

# HAILEY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2022 in the Village Hall

**Present: Cllrs:** G. Knaggs (in the chair), A. Smith, A Gibson, M Drew, G Doland, M Crow **County Cllr:** L. Walker, **District Cllrs:** G. Hill, C Dingwall, **Parish Clerk:** T Cameron, Presenters:

- 1) **To receive Apologies for Absence – Cllr Doland, Wychwood Project, Radio Control Car group, Project Hailey, Breach Wood, Hailey Festival, Hailey Primary School, Kestrel Cubs, Gardening Club, Play reading group.**

- 2) **Introduction from Chairman**

The Chairman would like to thank everyone for coming as this is our first Annual Meeting since 2019

- 3) **Parish Council Reports**

## **Cllr Knaggs Reported:**

### **North Witney**

Construction of the 1,400 houses on the North Witney site should have already started – according to WODCs Local Plan. However, it has not moved forward largely because the various developers involved need to come together to put forward a masterplan for the whole site and they have failed to do so. It is vital that a masterplan is put forward if anything is to happen as this will include the detail as to where and when the necessary infrastructure will be put in place and how it is funded. The WODC have held firm on this stance and the HPC have been actively reminding them of the rules regarding how this development must be approached.

Two of the plots have planning applications ‘under consideration’ but cannot move forward without a masterplan for the whole site.

There has been some trading of development plots within the NW Area with Blenheim Estates acquiring a large plot in the centre of the development in addition to the Pye Homes plot opposite the BP Service Station.

### **New Village Hall –**

The New Village Hall Working Group finalised the Architects Brief which sets out our requirement for the new Village Hall – i.e. what facilities it should contain. We subsequently issued an invitation to tender to six architect companies to enable us to select an architect for when we decide to move forward to the next steps. The deadline for tender submission is the end of May.

More recently a joint meeting of the PC and the Working Group have looked at a variety of options for the location of the new Village Hall.

## **Giles Doland Reported:**

### **Planning report for 2021/2022 -**

There is not much to report of a contentious nature for the last year as there have been fewer large scale development proposals now that the West Oxfordshire Local Plan is in place.

Smaller residential applications for extensions of various types have continued steadily and there have been hardly any occasions where the PC has felt a need to object. In general, the WODC’s final decision has mirrored the opinion of the PC.

The one development of note that has been discussed at length is the Giernalls Triangle. The WODC planning website currently shows that we are ‘awaiting decision’ but we know that at the most recent meeting that approval has now been granted. The HPC did object to the spur road in the development, but we have not succeeded in getting that removed.

Planning has been granted for 22 affordable dwellings for Sovereign Housing, which is owned by Blenheim Estates. This quantity of affordable houses is greatly needed in the area, but we are aware that the developer has applied for a grant to help fund the development and this process is ongoing. It might well

be that the developer comes back to planning to reduce the number of affordable dwellings if their application for a grant is unsuccessful.

We look forward to the coming year and will continue our endeavours to ensure that should the North Witney development ever get built; the necessary infrastructure that has been promised will accompany it.

### **Cllr Gibson Reported:**

#### **Allotments – Allotments**

Hemplands – Three large unused allotment strips have been divided up into over 20 small garden plots and three or four double size plots. The majority of these are let, although 6 plots are still available, which we expect will be taken up soon as the weather improves.

Work began around March to provide a water supply, contained in troughs for use with buckets and watering cans – not hoses - at both Hemplands and Poffley End. The pipework installation was carried out in the Spring and Thames Water made their connections first at Poffley End then finally at Hemplands in September. The Poffley End supply seems to be working well, but the supply at Hemplands is leaking so the supply cannot be used. We apologise to Hemplands allotments holders. The contractor has taken responsibility for this defect and is expected to return to remedy it shortly.

On request permission to erect sheds on several allotments was granted. An application for a small greenhouse was also given permission.

In the near future, the Parish Council will be carrying out work to create more useable grass paths through the additional allotments provided at Hemplands last year. Work is likely to proceed over the next few weeks.

The Parish Council is considering providing raised beds for use by people with limited mobility and wheelchair users. This is likely to require grant funding, but we hope this will be achievable sometime this year. An application to the National Lottery was submitted last year and was unsuccessful, but with support from the community we can try again.

If allotment holders and residents have any other thoughts on what could be provided at the allotments – baring in mind limited financial resources, please let us know. Please also let us know if you live in Hailey and are interested in renting a plot. We have 7 available. The cost is around £12 a year. Several allotment holders derive so much pleasure – and homegrown healthy produce - from their allotments that they have two or three plots.

#### **Playground**

The maintenance and safety of all playground equipment and benches at the recreation are the responsibility of the Parish Council.

