

# MILFORD-ON-SEA PARISH COUNCIL

The Old Clock House ~ 22 High Street ~ Milford-on-Sea ~ Hampshire ~ SO41 0QD



## **PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

**28th March 2011**

Minutes of the **280th** meeting of the Parish Council held **Monday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2011** in the Village Hall at 6.30 p.m.

### MEMBERS

Mr. Julian Davis	p	Mr. Bob Bishop	p	Mr. Brian Giles	p
Mrs. Susan Whitlock	p	Mr. Paul Noble		Mr Jim Read	
Mrs. Maureen West	p	Mr. Peter Jennions		Mr. Mark Owen	p
Mr David High	p	Mr Gary Watkins		Mrs Sophie Beeton	

### IN ATTENDANCE

District Cllrs. Mel Kendal and Michael Pemberton

County Cllr. Alan Rice

Geoffrey Hinds (Spokesman on HSBC Closure), Anne Jenks (Chairman of MEG), Amanda Tanner, Mike Halliwell, Dianna Goodwin, Helen Lister, Nicki & Lionel (Hardware + Pet Shop + B & B) + 3 Residents, Chris March (A&T Reporter) & Parish Clerk

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** Cllr Julian Davis declared a Personal interest in matters relating to Youth Cricket and Football.

County Cllr. Alan Rice asked if he could make a grant presentation from Hampshire County Council on behalf of the Hampshire Playing Fields Association of £500 to the Milford-on-Sea Youth Football Club. Cllr. Davis in his capacity of President of the Youth Football Club accepted the grant on behalf of the Club and asked Cllr Rice to thank the HPFA for the grant. The Chairman said that next season the Club will have teams from Under 6's through to senior level.

2. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** Several residents spoke on the announcement of the closure of the HSBC bank (see item 5 below).
3. **APOLOGIES** Cllrs. Read and Jennions (Holiday), Cllr Beeton (unwell), Cllrs Noble and Watkins (working).

With the agreement of the members, the Chairman brought forward Item 5)

### 5. **PROPOSED CLOSURE OF THE MILFORD-ON-SEA HSBC BANK**

The Chairman said that the Parish Council had invited Mr Julian Collinson – HSBC Regional Services Manager to attend the meeting, but this invitation had been declined.

The Chairman invited resident Mr Geoffrey Hinds to speak about the proposed closure of the HSBC bank. Mr Hinds said that a number of steps were being taken in an effort to persuade the HSBC to rethink their closure programme. A petition with approximately 1,000 signatures on it is growing daily and will be presented to the HSBC when they next meet. Mr Hinds said that both local and national media have been covering the closure and that an initial meeting had taken place with the HSBC Regional Manager at which they were pressing for a formal meeting with senior management. Mr Hinds said that residents wished the bank to remain open and that maybe a compromise solution could be found, saying that the bank should consider a three-day week or an adjustment of hours. Mr Hinds concluded by saying that it was extremely important for businesses, residents and visitors to have an ATM machine and a cash deposit box located in the village. It was noted that MP Desmond Swayne has been invited to help keep the bank open and he had agreed to talk to HSBC decision makers at the earliest opportunity. Mr Hinds said that he also wished to elicit the support of the Parish Council. The Chairman thanked Mr Hinds for his statement and invited other residents to speak.

It was suggested by a non-resident that it could be possible that the village could open its own community bank and that grant money is sometimes available to assist with such projects. The following concerns and comments were also raised:

- That the Milford-on-Sea branch had only been allocated its own Sort Code about two years ago and that it was possible that comparisons within the branch had been incorrectly assessed
- That residents and businesses be encouraged to open a further 1,000 new accounts
- That people signing on to internet and telephone banking had helped create the closure
- That other High Street banks be invited to take over the HSBC bank
- That many Clubs and Associations bank with the HSBC
- It was noted that the HSBC had not been one of the national banks to receive financial support from the government during the recent financial crisis and was therefore responsible only to its stakeholders
- That the village forms a limited company to run an independent banking operation, primarily for the benefits of residents and traders. (A copy of this proposal was handed to the Clerk for information).
- That a shopkeeper had invited the HSBC to visit Milford-on-Sea with a view to finding a suitable position to relocate an ATM and that this meeting would take place between the HSBC and the shopkeeper.

The Chairman thanked residents for their contribution towards the debate and invited Councillors to give their views.

