

Boldre Parish Council - Annual Assembly held on 11th April 2022

The following parishioners attended this Annual Assembly either in person or via Zoom technology:

Roger Bell, Russell Bowman, Tim Cockram, Simon Derrick, Andrew Farr, Anthony Graham, James Hoare, Pat Langfelder, Pat Le Marchant, Maggie Macro, Frances Mason, Judy Uren and Christine Wilson.

Boldre Parish Council Members present were:

Oliver Moore, Alison Bolton, Jacqui England, Patrick Kempe, Lester Mortimer, Jo Humphreys, Sherwin Small, Vincent Slattery and Eileen Morton.

Plus Peter Lock (Parish Clerk)

Introduction

Parish Council Chairman Oliver Moore opened the meeting welcoming everyone to this year's Parish Assembly. His report is shown below:

The minutes of the last Annual Assembly, which was held on 4th May 2021 using Zoom technology due to the Covid pandemic were approved by the Parish Council at a meeting shortly after the previous Assembly in 2019. They are available on the Boldre Parish website for reference.

Chairman's Report for 2021-22

Hello everyone, and welcome to the Boldre Parish Assembly 2022.

I'm glad to see you all here, both in person and virtually. BPC has continued to offer both in person and remote options for Parishioners to attend BPC meetings, working within the constraints of the published Government guidance on COVID. I appreciate the steps that people have accommodated at our meetings in order to reduce risk around COVID which appears to be with us for the long run.

In the last year we have successfully brought the Council back to full strength. I would like to welcome Eileen Morton to the council. She has already made a great contribution, leading BPC planning of the Platinum Jubilee event and contributing across a range of subjects, in particular Highways.

In addition to the day-to-day activities the Parish Council carries out such as ensuring that community facilities are maintained, reviewing planning documents and working with other bodies, the council tries to make longer term improvements for the community. In the past year, the key focus for the Parish Council has been developing the recreation ground, primarily to facilitate the relocation of Pilley Community Stores.

Our partnership with Lymington Sprites continues to go from strength to strength, with the contract for pitch usage renewed for another year. We have also worked very hard to minimise match day traffic disruption, working in conjunction with Boldre War memorial Hall to use their car park when the hall is not in use. We have also developed a fall-back plan to work with William Gilpin to share their parking when other facilities are not available. As always, our groundsman Adrian Drodge has done an excellent job in keeping the facilities in good order. Thanks also to the amenities group and the Clerk for all their efforts in making this happen.

BPC has continued the delivery of the new play area, working in conjunction with BWMH. Councillors, along with several local volunteers removed the existing play area, and had it recycled. This, along with community contributions of scrap metal resulted in ~£200 being raised towards the play area. With the help of several local business, we also managed to reinstate one of the swings on a temporary basis to provide some play equipment during the hall construction.

As part of this project, the proposed play area was toured around the Pylewell and William Gilpin fetes, as well as being advertised through our website and social media. BPC have been trying hard to keep the community engaged in this project and get feedback on the works we are doing. We have selected the vendor that received the most positive feedback from our shortlisted suppliers. We have worked with the hall, and Pilley Community Shop Ltd to ensure that the equipment will be sited with consideration for all users, whilst providing a great experience for the children using it.

Looking forward to the next 12 months, I would like to start by mentioning the precept that forms part of the council tax. The precept for next year has been set at £29,320. This is approximately 60 pence per week for a Band D home (the middle band) and is included in the total council tax each of us bears.

For this the Council runs and maintains the recreation ground, the seats across the Parish and the greens in Boldre & Portmore. It helps with funding for grants to applicants representing local organisations or wider organisations which bring benefit to the Parish. In the financial year 21/22, BPC did not increase the precept but with increased inflation pressure, for financial year 22/23 the precept has been increased slightly from the 21/22 budget at around 3%.

A continuing factor in the increase is a general increase in costs, both in terms of the contractors we use and the safety and other regulatory requirements the council has to meet in order to provide safe facilities for use. We have also had to make repairs to play equipment that we are retaining, some of which required maintenance to ensure their safe operation. The bus shelter in Norley Wood also requires maintenance in the coming

financial year to repair its failing roof. Continuing to maintain and develop the recreation facilities in the village remain a major objective of the Council and we hope to continue in this direction.

Over the last year we have heard very clearly from a number of community groups about issues with traffic volumes, speeding and the status of the highway surface. Though the Council has continued to report potholes and write to landowners to address hedge encroachment, we understand that more is needed. To this effect, we are producing a Highway strategy to provide clarity on:

- How BPC will work with the community groups to address Highways concerns
- Clear guidance on the information BPC looks for around highways, and the type of solutions to be considered
- How Parishioners can help by having clear statements on responsibilities for Highways maintenance, and how to report issues.

The Clerk will be presenting an overview of the first draft of this document today, which will be reviewed by BPC and ultimately shared with local community groups for their input before finalizing it. BPC has also heard requests from Parishioners around the need for an emergency plan, following the recent power outages in the Parish. BPC will look to progress this, working with residents over the coming year.

With the Queens Platinum jubilee being held this year, the Council hopes to coordinate a celebratory event, and is actively working with a range of community groups and schools across the Parish. We hope to finalise the details by the end of April, targeting an event on June 2nd.

The final major project that BPC will be taking on this year is developing the new play area. We are currently working to develop wild play areas, using earth taken from the Hall build to shape interesting features with the play area to supplement the formal play equipment. We have quotes in for new play equipment at ~£50,000 with further funding needed for groundworks and are currently seeking funding from a range of sources. If you know anyone who would be interested in contributing through grants, sponsorship or other means we would love to hear from you.

In addition to these specific projects, the Council will continue to work with the community on other activities, maintaining the community facilities and supporting community interests. I would welcome any questions you have.

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The Parish Clerk then outlined a proposed Highways Strategy for Boldre Parish as a Discussion DRAFT using the following slides:

Key Issues - Overall Parish problems

- Traffic volumes
- Routes used by through traffic
- Speed
- Road Surfaces and Defects
- Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs)
- Highway Encroachment (hedges & trees)

Current Reporting & Actions

- Use the Hampshire County Council (HCC) website or telephone
- The Hampshire Highways section are our Highways Authority
- Parishioners and/or Councillors can action such reporting

Future Strategy and Improvements

- Re-establish reporting and problem escalation with H.Highways
- Work as a community
- Establish Community Groups including BPC Councillor(s)
- Six-monthly open surgery including our HCC County Councillor

Specific Areas of Improvement include:

- Bull Hill Cross-roads
- Tanners Lane
- School Safety issues
- Public (and school) Transport

In conclusion, Cllr Moore closed the meeting at 18:50

Signed.....

Date.....

Cllr Oliver Moore Chairman, Boldre Parish Council