I carry out a monthly inspection of this equipment and the benches once a month and provide a written report to the Clerk for our records. If anything requires repairing or, very occasionally, replacing, that is organised by me. This could be topping up the bark under the swings, repairing the picnic benches or cutting back the hedging on the edge of the playground.

The playground and the adult gym equipment were not available during the lockdown but re-opened in July last year. It receives a lot of use from people within and outside the village. The playground seems to be one of the most popular in the area.

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) carries out a detailed safety inspection of the equipment annually. The Parish Council then acts on the report repairing or replacing items brought to our attention. Some of the components we replaced this year included the ladder and some of the timbers on one of the climbers, and the timber boards on the roundabout.

For the future, we are hoping to provide one or more pieces of equipment for children with limited mobility and wheelchair users. The Parish Council has budgeted some funds for this, but it will also require community support and grant funding. We'd like to think that the village will be supportive of this project to make the playground more inclusive for all children.

#### **Recreation Ground**

The recreation ground is used by Hailey Football Club - adults and children for which they pay a rent. The Cubs use it during the Spring and Summer. It is used occasionally by commercial users who are charged a fee. And many other village events are held there, such as the hugely popular Rounders match and

barbecue, organised by St John's Church, the School Fete, and the Big Lunch for special celebrations of the Queen's reign.

It provided a wonderful open space for walking and exercising during the lockdown, with the added bonus of listening to the Witney Town Band rehearsing when they were unable to rehearse together indoors, because of Covid restrictions, in late Spring early Summer last year.

**Cllr Andy Smith reported:**

- on Delly Hill – Andy has had call with engineer and has now received some software to enable him to Bluetooth into the device; this presumes the device can get powered on and there are some physical device/internal checks that Andy will do this week
- Speed camera has attended Delly Hill lay-by on a number of occasions, every few weeks which is good to see
- We have continued to hold Community SpeedWatch events in Hailey and recently set up a group to cover New Yatt too. We have paused activities as we are currently waiting for the Thames Valley Police team to set us up on their new online system to be able to record details directly

**HIGHWAYS & FLOODING**

- We have continued flood-related activities and reported them through the year
- Delly End's upstream
- A reported issue causing some gardens/garages flooding in Middletown has now been visited and cleared
- We await a decision regarding the proposed solar farm near Singe Wood as this will hopefully allow us to progress flood attenuation works c/o LEDA Properties

**PLATINUM JUBILEE**

- We have confirmed the following details:
  - Thu 2/6/22 = Rounders Match & Beacon Lighting at Village Hall & Recreation Ground
  - Fri 3/6/22 = GrooveTown Summer Pub Party with Live Music at the Lamb & Flag
  - Sat 4/6/22 = Vehicle Procession through Middletown, Delly End, and Poffley End with Cream Tea in the Village Hall afterwards
  - Sun 5/6/22 = Big Lunch at Village Hall & Recreation Ground
  - Scarecrows from Sat 28/5 for a fortnight with "A Year from The Queen's Reign" theme
  - Various Church-based activities during the week/weekend, including a Royal-themed Porch Gallery, a Happy & Glorious Flowers Festival, and a Songs of Praise Sunday service
- A flyer will be printed for putting in the May edition of the Hailey Herald, on noticeboards, in pub, church, etc

**Cllr M Drew Reported:**

**Environment:** As it is three years since we have given an Annual Report in public, I have included items outside our usual timescale. H.P.C. is responsible for a considerable amount of the Environment in our village

**Bus Shelter / Notice Boards:** These were planned and erected before lockdown. but it is worth recording their existence, which certainly enhances our village environment.

**Burial Ground:** Early in 2020 a new access path and vehicle hard standing were created which were of particular benefit during lockdown, a water tap, and the usual range of waste bins were provided, and we are pleased to have this opportunity to thank David Musson for putting them out for collection each week. Subsequently Council agreed that our Burial Ground should be part of the Queens Green Canopy to mark her 70 years on the throne, and 9 native trees were planted over the winter of 2021/22, and a plaque to commemorate the Jubilee will be erected in the Burial Ground.

As a further record of the Platinum Jubilee your council ordered 30 free small trees, which were given to 19 parishioners to plant individually, the remainder being planted in our community wood.

**Wildflower Meadow:** Which forms the other half of the Burial Ground. Council financed the purchase of wild flower seeds, particularly Yellow Rattle which should further enhance the area, and are pleased to acknowledge the work of volunteers in this Green space, and would encourage residents to use this whole area for quiet reflection.

