

## **FOUR MARKS PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING Held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> April, commencing at 7.30pm At the Village Hall, Four Marks**

**Hosted by: Cllr Janet Foster, Chairman**

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The Annual Parish Meeting was called by the Chairman and was held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2019 commencing at 7.30pm.

Cllr Janet Foster opened the meeting by welcoming all attendees and introduced Jamie Gargett and Maria Stewart from EHDC's Arboriculture department.

Mr Gargett delivered an informative and interactive presentation on 'Trees, Tree Preservation Orders and the Law'.

The presentation, which is available from the Parish Office upon request, detailed the procedure on preserving trees, the criteria required and the concerns people have with trees and whether they are an inconvenience or notifiable nuisance, and action that can be action against those who remove, or carry out works to, trees awarded protection.

The presentation prompted several questions, a selection of which are below:

- Q1. Is it possible within the management of a group or woodland awarded protection to remove trees.  
A. Good woodland management may require the removal of some trees, dependent upon their life stage and ground conditions and whether they are suppressing others, some removal may be needed to give space to allow others to flourish.
- Q2. Can hedges be awarded protection?  
A. Sadly cannot, as yet, hedgerows cannot be TPO'd, they can be protected by planning conditions if at risk by development. This would be monitored by the planning compliance team, rather than tree officers. However, there is currently a proposal contained within the Local Plan review to protect existing hedgerows where possible in a bid to protect and enhanced rural areas.
- Q3. If a tree in a garden overhangs a public highway, whose responsibility is it to ensure there is adequate clearance for highway users.  
A. It is the owner of the tree's responsibility.
- Q4. Can a tree be awarded protection if it is a home to wildlife  
A. No, sadly, protection of wildlife is not one of the criteria for awarding a TPO.

Finishing off the presentation, Mr Gargett advised of a new initiative of recruiting locally based tree wardens to monitor trees within the parishes, and if anyone was interested to contact either the Parish Council, District Councillor or EHDC directly.

Mr Gargett and Ms Stewart were thanked, and the Chairman moved on to the next item of business.

### **FOUR MARKS COMMUNITY AWARD**

Last year the Community Award initiative was introduced by the Chairman to publicly recognise endeavour and achievement within the community, and last year's well deserved recipient was Teresa Hammond.

This year's two nominations stood out, both candidates having very different roles within the community:

The two nominees shortlisted for this year's award, in alphabetical order were:

### **Anna Parrett**

Even those who don't currently have children at Four Marks Primary School will know or at least heard of the daily endeavours of Anna.

The nominations for Anna were all very similarly worded;

- She is out in all weathers with a cheery hello and beaming smile
- She clears the drains and sweeps away standing water when the junction floods;
- She grits the pavement and roads around the school in icy conditions
- She posts warnings on social media of inclement conditions.
- She has an endless supply of end of term treats for the children and dogs!
- She keeps the area clear of rubbish
- At Christmas she provided a Community Christmas tree for children to hang their decorations on
- Her dedication to all the community goes as far as rescuing stranded motorists on the A31
- She has a heart of gold
- She regularly goes above and beyond and even further than that

### **Diana Tennyson**

Diana has been nominated for her outstanding contribution and exceptional commitment in protecting wildlife and our natural environment.

- She manages the wildlife conservation and support group
- She contributed significantly to the Neighbourhood Plan to ensure that wildlife is protected whilst the village is under pressure from developers.
- Her determination and dealings with local developers has ensured that the wildlife remains protected.
- She enjoys passing on her knowledge by producing a monthly newsletter, gives talks and leads village walks for children at the school.
- She helps maintain verges around the villages containing endangered plants, like orchids and is a strong supporter of keeping the village trees.
- She has supported the parish council in trying to keep the village a village
- The village should be very grateful that we have such a pro-active villager living in our community.

Two very different but very worthy nominees and both were thanked by all attendees for their outstanding contributions.

However, there can be only one winner, and this year the Parish Council presented the Four Marks Community Award for 2019 to Anna Parrett.

Also wanting to recognise the huge contribution that Diana makes to the community, she was presented with a highly commended certificate

The formal meeting then commenced.

