

Rookley Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting

Wednesday 3 April 2019 at 19.30

in the Village Hall, Highwood Lane

In the Chair: Mrs E. A. Wills, Chairman of Rookley Parish Council

Also present: Mr M. R. Taplin, Parish Clerk, and 6 members of the public

1. Apologies for absence
Apologies for absence were received from Mr S Hastings and PCSO J Keefe
2. Minutes of the 2018 Annual Parish Meeting
The minutes of the 2018 Annual Parish Meeting held on 2 May were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman
3. Matters arising not otherwise covered
None
4. Chairman's report
The Chairman's report was read and is attached as part of these minutes
5. Isle of Wight Councillor's report
Cllr Hastings had provided a written report, which was tabled
6. Police report
A police report was tabled
7. Any other business
None

Meeting concluded at 19.41

Rookley Parish Council Chairman's report for 2018-19

This is my second and final Annual Report as Chairman of Rookley Parish Council and it is such a pleasure to be able to say that Rookley was voted the 'Best Kept Large Village 2018' on the Island. Rookley consistently scored above average for nearly all of the categories which the panel of Judges use to determine their decision. The categories include the condition of hedges, fences and walls, wide verges, pavements and signage, phone boxes and bus shelters, and the absence of litter. The condition of car parks at commercial premises is also considered by the Judges whose official comment was that Rookley was a 'worthy Group Winner with good consistent scores above average in most areas'. All residents of the Parish deserve a big thank you for the care they bring not only to their own properties and their immediate environs but also by respecting the civic spaces within Rookley. Thanks should also go to James Morton for his contributions in renovating and maintaining the seats, benches and tables around the Village Green, Island Car Centre for the attractive development of their property and to Highwood Nurseries for supplies for the flower beds on the Green.

During this year Councillor Bacon resigned but we were very grateful to be able to recruit Derek

Hunt to join the Parish Council. Many will know Derek well as a long term resident of the Village with much local knowledge. All your Councillors make valuable contributions not only in the monthly meetings we hold to deal with local matters but also by dealing with specific issues further afield. Councillor Colin Willis is our IT specialist and is in talks with the Island Council regarding bringing 'full-fibre' technology to the Village. I and Councillor Mike Jones deal with South Wight Health and Wellbeing Group which keeps us abreast of information relating to how members of the community can stay fit and healthy and living in their own homes for as long as possible as they age, and a range of other services that are available for Islanders. We receive updates on strategies on the improvements of St Marys Hospital's progress towards excellence. Councillor Hunt is in contact with Southern Water regarding problems with foul water sewers in Main Road near the Country Park and along with Councillor Colin Willis keep a community eye on very many aspects of developments within the Country Park (recently re-branded as 'the Lakes at Rookley'). Councillor Steven Vail monitors the activities of those promoting 'fracking' on the Island and keeps the parish Council informed of developments.

Councillor Ian Rigaud Barrett takes an active role in Island Council activities especially when they may affect Rookley. He and I recently attended a presentation of the Island Draft Planning Strategy – described in a document 167 pages long! It is mandatory to have an up to date Planning Strategy or the government will impose one on us, and the current consultation period is soon to end. Islandwide the number of houses deemed necessary (by the government) is 9,000 over a 15 year period. Our MP Bob Seeley feels that this is far too high, and would prefer that the houses built reflect the requirements of young islanders who wish to live and work on the island and has issued a petition in regard to this. Housing in Rookley has been proposed on two sites: at least 30 houses on the fields behind to Co-Op Stores up as far as Rookley Green, and 7 on the current site of Highwood Nurseries and some of the land around there. This does not mean that houses can be built there without planning permission, only that those sites are considered suitable areas for development, and planning applications would be looked on more favourably.

The Parish Council has also been considering the proposed changes to ward boundaries within the island. It looks likely that Rookley will become part of the Godshill and Wroxall Electoral Division rather than the Central Wight Division where we currently reside.

Our Annual Lights of Love Service around the tree on the Green was a great success this year, with Shanklin Brass Band playing and the Reverends Helen Millward and John Izzard leading the singing. The Methodist Church Hall was re-opened for the occasion and mince pies donated by our local Co-op and hot non-alcoholic punch offered to the masses. The Parish Council donated £100.00 to Earl Mountbatten Hospice, who collected £190.00 themselves on the night. We also donated £60.00 for the services of the Band. A lovely evening for a worthy cause.

The Parish Council funded the free skateboard lessons (50/50 with Rookley Village Association), supplied by John Cattle during the schools Summer Holidays. It was a pleasure to see such good attendance and appreciation for the opportunity hopefully repeated this summer.

At the end of the agenda items on our monthly meetings Councillors detail meetings they have attended and queries from members of the community that they have received, and these are summarised on the minutes of meetings posted on the noticeboard on the green. Newsletters with current information from both the Parish Council and Rookley Village Association are also distributed at least three times a year to every household in Rookley.

Elizabeth Wills

1 April 2019