

Whitchurch on Thames Parish Council

MINUTES of the Annual Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall, Monday 12th May 2014 commencing 8.00pm.

PRESENT

Chairman	Mr. H. Butterworth Mr. V. Aldridge Mrs. L. Lucas Mr. H. Ainley Mr. N. Grove
Clerk	Ms. J. Welham

1. To Elect Chairman

The Clerk opened the meeting and requested nominations for Chairman Cllr Aldridge nominated Harry Butterworth and Cllr. Grove seconded. Mr. Butterworth accepted and took over the meeting.

2. To receive apologies for absence

Mr. K. Brooks

3. To receive declarations of interest

None.

3. **Public Forum**: Opportunity for members of the public to address the Council. With the permission of the Chairman, the public may also speak about specific items of business as they arise. None.

5. Agree Minutes of Parish Council Meeting 8th April 2014.

Agreed as a true record.

6. County Councillors Report

Cllr. Bulmer had circulated his monthly report, there were no major issues for the Parish Council.

7. District Councillors Report

Cllr. Slatter reported that since the extensive report given by Anne Ducker at the Annual Village Assembly there was not anything recent to add to this report.

8. Planning

No new applications forward for review.

The Clerk updated the meeting regarding the Greyhound Public House which is being marketed for Sale. SODC had declined the PC's nomination to register it as a Community Asset. The Clerk had been contacted by an interested party who may wish to purchase the property to become a single residence. The party had originally said they would attend the PC meeting but had contacted the Clerk to advise that they would not be able to make the meeting this evening.

The PC's preference would be for the Greyhound to remain as a public house, but will have to wait and watch the progress of the marketing.

9. Other Committee Reports

Village Hall

Stephen Trinder reported;

No issues or concerns. A new customer has been obtained Centurian Runners who will use the Hall's facilities twice yearly as a stop over for their running events, the Hall are receiving a good income from this rental.

The new Hall Manager is doing a great job and the Committee are very pleased with how things are being run.

The Hall webpage is to be updated and events being run at the Hall more widely publicised, this is work in progress.

TAPAG

Richard Wingfield reported,

The priority list for Highways jobs on the High Street has been sent to the Clerk to chase up the outstanding jobs, which need to be done whilst the High Street is free of commuter traffic due to the Bridge Closure. Clerk to action.

Resurfacing of the footpath Eastfield Lane/Swanston Field has been raised, this is long overdue and was scheduled to be done in the 1990's. The Clerk has registered this with OCC Highways and been told that their Inspector will come and look at the area, the Clerk has chased this up requesting a speedy decision.

The other area Richard Wingfield and John Southey are working on is an extensive report regarding the Flooding. This report is not yet complete as information is still being gathered. It is evident that there are a combination of issues that led to the village flooding twice during the earlier part of the year.

Foul sewage overload at the village pumping station requiring attention by Thames Water. Some properties experienced problems during both the January and February peaks. Ground level toilets became reluctant to flush and sewage was emitted from a kitchen drain. These may be related to the below paragraph.

Surface water rose in several places along the route of an underground drainage channel during both the January and February peaks. This was due to a restriction in a culvert that drains water from fields lying above the weir. The restriction has been located as between the last manhole in the rear garden of Chiltern Edge to where it meets the culvert headwall some 50m further on. The restriction forced upstream level water to flood across the road adjacent to the pumping station. For several hours the surface water in a section of Eastfield Lane was commensurate to the levels of 1947. The flooding caused by this restriction may have contributed to the sewage station overload. A blocked roadside drain on the northern side of Eastfield Lane (OCC ref 629128), and surface leaf litter blocking drain grilles on the southern side did not help.

The restriction needs investigating when the water levels fall and when it is possible to make a camera survey.

The events have also highlighted the need for regular maintenance of a 16m³ silt trap outside The Greyhound. This is where the culvert accepts road drainage from the High Street.

Cllr. Slatter will arrange a meeting with the Head of SODC Anne Ducker for Richard, John and Harry to attend to review the findings and discuss the Flood Relief funding to see if the issues are eligible.

Hardwick Road Project, Keith Senning from OCC Highways had been and visited the site again, and the issue now appears to be that the contractor engaged to carry out the works is not a recognised supplier for OCC.

A Bond will need to be raised and signed, Keith Stenning is looking into this and will advise. This unfortunately further delays the project starting.

Village Green

Cllr. Ainley reported,

He has met with various officers to discuss grant possibilities for a new Pavilion on the Green.

SODC will be a major source, but Sport England can also offer grants. To be successful the PC will need to show involvement from the Community, other Sport Groups and that the PC themselves fully support this project.