- Cllr Giles read a personal statement about the closure and suggested that local shopkeepers and businesses help identify a new location for an ATM
- Cllr West reminded members that a resident had lost a substantial sum of money (£42k) due to irregularities at the branch and that this sum might not have been taken into the financial conclusions arrived at by the bank, which determined its closure
- Cllr Kendal said that he had signed the petition, but was concerned about how the problem was locally addressed. Cllr Kendal said that the HSBC currently employ 20,000 in the UK and that their head office was in London, but could be relocated to anywhere in the world. Cllr Kendal said that the Parish Council should act positively with regard to the repositioning of the ATM and for deposits to be made. Cllr Kendal suggested that as we have a Co-op shop in the village it might be appropriate to have a Co-op Bank, which is owned by its members. It was noted that the HSBC has a lease through till 2034.
- Cllr High suggested that HSBC shareholders are asked to force an Extraordinary General Meeting, invite Caroline Brown to take up the case and bring to the attention of the national media, not to underestimate 'people-power' in closures which affect the community and ask for evidence from the HSBC as to why they felt it necessary to close this particular branch
- Cllr Davis suggested that contact be made with all other banks to enquire whether they would be interested in taking over the branch, that the community and businesses are supported in trying to secure both an ATM and a cash deposit facility in the village for businesses.
- Cllr Bishop suggested that a dialogue be opened with the HSBC to find out how many more accounts the HSBC need to warrant keeping the branch open and to encourage more residents and businesses to open accounts
- The Clerk was asked to liaise with Mark at the newsagents to see if it was possible to meet with him and the HSBC representative on Wednesday to select a suitable site for an ATM.

As there were still uncertainties about banking provision in the village, no decisions were taken at this meeting. The salient points will be taken forward and placed onto the next F & GP agenda for formal resolution as to the action to be taken by the Council to help address local banking concerns.

The Chairman thanked residents for attending the meeting and for bringing their concerns to the Parish Council. The majority of residents and shopkeepers departed the meeting at 7.15pm.

#### **4. SITES & DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT DPD**

It was noted that Dr T Langford's email communications regarding the above had been dealt with in full and that Dr Langford had been invited to attend tonight's meeting to further outline his earlier concerns. Unfortunately, Dr Langford had a prior commitment so sent his apologies.

Copies of the Parish Councils response to NFDC's Public Consultation were distributed to the Press and members.

Cllr Bishop said that there were still several concerns regarding the provision of affordable housing and that there appeared to be a lack of clarity in the protection of each properties long-term security as affordable housing for local people in perpetuity. The Clerk said that a meeting with senior NFDC officers was being arranged at the earliest opportunity and that District Cllr. Pemberton was assisting the Clerk in bringing the appropriate personnel together. The Clerk said that the following officers were being invited; Louise Evans – NFDC Principal Policy Planner, Chris Elliott –

NFDC Head of Planning, Greg Spawton – NFDC Housing Needs Manager, Javed Ditta – NFDC Housing Development Officer, Chris Buchan-Hepburn Development Manager – Hyde Housing Association and a representative from the National Housing Federation’s Rural Housing Alliance who represents 1,200 independent, not-for-profit housing associations in England.

The Clerk reported that a further six-week public consultation period would be held towards the end of 2011 once NFDC had taken into consideration the views and concerns from the current consultation.

All Parish Councillors will be invited to attend the parish office working group meeting with the above officials.

#### 6. **MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD 14TH FEBRUARY 2011**

Cllr Bishop proposed that the minutes be adopted. Cllr Giles seconded this proposal.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held 14th February 2011 were a true record of the meeting and were duly approved by the members and signed by the Chairman.

#### 7. **COMMITTEE & OTHER REPORTS**

##### a) **Finance & General Purpose Committee Meeting held 7th March 2011**

Cllr Bishop dealt with these minutes. Cllr Bishop said that several important items were discussed at the meeting, including the Sites & Development Management DPD, Sewerage infrastructure, Rook activity in the Lower Pleasure Grounds and Studland Common grazing, which have all been documented in detail in the minutes. There were no questions.

##### b) **Planning Committee Meetings held 31st January & 21st February 2011**

Cllr Giles dealt with these minutes, which had both been adopted. There were no questions.

The Chairman thanked Cllrs Bishop and Giles for their committee reports.

#### 8. **COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORTS**

The Chairman invited Cllr Michael Pemberton to give his report. Cllr Pemberton said that he was assisting in setting up a suitable meeting between NFDC and the Parish Council to discuss affordable housing provision.

Cllr Kendal said that he had noted that the Parish Council no longer wanted the 20mph speed restriction for the village centre and that there would be no money to commute to the B3058 traffic calming scheme (Raised tables at Church Hill and at the Zebra Crossing). Cllr Kendal said that the community, via the Parish Vision 2020 Action Plan, had instigated this project. Cllr Kendal said that when the last speed checks were carried out, the average speed through the village was 24mph and that with the additional 20mph signage; it was reasonable to assume that speeds could be reduced by a further 2 – 3 mph. Cllr Kendal said that the funds for the village centre traffic-calming scheme had been spent, except for about £2,000, which had been earmarked for the new 20mph signage, which would no longer be required. Cllr Kendal indicated that the cost to provide ‘raised-tables’ at Church Hill and the Zebra Crossing would cost ten’s of thousands of pounds to install and that funds for such a scheme would have to come through developers contributions over a long period of time.

