

Minutes of the meeting of Arreton Parish Council held on **Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024 at 7.00pm in Arreton Community Hall**

**Present:** Cllrs Gurney-Champion (Chair), Healy, Dodson, Mills, Roberts, Cooper, Verey and Taylor.

**In attendance:** Claire Gale (Clerk), David Harrison-Wood (Community Speedwatch), John Wersby (Community Speedwatch), PCSO Justin Keefe, PC Liz Clapp, 14 members of the public.

#### **125/24 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Bob Castle (Community Speedwatch) who was on holiday and from IW Cllr Suzie Ellis due to ill-health.

Following a request from PCSO Keefe the Chairman stated that item 133/24 would be dealt with following 129/24.

#### **126/24 Questions from the public**

Public questions were to be raised relating to Community Speedwatch and Arreton Schools Trust and would be dealt with under the agenda item.

#### **127/24 To receive any declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest and requests for dispensations under the Localism Act 2011**

There were no declarations.

#### **128/24 To give notice of any item to be raised under agenda item 143/24**

Due to the number of interested parents and residents present the potential closure of Arreton Primary School was to be raised under this item and discussed after Community Speedwatch.

Cllr Cooper raised the lack of enforcement action by IWC on the old nursery site adjacent to The Fighting Cocks.

#### **129/24 To receive and confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

**RESOLVED:** To agree and sign the minutes of 8<sup>th</sup> July 2024.

#### **130/24 To receive regular reports**

##### a) IW Councillor

Cllr Ellis submitted an email report as follows. Whilst I fully support the long-overdue school place planning strategy for Island Schools, I was devastated to learn that both remaining Primary Schools in Central Rural are among the six primary schools named for consultation on closure, should the Isle of Wight Council's cabinet decide to proceed with the proposed consultation at their meeting on Thursday, 12th September. I have visited both schools to offer my support and am working closely with headteachers and governors to explore alternative solutions that would not leave the rural centre of the Island without primary provision. There is an absolute need for change, but we must ensure it's the right change, incorporating compromise and sustainability for our communities. It is important to note that, at this stage, the Council's Cabinet is only being asked to approve a consultation period, not to make any final decisions regarding closures or changes. I will continue working with the schools, the wider communities, and IWC officers and Councillors to secure the best outcome for our children, and should this proposal proceed to the consultation stage, I would encourage you all to engage with this process.

##### b) Cemetery and churchyard matters

The arrangements for Councillors taking part in the cemetery tidy-up the week beginning 23<sup>rd</sup> September will be made by email. The Councillors expressed thanks for the new cemetery sign.

##### c) Highways and footpaths

Cllr Cooper noted there is a need to monitor the additional signs appearing on verges. Cllr Gurney-Champion had received an email from a concerned resident about a tyre company van permanently parked in a layby near Newclose Cricket Ground. A letter will be written to Island Roads, HIW Police and the company asking for it to be removed as the layby is used by motorists to avoid flooding. Cllr Verey expressed concern that the 40mph speed limit from the main road to East Lane junction was putting the safety of pedestrians at risk and would be better reduced to 30mph.

d) Community Centre

Cllr Dodson reported that the NHS Pod contract has been renewed for a further year. The services of a plumber have been secured free of charge. The dishwasher is to be plumbed in this week. Bookings have increased partly as a knock-on effect from making the car park available at school drop off and collection times.

e) Chairman's report

The Chairman had attended an informative IWALC Topic Meeting on Emergency Planning on 29<sup>th</sup> August along with the Clerk. Lessons have been learned from errors that occurred last autumn when major flooding incidents happened across the island but were particularly bad in Cowes and Ryde. The possibility of creating a vulnerable persons register and list of those with access to 4x4 vehicles in the community will be discussed at a future meeting. The Chairman has dealt with numerous emails and attended a meeting about proposed tree wardens.

f) IWALC

Cllr Roberts had not attended any IWALC meetings.

