

GURNARD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Gurnard Electors held at the Village Hall in Worsley Road, Gurnard on Thursday 16 April 2015 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Harrison (Chair), Bugden, Fuller, McNeill, Nolan and Spencer, Youth Adviser Bronwyn Westmore and three members of the public.

Councillor Harrison opened the evening by welcoming those who had attended and introducing the speakers.

John Ward (new owner of Cowes Club – formally Gurnard Pines) advised that his family run 13 Spar Shops on the Isle of Wight, starting with Hunnyhill Stores some 15 years ago. Since taking over the complex (not the accommodation), they have spoken to staff about possible improvements. They have taken on a 20 year lease so it is a long term project. Apart from opening a Spar Shop on the site, the first change they have made is to introduce a chef to the bistro so they can serve some healthier food using local produce where possible. The bistro is open from 9am for breakfast serving Brownrigg eggs and sausages. A new over 50 £5 lunch has been introduced. For local non- members, a Sunday swim has been introduced from 9am to 2pm which will cost £4 for adults and £2 for children. They have successfully reapplied for a wedding licence for the ballroom and started introducing local acts on some evenings. They held an Easter Fayre which had 30 Stall holders which was successful. Staff are willing to listen to any ideas to use the facilities again for locals as there are now only 22 units of holiday accommodation on site.

Questions were asked about the Residents Association – the relationship has improved with the group meeting once per month at The Chart Room free of charge. The Spar Shop will not be open until the end of May as they are awaiting the refrigeration units. John advised that the owners of the accommodation may be requesting planning permission to replace the wooden chalets that were recently taken away on the top field by the entrance.

Paul Creer of the Badger Action Trust was the second speaker. He brought along some slides and talked about how the social groups are established, how the sets are used and food requirements. They dig latrines for use, and will cover up the dung once the hole is full. Badgers do not leave the set for the first two weeks after giving birth. They enter the set backwards so they can scent mark the entrance. They will also scent mark their territory using the same trails all the time. Earthworms are their favourite food and they can devour up to 200 in a short period of time, but will also eat small mammals, seeds, fruit, maggots, slugs, snails and honey from bee's nests. Once the group is too large for the available food sources, the male will encourage younger members of the group to leave and set up new groups. A set will normally hold an average of 6 – 8 members.

Questions were asked about the Badger sets in the Jordan Valley. Paul advised that he built an artificial set before the building started on the Oaklands Development, although the set there only contained a couple of badgers. He is worried about them on the site of the Glen and wants to ensure that they are safeguarded being any building works is started. He left his contact details with the clerk if anyone has any further questions.

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Following refreshments, the main meeting started.

Apologies were received from councillors Jacobs and McKean plus PSCO Howard.

The minutes of the last meeting held on 27 April 2014 were taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Councillor Harrison then gave a Chairman's Report which highlighted the achievements and detailed the challenges which lie ahead. The Neighbourhood Plan is nearing completion, success in the refusal for Planning permission for the 89 homes in Place Road, his attendance at the Queen's Garden Party, the Public Consultation which gave the Parish Council full backing to raise the precept to enable the Parish Council to maintain local services instead of the IW Council. Challenges include the efforts to re-open the coastal footpath, maintaining local services, establishing the open space on the playing field and orchard of the former Gurnard Primary School site.

The Parish Clerk circulated copies of the audited accounts and was available for questions. The main item is reduction in administration costs.

Councillor Bugden then provided a verbal report on the Neighbourhood Watch for Gurnard. She attends monthly meetings at Cowes Police Station but generally Gurnard is a relatively safe place to live with a low crime rate. She wanted to highlight that there have been some opportunist crimes where doors or windows have been left unlocked to both homes and cars. Also that keys should not be hung close to a door where they can be removed.

PSCO Howard sent an annual report which was circulated. He provided an update to the team and advised that priorities were to be discussed by new PACT meeting (Police and Community Together).

Councillor Fuller provided copies of his Annual Report which he will deliver to all households over the next few weeks. He highlighted the challenge to Gurnard with the planning applications for the Jordan Valley, and the problems with the coastal footpath remaining closed. Councillors Fuller and Nolan will arrange a meeting with the Rights of Way team at IW Council to try and establish that at least part of the footpath could re-open.

A Parish Award was presented to Graham and Kathy Piltcher by the Chairman following a nomination by Councillor Spencer. She highlighted the voluntary work carried out by them for the community of Gurnard particularly around the May Queen and Harvest Festival events. Kathy accepted the award on their behalf.

The meeting closed at 9pm.

CHAIRMAN