

# HILTON PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 10th May 2011 at the Old Brewery Hall, Ansty at 7 pm.

**Present**, Mrs C. Langham (Chairman) Mr Philip Clive, Mr R Northover, Mr J Waterworth, Mrs M Walbridge, Mr W Earp, Mrs P Gubbins, (Clerk) Mrs H Cox, (County Councillor) Mrs Jane Somper and Mrs Emma Parker (District Councillors), Graham Burton, (Village Hall) and 6 members of the public.

**Catherine Langham** proposed by Jim Waterworth, seconded Rodney Northover, was unanimously elected Chairman.

**Apologies** were received from Mr Steve Sanders, Mrs Della Jones, and Mr Michael Cox  
**Newly elected Councillors** signed their Acceptance of Office,

**The Chairman's Report. Catherine Langham** said that in a generally uneventful year the main interest had been in the lack of adequate provision of winter services during the two very wintry spells. Lack of gritting on the school bus route, and provision of materials for self help was discussed in a subsequent meeting, and it is hoped a remedy will be found for the future. She was sad to report the deaths of two very valuable members of the community during the year, Commander Richard Sutton and Mervyn House had both given great service to the Council and to the Village. We are also losing the services of the two District councillors who have looked after us for many years – Michael Cox having also been a long-serving Parish Councillor, and she welcomed newly elected Emma Parker and Jane Somper, and Steve Sanders, elected to the Parish Council.

**The Financial Report** Annual accounts for the previous year were circulated to Councillors and members of the public. The Precept had been maintained unaltered, at £4000 and HPC, while slightly over budget, remained within current account balances. £689 had been spent from the Benefit account on provision of new noticeboards at Lower Ansty and Hilton. We are very grateful to Robin Stewart who once again audited the accounts and reviewed the activities of the Council over the year.

**The County Councillor's Report: Hilary Cox** said that after 13 years the Government now reflects the political character of Dorset. Efficiency savings of £22.4 m. had been made over the past six years, and further savings of £31m have been forced upon them, leading inevitably to staff redundancies and a cut back on some services. A further £10/12m will have to be saved. A radical restructure of Highways is hoped to improve services which were stretched during the extreme wintry weather. An urgent review of farmers' services in bad weather is essential. The library service will have to face cuts, as some libraries are just 3 miles apart; 20 libraries serve only 4-5% of the population.

**The District Councillor's Report: Michael Cox** regrets that due to illness he has had to stand down, and is grateful to Della Jones for covering for him. He has always supported business planning applications that encourage the rural economy. Faced with cuts, NDDC has been forced to find other sources of funding for local community facilities, but Michael warns against parish councils entering into ownership. He concluded by wishing his successors well, and thanking the clerks for their patience and courteousness.

**Open Forum Dee Stephens** reported on the Environment Group's recent activities; an Energy Exchange meeting will be held at the end of the June 7<sup>th</sup> Parish Council meeting, and Councillors agreed to provide up to £30 to fund it. The precarious condition of the cross at Rawlsbury Camp will be publicised in the Village News, to ascertain the public's view on replacing it. Members of the Group have adopted various Rights of way areas to help maintain them in good condition. **Graham Burton** reported that work continues to tidy up the area behind the Hall, and the new door in the Committee Room will be sited between the two back windows, where a lintel has come to light. In response to his enquiry, Hilary Cox said DCC are doing well in their efforts to recover Icelandic Bank funds.