Cllr West expressed her disappointment that the 20mph speed restrictions would not apply through the village centre as she had spent many months working with the Parish Vision 2020 Steering committee who had collated the findings of the community before publishing the final Action Plan. Cllr West said that 80% (of 695) respondents supported a 20mph speed restriction through the High Street.

#### 8. **PROJECT LEADER/REPRESENTATIVE/CLERK REPORTS AND UPDATES**

**SCHOOL PROJECTS** Cllr Davis said that the School were pressing for ‘white-lining’ areas of Manor Road to help calm traffic. NFDC – Principal Engineer has requested a copy of the School Travel Plan, which the Clerk is trying to obtain so that a traffic-calming scheme can be considered for a future programme.

**EVERTON JUNCTION Traffic Light solution:** The Clerk reported that he had been asked by NFDC for the Parish Council to prioritise outstanding traffic calming schemes at Everton Junction (intelligent traffic lights), Manor Road (Roundabout - MoS1 Site) and Raised-tables at Church Hill and Zebra Crossing. The Clerk said that he would include this as a formal item on the next F & GP agenda.

**QUALITY COUNCIL STATUS:** Cllr Davis asked that this item be placed onto the next F & GP committee agenda.

**MILFORD COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP:** Cllr Bishop said that Penny Velander – NFDC Community Planning Officer was leaving the District Council at the end of March and that part of her role would be allocated to another officer. Penny said that funds had been allocated to New Milton Town Partnership to undertake a ‘refresh’ of their Action Plan and invited the MCP to bid for funds towards their own refresh and paying a small bursary to an Administrator for the Partnership. Keith Metcalf on behalf of the Milford Community Partnership said that he had placed a bid for £2,000 for these funds. Cllr Bishop said that the new Parish Council members might want to review the joint partnership arrangement with the MCP. Cllr Owen suggested that the Partnership might want to consider how to engage more effectively with certain sections of the community. Noted.

**TOURISM:** Cllr Bishop said that the Tourism Group had recently met in The Marine. The meeting was well attended and a further pre-season meeting would be organised.

**TRADES AND BUSINESSES:** It was reported that the ‘Food Week’ project was gathering pace and that Piccolo Mondo had been taken over by new proprietors.

**COASTAL PROTECTION:** Cllr Whitlock expressed concern regarding a huge drop in the level of the beach in front of beach-huts that had been created by natural sea processes in the area of the Ice Cream café at Hordle Cliff. Steve Cook – NFDC Coastal Protection officer has said that there are no funds currently available to build up the drop as further wave action might immediately remove any replaced materials. The Clerk was asked to further investigate this concern.

**SEWERAGE INFRASTRUCTURE:** Cllr Giles was concerned that the replacement system will not address the problems of properties in Sea Road and Gillingham Road. It was noted that the latest tests being carried out by Southern Water will address all of the outstanding concerns and that Sturt Pond local nature reserve and the properties at Sea Road and Gillingham Road are at the lowest point of the present system. Once the new tests have been completed a public meeting will be called to enable Southern Water to show the community what was envisaged.

**HEALTH:** Cllr Giles reported that the hospital website was now up to date. Cllr West praised the people involved in developing the community use of the old War Memorial Hospital, where the facility is now extremely well used. Noted

**SPORT:** It was reported that the draft bowls lease had been received and that a working group meeting will review the draft before the next F & GP meeting.

**YOUTH:** Cllr Owen said that the work of the Youth Group was now under the wing of the VCCC. Cllr Owen said that the VCCC wished to make a bid for funding from the 2010/11 budget. An item will be placed onto the next F & GP committee agenda for discussion. Cllr Whitlock said that the Youth Club would recommence on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> April.

**STUDLAND COMMON GRAZING PROJECT:** Cllr Bishop suggested that the date set for the Public Open meeting (Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> May at 7.30pm in the Community Centre) would coincide with the Council elections and wondered whether it would be better to move the date back. The Clerk said that it would be possible, but had set the date based on the availability of New Forest Land Advice Service (who would make the presentation) and the availability of the Community Centre for the presentation. The Clerk also suggested that, as residents would be out in the village to vote it was possible that this might encourage more residents to also attend the presentation. Following discussion, it was agreed that the date (5<sup>th</sup> May) for the presentation would be suitable.

**NEWSLETTER:** The Clerk reminded members that if they had anything that they wanted included in the next issue of the Village Voice, it was important to let him have the text by Noon Friday 8<sup>th</sup> April. The Clerk said that the following items would be included: Closure of the HSBC, Sewerage Infrastructure, Sites & Development Management response, Studland Grazing Project and the Parish Council elections.

## **10. CORRESPONDENCE:**

Letter 14.03.11 from the President of the Bowling Club regarding the proposed Putting Green and long-term lease.

## **11. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION**

The Clerk reminded everyone that if they were standing for the 2011-2015 elections they would need to submit their nomination papers directly to NFDC at Appletree Court by Noon on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2011.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and **CLOSED** the meeting at 8.10 pm

Chairman

Date:.....