

WOOTTON PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Meeting held on Monday 11th May 2015 at 7 pm in the Village Hall

MINUTES

Present

Cllr. M Tuely (Chair)
Cllr A Warner
Cllr P Loftus
Cllr. J Thomas
Cllr. L Seymour
Jane Carlin (Clerk)

8 members of the public

The meeting opened at 7.00 pm. The Chairman welcomed all present

1. Apologies

2. Approval of Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on Monday 12th May 2014

Agreed by all present and signed as a correct record of the meeting.

3. Report by Chairman of Wootton Parish Council:

There were six meetings of the Council plus the Annual Meeting plus one Extraordinary Meeting during the year. There were initially 7 councillors – two resigned during the year (Dave Baldwin and Trudie Lang) and one new member has been co-opted (Joan Thomas). Financial matters: The annual accounts were approved and signed off by the Responsible Financial Officer.. The balance brought forward to 1st April 2015 was £4,333.39 – this included £947.33 in the No. 2 Account for Special Projects and VAT owed, Fixed assets held of £69,884. The internal audit report for 2014/15 has been signed by the Internal Auditor on 25th April 2015. There were 7 Planning Applications decided, one of which was refused and subsequently granted on appeal. Thanks are due to all the village organisations, to the Responsible Financial Officer (Ric Adams) and the Internal Auditor (Phil Parker), to our County and District colleagues, to the Clerk and to the two councillors who have stepped down.

4. Presentations by Village Organisations;

PCC - Rev Stephen Jones thanked WPC for its continued support, especially as maintenance of the Churchyard and Church Clock are of benefit to the whole community. The Church has had another good year with the "£1-a-day" Lent Appeal having a generous response. The monthly "Messy Church" brings about 25 children and their parents together in Church and is a means of learning about the Christian way and seeing that "Church" is a welcoming environment. Church members take a large share in producing the TRIO lunch which is much appreciated by the recipients.. A contribution has recently been made to the Nepal Disaster fund. The Churchyard is now being mown as part of the summer programme, and "wildlife areas " have been set aside to preserve wildlife. Particular care is taken where there are newer graves. The Church enjoys good support from the Congregation and the Community whilst being aware of changes in people's understanding of life and faith. The support and friendship received is very much valued.

Village Hall - Joy Pomfret, Administrator, explained that the Village Hall had not requested any support from the Parish Council this year, largely due to the outstanding success of the Friday lectures. Last year the toilet area was repaired and repainted, outside window sills had been repainted (the woodwork was pronounced excellent), the front door repaired and new overhead heating installed to great success. This years improvement plans are to paint the inside window sills and creosote the outside woodwork and purchase 100 new chairs. The Village Hall is extremely well used and enjoyed by all age groups. In particular the School makes extensive use and the hall plays an essential part in keeping the School viable.

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9/5/16

Outreach – Continues to be freely distributed each month to all dwellings in Wootton, Glympton and Kiddington. The entire production is non-profit making and run by volunteers. Total income for the year 2014/15 was approximately £2,700 and total expenditure was £2,600, income being made up from 55% advertising and 45% donations including the grant from the Parish Council. Outreach has been able to reduce the amount requested from the Parish Council for two consecutive years and although it is unlikely that it could survive without any support it strives to minimise the support required.

Village Stores – the £787 granted by the Parish Council is used entirely to fund the Parcel Box and Daily Collection by the Royal Mail (Mon – Fri). This enables villagers to send recorded and special delivery letters, letters over D5 in size, freepost returns and parcels and is used for both personal and home business on a daily basis. The shop continues to fulfil an important role in the community and is well stocked at competitive prices with both staple produces and new items. It supports local producers and is supplied daily with fresh fruit and vegetables. The introduction of a dry cleaning service has proved popular. The shop continues to welcome and train new volunteers and encourage more people from the village to become involved. Following the break in earlier this year new security measures have been introduced. The AGM will be held on 1st July 2015.

Wootton CE Primary School - Jonathan Reynolds, Chair of Governors, on behalf of the School thanked the Parish Council for £750 precept to support the costs of a replacement data projector. The School is currently awaiting the results of an OFSTED inspection in April and is hopeful that it was a “positive inspection”. The budget for 2015/16 is likely to be in the order of £½ mn and this year will balance but only with the help of the Parish Council, Friends of Wootton School and the Parrott and Lee Foundation. There are currently 61 children on the school roll and the maximum capacity is 70. Ten pupils will leave from Year 6 and it is likely that 8 pupils will be admitted into Reception (to be confirmed). It is also likely that a small number of in-year admissions will occur from September as a result of transfers and families moving to the village. Only one vacancy remains for Governors (LA) and the School is fully staffed barring one KS1 teacher, and interviews have been held.

