

# Burley Parish Annual Assembly

Minutes of the Annual Assembly of the Parish held on Monday 30th April, 2018 at 7.30 p.m. in the Village Hall: to be signed at the Annual Assembly 2019.

**Present:** Mr Philip Daubeney (Chair), Parish Councillors: Mr Peter Russell, Mr Robert Clarke, Mr Neal Martin,; also present were: the Clerk, Lord Manners the Official Verderer, Mr David Illsley from NFNPA, Sonia Lorenzo-Martin (Forestry Commission), Cllr K Mans (HCC), Cllr R Frampton (NFDC), Cllr M Steele (NFDC), & 47 local government electors.

**Copies of the minutes of the Annual Assembly 2017, draft annual accounts summary 2017-18 and summary reports from NFNPA, FC and NFDC were circulated to electors.**

**1. Apologies** Cllr V Johnstone, Cllr J Kendall

**2. Minutes of the last meeting** The full minutes from the Annual Assembly 2017 were agreed & signed.

**Matters Arising** The Chairman reported that:

- Mr Avery (NFNPA) had investigated that possibility of season tickets for residents to the open top tourist buses, however this was not found to be viable.
- A directional sign for the White Buck is now in place

**3. Chairman's Report** See attached report. No questions were raised.

**4. Heritage Centre** Cllr Russell gave a summary of some of the recently discovered history of the village and outlined plans for a Heritage Centre in the village, based on a model currently run in Fordingbridge. **Plans were displayed and available for all to view for Affordable Housing and an outline Heritage Centre on land in the centre of the village;** a 999 year lease has been secured by the NFNPA. Cllr Russell said that planning permission is expected to be submitted by the NFNPA by mid-May. At the BPC meeting in June, a discussion on the proposals will be invited during public participation. Discussions have taken place to set up a Burley Village Heritage Trust. Land adjacent to that purchased by the NFNPA has been informally offered by a local landowner to possibly extend the site; this is on condition that there will be an exhibition of tractors and agricultural implements; he has also indicated that he may make a capital contribution to the project. Cllr Russell thanked those local landowners for facilitating the project. Cllr Russell said that a grant has been applied for to run an exhibition of artefacts; this will be held in the last weekend of March 2019 if successful.

An elector commented that the museum holds no relation to commoning and that she believes that museums only work when based in a traditional building. The Chairman replied that there will be many issues to address in relation to the project in the future.

**5. Report from the Official Verderer** Lord Manners summarised the role of the Verderers: to protect and administer the practice of commoning and to preserve the landscape and its heritage. He said that the Verderers powers derive from an Act of Parliament: 5 Agisters are employed by the Verderers.

56 animals were killed last year and 22 injured. Lord Manners reported that the Verderers have increased the reward to £5000 for information leading to a conviction of a hit and run driver.

An election of Verderers is up-coming: 4 Verderers are appointed and 5 elected, with 1 independent Chairman.

An elector asked what the qualifications are required to stand as a Verderer: Lord Manners replied that an elector must have commoner's rights.

Another elector commented that during the winter period some car parks are closed to protect areas, however farmers don't appear to keep to the tracks: Lord Manners replied that commoners have a legal right to de-pasture their stock and therefore go onto the forest to look after them. There are designated feeding areas that are inspected every summer to ensure that use of that area has not caused inappropriate damage.

An elector commented that it is difficult to find out drift dates and this could be dangerous as local people use the forest for dog walking/riding etc and may get caught up in a drift. Lord Manners said that the dates are published in the local paper the week before and are also available on the Verderers website; however they are not made widely available for safety reasons, to avoid sight-seeing crowds. Lord Manners agreed to feedback the comments.

An elector asked the Verderers views on mass cycle events: the Verderers are not keen on mass cycling events. Although Verderers have powers over recreational facilities that impact on commoning they have no jurisdiction over roads.

**6. Report from the NFNPA** David Illsley gave a brief overview of the work of NFNPA over the last year (see attached). An elector asked if all local public bodies sit together to discuss forest issues; Mr Illsley replied that they do meet. The elector said that local by-laws need to be set out for visitors to the forest; Mr Illsley said that there is a recreation management strategy and that bodies come together to discuss this.

**7. Report from the FC** See attached summary. Cllr Clarke asked about the tree felling licences that are required by the Forestry Commission to do felling works. He said that he has difficulty in tracing these licences. Ms Lorenzo-Martin said that felling licence requirements depend on the size of the trees to be felled. The FC applies for the necessary licences and they are issued by the NFNPA. Not all areas being felled require a licence.

An elector asked whether any more trees would be felled at Turf Croft as he felt that trees should be left to help prevent erosion. Ms Lorenzo-Martin confirmed that no more trees would be felled along the stream.

An elector commented that “natural regeneration” is now preferred, however where trees have fallen there is a lot of dead wood and little evidence of natural regeneration. Ms Lorenzo-Martin confirmed that she has raised concerns over this and in some areas trials have been conducted; the Forestry Commission is liaising with Natural England.

It was agreed that felling is a controversial matter.

A resident of Honey Lane commented on local flooding in the area. Cllr Clarke said that this was in hand.

**8. Report from HCC** Cllr Mans reported that at the County Council elections in May 2018 the leader and deputy-leader were re-elected; Cllr Mans is also a representative on the NFNPA. Cllr Mans paid tribute to the late Ken Thornber. He said that the central government grant to HCC has now been cut by a total of 40% however waste sites have been kept open. There is a move in Children’s Services to employ more social workers to reduce the number of children in care; this in turn reduces costs as well as giving children a better start in life. Councillor Mans devolved budget is £8000/year.

Cllr Mans said that signage for visitor’s education could be better in the forest and that more could be done to explain to visitors what the rules of the forest are. Cllr Mans said to Lord Manners that they need to work together better.

**Report from New Forest District Council** Cllr Steele gave a summary of NFDC work over the past year and the plans for the year ahead. He also said that there is a new Chairman at NFDC: Mel Kendall, whose charity of choice is Oakhaven Hospice.

**9. Any Other Business** An elector asked what the rules are about dog mess in the forest. All agreed that bags containing dog mess are causing more of a problem when left on the forest than the mess itself.

An elector said that there is no sign at Tyrells Lane.

An elector handed over a “Code of Conduct for cyclists and horse riders” leaflet to the Chairman.

**The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.15pm.**