g) Meeting reports

Cllr Verey attended the Environment and Sustainability MS Teams meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> July. A talk was given by a volunteer representative of Future IW about reducing the carbon footprint. The organisation also offers advice on air quality checks and home ventilation.

h) Clerk's report

After the last meeting the Clerk updated and circulated Burial Fees information incorporating approved exception to Table A wording, drafted the letter to Police re Community Speedwatch, followed up the Housing Needs Survey and completed the distribution list, responded to Wootton Parish Council's request for support regarding the need for a new planning application relating to gravel extraction, sent thanks to Rookley Parish Council for their support with the dark skies initiative and circulated the Draft Island Planning Strategy consultation details to councillors and residents.

It was noted that the following planning applications have been granted:

24/00725/HOU

2 Longmeade Cottages Hale Common Arreton Newport Isle of Wight PO30 3AP

Demolition of conservatory; Proposed single storey rear extension; new door on rear elevation

24/00699/FUL

5 And 6 Macketts Lane Cottages Macketts Lane Arreton Newport Isle of Wight PO30 3AS

Demolition of conservatories; proposed single/two storey rear extension to 5 and single storey rear extension to 6

24/01032/RVC

Little Sullens Farm Burnt House Lane Arreton Newport Isle of Wight PO30 2PP

Variation of condition no 2 on 23/01178/HOU to allow revisions to approved plans showing external materials/finishes

The following planning application has been refused:

23/02237/FUL

Land Adjacent 3 Birchmore Cottages Birchmore Lane Newport Isle Of Wight PO30 3BW

Proposed detached dwelling (revised scheme)

The following applications were dealt with by email as there was no meeting during August:

24/01032/RVC

Little Sullens Farm Burnt House Lane Arreton Newport Isle of Wight PO30 2PP

Variation of condition no 2 on 23/01178/HOU to allow revisions to approved plans showing external materials/finishes **Support**

24/01159/HOU

Plot 4 Land Between Challen Way and Beresford Arreton Street, Arreton, Isle of Wight

Proposed sunroom **Neutral**

At Gore Cemetery a funeral was conducted on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> July and interments of ashes on 20<sup>th</sup> August and 3<sup>rd</sup> September. The Clerk processed renunciation of burial plot A21 and issued or transferred Exclusive Rights of Burial on 3 other plots and followed up on cemetery inspection matters.

On 15<sup>th</sup> July the Clerk attended the Parish Helper Domains Service webinar on How to Choose the Right .gov.uk Approved Registrar for Your Council and subsequently selected Approved Registrar in conjunction with the Chair and applied for the grant. The laptop was taken to Wight Computers for the RAM upgrade. The Annual Parish Meeting minutes have been drafted and the new 2024 JPAG Practitioners Guide for audits from April 2025 reviewed.

The Clerk prepared papers for the Arreton School Trust Meeting and attended on 19<sup>th</sup> August 7pm at the Community Hall. The Quarterly newsletter for September was prepared and circulated. The Clerk reviewed the contents of filing cabinet and disposed of documents as appropriate. A Policy/Procedure review schedule has been drawn up.

### **131/24 Finance**

The Council noted the finance report for July and August and the balance in the current account was noted as being £16150.11. The Council considered a draft of the Financial Regulations where one clause had been added.

**RESOLVED:** To agree and approve the payments as presented. To agree the Financial Regulations.

### **132/24 Planning and Appeals**

The Council considered the following planning applications.

