

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 6 MAY 2016
AT 7.30 PM IN BRAMBLE HALL, BRAMBLE HILL**

Present: The Parish Council Chairman, Charles Metcalfe (CM), Parish Councillors, the Parish Clerk, Rosemary Robertson, together with c17 members of the public

1 Apologies for Absence

Received from Joy Hopkins, Alan & Sue Etheridge

2 To approve the minutes Annual Parish Meeting held on 26 March 2015 (circulated)

The Minutes were signed as a true record of the last Parish Meeting.

3 Matters Arising

Gary Marsh asked what the £5,000 set aside for “Cuadrilla returning to the village” was to be used for – CM stressed it was a contingency fund for such things as base line monitoring, expert advice etc It was agreed to make this more transparent in the Parish Magazine.

Annie Greig asked if there had been developments in the provision of a skateboard park to prevent children skating in Foxwells or Stockcroft Road. Cllr Daniel explained that the siting of the park had proved so contentious that it had been taken out of the Neighbourhood Plan, but the Parish Council was still committed to its provision. *Paddy Horne* asked about the numbers that had complained about the skateboard park.

4 Chairman’s Report

CM spoke about the new parish council with Martin Flint, Nicky Gould, Lisa Greer, Neil Lindsay-Stewart, Mat Record, Sue Taylor and himself elected in May 2015, and previous parish councillors Katherine Daniel, Simon Greenwood and Alison Stevenson staying in office to provide some continuity. Catherine Miners had been elected, but resigned after leaving Balcombe in 2015. CM then announced that the current Councillor vacancy had been filled by Carol Dutton and he looked forward to welcoming her on board. The Parish was fortunate to have the Parish Clerk, Rosemary Robertson, saying in this role. He thanked Botts Bottomley, the late Alan Dearden, Catherine Dennison, Peter Huxley, Carol Jarvest, Rodney Saunders, Mike Talman & Robin Williamson for the work they had done on behalf of the village.

The main achievement of the year had been the Neighbourhood Plan (NP), Katherine Daniel has been the chief architect of this, ably assisted by Nicky Gould, Mat Record, Alison Stevenson and Sue Taylor, with continuing and valued input from ex-councillors Catherine Dennison, Peter Huxley and Carol Jarvest. The NP is currently with the independent examiner and it is hoped that it will go for referendum 2 September 2016.

A defibrillator had been installed on the outside of Bramble Hall and training sessions organised. Thanks to Vicky Buttle, Louisa Delpy, Louise Eldridge, Karin Schulte, Alison Stevenson, & Sue Taylor, and to Chris Pierpoint for free installation.

Other matters - The Half Moon has been registered as a Community Asset and CM urged people to support it. Parking problems in the village centre meant that the Sussex Bus Company rerouted the 37 bus along Oldlands/Newlands. Several residents complained; others were delighted. Problems of mobile phone reception had been dealt with. Assurances have been given by Ouse Valley Practice that the Balcombe Surgery will remain open, though the dispensary only in the mornings.

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4 Financial Report for Year 2015/16 ending 31 March 2016

Cllr Taylor had drawn up the figures the Accounts are prepared on a cash basis. Election expenses were under dispute and a meeting has been organised to resolve this. A provision of £5,000 had been entered for two Election expenses this year (the May 2015 invoice just received was in dispute). Last year there was therefore no election expense.

Reserves were held at £71,090. Bramble Hall was doing well and this year there are plans to install blinds. **Richard Greig** reiterated Gary Marsh’s comment about £5,000 set aside for Cuadrilla’s return. ST explained that £10,000 was set aside for Traffic Matters. Gary Marsh said that it was unlikely that there would be a reduction in election expenses because Balcombe had a high percentage of postal votes etc He questioned why the vacancy had gone to Election when co-option could have taken place. Members of the public had called an election and CM said it was the clearest and most transparent way of finding a new Councillor. AS said it was a shame that the village didn’t trust the Council to co-opt fairly. Reasons why no one was co-opted in September were also explained.

5 Questions from the Floor

Richard Greig asked about the shortfall in Pavilion income: RR said £800 had been banked in April.

Adele Burke referred to the impact on the village and asked what activities would be permissible on the edge of London Road if Cuadrilla returned. Gary Marsh explained that WSCC had obtained an injunction to limit demonstrations to a 30/40 m stretch of road and no overnight camping was allowed. She suggested that other parishioners would like to be informed.

Paddy Horne spoke about non-stop drilling for 36 months. Cllr Greenwood said Cuadrilla only have permission to test the existing well.

Richard Greig wanted WSCC to maintain the red rumble strip as they had been contracted to do. Cllr Gould said that WSCC are aware of the degradation and it is on the list to be rectified. AS is drawing up Access Protection Line drawings to help with parking problems. Newlands footway was due to be resurfaced. Gary Marsh stated that MSDC will be funding further wooden posts on the west side of Newlands to prevent parking on the grass.

Stuart Gregory asked if the muddy area opposite the Parish Room in Stockcroft Road could be treated similarly. It was suggested that a proposal be put to Council.

Richard Greig asked if the Ranger was inspecting gullies and was informed that he was.

Sue Taylor wondered if parishioners would be interested in putting another defibrillator in the Station Phone Box. Power sources would be a consideration.

Suzie Horne asked what implications for the NP the recent changes in permitted development rights had had. AS explained that whilst we cannot protect ourselves against hostile developments or legislate on barn developments through the Neighbourhood Plan it does give us some protection.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.35 pm.

Signed.....

Date.....

A film on how to use a Defibrillator was then shown followed by representations from various Balcombe businesses.