

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting **held on Monday 25th April 2016 7.30pm at the Village Hall**

Present: G. Knaggs (Chairman), A. Smith (Vice Chairman), K. McConville, D. Musson, N. Moglia, P. Lakey, M. Davies, 10 members of the public

1. Apologies for Absence: County Cllr L. Chapman, PCSO Tracey Waller

2. To consider and approve the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 27th April 2015: it was noted that the minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting had been previously approved.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes:

None

4. Parish Council Reports

(a) 2015-6 Report

At the start of this financial year there were elections for the Parish Council and the District Council. Three Hailey Parish councillors stood down: Bob Quainton, Russell Sharp and Paul Thomas. Cllr Knaggs gave thanks for their contribution to the parish council. Three new councillors were elected – all from New Yatt: Pauline Lakey, Marion Davies and Nick Moglia. Last September the PC also said good-bye to the Parish Clerk Katherine Doughty and welcomed Lisa Wilkinson. DC Simon Hoare stood down and is now a Conservative MP for N. Dorset. Gill Hill was selected as his replacement. The other District Councillor will be decided in a weeks' time.

(b) Highways and Traffic Working Group

Cllr Smith reminded everyone of the achievements this year. Although there is no longer a lollipop lady as she retired, there are now 20mph signs either side of the school with flashing lights. There are two permanent VAS devices: on the main road and in New Yatt. Village gates have also been installed: 90% of those who showed interest in these were for installing them.

In the near future Speed Data Recorder Analyses will be set up in three locations: New Yatt, Poffley End and Delly End. This will see if there is a problem with the speed of traffic through the area.

(c) Planning Working Group

i. Planning Applications

Cllr McConville reported that it had been a busy year. There have been a large amount of applications from residents. The PC holds a supportive standpoint and listens to residents' views. The proposal for 200 houses remains as does the development at N. Witney. The PC is not supportive of this. The PC has held a public consultation on views about the proposed development on Giernalls Road. It seems the majority are in favour of a small development. The PC will continue to listen and represent the views of the residents. Cllr McConville advised that anyone interested in making a planning application should talk to the PC early on in the process as the PC is a conduit to WODC.

ii. WODC Local Plan 2031

The Local Plan has been suspended for one year. This plan contains the 1,000 houses in N. Witney. WODC took the Plan to the Government Inspector in December. The Inspector reported that it had met the SHMA (Strategic Housing Market Assessment) which researches how many houses are needed in an area. It had also not taken into consideration the needs of Oxford City, as the surrounding councils have to pick up 15,000 of the City's housing requirement. WODC are currently looking for more sites to build more houses. There will be a consultation in October, the Plan will then go back to the Inspector in January next year. So at present it is unknown what is happening in N. Witney.

(d) Estates and Footpaths Working Group

Cllr Musson reported that this group is made up of himself and Cllr McConville. Their main areas of responsibility are the new and old Burial Ground, the allotments and the footpaths.

New Burial Ground: this involves maintenance, management and reservations of plots, as well as developing the wildflower area.

Old Burial Ground: tree work has been undertaken as a tree was pushing against the wall. The wall was also repaired.

Allotments: there is currently a full list of allotment holders, the sale of some allotment land at Poffley End has been completed, and repairs carried out on walls thanks to Phil Hunt who has done a lot of work for the Parish Council.

Footpaths: former Parish Councillor, Paul Thomas is the Parish Path Warden: he walks the paths and reports back with any issues. The PC appreciates this.

Grass cutting: the contract previously held by WODC was up for tender earlier this year and has now been offered to McCracken and Son who are a local family firm. The first cut has been undertaken and has been done well. The PC was unsure about whether a grass cutting grant would be received this new financial year, however there will be a grant so the PC will undertake as much cutting as possible.

Land Registry: Some land, under the management of HPC, is in the process of being registered with the Land Registry.

Woodgreen: Hailey PC is currently transferring some land to Witney Town Council. (See below)

New footpath: In September daffodils were planted along the new footpath. This is looking good at present. The PC needs to deal with the damage to the railings caused by a car.

