

GURNARD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Gurnard Electors held at the Village Hall in Worsley Road, Gurnard on Wednesday 26 April 2017 at 7.30pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Harrison (Chair), Bugden, Fuller, Jacobs, McKean, Nolan, and 13 members of the public.

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

The first item of the evening was a prize giving ceremony where the developers of the Place Road housing project rewarded 3 members of the public with £50.00 cheques for successfully naming three of the roads within the development. The winners were Cowes Deauville Twinning Association for Deauville Avenue (to celebrate over 50 years of the twinning of Cowes and Deauville), Rufus Darroch for Sunset Drive (to celebrate the world famous glorious sunsets in Gurnard) and Claudia Summers for Cordelia Crescent (to celebrate the heroic little ships which sailed from this region to rescue the soldiers from the beaches of Dunkirk). Claudia and Rufus both attend Lanesend Primary School where students were invited to take part in the competition.

Grant recipients then provided a short presentation advising how the Parish Council grant benefited their organisations.

First was Solent Singers, with Suzanne explaining how the group has to pay for all their sheet music. The group has expanded to 34 members singing a variety of 2/3 part harmony songs. They perform two concerts per year in Gurnard, with the next one being on 14 July 2017. They raise funds at their public concerts for both an annually nominated charity as well as the running costs of the group. The grant from the Parish Council has spent on sheet music.

Secondly was the Gurnard Toddler Group. Catherine explained that the group meets every Friday in term time at the Village Hall. The grant has been used to provide toys, and activities from Starlight Boutique who have carried out a Circus Skills session, Face Painting and Balloon Modelling.

The third group to speak, was Wendy on behalf of the All Saints Church for their production of the Gurnard News. She explained that although all the work on the magazine including production and delivery is accrued out by volunteers, funds are required to provide a copy printer, paper and ink. Although funds are raised by advertisements within the magazine, the grant is used towards the three yearly replacement of the refurbished copy printer and annual maintenance of the machine. The Gurnard News is the voice of the village, anyone can provide an article and it is delivered to every home in Gurnard.

Lastly, Amanda advised about the Elephant Club which is currently meeting monthly in the All Saints Garden Room. The group has expanded to 19 members and will shortly have to move into the church. It provides a space for people with memory problems to listen to music and reminisce. The grant was used to pay for the hall and a specialist to lead the discussion.

Other groups given a grant this year were Gurnard Preschool and 1st Gurnard Management Committee (Scout and Guide hut in Worsley Road) who were unable to attend the meeting.

Following refreshments, the main meeting started.

Apologies were received from Councillors Doughty and McNeill and PSCO Howard.

The minutes of the last meeting held on 28 April 2016 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 of the Parish Council including:-

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- The Neighbourhood Plan – the examiner has been appointed and a referendum will be carried out later this year.
- Meetings attended by councillors - 12 Parish Council meetings, 7 separate planning committee meetings, considering a total of 43 Planning applications, Open Spaces Project Working Group, Personnel Working Group, Financial Working Group plus various meetings of outside bodies.
- The Open Space is now known as Cockleton Meadow with a small committee plus a band of volunteers managing the site. The group was also successful in obtaining a grant from Tesco “Bags of Fun” which is enabling them to make major improvements to the site to improve the facility to encourage the wildlife and native species to thrive in a beautiful outdoor space which is accessible to all. The picnic tables have now been installed, bat boxes, insect boxes and bird nesting boxes will also be installed.
- The toilet block is now leased by the Parish Council who employ their own toilet cleaner. It was important to residents that this facility remains open all year round.
- Councillor Doughty was co-opted onto the Parish Council in September. He successfully achieved the refund of business rates for the toilet block.
- The council was successful in gaining funding for legal advice to dispute the service fees levied by the management committee for the new Oaklands Development. This would have caused a financial drain to the resources of the Village Hall Association.
- Jennie Lewis volunteered to take on the “Gurnard in Bloom. With her nephew and a small amount of funding, her efforts have improved the overall look of the village. Further work is required to return the verges to their previous state.
- The clerk was successful in obtaining funding from Southern and Scottish Electric to provide equipment for an emergency which is housed in the new shed in the grounds of the village hall. The Emergency Plan has been updated to reflect this additional resource.
- A new notice board has been purchased and installed at the top of Worsley Road.
- Island Roads provided free labour and materials to refurbish the benches on the Esplanade by the beach huts.
- The council supported the High Sherriff’s Isle of Wight Day by distributing the free bunting to all business in the Parish.
- The chairman represented the council at the Annual Remembrance Service at All Saints church and laid a wreath.
- The clerk was successful in obtaining grant to provide a community accessible defibrillator which is now installed out Gurnard Press. The council is very grateful to Nick Clarke for allowing the unit to be placed on his property. Free training for councillors and residents will be taking place at the Village Hall later this year.
- £1150 has been provided to local groups in Gurnard in the form of grants.

Continuing Challenges:

- Residents are still unhappy that the Community Bus runs for only five mornings a week. Work is continuing to try to improve the transport situation for residents. A coffee morning was held in February to enable residents to hear about the Optio Car Service which is run by Community Action (IW) which could provide an alternative means of transport. Unfortunately no-one attended.

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The Parish Clerk circulated copies of the audited accounts and was available for questions. No questions were asked.

Councillor Bugden then provided a verbal report on the Neighbourhood Watch for Gurnard. She attends monthly meetings at Cowes Library following the closure of the Police Station. Generally Gurnard is a relatively safe place to live with a low crime rate although youngsters have been causing problems in the beach area, breaking resident's gates and fences for firewood and having fires in Spencer's Wood. There has also been vandalism at Cockleton Meadow and in Place Road where a bus was graffitied and then a fire started. There have also been problems where small motorbikes are being used on the coastal footpath. The Police are investigating all the incidents and treating it as a high priority.

Due to sickness PSCO Howard was unable to provide an annual report this year.

Councillor Fuller provided copies of his Annual Report which he has delivered to all households over the last few weeks. He wished to emphasise that to be able to access public Rights of Way, the Isle of Wight Council is in continual dialogue with landowners.

A Parish Award was to be presented to Mr Gordon Day, but he was unable to attend. Councillor Harrison read out a citation prepared in advance which thanked Gordon for all his work. "Presented in recognition of your outstanding service to the Gurnard Community, especially for taking over "Keeper of the Clock" role which proved to be a larger voluntary role than originally thought. The free refurbishment of the clock and its workings was really appreciated by the Parish Council, residents and visitors alike. Also for the work completed on the slipway by the Sailing Club for which you requested no public recognition." The framed certificate will be delivered to his home as soon as possible.

The meeting closed at 8.31pm.

CHAIRMAN