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## **AGENDA**

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

An apology for absence was received from:

#### **PRESENT:**

##### **Chairman:**

Cllr Janet Foster

##### **Parish Councillors:**

John Davis, John Hammond, Anne Tomlinson, Simon Thomas, Neil Bonter, Shaun McCarthy

##### **District Councillors:**

Ingrid Thomas, Deborah Jackson

##### **County Councillor:**

Mark Kemp Gee

##### **Clerk/RFO:**

Sarah Goudie

##### **Members of the public:**

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### **2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL PARISH MEETING, HELD ON 11<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2018, AND ANY MATTERS ARISING:**

The Minutes were circulated to all Parish Councillors following the above meeting and it was agreed at the Parish Council meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2018, Minute 18.68, to accept them in principle. It was concluded that they were a true reflection of the meeting, and subsequently adopted as read. There were no matters arising.

### 3. PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMANS REPORT – CLLR JANET FOSTER

In my fourth year as chairman I would like to thank all councillors for giving their time with no monetary reward and working hard in helping to make Four Marks a better place. I would also like to thank Sarah Goudie, now with the title of Executive Officer which properly reflects her role and the many diverse duties she carries out. Sarah works diligently and patiently with all the demands from the public, official authorities and councillors.

As our community continues to grow, we increased the parish precept this year to £113,200 a 4.9% increase. This is to enable us to continue to carry out the services that we believe you want in Four Marks.

The following are some examples of what we have done over the past year:

- Grounds maintenance contracts for all our open spaces including the recreation ground, cemetery and Swelling Hill pond with grass cutting, bin emptying, and tidying.
- Carried out tree maintenance at Lymington Green, the recreation ground, Swelling Hill and the wildlife corridors.
- Maintenance of our property the Benians Pavilion.
- Kept our rights of way network free of obstructions.
- Continued to sponsor the Speed Watch and Street Watch teams and their volunteers who help create a safer community.
- Supported a variety of local charities and services.
- Organised the previously successful Four Marks 10K and shorter fun runs which will take place again this year on 7<sup>th</sup> July.
- Entered the Fullers Village of the Year and gained 4 awards.
- Running the Community Award.

In planning and new developments we:

- Made comments on all planning applications using the EHDC Joint Core Strategy, Medstead and Four Marks Neighbourhood Plan and Village Design Statement in our parish and in the neighbouring parishes when applicable. Working closely with Medstead Parish Council, to ensure that we have a greater voice regarding planning issues that challenge our communities.
- Supported the liaison meetings of the new developments just north of the railway line.
- Gave comments on the draft EHDC local plan.

From the developer contributions totalling £6,737 we have carried out the following:

- Replaced the Oak Green Parade notice board jointly with Medstead PC.
- Replaced the fencing at Lymington Green with locally sourced chestnut wood.
- New cemetery gates.

With grants from our County Councillor and District Councillor:

- Purchased a new HCC flag (CC).
- Contribution towards some footpath clearance work.
- Purchase of the Tommy silhouettes.
- Maintenance and upgrade of the Oak Green Clock.

Recognising that we need more community facilities we held a consultation for all residents to “have their say” about a community building with the preferred choice of a new building and a close second of refurbishing the current Village hall. The new Parish Council in May will now *decide whether to progress* the preferred choice.

During 2018 / 2019 we have given comments on various documents. Particularly on the draft EHDC local plan; also HCC communications; CPRE (Campaign for the protection of Rural England); Four Marks School car parking and classroom extension plans and HCC highways on local projects.

The Parish office moved back into Four Marks, into our own building the Benians Pavilion, after a number of years in Medstead. It is now more accessible to residents,

All current Councillors will retire and eight have offered themselves for re-election. A full complement of 10 Councillors have been duly elected without a contest for the next 4 year term. However, on May 2 there will be an election for three District Councillors to cover Four Marks, Medstead and Chawton.

Please remember that residents can speak at the beginning of all our meetings during the "open session". All meeting dates are published on our website, notice boards & social media. Contact details can also be found in the Four Marks Village News.

#### **4. PARISH COUNCIL FINANCIAL REPORT – SARAH GOUDIE, EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

In accordance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England, the Parish Council accounts are audited each year by an independent internal auditor, currently Auditing Solutions Limited.

An Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) will be prepared by the Responsible Financial Officer (the Clerk) for the internal auditor to sign following completion of audit. The AGAR will then be approved by the Parish Council and signed by the Chairman for submission to the external auditors. PKF Littlejohn LLP.

The external auditor compares the financial year's accounts with the previous year's accounts and can, if necessary, carry out further audit should they so wish.

