

## HOLMWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL ASSEMBLY MEETING HELD ON 18 MAY 2023 AT HOLMWOOD VILLAGE HALL

Present: Mr Keith Carter Chairman  
Mr James Afford Vice Chair  
Mrs Mary Mansell  
Mr Ian Fairbrother  
Mrs Rachel Snook  
Mrs Jan Russell Parish Clerk

Apologies: County Councillor Stephen Cooksey, District Councillors Claire Malcomson, Rosemary Hobbs and Clayton Wellman.

Before the meeting began, the Chairman asked for it to be noted that 2 long serving Parish Councillors had resigned from the Council. Both John Chiverton and David Goldhawk had served as Councillors and then Chairpersons for many years, and their service to the Council and community is sincerely appreciated.

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 17 May 2022 were signed at the meeting held on 14 July 2022.

#### **2. Chairman's Report**

In my previous year's report, I stated that Parish Council meetings had resumed in full following Covid restrictions, and we have been fortunate that this past year has also been restriction free. We have thus been able to continue to function unhindered.

The good order of Council's finances has been maintained and verified by the auditors. Precept for the coming year has been maintained at £13,500 to cover the expected costs of running the Council. The Council has re-adopted the Financial Regulations, Standing Orders and Code of Conduct as handed down from the County association.

Planning applications have continued to be reviewed by Council and any comments passed to Mole Valley District Council (MVDC) for their consideration. The question of the Carpel House rejected planning application by MVDC, and the subsequent appeal refusal has continued to take up Council time. This is entirely in the hands of the MVDC Enforcement Team but unfortunately little seems to have been resolved and this is still causing upset to local residents.

The Village Hall has continued to be managed by the Council on behalf of the Trustees over the past year although the Trustees have taken on more of the responsibility of its running. Maintenance continues to be the main outlay for costs. A fire safety survey was undertaken, and its recommendations have been actioned over the year. This has included new fire doors to the main hall and currently electrical safety is being upgraded. The main hall floor has been repaired and resurfaced although repair to the floor in the kitchen is yet to be actioned.

The Children's Playground continues to be in the care of Council, and we have this year been able to install two new pieces of play equipment; a Masquerade climbing frame and a ground level Trampoline. The Masquerade was unfortunately damaged shortly after installation, but

repairs were undertaken within a week. Safety inspection and repairs have been carried out generally.

The safety at the A24 road junction with Mill Road has continued to concern the Council. Representations have again been made to SCC Highways regarding the new layout. However, they are insistent that the new layout shall remain, and we have asked MVDC to help resolve the issue.

Parking in the village continues to be a concern. We have approached the National Trust and Surrey Highways for some resolution to the congestion and are awaiting a meeting date with both parties.

Throughout the year we have continued to ensure that the War Memorial and the Vanderbilt Memorial have been maintained to adequate and safe standards. Grass cutting and maintenance of hedges etc, has been undertaken by ID Verde at our behest, but the National Trust, whose land we maintain on their behalf are now requiring us to hold a licence to do so. This is under negotiation as it will affect the standard of cutting we have become used to.

For the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, a Beacon was lit on June 2<sup>nd</sup> in the play park area. Refreshments were offered and it was well attended.

Two Newsletters were produced this year.

Parish Council elections were held this May but as candidates were fewer than places available, those applying were re-elected without a vote to the community. Two long serving councillors have stood down. Their experience, dedication and historical knowledge have been of great value to the running of the council and on behalf of the remaining councillors I would like to record our thanks and appreciation for their long-standing support to the community. They will be missed. Two new councillors are required to fill the vacancies and they will be co-opted to the council following due process.

As chair, I would like to express my thanks to all councillors and the clerk for their support throughout the year enabling this Council to run its business smoothly and efficiently.

### **3. Questions from the Floor**

None