

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL ASSEMBLY HELD ON 7 MARCH 2019

Present: Mr John Chiverton Chairman
Mr David Goldhawk Vice Chairman
Mr Ian Fairbrother
Mr Ian Foster
Mrs Mary Mansell
Mrs Jan Russell Parish Clerk
District Councillor Claire Malcomson.
District Councillor Clayton Wellman

Apologies: Mr Daniel Pearson and County Councillor Cooksey.

1. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL ASSEMBLY HELD ON 13 MARCH 2018.

The minutes were approved at the Annual Parish meeting held on 17 May 2018.

2. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2018-2019

First of all, it was my pleasant duty in November to welcome Mr. Daniel Pearson as a new Parish Councillor. Not only was that an injection of fresh - and dare I say much younger - blood but it also brought the number of Councillors to the full complement of seven.

An ever-present issue for Council deliberation is that of Planning. Happily, very few cases arose during the year that were seriously contentious, but comments were made to the relevant authorities where appropriate. Sadly, these comments seemed to be routinely ignored - a view echoed by the majority of Parish Council delegates to a "Peer Review" organized by the Local Government Association, which subsequently reported that Mole Valley District Council Planning Department in general was seriously in need of substantial improvement. Council reiterated its response to M.V.D.C's "Modest Additions to Rural Villages" proposals to the effect that Holmwood has neither the capacity nor the infrastructure to sustain any significant further development and deplored that possible appropriation of Green Belt land; it is understood that no decisions are to be made before June, 2019.

In its capacity of Managing Agent, Council has continued to oversee the well-being of the Village Hall and adjoining cottage. Further up-grades to the premises have been carried out during the year; costs have been off-set by incoming rent on the cottage and by regular but modest Hall hirings, which are somewhat compromised by car parking restrictions.

Council has also continued to monitor the condition of the Village playground and the equipment on it; repairs recommended in Wicksteed's Inspection Report have been carried out. The installation of a safety gate was also carried out; a dispute as to its correct positioning to meet RoSPA guidelines was amicably resolved. Enquiries from the public as to safety and the possibility of installing additional equipment were responded to by way of an assurance that Council strictly meets the requirements of Wicksteed's Inspection Report and that the installation of further equipment is constrained both by National Trust restrictions and by the very considerable costs involved.

On a more general note, Council has also given its attention to a variety of matters of public concern, including the War Memorial, the A24 subway, Blackbrook Road safety barriers, long-term parking in the lay-bys alongside the Church gate and bus-stop, waste disposal/recycling,

advertising boards etc., with representations being made to relevant authorities where appropriate.

Reflecting diligent and responsible management during the year, it is comforting to report that Council's financial position is sound. The sum set aside for Contingencies has been increased from £2,000 to £3,000 and it has been agreed that it would be prudent to build a modest reserve of funds in the light of probable equipment replacement costs. Council is to seek a precept of £12,500 for the year 2019/20. Internal Auditors have verified and confirmed that our accounting procedures and controls are fully compliant.

I am also pleased to report that Council/Councillors are fully compliant in respect of Code of Conduct, Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Internet/E-mail usage legislation.

On behalf of Holmwood Parish Council, I wish to record thanks to Surrey County and Mole Valley District Councillor Stephen Cooksey and Mole Valley District Councillors Claire Malcolmson and Clayton Wellman for their attendance at our meetings and for their valuable advice and assistance in respect of a number of our concerns.

Finally, on a personal note, I would like to extend my thanks and appreciation to my fellow Councillors and to our Parish Clerk for their support, guidance and forbearance during the mostly agreeable, sometimes challenging but always rewarding six years of my Chairmanship.

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None