The AGAR will be returned, confirmed and signed by the external auditor and displayed for 21 days on our notice boards together with a notice advising that anyone can request to see the documents in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

The Annual Parish Meeting has historically been the forum for presenting the previous two year's audited accounts, and the provisional year end results for the recently completed financial year. As the financial accounts are available on the website and upon request, for this meeting the provisional accounts for the recently completed financial year (year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019) will be presented with the previous financial year's results for comparison. Following last year, a simplified version has been produced, more detail will be available in the final accounts.

Please note that the figures for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 are **provisional**, they have not yet been reconciled against the bank statements or audited, and therefore are subject to change.

A budget for the following financial year is prepared in November each year so that the Parish Council can project the spending requirements and agree an appropriate Precept amount to be requested through the Council Tax by EHDC.

The Accounts are attached as Appendix 1.

#### **5. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – DIST. CLLR INGRID THOMAS**

The last year appears to have been spent primarily attending meetings; both local Parish Councils, at District and various developer liaison meetings.

I have spent a good deal of time working with officers and fellow Councillors on the Local Plan review and have been instrumental in ensuring that there are no proposed large building sites within the ward until 2032, and that was added to appease the Inspector.

Together with Parish Council representatives, I have been working closely with HCC on local road safety issues, including persevering to get the Brislands Lane junction reverted back, and up and coming projects including a new pedestrian crossing at Lymington Bottom, the widening of the Boyneswood Road junction and a pedestrian bridge over the railway.

EHDC are working on a new strategy concerning welfare, with a £1m fund towards welfare care.

Just a reminder that the Ward will have 3 District Councillors following the elections in May, therefore you now have 3 votes, and hopefully the new team of 3 will work well together to support you all.

### **DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – DIST. CLLR DEBORAH JACKSON**

The biggest project over the last year has been developing local plan.

All the large sites are now completed or in the latter stages, with just snagging issues, but the new residents are already becoming part of the local community.

As Cllr Thomas mentioned, the outstanding projects as a result of the recent developments, are a new pedestrian crossing at Lymington Bottom and pedestrian bridge over the railway on Boyneswood Road, which is long overdue, and I am sure that local residents will not let this be forgotten.

The new traffic restrictions at the school will, hopefully, go some way to alleviate the parking issues particularly in light of the proposed expansion plans.

Still to be completed is the completion of the green infrastructure identified in the Neighbourhood Plan with the provision of a safe pedestrian link between Four Marks and Medstead, which has been currently halted as permission has not been obtained from the landowner.

I have had more requests than funds available this year but have provided grants for the holiday at home scheme for COGS, replacement marquee for Medstead Parish Council, safety clothing for Speedwatch, Tommy silhouettes for the WW1 celebrations, community events, the Four Marks village gateway project and a storage shed for the scouts.

### **6. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – CLLR MARK KEMP-GEE**

This time last year I talked briefly about finance. As we now know County Council Tax is up 3% for the municipal year, EHDC's share is unchanged but the police share has gone up by 13%, making 20% over the last 2 years and we are promised 130 more front line police!

As we know, 2019/20 marks the end of Hampshire's RSG from central government – it was some £400 million in 2010. So apart from odd specific grants engendered to do the government's bidding or help where we are most severely stretched like adult and children's social care and roads, of course, Hampshire is becoming mostly self-financing. Approximately 5% of our total tax is raised and spent locally compared to 50% in the USA, Canada and France. So we send 95% of taxes up to London and get virtually nothing back except from the annual £1 billion Schools Budget which we administer and manage on behalf of central government. No wonder, with Central Government in a state of total sclerosis on all matters apart from, or should I say, including Brexit, the demand for massively increased devolution for Hampshire becomes stronger by the day. Our GDP is greater than Wales, which is now collecting all central and local taxes from this April onwards, like Scotland. Also, interestingly, IHT collected from the GU postcode is now greater than Wales and Northern Ireland combined! As it is, our schools are some of the best in England, with 92% of school children getting first choice placements despite numbers going up by around 8% per annum. Meanwhile we have the second lowest council tax in England. Our mantra at County is originality, technical advance, efficiency and pragmatism and I think without being complacent, we continue in that vein despite immense financial pressures.

Also, we are substantial investors in infrastructure such as new roads, broadband and new and expanded schools in particular. We are also now taking responsibility for certain substantial housebuilding projects such as Manydown in Basingstoke. Our capital projects programme currently stands at over £800 million.

## FOUR MARKS MATTERS

It's been quite a busy year as far as my inter-relationship with the village is concerned.

