

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Gurnard Electors held in the main hall at Gurnard Primary School in Hilton Road, Gurnard on Tuesday 27th April 2010 at 7.30pm.

PRESENT: 10 electors, IW Councillor Fuller, Alan Marriott (speaker), Mike Bishop (speaker), Paul Savill (Speaker), IW County Press and the Parish Clerk.

1. PRESENTATION: "A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A NEWSPAPER EDITOR" WITH ALAN MARRIOTT

Alan Marriott, who is Editor at the IW County Press, gave a fascinating insight into the world of a newspaper editor and the IW County Press. Alan has worked for the IWCP for 26 years, having started originally at a Chester based local paper. He became Sports Editor here in 1984, Deputy News Editor in 1989, and Deputy Editor in 2000 before taking on his current role as Editor in 2007. He is only the 6th Editor in the paper's 125 year history, which is typical of most of the paper's staff – they don't move on quickly which was highlighted recently with the retirement of a staff member after 52 years! The IWCP is still here and it has seen others come and go and competition still prevails, but Alan feels the paper's future is secure. The Brannon family founded the paper, all of whom have a real "stake" in IW life, and don't interfere with the running of the paper like is seen in so many other papers. The reporting team is excellent and has solid local knowledge, and an overriding ethos of the paper is that it will only get involved with news items and events directly related to the Island. The paper has always been Newport based, but has moved in the town from the High Street to Pyle Street and printing on the Island at Riverway before being transferred to the mainland – it is now printed by the Newbury Weekly News. There are about 80 employees, both full time and part time, and about 40,000 copies of the paper are sold weekly. There is also a website which is very popular - there were 95,000 unique visitors in January 2010! Much of Alan's time is spent dealing with complaints for mistakes made and the like, and Friday has become known as "tin hat day"! Questions followed and Alan was thanked by the Chairman.

2. PRESENTATION: "CARISBROOKE CASTLE MUSEUM" WITH MIKE BISHOP

Mike Bishop, who is curator at Carisbrooke Castle Museum commenced by saying that he has been curator for 2 years, but has been involved with the Castle in other roles prior to this. Although the museum's management is separate from the Castle and the museum is a Charitable Trust, English Heritage do offer some support. The museum was founded by Queen Victoria's daughter Princess Beatrice in 1898 in the gatehouse and dedicated to the memory of her husband, Prince Henry. The museum is unique in that it is a royal museum and is open to the public, and it is also the oldest surviving museum on the Island. It was originally founded to preserve Island history and this is still the role it plays today. The Trust was first set up by Princess Beatrice in 1944, not long before her death, and it is now situated in the old Governor's House. There are some 60,000 items in the museum which include donations from Queen Victoria and some Charles I relics, but space limitations mean it can only display about 1.8% of its collections at any one time, so the exhibits are changed and rotated frequently. Space is always a problem, so in the 1980's the archaeological collection was moved to Clatterford Road in Carisbrooke but is easily accessible. Collections also include some items from a military background, especially the IW Rifles, and there is also one "Turner" watercolour of the Castle. Much historic church plate and ecclesiastical vestments from 17th to the 20th Century are also there which churches use from time to time, and there is also a John Milne photographic collection as well as a library which came from Carisbrooke Priory. Financial survival is always a challenge especially as there are restrictions on admission charging, retailing refreshments and a shop due to it being on an English Heritage site, so fundraising and membership schemes are the main sources of funding, and charges can also sometimes be made to universities for work carried out. Questions followed and Mike was thanked by the Chairman.

3. PRESENTATION: "THE GURNARD SCOUTS & GUIDES YEAR" WITH PAUL SAVILL

Paul Savill gave a short presentation on the Gurnard Scouts & Guides year and handed out the latest version of a promotional magazine. There are 30 million scouts across the world, ½ a million of which are in the UK. The Island's membership increased by 4% last year and this

includes a growing teenage group. Gurnard's 1st Group has meetings Monday to Friday and this includes Scouts, Beavers, Guides, Cubs and Explorers and currently involves over 100 youngsters. Volunteers are always needed and screening and training is now carried out/provided for adults, which is an on-going process. The Troop also has Kayaks and gets involved in many celebrations and events including St George's Day (patron saint), visits to Corfe, camping both locally and at County level, the May Queen and there is a really good "buzz" and feel in all the activities. What really comes through is how youngsters really are interested in scouting, including teenagers, and parents do get involved too. There is a new unit, Scout Active Support (SAS), which is currently involved helping to send youngsters to the Sweden Scout Jamboree. Questions followed and Paul was thanked by the Chairman.

Refreshments were served at this point

4. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Jacqui Darby, Ben Hollis, Ken Chapman, PC Mark Thomas and Jane McKean.

5. MINUTES

The minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting, held on 28th April 2009, were taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

7. REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

a. Parish Council Meetings

Since the last Annual Parish Meeting the Parish Council has met formally for a total of 11 full Council meetings. It has continued to act on behalf of the local community on many wide and varied issues, and also responds as a Stakeholder Consultee for the IW Council, Central Government and other Bodies on several wider local government issues.