(At the end of this School year Jonathan will step down from Chair of Governors and Cllr Tuely expressed his and the Parish Council’s appreciation for his long standing commitment and care)

Questions were raised as to the long term aims of the School – whether it was viable to stay in the current building which relies heavily on additional space from the Village Hall and Playing Field. The main problem was finding land for a new building.

Wootton Baby, Toddler and Pre-School Group - Rachel Budge, Chair, gave her thanks to the Parish Council for their donation (£400) towards the replacement of their toy storage shed. They have raised an additional £500 from the Oxon County Council Community Projects Fund and are now in a position to go ahead. They will enlist the help of some local Dads for the building and Cllr. Warner offered the use of his driveway to place a skip whilst the old shed is being removed. In the New Year the Group initially dropped numbers but after posting advertisements and questionnaires throughout the village there are now several new families attending regularly. The Oxford Children’s Centre in Eynsham has been encouraging in helping with advertising and attending the Group to give support

Playing Field: Ann Day, Chair, reminded the meeting that this is the Memorial Playing Field purchased at the end of the War as a recreational space for those men returning. The recent VE celebrations on Friday 8th May had been a huge success. The afternoon event was opened by the Duke of Marlborough and witnessed the raising of a new flag and a 21 gun salute. The church bells were rung at 7pm followed by an evening fireworks display and lighting of the beacon. The day had been unanimously enjoyed by all.

The Committee has purchased a new football safety net to protect the bungalows at Burditch Bank, new baby swings for the play corner and four new bench seats. Ann warned that the ROSPA inspection is due in July and may recommend an overhaul to the play corner. The AGM is on 27th May.

(Cllr Tuely on behalf of the Parish Council expressed his thanks to Ann Day for a wonderful job in maintaining this valued village asset)

Wootton Sports Club – Ted Thomas, Chairman, reported the success of the last Season with two teams. – the 1st team finishing in Division Three Witney and District League and the 2nd team in Division Four. The

priority for the start of the new season is the need for new goal posts and the Club is fortunate in having two Sponsors, Taylor and Wimpy for the 1st team and Farrow Construction for the 2nd team. All work and fundraising is voluntary.

Wootton Conservation Trust –Jim Fletcher, Chairman, reports that after lengthy consultation with the Environment Agency, agreement was finally reached for limited work to improve the flow of the Glyme – unfortunately not in time to prevent flooding this winter. The delay to work on the river held up work to the main drain and footpath on Long Meadow but this work has been completed this April. The traditional laying of the hedge along Milford Lane in Feb 2014 has opened up the view over the valley and will rejuvenate the hedge. Advice and support has been received from a variety of expert Agencies and competitive estimates obtained for willow tree pollarding, a bat survey undertaken and a grant obtained towards work on 12 large trees along the Dorn. The Oxford Conservation Volunteers have done valuable work in clearing up after the pollarding work, building a new otter holt and keeping fences in repair and planting up gaps in the roadside hedge. Seven cows and five calves are now grazing the flood meadows. Work is outstanding to repair fences and re-erect signs. The main bridge over the Glyme has been photographed underneath and a maintenance working party is planned in August.

Wootton Relief in Need: presented a balance sheet

5. Presentation by Community Police Officer:

PCSO Phil Workman reported that there has been no rise in general crime – although the period 2014/15 for Wootton saw a significant rise in neighbourhood disputes, involving the same individuals. Crime Related Incident figures were also higher than the previous year, but these involve incidents such as Domestic where no criminal offence has occurred but is likely to involve vulnerable members of the community whose details are passed to partner agencies. PC Workman stressed that no incident is too small and urged people to phone 101 to reach the non emergency Thames Valley Police unit – phone 999 in an emergency.

The problem of speeding through the village was raised. PC Workman willing to employ a SID (speed indicator device) although the last time he had checked Castle Road there were no offences.

6. Any Other Business

Mike Hallam wished to raise three matters:

- He reminded the Parish Council that the correct terminology for the Memorial in the Churchyard was the Peace Memorial, the War Memorial being situated inside the Church
- The dilapidated state of the Well cover. This is a village feature and needs replacing with good quality wood. The main problem is its vulnerability in being hit and damaged by vehicles – but it should not be allowed to deteriorate.
- Village Precepts – questioned the amount of the Precept and why it had been increased. He asked if the accounts of the various organisations were examined before grants were awarded and whether other sources of funding were investigated first. He cited as examples Outreach which covers 3 villages and the School which includes children from other parishes.

Cllr Tuely suggested all these points be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting.

The Annual Meeting ended at 7.50pm and was immediately followed by the meeting of Wootton Parish Council. The date of the next Annual Parish Meeting is Monday 9th May 2016 at 7pm

Jane Carlin (Clerk)