The main area of engagement has been Highways and Traffic Calming, but I have also been able to help with my devolved budget with the new Four Marks flag which I am looking forward to seeing, and other more mundane matters.

As has been widely publicised, we are beginning to make some progress with three priorities for improving matters for pedestrians at Lymington Bottom crossroads and Boyneswood Road bridge, together with the bell mouth at the Boyneswood Road/A31 junction. HCC has cooperated fully with the new parking arrangements at the school and although our highways budgets remain stretched, it was good to see the resurfacing and new drains through the centre of the village on the A31.

I look forward to continuing my close engagement with the Parish in the years ahead.

Mark Kemp-Gee, Councillor, Alton Rural Division, Hampshire County Council.

## 7. QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR.

For Cllr Kemp Gee;

Q. To alleviate the lengthy waiting times to turn right from Lapwing Way in peak times, could a roundabout be implemented?

A. Whilst the problems are noted, it would be unlikely, however with the new proposed crossing it may be possible to enable a timing mechanism to ensure continual breaks in traffic to allow traffic to enter the A31 from the side roads.

Q. Is there anything that can be done to alleviate the continual flooding at Tawny Grove and Vectis Close, and now Telegraph Lane.

A. Telegraph Lane is being addressed, Tawny Grove, the drains were recently de-silted, and appears to have alleviated the problem. Vectis Close will be investigated.

For Cllr Jackson

Q. Who is responsible for rectifying road subsidence by the entrance to the Bellway development, where clearly the damage has been done by contract vehicles.

A. The damage will be assessed at the end of the development, and the developer will be required to make good any damage caused, through their S106 agreement or S.278 works as appropriate.

General questions.

Q. The population of Four Marks has increased dramatically, do we know the current population statistics?

A. The boundaries commission will have the current populations numbers.

Q. Who is responsible for the open space area at the entrance of Kingswood Rise, one area keeps being left and not included in maintenance.

A. It was confirmed that all open space areas in Kingswood Rise were the responsibility of EHDC.

Q. With reference to the proposed expansion of the school, there is a proposal to improve the parking provision in Gradwell Lane, however it is unclear how or by how much, is there any other information?

A. The Parish Council have responded to the application raising serious concerns that the parking issues have not been appropriately addressed and it is hoped that clearer proposals will be forthcoming prior to any work being approved or started.

Q. As there appears to be a high amount held in reserves, why is it necessary to increase the precept? There needs to be more detail to show what the reserves are for.

A. The Council needs to ensure that it has a minimum of six month's expenditure in reserves, but also to ensure that increase in costs in services are covered. Current projects are detailed in the formal accounts, yet to be audited. Further consideration on changing the information presented at this meeting will be discussed at a future Finance meeting.

Q. Is the budget available for viewing?

A. The accounts are available on the website, budget meetings are held in November.

**Clr Foster thanked all the presenters and members of the public who attended and closed the meeting at 9.40 pm.**

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**APPENDIX 1**



**FOUR MARKS PARISH COUNCIL**

**FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 10<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2019**

**PROVISIONAL RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS SUMMARY**

<b>DETAIL</b>	<b>Year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 £</b>	<b>Year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 £</b>
<b>Opening Balance</b>	<b>129,193</b>	<b>162,359</b>
Add Total Receipts	298,264	150,859
<b>S/T</b>	<b>427,457</b>	<b>313,218</b>
Less Total Payments	265,098	128,277
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>162,359</b>	<b>184,941</b>
<b>Cumulative Funds represented by:</b>		
TSB Bank plc – old a/c	45,849	0
TSB Deposit a/c	78,806	806
CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund	0	78,344
Benians Trust Fund – NS&I	37,704	37,977
Unity Trust Bank	0	67,814
<b>Total</b>	<b>162,359</b>	<b>184,941</b>
<b>Reserve Balances represented by:</b>		
Current Year Fund	33,166	22,582
General Reserves	50,108	76,641
Earmarked Reserves	79,085	85,718
<b>Total</b>	<b>162,359</b>	<b>184,941</b>

**Note 1.** Both the current and deposit accounts were moved from TSB within this financial year to comply with the Parish Council's investment strategy, in a bid to minimise risk and maximise return. The day to day current account transactions were moved to the online bank, Unity Trust Bank, following operational issues as a result of the computer related problems at TSB.