The Cricket Club have pledged £10 to £15K, the Football Club are interested also, the Junior Football Club included and have pledged possibly £10K.

The next steps are to hold a Community meeting and to detail the ideas and plans, and get Community feedback and support. A Planning application will need to be submitted and approved before any Grant applications can be submitted. Cllr. Slater stated that the SODC deadline for the next round of CIF Grant funds has passed and that this is very disappointing as there is a large fund and not many applicants. She expressed concern that the PC need to get things moving on this project, and get a planning application submitted and approved so grant funds can be applied for next time.

10. Finance

<u>Date</u> <u>Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Cheque Ref</u>	<u>Amount</u> <u>Paid</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
15/04/	Berinsfield Community Business	SO	£229	March grass cutting
24/04/	K. Brooks	141	£15	New key/Varnish for benches
24/04/	K. Brooks	142	£36	New padlock for VG gate
01/05/	J. Welham	SO	£426	April Salary
01/05/	HMRC	SO	£96	April Tax
06/05/	Chiltern Society	143	£25	Annual Sub
12/05/	Broker Netwrok Ltd	144	£402	Insurance renewal
12/05/	Southern Electric	145	£86	Electric bill pavilion
		Total	1,315.09	
		Payments		

Approved

12. Environment Group Cllr. Brooks – update

Cllr. Brooks was absent so the Clerk read out his report,

The seats on the village green needed repainting and this was done by myself with treatment paid for by the PC. This greatly improved their appearance.

There was also a problem with the lock on the gate which had become unfit for use so I purchased a much better one and fitted it. The lock was paid for by the PC.

Lastly the grass verge at the end of Hardwick Road opposite the Art Gallery had become overgrown - Stephen Trinder and myself cleared this area putting all the green waste into plastic Biffa bags ready for collection.

13. Sustainability & Allotments

Cllr. Donahue report,

Allotments: - No change.

Whitchurch Maze Committee

- 9 new bricks received for repairs and replacements, etc. Ready to be installed
- Reminder, the first Saturday of each month is Maze working party!
- Investigating 1-2 picnic tables. Requested help from Hardwick Estate for tables made out of Hardwick Trees. Will plan Maze event once tables are available.

WOTHabs Hardwick Road Verges Project:

Still trying to get the OCC go ahead for selected contractor Ed Hazel to start work. Escalated to Kevin Bulmer. Meeting held with Keith Stenning and designed Tim Wilde. Still no resolution.

War Memorial Improvements Planned:

I have met with Goring Heath Parish Councillors Peter Dragonetti and Martin Wise who have suggested some improvements to mark the 100th anniversary of WWI.

Martin is a Landscape Architect and put together a rough proposal that will improve access to the memorial or elderly and provide an improved cohesive architecture that incorporates the bench and waste bin with a surrounding hedge and crash barrier.

An informational plaque would be added based on some recent research that has been done on WWI veterans of the area. It would also be cleaned and restored.

Overall costs are estimated to be in the region of £10,000. It is proposed to seek matching funding from government initiatives that are planned and to split the costs between the two PCs.

Timing would be over the next couple years to be in place ahead of 2018 end of War commemoration. If you would like to be involved in this project or have ideas on what should be included please contact Councillor Donahue.

PAWS:

Sustainability Day to be held in Pangbourne Village Hall Saturday the 14th June from 10am to 3pm.

15 – 20 local representatives of Sustainability Initiatives be on hand to provide information and discuss: Energy Conservation, Biodiversity, Recycling, Green Economics, Organic Farming and buy local, among others.

We also plan a UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) update presentation from local IPCC Contributors Sir Bryan Hoskins and Nigel Arnell at 12pm which should be a great attraction given all the press the reports have had recently.

14.Other Matters for Chairman

The Clerk had received an email from a resident regarding the Yew Trees on Manor Road. These trees have had no maintenance for some years and a large bough is overhanging the roof of his property.

The Council agreed that the Clerk should ask the SODC Tree Officer Matt Gulliford to come and give a report on the yew trees, also the Beech Trees alongside the Village Green that originally were planned to be a hedge but have now grown into mature trees and are too close together, and their root systems could force a tree to fall.

Cllr. Slatter wished it to be noted her congratulations to Woodcote Parish Council on their successful Completion of their Neighbourhood Plan. She stated that they had carried out an excellent job and were a beacon for other Parishes in the District and the County. She suggested the Parish Council write a congratulatory letter.

15. Note date of next meeting Monday 7th July 2014.

Signed.....Date.....