24/01198/HOU

Location: Valley House, Merstone Lane, Arreton, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 3DE

Proposal: Proposed single storey side extension to form garage and change of roof covering from tiles to slate

24/01259/HOU

Location: Plot 1, Land Between Challen Way and Beresford, Arreton Street, Arreton, Isle of Wight

Proposal: Retention and alteration of outbuilding to form summerhouse, shed and log store

**RESOLVED:** The Council made a neutral response to both applications.

### **133/24 Community Speedwatch**

PCSO Justin Keefe and PC Liz Clapp introduced themselves as Police Neighbourhood Officers for the Central Rural area. Inspector Kevin Hercocock had asked them to attend following a letter from the Parish Council responding to a post by HIW Police on Facebook in connection with Community Speedwatch. David Harrison-Wood introduced himself as Co-ordinator for the Arreton Speedwatch Group under which he is responsible for Arreton and Blackwater. There are only 3 volunteers currently which is the minimum number needed to operate a session. More volunteers would be welcome for Blackwater to enable more regular sessions and it would also be beneficial to recruit new volunteers to run sessions in Arreton. A poster advertising for volunteers will be forwarded to the Clerk for use in the December newsletter. The Blackwater Group reports about 1% of vehicles travelling above the speed limit of 40mph although they can only record vehicles over 45mph. Early morning or late evening when the traffic volumes are lower more vehicles are travelling at high speeds. Bob Castle Co-ordinates the Merstone Group and had submitted a written update

for consideration. John Wersby highlighted statistics from the report. Since resuming their 1-hour sessions following road closures, holidays etc. in the last month 45 vehicles have been recorded speeding. In one session 36 out of 68 vehicles recorded were over the speed limit. Vehicles do slow when high viz jackets are evident. Pedestrians are still at risk. There was a recent incident when a pedestrian was clipped by a car door mirror and the driver then stopped to hurl abuse at the pedestrian about the broken mirror. Community Speedwatch volunteers appreciate that police resources are limited but would like to see more enforcement including of penalties for offences by over-width vehicles and physical measures to control the speed of vehicles which could be achieved by alterations to road markings and improved signage. The group would like to see measures put in place now to prevent a tragedy rather than only responding once something catastrophic has happened.

PC Clapp explained that community police have strict rules to follow when carry out speed checks including wearing high vis clothing. There are 2 traffic cars on the island and additional officers are being trained. The Central Rural team have 10 Parish Councils to service and have attended our Parish twice. There is only one recorded minor accident in the area that happened in 2012. Dedicated Traffic Officers can operate in plain clothes, single crewed and use longer range equipment. They are tasked by their inspector based on data but a request could be made to run a session in the Parish. The police had received some advice on Mr Wesby's report on possible traffic measures which they agreed to share with the Parish Council and the Community Speedwatch Group following the meeting. PCSO Keefe also stated he would share contact details for the Traffic Inspector and Advisor.

Cllr Taylor raised concerns that traffic in Bury Lane and East Lane which is already used as a rat-run could be made worse by additional measures on Merstone Lane. Cllr Verey stated that the 40mph speed limit set by the recent TRO for East Lane needs to be reduced to 30mph. A member of the public resident in Arreton was concerned about the high volume of very large heavy lorries and agricultural vehicles, including those going to the Anaerobic Digester Plant, travelling at high speeds through the village up to 10pm.

**RESOLVED:** To write to HIW Police regarding traffic calming measures in Merstone and other concerns raised, and request attendance by dedicated plain clothes traffic officers for enforcement. To contact Wight Energy Ltd and the NFU regarding large lorries and agricultural vehicles speeding through residential areas and country lanes in the Parish.

#### **134/24 Traffic Congestion at the Hare and Hounds Traffic Light Junction**

Councillors had noticed frequent congestion at the Hare and Hounds traffic light junction where the phasing of the traffic lights is very irregular. 3-way temporary lights or no lights at all make the traffic flow better. It was thought that the traffic flow from Lynbottom is monitored but not to the junction from the Arreton direction.

**RESOLVED:** To write to Island Roads and IWC asking for the phasing of the lights to be checked and traffic flows to be monitored with a view to making improvements.

#### **135/24 Solent CO<sup>2</sup> Pipeline Project Consultation**

The deadline for responding to the consultation has been extended to 30<sup>th</sup> September. The Chairman and the clerk will draft an objection for circulation and approval.

