

CHARVIL PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 2nd May 2007 in the Village Hall

Present: Cllr. Alice Wilkinson, (Chairman), Cllr. Jim Gillett, Cllr. Shirley Newman, Cllr. Nick Ray, Cllr Jackie Jeffrey, Cllr. Michael Forrer, Cllr. Chris Drew, Cllr John Davies, District Cllr. Pamela Graddon and 32 residents.

The Clerk formally opened the meeting by welcoming the residents and the press, and introduced the Chairman of Council, Alice Wilkinson.

1. Chairman's opening remarks

The Chairman, on behalf of her fellow Councillors, welcomed residents to the meeting. She apologised on behalf of Cllr. John Illenden, who was unable to be present. She explained that Steve Grey had recently resigned from the Council after many years of service to the community. He had been Chairman of Council for several years and as Chair of Recreation he had been responsible for the major refurbishment of St Patrick's recreation ground. On behalf of the Council and the village she thanked Steve and wished him well for the future.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 3rd May 2006

Copies of the minutes were made available to residents and had been displayed on the Charvil.com Web site.

3. Chairman's report

The Chairman started by introducing her fellow Councillors to the residents. She explained that Council is responsible for spending the Parish Council precept, which is levied as part of the Council Tax of which the precept is a very small part. The main purpose of the meeting is for the Councillors to give a detailed report on the area of responsibility which they cover, and how the precept was spent. These reports would follow. The Chairman went on to review the exceptional events which had concerned Councillors in the past year. We had a traveller break in onto Charvil Country Park through the East Park Farm sports facility. Because the Country Park land has still not been handed over there was confusion about land ownership which delayed the eviction. Later in the year concern arose because of interest shown by a developer to build retirement homes at Sandford Farm with access onto Beggars Hill Road. A planning application is expected. There was also concern at a number of back garden development applications around the village. The Chairman went on to thank the Parish Clerk and Assistant Clerk and the Village litter Warden, and the Village Hall cleaner for all the effort they put in to make the Councils activities run smoothly. and to Steve Wilkinson the Webmaster for Charvil.com and to Shirley Newman the editor of Charvil News.

6. Planning

Councillor Jeffrey explained the process for review of applications by the Parish Council and how comment is formulated. Wokingham Borough Council are the planning Authority. The Parish Council can only comment and expect the comments to be taken into account by the planning officers or the Planning Committee when making decisions. Most applications are for small extensions, but all too frequently more contentious small and occasionally larger back garden development are received. Back garden developments on Park view Drive South, on Old Bath Road and on Charvil House Road have all been considered together with an application to redevelop the Texaco Garage.

7. Finance Report

The Chairman of Finance Councillor Nick Ray reviewed the income and expenditure in the previous year 2005/2006 from which preliminary figures indicated that Income had increased by £10K. This was attributable to a £3K increase in precept and the larger than normal refund of VAT of £7K resulting from the capital purchase of Play equipment in the previous year.

There had been a slight fall in Village Hall Income compared with the previous year but that was matched by a reduction in Village Hall expenditure.

He went on to explain the budget and resulting precept for the current year. The total precept had increased by 4.3% on the previous year. However this represents only a 1.7% increase for a band D tax payer because of an increase in the number of taxpaying properties in Charvil.

8. Village Hall Management

Shirley Newman explained the objectives of the Management Committee to make the Hall self-financing and at the same time maintain the Hall to the highest possible standard. To this end a floor cleaning machine has been purchased and the exterior lighting is currently being improved. The committee is currently exploring the refurbishment of the Toilets. With all this expenditure there is an obvious need to keep the hall fully booked. We believe this is best done by word of mouth. "SO RECOMMEND YOUR HALL TO ALL YOUR FRIENDS". Shirley Newman again thanked Tracy Ray, the Assistant Clerk and Village Hall manager, who deals so efficiently with all the day to day work involved in running and maintaining the hall.

9. Amenities & Recreation

Chris Drew the Chairman of Amenities and Recreation reported that two notice boards had been wrecked, one by vandalism the other by old age. The one at the Hawthorns has already been replaced, the one at Park View Drive North will be replaced shortly. Council were considering the future of the somewhat dilapidated bus shelters on the A4, - Do we need them? How much are they used? Should money be spent to replace or refurbish them? These are the questions which need to be asked of residents. Let the Council know your views. Graffiti has made a reappearance and Roger Burns has removed it on a number of occasions recently. All the play equipment and other Council owned assets continue to be inspected regularly. The manned refuse vehicle continues to attend monthly.

10. Highways & Public Transport

Michael Forrer reviewed the ongoing issues relating to highways and public transport. Some concern was being expressed at the increase in traffic using Park Lane and Park View Drive South as a short cut to the A4 to and from Woodley. Speed humps have had some effect on Park Lane but some residents are not happy. A meeting had been held to consider the use of 'Quiet Roads' measures and speed limits to control traffic. Improvements to the footpath on Old Bath Road have been welcomed but only as a half measure.

11. Multi Sports Area at East Park Farm

Nick Ray explained that following the favourable response at last year's Annual Parish Meeting the Parish Council asked Wokingham District Council to part fund a new Multi Sports Area at East Park Farm. Wokingham agreed and the process is now under way. Submission of a planning application is imminent. Following on from his earlier explanation of funding he asked residents for ideas on how we might further improve the facilities in Charvil.

12. Country Park

Nick Ray explained that the hand over of the land to form the Charvil Country Park has still not taken place but is still said to be imminent. With this in mind the Parish Council has asked the Chief Executive of Wokingham Borough Council to set up a Charvil Country Park Management Committee, on which both the Parish Council and the Borough Council are fully represented. In response to a question about cross country motor cycle riding in the area designated for the park he explained that until the land is formally handed over it is difficult for Wokingham Borough Council to enforce any restrictions.

13. Vacancy on Council

Jim Gillett the Deputy Chairman of Council asked residents who had made the effort to come to the meeting to take the next step and join the Council or the Village Hall Management

Committee. Because of the retirement from the Council of Steve Grey, who during his many years on the Council had served as Committee Chairman and Chairman of Council there is now a Council vacancy to be filled. There is also a need for non-Councillor members of the Village Hall Management Committee.

14. Age Concern

Jim Gillett asked residents to be aware of the good work carried out by Age Concern and to be aware that they have a need for volunteer drivers and kitchen helpers at the Twyford Centre. Any volunteers were asked to contact Madeline Boyce.

15. Open Forum

A resident raised the issue of the broken fence in Chiltern Drive. She asked if a more solid wall could be erected which could not be so easily destroyed.

It was confirmed that the Village Fete Committee has been reformed and that the Fete would take place on 8th July.

In response to a question about Children’s Centres: It was explained that Charvil is in the north area for which decisions had not yet been made.

District Councillor Pamela Graddon asked the residents present to join her in thanking the Parish Councillors for the efficient and professional manner in which the business of the Council is carried out.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.

*Signed*Chairman of the Council

Date.