(e) Amenities Working Group

Cllrs Musson, Davies and Lakey monitor the recreation ground and inspect it monthly. A ROSPA check is carried out annually. The recommended repairs have been carried out. Thanks were expressed to Terry Matthews who has undertaken repairs and maintenance over a long period of time.

Cllr Musson highlighted the support the PC has given to Project Hailey for adult fitness equipment. There is also liaison with the Football Club and Village Hall Committee. The perennial issues are litter and dog mess.

(f) Special Projects

i. Woodgreen

The Parish Council has agreed to sell land at Woodgreen to Witney Town Council for £100 plus legal fees. All information has been given to the solicitor. The process has been slightly stalled by a query over an unadopted road crossing the area.

ii. Village Gates

See 4b. above

iii. Neighbourhood Plan

This has been running since September. A Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire will come out with the May edition of the Hailey Herald. There are 20 questions to answer about how residents would like to see the village develop over the next 15 years. The Planning team will also question landowners, businesses, schools and the college to see what they would like. Residents' views will be asked again before the Plan is submitted to WODC who will organise its inspection. If the Neighbourhood Plan is adopted, this enables the Parish Council to receive a higher amount of money from any developments in the parish. This could be up to one and a half million pounds; it must be spent on infrastructure.

5. Reports from District and County Councillors

DCllr G. Hill presented her report, an excerpt of which is below:

These are challenging times and significant cost pressures have been imposed on WODC by other bodies which together with a difficult financial settlement from government has meant that an amount around £131,000 of underlying funds of General Fund Reserves will have to be used to balance the budget. Fortunately money was allocated to reserves take care of this possible dilemma, thanks to the long term financial planning of WODC.

WODC has managed to freeze Council Tax for residents over the last five years but with the unemployment claimant count for West Oxfordshire back at a level not seen since 2007 and fuel billings falling, it is considered a slight increase in Council Tax is now affordable to most residents. This will still leave WODC levying the second lowest charge out of all the shires District Council's in England.

The shared services approach by WODC with Cotswold District Council (and others) has now reached savings of almost £9m between the two Councils with a further £3m to come in 2016/17. WODC continues to provide free car parking 24/7 throughout the District. Unemployment and crime rate figures remain some of the lowest in the country and continue to fall. Tourism spend continues to rise and leisure facilities attract more users.

High Speed Broadband is expected to cover the vast majority of the District with the new scheme which could not be provided by the commercial sector or by the County Council BT contract.

The Devolution deal is being discussed with the County Council commissioning its own independent work. WODC will work with other District Councils and partners to develop further the initial unitary devolution proposals. Recent discussions seeking to reach agreement to carry out a joint consultation had fostered a spirit of co-operation in terms of information sharing. It is thought that the advantages to be gained through a devolution deal were far too great to disregard. Independent consultants should be jointly appointed by the Districts to undertake detailed work. The initial study to be on viability and sustainability and governance; specialist work on collaboration around Children and Adult services; public consultation and involvement; and preparation of a revised Devolution Deal. This will be funded from reserves.

No report from County Councillor Louise Chapman was available.

6. Report from Thames Valley Police

Tracey Waller is the new PCSO for Hailey. She has nothing to report.

7. Parish Accounts for 2015-16

The draft Parish Council Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2016 were circulated. The accounts show total payments of £24,287 and receipts of £23,694, giving an overspend of £593. This was due to a catch up of the grass cutting fees for the previous 2 years. Main items of expenditure were the Clerk's salary of £6,106, with a changeover of clerks, and capital projects of £4,284 for the installation of the village gates. Donations were received to pay for the new defibrillator case at the Lamb and Flag and for the Queen's birthday beacon.

The £593 overspend does not take account of the £1500 of reserves that have had to be liquidated. This is part of the reason why the precept had to be increased. The PC has been holding the precept over the last 5 years but the reserves have been dwindling and now there is hardly any backup.

8. Charity Reports and Accounts for 2016-16

(a) Joan Smith Education Charity

This charity, created in the 1600s, receives income from pieces of land it owns. The money is used to provide support to people in the parish under the age of 25.