The Planning Committee has also met regularly during the year, on 10 occasions in fact, in order to respond to planning and licensing applications within the deadlines set by Development Control and Licensing. Up to the end of March a total of 54 planning applications have been considered and commented upon during the year, which amounts to a reduction on last year of 3.6%. The Parish Council has continued to attend selected Planning Inspectorate appeal site inspections.

The Community Projects Committee, which started work in December 2006, has met 3 times since the last APM and continues to work through the Parish Plan Action Plan.

The Parish Council thanks Ward Councillor Paul Fuller for his support and the regular reporting on events at County Hall as they affected Gurnard during his 1st year in office, and is particularly grateful for his obvious enthusiasm for the role he undertakes in our community.

A strong and positive relationship has also been maintained with the Cowes Safer Neighbourhood Officers (Police) and the IW Council's Neighbourhoods and Environment Officer (Rural Area Managers), and the Parish Council is indebted to Police Constable Mark Thomas and PCSO Steve Oatley together with Jacqui Darby for their enthusiasm shown by attendance at Parish Council meetings to give reports.

b. Gurnard-in-Bloom Jubilee Fund

This organisation continues to serve the Village well and I'm quite sure everyone can see the fruit of their labours. The Parish Council is hugely grateful to the small band of people who create such colour in the Village, and it has been a pleasure to continue to support their work. Whilst there were no grants accessed on their behalf by the Parish Council as in 2008/9, financial and other support was given during the year. The team is extremely concerned and frustrated by what they see as prolific parking on grass verges, which undermines their work

c. Waste Management

A wheelie bin has been supplied for the tourist season for the past 5 years, and is in place again now on the Esplanade and will remain there until the autumn half term holiday. There are 16 dog bins in the village, 11 of which the Parish Council funded and continues to service – this is an addition of 2 since last year (Esplanade and the Marsh). The Parish Council took part in a Beachwatch litter pick and survey exercise in September 2009 and a more general clean-up campaign is planned for 7th & 8th May this year on both the beach (10am on the 8th) and in the village.

- d. **IW Walking Festival**
Gurnard didn't feature in the walks programme last year, but our Walk Coordinator Jo Moore has a walk included in the 2010 programme that will take place on Sunday 9th May starting from the Outlook Café on the Marsh at 12.30pm walking the 3½ miles to Thorness and back.
- e. **Parish Councillors, Committee Members & Youth Advisors**
2009 saw Parish elections taking place, but only 7 nominations for the 9 seats were received. The only route to filling these vacancies so soon after an election was to co-opt, and 3 applications were received leading to Nigel Harley and Ben Hollis being co-opted on 14th July. There was one resignation in August, which attracted 3 nominations and was eventually filled by Tony Hathaway through co-option on 10th November. No training has been undertaken by any Councillor this year. There are or have been Parish Council representatives on the IW Assn of Local Councils, Cowes Youth Club Management Committee, Island Waste Advisory Group, Marsh Road Residents Association, the May Queen Committee and the IW County Training Partnership, and all of these have involved outside meetings and other activities from time to time. One Parish Councillor also serves as a Parish Tree Warden alongside Richard Bolwell. Attendance by Parish Councillors at Full Council meetings from April 2009 to March 2010 has dropped from 89% last year to 82% this year. The Community Projects Committee lost one member during the year, but Councillor Paul Fuller has been co-opted as a replacement. With effect from July 2008 the Parish Council has benefited from the input to 2 committees and 1 working party from a total of 6 youth advisors - 4 from Cowes High School and 2 from Solent Middle School – there have been some changes during this year and one youth advisor is now invited to attend Full Council meetings too.
- f. **Grants**
The Grants programme runs during March and April, and the Parish Council approved grants totalling £700 on 13th April 2010. Full details of all grants paid last year (2009) are in the financial statement.
- g. **Grass Cutting.**
In addition to the verge cutting undertaken by the IW Council, the Parish Council has continued to fund the maintenance of the grassed areas at Pond Green and Gurnard Heights. The local contractor appointed in 2009 continues for this year. Some major shrub and tree pruning work was also undertaken during the year again at Pond Green.
- h. **Website**
The website has continued to be regularly updated, and is increasingly being used by both residents and people from outside the Village as well as some from many Countries across the world – there are between 300 and 500 visits per month, which is an increase on last year. The forum is not a success story, though, as it is not used much which is shame as it could be a great consultation tool.
- i. **Traffic Management Plan**
The Parish Council's Traffic Management Plan Working Party which consists of 10 members including 3 Councillors, has met 3 times in total during the past year with the next meeting scheduled for next month. Issues dealt with during the year include speeding, signage, parking & school run traffic and safety problems, and it has also carried out a residents' survey follow-up exercise in Hilton Road. There is currently one vacancy on this working party if any resident wishes to help out.
- j. **Village Hall**
The Parish Council continues to be indebted to the Hall Management Committee for all its hard work. The Parish Council was unable to financially support the work there this past year, but some administrative support was given to assist the committee in gaining additional Hallmark 2 & 3 accolades, which opened up access to about £4000 worth of funding which is being used for upgrading heating and insulation projects.
- k. **Projects**
The main project this past year has continued to be the Play Area on the Village Green, both in terms of raising the funds needed and the project management. Without doubt this has been the largest and, fortunately, the most successful project ever undertaken by the Parish Council and this not only included the play equipment but also seating, fencing, gating and signage as well as arranging on-going management and maintenance regimes. The young people had access to the

