

Sparsholt Annual Parish Meeting 20<sup>th</sup> April 2024

**Present**

Cllr Stephen Godfrey, Michael Hodder, Tricia Hodder, Malcolm Hewson, Janet Hewson, Eddie Bush, Marie Bush, Anne Fairey, Rev Kevin Rogers

Sparsholt Parish Council: Cllr Sue Wood, Cllr John Little, Cllr David Brown, Cllr Mark Himbury, Cllr Jon Walthoe.

**Apologies:**

Alistair Barron, Cllr Caroline Horrill, Cllr Jan Warwick, John Wesley, Sally Wesley, Cllr John Cooper, Cllr Nigel Reid, Cllr Lynne Gibson, Nicky Breen (Parish Clerk)

1. **Welcome and Apologies** – the Chair welcomed all to the meeting and noted apologies as above.
2. **County and City Councillor Reports** - Councillor Warwick (HCC) sent a written report which arrived after the meeting and is attached. There were no questions raised to be put to the HCC Councillor. Councillor Horrill's written report was read by Cllr Stephen Godfrey. Discussions took place on several matters eg: A) the closure of the Andover Road to take traffic through the new Kings Barton estate which residents felt was incomprehensible and needed to be rescinded. It makes no sense to route HGV's through a residential estate or the additional traffic that will be generated by the Sir John Moore Barracks proposed development. Cllr Godfrey said that it would take a further planning application at great cost to Cala Homes to change the decision and it was thought that the original application was to make the access to Winchester City safer for residents. B) The Local Plan REG 19 has been delayed because more than 3500 responses to the Reg 18 consultation was taking much longer to process. Questions were raised on where new developments might be sited. Cllr Godfrey spoke about the Harestock/ Littleton Area, Sir John Moore Barracks as the areas closest to Sparsholt. Cllr Wood spoke about the Parish Council asking WCC as part of the process, to ensure that Sparsholt remains a village with no proposed development encroaching onto the green areas surrounding the village. The Parish Council has formally requested a new protected green belt area around the village.
3. **Reports from Village Organisations** – A) Malcom Hewson spoke about the challenging year for his group of volunteers. The latest effort was to repair the very deep potholes in the Car Park. He also reported that there has been an increase in the number of dog walkers and of some professional dog walkers now using the area. This has led to increase deposits of Dog excrement - a dangerous health hazard for walkers and the volunteers who look after the area. A copy of The Ham Green Report is attached. B) The school report was read by Cllr Little A copy of the School Report is attached. C) The Sparsholt College report was read by Cllr Mark Himbury. It was noted that the College will be celebrating its 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year with a number of celebratory events to be held. Cllr Wood is to ask the College if residents can be included in any Open Days that might be planned. A full Sparsholt College Report is attached. D) Cllr Brown read the Shop/Post Office Report which indicated that the Shop is financially stable and recognised the team led by Jeanette and Fiona. The invaluable support of the Volunteers and the wide variety of roles they play ensures the shop is at the heart of the village and is always open to new ideas. This Community facility needs us all to continue to use it to ensure we retain it. A copy of the report is attached.

4. **Annual Parish Council Report** - Cllr Wood then read the Annual Report for the Parish Council, highlighting that planning applications and Highway issues have been the main focus of the past year and Highway road safety, and the playground improvements will be the main focus for the coming year. Tributes were paid to Cllr Osmond and past chairman David Parker who both recently passed away. Both of them were highly valued members of the Community and will be greatly missed by all of us.
5. **Resilience Planning**- Cllr John Little presented the development of the Parish Council Resilience and a Community Emergency Plan providing guidance on how residents prepare for and deal with various emergency situations. A copy of the Report is attached.
6. **The 100 club Charity** – Malcom Hewson promoted the need for more people to join St Stephen’s 100 club to enable the money to be spent on the fabric of the church. The 100 club is a charity with benefits shared between the Parochial Church Council and the Friends of St Stephen’s and has already contributed £17K for the renovation of the Church and the Church Roof.
7. **Reverend Kevin Rogers** joined the meeting and thanked residents for the warm welcome he and his wife Lorna had received since being installed as the new Rector for the Downs Benefice. Kevin’s has a vision for St Stephens Church based on greater interaction between the community and the church. He will be looking at how best to support and enable people to relate and connect with God through every-day life, by getting to know people in the parish, what they bring to the community and what needs they have. He is very enthusiastic for young people to engage with Faith. Kevin was welcomed into our community and we wish him well.
8. **Close of Meeting** -Cllr Wood thanked all those who attended and who had spoken at the meeting.