There were receipts of £2,181 to the nearest £ and payments of £1,905. Nine grants were made and the financial assets of the charity stand at £22,358, not including shares. The charity's income was made up of rent £1,912 and interest and dividends of £269. The payments were made up of grants for £1,680 and administration fees of £225 (£100 from 2014-15). A statement is awaited in order to value the charity shares.

(b) Allotments for the Labouring Poor

Payments made throughout the year were £1738 and the receipts were £20,049 to the nearest £. £18,000 was received for the sale of Allotment land. This year £1,400 was spent on dry stone wall repairs. £72 was spent on Ordnance Survey maps as the land owned by the Allotments for the Labouring Poor is in the process of being registered with the Land Registry. The charity's income included rent of £1,865 and bank interest £57. The financial assets of the charity stand at £34,905.

(c) Hailey Relief in Need Charity

Mrs Simpkins, the Treasurer and Secretary, presented the unaudited accounts. A total of £1,291.52 was awarded in grants this year. The Trustees meet twice a year, in April and October, unless there is an emergency when they will have an additional meeting.

The Charity has three wheelchairs which can be borrowed on a short term basis.

The Charity gives funds for anyone with a disability, the elderly or for young people to go on school trips. It is not means tested. 24 grants have been paid out this year. Examples of the type of help given are a new carpet after a flood, adaptation of a bathroom for a disabled person and a ramp outside the front door for easy access. The Trustees cannot commit themselves to repeat or renew any relief previously granted.

The spirit of the Charity is to help individuals although organisations have benefited from time to time.

The Trustees are: Pam Simpkins, John Gibson, Jeremy Lewis, Neil Traynor, Janet Lines and Lauren Basson.

The Charity has also supported a second defibrillator being put in at the garage and has upgraded the defibrillator at the Lamb and Flag.

(d) Project Hailey

Suzanne Reeve, as chair of Project Hailey reported. They have carried out their usual fundraising activities such as the rounders match and pub quizzes. There are currently £2,300 in the funds. This year, Project Hailey has surveyed secondary school age children and parents of children using the playground. This research discovered that people would like to see adult fitness equipment and a larger slide at the playground. They have received support from the PC, who gave funds for this. Wren and WODC also awarded grants (although not for the slide). Five pieces of equipment are ready to be installed and they are awaiting confirmation that they can purchase a table tennis table instead of the slide.

Project Hailey has recently undertaken a spring clean of the play area. All the equipment was cleaned, weeding was done and some bark was replaced.

(e) Hailey Festival

Hailey Festival encourages various organisations to run events by acting as a co-ordinating body. There are nearly £1700 in the funds. Cllr Smith thanked the Hailey Herald for being kind enough to distribute leaflets for all Hailey Festival events last year. The Festival team have been busy; five meetings have already been held and a planned programme of events has been compiled:

- The Queen's Birthday Beacon event last week was well attended and raised £53.
- The usual scarecrow competition is being held on 10th June with the theme being characters from cartoon films.
- The rounders match is also planned for 10th June.
- There will be a Sunday service and also a Big Lunch on Sunday 12th June.
- Saturday 18th June is the big event -a summer fete on the recreation ground. There are lots of organisations involved in this.
- On Sunday 26th June is Open Gardens and the Festival finale which is to be held in the Lamb and Flag.

There is another fund-raising pub quiz on Sunday 22nd May.

On Wednesday 4th May there is a quiz in aid of Help the Heroes.

Suzanne Reeve gave thanks to the Hailey Festival team and said the village was very lucky to have them.

Judith Knaggs asked that word of the scarecrow competition was spread to residents of New Yatt

9. Members of the public and items for general discussion

Michael Drew talked about the Hailey Herald which is run by himself and David Burton. He explained that there will be a point in time that someone will have to take it over.

Cllr Knaggs thanked them and said the village was appreciative of their efforts.

Cllr Smith informed the meeting that there are now Facebook pages for Hailey Festival and Hailey Village.

Cllr Musson mentioned that when the grass cutting contract was put out to tender, the PC had not heard whether a grass cutting grant would be received. The PC will revisit the specification with the grant in mind.

A question was asked about the current status of the Saddler's Arms. There are no new developments on this issue.

Meeting closed 8.33pm

Lisa Wilkinson
Parish Clerk