scheme from early autumn 2009 and Gurnard Primary School attended en mass on 16th November to formally open the scheme. Just short of £75,000 was raised from outside sources to fund the project and, due to there being some funding remaining, an additional item of equipment was ordered and is now in place. Installing seating has taken a while due to weather constraints, but 4 seats are now in place, all of which are dedicated.

Some initial work has started on considering what to do with the primary school site after the school moves to the Solent Middle site. A working party was formed with the prime aim initially being to ascertain if there is a desire in the village community to do anything with it or to leave it to the IW Council to decide. This is still on-going and the Community Projects Committee is likely to get involved with this project very soon.

The Parish Council's Gurnard Community Association project came to fruition during the year but it hasn't undertaken any project work yet. This will primarily be used to draw down funding for projects that the Parish Council is unable to apply for, but where voluntary groups can. There is still one vacancy on this group so if this interests you please do make contact with the Parish Clerk.

The Parish Council is currently working alongside the Sailing Club on a project to reintroduce the Gurnard Regatta, and this 1st such event for some years now will take place on 14th August. If anyone wants to help out with anything on the day do contact the Parish Clerk.

For about 4 years now the Parish Council has taken on a project to attract some maintenance and ownership of the footpath behind the Gurnard Heights houses. This is almost complete now with the land due to be dedicated to the IW Council very shortly - Rights of Way will then look after it. Thanks go to those residents who took the trouble to respond to the questionnaires, which were needed as evidence.

l. May Queen

One Councillor continues to serve on the May Queen committee and the Parish Council will be attending the fete officially for the 2nd time on 8th May and this year's event will be used to consult on 4 issues, so do come along and say hello.

m. Affordable Housing

This project moved one step closer during the year in that a possible site was identified, but unfortunately it proved not to be suitable so the project is on hold again pending a new site being found. Working with Northwood Parish Council on this is also an option.

n. Victorian Water Fountain at Woodvale

Complete refurbishment of this is completed and, whilst this was an IW Council project, the Parish Council has assisted with covering about 30% of the cost.

8. PRESENTATION OF PARISH AWARD

The Parish Council wished to recognise Phil Dow and family from the Village Londis Store, and especially with respect to how the family stepped out beyond the normal shopkeeper commercial role and remit by helping so many people during the severe winter weather earlier this year. As the family was not able to attend the meeting, the Chairman will present them with a framed certificate later at the shop.

9. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Parish Clerk presented a summary of the accounts to 31st March 2010, which has been approved by the Parish Council subject to audit. Income for the year was up from £45169.54 last year to £102,820.19 this year, almost totally due to funds being drawn down from outside sources for the play area. Expenditure was considerably up from £33558.98 last year to £97,877.33, again almost totally due to the play area equipment this year. The General Fund (carry forward figure) at the end of the financial year has increased from £26329.15 last year to £31,272.01 this year, which was almost totally due to the grant fund total for the play area not all being spent before the year end. £1200.00 was paid out in community grants, and there was an £7,378.31 under-spend for the year when comparing the annual income with expenditure, and again this was mainly due to grant funding money received not yet being spent.

10. NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Ken Chapman was not able to attend the meeting.

11. SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS

PC Mark Thomas was not able to attend the meeting.

12. NEIGHBOURHOOD AND ENVIRONMENT OFFICER

Jacqui Darby was unable to attend to report, but her role as Neighbourhood and Environment Officer for Gurnard comes to a close on 5th May 2010, and the future of the role is not yet clear.

13. IW COUNCILLOR

Councillor Fuller outlined what had been a busy year for him and this included his role in the Ward and representing the community. Details of his surgeries and availability were included, and he went into some detail on his involvement with planning especially Solent Lawns and the new gas main, school reorganization, combating crime especially no cold calling and anti-social behaviour on Gurnard Beach, transport and especially the No 32 service, community assets and the future of the Gurnard Primary School site, best value with respect to the use of public money, and his accountability, going into some details of the many meetings attended, visits made and his allowances. He states he is committed to serving the community and is keen to see the IW Council return to its Eco-Island agenda.

14. OPEN SESSION

Comments included how the Village Green is beginning to look like Hawaii with the replacement cabbage palm trees, but that he was pleased to see one fir tree is still there. Also thanks were expressed to the Parish Council, Councillor Fuller and the Parish Clerk for their service and diligent efforts on behalf of the community.

The meeting closed at 9.47pm.

CHAIRMAN