## FOUR MARKS PARISH COUNCIL

### FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 10<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2019

#### PROVISIONAL RECEIPTS

INCOME DETAIL	Year ended 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2018 £	Year ended 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2019 £
Precept	105,000	109,000
Administration	1,972	729
Parish Office	50	280
Other	1,000	2,840
Benians Trust	176	273
Benians Pavilion	4,120	5,498
Events	2,265	906
Cemetery	3,465	4,330
*Allotments	2,488	2,347
*Festival Committee (1)	0	1,951
*FM Youth Club Fund	9,562	0
Land Sale (2)	0	1,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>130,098</b>	<b>129,154</b>
<b>Developer contributions:</b> (3)		
Open Spaces, including Recreation Ground	49,748	5,570
Tennis Courts	22,765	0
Oak Green Parade	44,935	1,150
VAT	50,718	14,985
<b>Total</b>	<b>298,264</b>	<b>150,859</b>

#### Note 2. Variance explanation

- 1 A new EMR was set up for the Festival Committee account
  - 2 A small portion of surplus land was sold to the rear of the allotments
  - 3 There was only a minimal spend of developers contributions this year
- \* Earmarked reserves



## FOUR MARKS PARISH COUNCIL

### FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 10<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2019

#### PROVISIONAL PAYMENTS

PAYMENT DETAIL	Year ended 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2018 £	Year ended 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2019 £
Staff costs	34,239	37,285
Administration (1)	20,762	13,776
Parish Office (2)	696	4,746
Open Spaces	22,206	19,029
Benians Pavilion	4,431	5,048
*Kingswood Copse (3)	7,540	380
*Badger Close	1,615	1,710
*Bus Shelters	422	281
Oak Green Parade (4)	3,804	6,394
Bowls club	109	123
Events	2,001	1,133
Recreation Ground	9,027	4,386
Swelling Hill Pond	225	3,450
Lymington Bottom Green	193	1,444
Cemetery	2,355	3,340
*Allotments	4,214	2,034
Community Buildings Project	0	3,459
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>113,839</b>	<b>108,018</b>
<b>Developers contributions (5)</b>		
Open Spaces, including Recreation Ground	49,748	5,570
Oak Green Parade	44,935	3,007
Tennis Courts	22,765	0
VAT	33,811	11,681
<b>Total</b>	<b>265,098</b>	<b>128,276</b>

#### Note 3. Variance explanation

1. Change in insurance provider resulted in a £3000 per annum saving
2. Increase in Parish Office costs due to temporary accommodation hire
3. Incurred very little maintenance in this financial year, budgeted funds transferred for 2019/2020
4. Additional expenditure incurred for the clock repair and maintenance above grant fund
5. Minimal developers' contribution expenditure this year, projects included; 50% share of a new notice board at Oak Green, new fence at Lymington Green, new Cemetery gates, and donations towards Oak Green clock maintenance, open space work and the WW1 Tommy silhouettes,



**FOUR MARKS PARISH COUNCIL**

**FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 10<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2019**

**EARMARKED RESERVES**

<b>Earmarked reserve accounts</b>	<b>Opening balance</b>	<b>Net transfers</b>	<b>Closing Balance</b>
Benians Trust Fund	37,703.90	273.43	37,977.33
Kingswood Copse	394.70	1,620.00	2,014.70
Badger Close	6,825.10	-1,710.00	5,215.10
Bus Shelters	1,128.08	-281.25	846.83
Barry Seward Memorial Tree Fund	1,000.00		1,000.00
Defibrillator Fund	190.00		190.00
Allotments	2,410.03	373.12	2,783.15
Tennis Courts	2,571.63	1,000.00	3,571.63
Community Building Fund	13,700.00	3,680.00	17,380.00
Election Provision	3,500.00		3,500.00
FM Youth Club Fund	9,561.79		9,561.79
Festival Committee	0	1,950.64	1,950.64
<b>TOTAL FUNDS HELD</b>	<b>79,085.23</b>	<b>950.01</b>	<b>80,035.24</b>



**FOUR MARKS PARISH COUNCIL**  
**FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 10<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2019**

**BENIANS TRUST ACCOUNT**

**AS AT 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**Balance brought forward from 2017/18**

National Savings	<u>£37,703.90</u>	<b><u>£37,703.90</u></b>
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**Income – Interest**

National Savings	£ <u>273.43</u>	£ 273.43
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**Expenditure**

<b>Balance carried forward:</b>		<b><u>£37,977.33</u></b>
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