**Old Burial Ground:** During the year Council restated its deliberate policy of allowing this space to be a relatively untouched wild space, only strimmed 2x /year. Discussion will take place in the May meeting on the merits of leaving the large fallen Ash tree in place or removing it.

**Verges/Green Spaces -Grass Cutting:** Council reappointed S. McCracken and Son, having increased the number of cuts from 8 to 10 times/ year.

**Footpaths:** Council hold a watching brief monitoring any proposed changes.

**Trees:** Council has an 18 monthly tree report of all trees for which we are responsible and carries out remedial work as necessary.

**Community wood:** For the last couple of years Council has agreed to award an annual grant to Hailey Community Woodland Ltd., thereby acknowledging the value of this Village asset.

**Signpost at Delly Pool:** Although officially owned by OCC it has been part of P.C. responsibility for many years. 2 finger posts were broken last year which led to a decision to replace all the finger posts and lettering and repaint. Two were replaced last summer, and the work should be completed within the next month.

#### 4) County and District Councillors

##### **County Cllr Liam Walker reported:**

There were two main big issues this year. One was speeding within the village and OCC rolling out the 20mph zones in the village. This will go out to further consultation with the parish and hopefully will be rolled out in tranche 2 which should take place late 2022 or early 2023.

Burford HGV – It is great news that the ban was overturned which shows what can happen when villages ban together. We are still awaiting for county to come back with a plan. The signs though have now gone.

##### **District Cllr Gill Hill reported:**

The past two years have been unexpectedly unusual due to the arrival of the Coronavirus with all it's issues and subsequently the war in the Ukraine.

WODC finds itself in a position that is more fortunate than many councils. Though careful management it has built up a good level of reserves, but these are forecasts to be depleted significantly in the medium term and the Councils financial security lies partly in the savings we have already made, but also potential efficiencies as yet undefined, government funding yet to be determined and future commercial strategies yet to be realised. The Council in common with all councils has had a difficult year. As well as maintaining business as usual, the staff have been at the forefront of coordinating support and recovery in the district. From working with local companies to help them strengthen their businesses and move forward out of the pandemic to supporting and enabling community groups, providing a lifeline to the vulnerable, manning vaccination centres, and distributing £49m of Covid grants – all while dealing with the effects of Covid on themselves and their own families. They should be justifiably proud of the efforts, and we will continue to exercise caution in our finances but maintain the high level of service and innovation that the Councils needs to secure our financial stability and carry on our service to our residents.

**Ukraine:** WODC is doing its utmost to assist the people of Ukraine. Supplies have been collected and dispatched in conjunction with the Red Cross and the RAF at Brize Norton. There are a number of national and local government responsibilities relating to the Homes for Ukraine scheme. Copies of these requirements are available.

**COVID:** Officers have been doing an incredible job in handling the recovery process and ensuring that vulnerable residents are looked after; liaising with businesses and arranging grants provided by the Government.

**Waste Services:** Significant rises in costs have occurred. Ubico have inflationary pressures on fuel costs, coupled with driver shortages due to COVID have caused an increase of £350k on last years contract price. Recycling costs have increased by 50% per tonne, adding another £300k to our budget. This was partly caused by market conditions and exacerbated by a shortage of bidders on renewal.

**Publica:** The contract has risen by expected wage inflation. Resource shortages were recognised in several key areas including Planning and s106 support.

We have had areas that have seen an unprecedented increase in activity such as Planning. This is hugely affected by large scale housing developments which boost income in a particular year but are not a general

pattern. The Local Plan is sure to be revisited over the next couple of years. Business rates reset have again been deferred.

**Council Tax:** With a slight increase of £5 per band D residences, we still remain with the second lowest Council Tax in England

May I take this opportunity of thanking you for putting up with me as your District Councillor. I plan to be around for another year as I shall be up for election in May 2023.

I would like to wish you all a Happy Easter.

#### **District Cllr C Dingwall reported:**

WODC is in good health and has again produced a balanced budget keeping it England's 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest charging district council with no cuts to services despite cuts in the grants. It is worth noting that this has been achieved while providing free parking throughout the district supporting local shops and business and reducing costs to individuals.

We have a dedicated team to welcome Ukrainian refugees as we did with the Afghan Refugees providing homes and shelter to families in need.

WODC has a new police to help abused women and girls and identify a specific property to provide shelter. I am delighted at the outcome of the WiVTAG groups success in overcoming the Burford HGV ban which forced lorries through our villages. It's been great to see what smaller villages can achieve when working together.

I am proud to have helped WRFC (Witney Rugby Football Club) obtain a £50k grant towards a new extension.

WODC have employed a dedicated climate officer and cabinet officer to reach our zero targets and have already started to install EV charging points and purchase electric vehicles.

