

SOUTH HANNINGFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of the Electors of South Hanningfield held on Friday 26th April 2024 in Ramsden Heath Village Hall.

Present: Councillors Black, Whitehead, Huntington, Graves, Burgess, Coveley, Thurgood and Elms. Thirteen Parishioners were in attendance and the Clerk kept the minutes.

- 1. Welcome from the Chairman, Councillor Kevin Black** – Cllr Black welcomed everyone to the meeting this evening.
- 2. Apologies for Absence** – Councillors Walker, Vallis and Grundy and Richard Cerson.
- 3. Approval of Minutes dated the 28th April 2023** – Proposed by Cllr Burgess, Seconded Cllr Elms.
- 4. Report from the Finance Chairman, Councillor Roy Whitehead** – Overall we had a relatively good year. Christmas Cheer payments were down, as it was agreed to donate to the Luncheon Club Christmas meal. South Hanningfield Tennis Club donated £10,000 towards the new play surfacing which we match funded. We have £58000.00 in reserves. Thanks go to the Clerk for managing the day to day running of the accounts and to the Finance Committee for their support. Cllr Whitehead was happy to report that we are solvent and look forward to the year ahead.
- 5. Report from the Sports Field Chairman, Councillor Kevin Black** – The Sports Field enjoyed another busy year. The pitches are used by Billericay Town Youth, Ramsden Scotia, Havertown and Toby FC. We achieved Best Kept Football Pitch from the Essex Playing Fields Association, serving a population of 2500 or less. After some games there is sometimes litter left on the pitches, we have therefore introduced a £25 fine to all clubs who leave the pitches in a poor condition. If anyone see's any plastic bottles etc, after a game, please take photographs and send to the Clerk. We are in the process of resurfacing the tennis courts and this should be completed shortly. He thanked SHTC for their contribution towards

the cost. First Kicks use the Sports Field for football coaching during the summer holiday and Play in the Park was very well attended by the younger members of the Parish. My thanks go to our Ground Staff for maintaining the Sports Field and lastly thanks to the Clerk and my fellow Councillors on the Working Party.

6. Report from the Parks & Open Spaces Chairman, Councillor Bob Burgess

– The Parks and Open Spaces Working Party is responsible for overseeing and maintaining 27 acres of Parish Council land in three villages of the Parish. The Clerk and four Councillors of the Working Party met 3 times this year, walking round the three villages and noted work needed to be carried out. Wooden posts have been replaced on South Hanningfield Tye and the play equipment has been painted where necessary. He reported that both play areas in South Hanningfield and Ramsden Heath achieved Gold Awards from the Essex Playing Fields Association. He thanked the Clerk and Ground Staff for all their hard work and support once again this year.

7. Report from the Transport & Parish Paths Partnership Representative, Councillor Peter Thurgood

– The P3 Team currently are a Team of 9. They meet on a Monday morning and clear footpaths and repair styles and kissing gates. Our thanks go to the resident volunteers. Sadly the buses into Billericay will be withdrawn at the end of July. Essex County Council can no longer subsidise these any longer. The Chairman thanked Cllr Thurgood for his report.

8. Guest Speaker Malcolm Noble from the Chelmsford Civic Society

– Malcolm gave a detailed report. Hylands House become a registered listed building in 1967, it holds nearly 300 years of history. To this day visitors can tour the building under Heritage Open Days and it is a great asset to Chelmsford. We also have Shire Hall, this is where the Post Office Scandal was filmed. This is yet another fascinating building. The Vice-Chairman gave a vote of thanks to Malcolm for attending this evening.

9. Report from the Chairman, Councillor Kevin Black

– The Chairman welcomed Clive Vallis and Sandra Graves to the Council, they both represent the South Hanningfield Ward. Sadly our Vice-Chairman,

Bob Marsello resigned and is greatly missed, after all the good work that he put in, particularly dealing with Standing Orders. We are seeking two members via co-option to represent the Downham Ward. We are not a political Parish Council and members do not receive allowances or claim expenses. We looked at 56 planning applications during the year, up from 54 in the previous year. For the first time no Christmas Cheer was distributed to older residents, as, after consulting those eligible, it was felt better to make a substantial donation to the excellent Luncheon Club run by Barbara Stanton and her team in Ramsden Heath Village Hall. I would like to thank our Ground Staff who erected this years Christmas tree in the centre of Ramsden Heath. Residents said it was the best tree yet, the Clerk chose well! We have a very popular Community Cuppa & Cake afternoon every month in Ramsden Heath Village Hall, our thanks go to the Cupcake Ladies for their work. Norton Meadows is used by Downham School and Ramsden Pre School for their sports days. Our three village halls are all doing well and the recent refurbishment at South Hanningfield Village Hall has been completed. Ramsden Heath Allotments is a registered charity and it held its Annual Meeting last week. There are some plots available, so if anyone is interested in taking one over, please contact our Clerk. An on-going problem is fly-tipping and it is particularly bad in Downham. Residents have reported an increase in speeding through the villages and whilst this is not the direct responsibility of the Parish Council, we do arrange and pay for speed counts to take place. The 20mph limit in front of Downham School has been installed and operates during term time. We did look at other areas which could have a lower speed limit and this will go to public consultation. Our Clerk Julie has an assistant, Mel, who works 5 hours each week. Both do a fantastic job. At our Auditors request we have been producing a new Asset Register and it shows just how much we have to look after. We have two recreation grounds, a sports field with three football pitches and two tennis courts, a war memorial and a number of open spaces as well as bus shelters and benches to maintain. Our powers are limited and we get frustrated at what seems to be a simple matter for the higher local authorities to deal with, but the Clerk tries very hard to get things done and will continue to do so in the months ahead. I am happy to take any questions and would like to thank all of the Parish Councillors and our staff for their work and continuing support.

10. Matters for Information – None.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.56pm.

Approved as a true record.

Signed.....dated.....