenate use, awareness and interest in NW, I have set up a NW Group page on the Nextdoor website which local villagers can join in order to keep in touch and up-to-date with NW-related matters and also post on there, matters of interest for informational purposes. It might be worth remembering too that NW isn't just here for crime and crime-related issues, it can be used for several other matters and occurrences, such as concern for an elderly relative/neighbour who may be missing, a lost cat or dog, fly-tipping or even low-flying aircraft! Hale Parish Council are now working closely with NW, helping to re-establish communicational contact between NW and the police. Quite a bit of progress has been made in this regard: PCSO Steve May has resumed the local Beat Surgeries (after a discontinuation due to the pandemic), which take place on the fourth Saturday of each month in the Horse & Groom car park at 4.00 p.m. (but please note however, that these are subject to Steve's work duty rota. A reminder that reporting to the police is important, even if it is felt that it may be trivial – reporting matters enables the police to keep a vital accurate record of occurrences that happen locally, without which the result may evolve that "nothing happens in Hale"! Reporting can be made by telephoning 101 and it should be noted that when ringing 101 the caller must ask for HAMPSHIRE CONSTABULARY so that the call can be dealt with by the appropriate county department. Alternatively, matters can be notified to the police online via their website: [Hampshire.police.uk](http://Hampshire.police.uk). One of the most efficient ways to receive crime-related warnings and up-to-date information is to sign up to Hampshire Alert via the following link: [www.hampshirealert.co.uk](http://www.hampshirealert.co.uk). No-one should ever feel vulnerable or threatened – anyone who is worried about anything, please call either myself, David Barnett or any of the Neighbourhood Watch Team for reassurance or guidance. If we are not available please leave a message and we will get back to you as soon as we can. Otherwise, do remember that you are quite within your rights to put the phone down on anyone calling you who makes you feel scared, uncomfortable or pressured in any way.

iv. **Stephen Roper – Hale Social Committee** – Sadly the social committee have been unable to put on any events for 18 months, however they are planning a grand spectacular to celebrate the end of the pandemic.

v. **Steve May - PCSO New Forest West Neighbourhood Policing Team SM** displayed and talked through the list of crimes committed in the village of Hale in the last year; there were 54 incidents ( includes premises and fire arms licences)

of which 23 were recorded as crimes. Beat surgeries have resumed and are held every 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday, currently in the car park of the Horse and Groom but as pubs reopen a new location will be found. Crimes should always be reported and any non urgent issues can be reported at Hampshire.police.uk or by phoning 101. Recent issues using 101 have been noted and are being resolved both in Hampshire and Wiltshire. Complications do sometimes occur due to the proximity of the border but these are being addressed.

## **6 To take public comments and questions**

- A parishioner asked Cllr Heron to pass on thanks to the finance team at NFDC for managing the grant system during the pandemic so well.
- Cllr Heron was congratulated on his new position as Leader of the council.
- A parishioner asked Steve May if the burnt out car at Hale Purlieu was linked to the burglaries at Hale Purlieu; no link has been found.
- Cllr Lavis asked for any advice regarding the recent traffic surveys and moving forward; both Steve May and Cllr Heron responded. Anything fixed i.e. a speed flash up, requires discussion with highways. A Community Speed Watch can be created, it requires a minimum 6 people and equipment can often be shared with other groups. To progress it must be indicated that there is a speeding issue and shown that there is community concern.
- A parishioner questioned why reasons have not been given for the recent resignations of two experienced parish councillors. Cllr Gemmell replied that this will be explained in the following meeting.

**The Chairman thanked the speakers, the clerk, fellow councillors and everyone for attending. He thanked Sarah Delves, John Mangan and Jacqui Hartas for their time, effort and commitment to the parish council.**