It has been a long process, but I am delighted to see 20mph speed limits being offered to all the villages that want them having promoted the Norfolk policy of 'Quiet Lanes' since 2006 bringing safety for our schools and all those using our rural streets. Thanks to OCC Councillor Liam Walker for his support and efforts over the years.

#### **5) Witney Rugby Club – Rob Fisk**

Dear all, thank you for giving us the opportunity to give you an update on where we are at Witney rugby club. We continue to run 3 men's sides a lady's side and have over 400 children playing members, as well as the special educational needs team Witney Wolves.

All run by volunteers and funded by membership and sponsorship with all money going back into the club and facilities.

On the facilities front we will be starting work on the extension at the end of April this will give us greater indoor space for the after-match meals as well as providing space for indoor training and community events.

We have installed a new playground this year, which is open to all residents of Hailey as is the bar and we look forward to seeing you one day.

Another big community event is our fire work display, but as covid restrictions have stopped us from holding this for the last 2 years it is now unlikely to return. Several reasons for this are we don't believe it right to be burning the wood etc Clean air act, Likewise the noise from fireworks has caused issues locally and an issue for us is the amount volunteers needed to run such an event.

However, we are still planning to support the rotary clubs colour run at our grounds in May, the Thames Valley caravan rally in July, and if required will look to help Wychwood forest with parking.

We enjoy being part of our local community and where we can we are pleased to help our neighbours from the local area

#### **6) Wychwood Project – No Report**

#### **7) Hailey Village Hall**

This is a very brief account of the Parish Council's involvement in the work of the Committee that manages the Village Hall – led by their Chair, Dawn Franklin.

The Parish Council owns the land on which the Village Hall sits and has a lease with the Village Hall Management Committee so that it can run its activities in the Hall. The Parish Council nominates a representative from the Parish Councillors to act as a liaison person between the Council and the Committee. That has been one of my roles over the couple of years. As a result, I am a Trustee of the Village Hall Management Committee with all the legal responsibilities that, that entails, including attending and participating in the management of the hall, ensuring good governance of the business, including compliance with its policies, for example, finance, safeguarding and health & safety, and supporting its fundraising events.

In addition to being a regular hirer of the committee room and occasionally the hall, the Parish Council provides financial assistance to the Village Hall Management Committee in the form of grants usually £1,000 a year. Other grants may be awarded from time to time for example towards the cost of the flat roof over the committee room and kitchen which was replaced last year. – **The trustees of the Village Hall would like to thank the Parish Council for the grant that they gave with help for the new flat roof.**

#### **8) St John's Church**

- Connections were maintained over the past 2 years through phone calls/emails or outside when weather permitted.
- There is a gallery in the church porch which depicts the seasons throughout the year
- Great Big Green week that happened in September 2021. Many visitors came to the church
- Village lunch which happens every month at the moment they have about 25 people in attendance which will hopefully increase as time goes on.
- Lights of remembrance evening saw many people coming to the church.
- The Tree of Remembrance is now in the church porch covered with names and messages
- An outdoor remembrance service to place by the war memorial. With also a dedication of the armistice stone.
- The Christingle Service took place with Hailey Primary School and raised money for the Children's Society
- The Big Crib was again in the porch of the church and attracted lots of visitors
- The Church held an outdoor carol service 50-60 people attended
- A local band made a recording on the church, which sounded really good.
- After easter there will be a new group called tiddlers starting in the church

#### **9) Radio Control Car group – No Report**

#### **10) Project Hailey – No report**

#### **11) Hailey Herald – Cllr Drew**

It is now 30 years old and is still going strong. Cllr Knaggs has taken on the role of producing it. We have £500 in the bank.

#### **12) Breach Wood – No report**

#### **13) Hailey Relief in Need – John Gibson**

Thanks to the Parish Council for the invite to talk at the Parish Meeting. They are a small local charity which has a fund from past benefactors within the Hailey and Crawley Parishes. They help people in need or suffering hardship or distress. They pay out small grants. They will help someone who needs something or service for and will pay for a small period of time. They have been registered charity since 1977 with 5 trustees including the vicar of the St Peters Church. They have £42k held in The Charities, Churches Investment Fund. The receive between £1500 - £2000 per year income from the portfolio. They expect to spend more than that over the next year due to the rising costs in living. They helped during covid with families who were struggling by covering the food voucher payments. If you think that you know anyone who needs help, please contact Pam Simpkins.

#### **14) Hailey Festival – No Report**

- 15) Hailey Primary School – No Report**
- 16) Kestrel Cubs – No Report**
- 17) Gardening Club – No Report**
- 18) Play reading group – No Report**
- 19) Questions and items for general discussion**