#### **136/24 Housing Needs Survey Update**

The deadline of 16<sup>th</sup> September is approaching. A reminder will be sent to residents by email.

#### **137/24 Arreton School Trust**

The Clerk stated that the South Arreton (Rookley) Educational Foundation had met on 19<sup>th</sup> August. 5 Trustees signed a Declaration of Acceptance and Willingness to Act. The IWC as Local Education Authority has been approached to nominate a sixth Trustee in accordance with the Trust Deed. As the Trust has been dormant since 2013 a new mandate is required by COIF followed by a new bank mandate to enable funds to

be distributed. The next meeting will take place on 28<sup>th</sup> October. An update will be provided at the November Parish Council meeting.

**RESOLVED:** To agree that the Clerk will provide administrative support to the Trust within the contracted hours.

#### **138/24 IT Update**

The laptop has received the RAM upgrade. An Approved Registrar has been chosen for providing the gov.uk domain name and the grant application has been successful.

#### **139/24 Burial Matters**

Following the July inspection the Council considered planting new trees in Gore Cemetery. | It is proposed to plant cherry trees in section A to obscure the view of the Anaerobic Digester and new hedging where the holm oak tree has been removed. Quotations for trees and installation will be considered at the October meeting.

#### **140/24 Volunteer Parish Tree Warden**

The Chairman reported that the IW Red Squirrel Forum had started the initiative to recruit volunteer Parish Tree Wardens. The Council supported pursuing this so that a dedicated Tree Warden Volunteer can be sought for Arreton as it ties in with the Biodiversity Policy. The Chairman will attend the next meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> September and report back on next steps.

#### **141/24 UKSA Test the Water Programme**

The Council considered a request from UKSA for funding towards the Primary School Year 6 Test the Water Programme.

**RESOLVED:** To contribute £100 to the UKSA Test the Water Programme.

#### **142/24 To note the date of the next meeting 14<sup>th</sup> October 2024**

#### **143/24 Any other matters raised by Councillors for discussion only**

Under this item and dealt with after 133/24 the Chair provided an opportunity for parents and residents to voice their concerns over the possible closure of Arreton Primary School. The IWC will decide whether to go ahead with a consultation at the Cabinet Meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> September. Parents were shocked that Arreton Primary School had been included. It is part of the community with close links to the Church. The staff are dedicated and provide good pastoral support to children, many of whom are suited to a quiet village school environment. Parents fear that there if the school closes there will be a knock-on effect on other facilities in the village such as the community hall and the cricket club. The proposed use of the site to provide nursery provision and a location for secondary pupils with high anxiety issues was felt to be incompatible and there were concerns about the cost of upgrading facilities to accommodate older children. It was also thought that nurse numbers may drop as a result making this element of the provision unsustainable. Additionally, there were practical transport concerns for very young children travelling from the village and for students from across the island travelling to the re-purposed site and cost concerns if this meant large numbers of taxis would be used. The current timing of the school day and provision of wrap around care is helpful to working parents and this would change if children were allocated places at Barton Primary School in Newport. It was acknowledged that recent reports had not shown high attainment at Arreton but this was also the case at the proposed alternative school.

The Chairman stated that some excellent points had been made. The Parish Council supports the school staying open in the current form and will work with the school, parents and residents to provide a response if the consultation goes ahead. It will be necessary to show unique reasons why Arreton Primary School should remain open. The Chairman thanks everyone for attending.

The Council requested that the Clerk contact IWC Planning Enforcement to enquire if any action is planned on the site old nursery site adjacent to The Fighting Cocks where Cllr Cooper has observed a number of caravans present.

The meeting concluded at 8.56pm.

**Claire Gale, Clerk to the Council**

E-mail: [arretonpc@outlook.com](mailto:arretonpc@outlook.com) Telephone: 07587 008183

13<sup>th</sup> September 2024

..... Chairman

..... Date