

CHARNEY BASSETT PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 31 MAY 2000

PRESENT:

Mr G Beer (Chairman)
Mrs B Douglas
Mrs E Dahele
Mrs J Bath

Mr P G Davies (Clerk)

An apology was received from Mr J Harper. Nine members of the public attended.

AGENDA

1. Minutes of the meeting on 22 March 2000 and matters arising.
2. Matters arising from the Parish Assembly.
3. Clerk's Financial Report.
4. Playing Field.
5. Charney Mill.
6. Village College.
7. Clerk's Correspondence.
8. Ten minutes for Residents' Questions.
9. Any Other Business.

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 22 MARCH 2000 AND MATTERS ARISING.

These were approved and signed by the Chairman. There were no matters arising which did not appear on the Agenda. The Chairman reminded **The Clerk** that Planning Matters should be a permanent agenda item although there were none for this meeting.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PARISH ASSEMBLY.

It was agreed to raise the matter of the derelict school with Mr McBain but by going to see him, rather than by letter.

The resolution of the dispute as to whether ragwort is present on Charney Field awaits the flowering of the weed.

The Clerk has yet to report the poor state of the Stanford bridle path to OCC.

3. CLERK'S FINANCIAL REPORT

The Clerk did not present a formal financial report at this meeting as he had presented a summary of the 1999/2000 accounts to the Parish Assembly on 10 May.

4. CHARNEY FIELD

Planning permission for change of use from agriculture to leisure had been granted. The Clerk had contacted OCC verbally to tell them of the Parish Council's wish to purchase the field. WS Atkins, agents for OCC said they would look into the value they placed on the field. District Audit had been contacted and they would need to carry out a re-valuation as the previous one was time lapsed; they would charge a fee for this. If the new valuation and the OCC values coincided, District Audit would not need to negotiate on the Parish Council's behalf, thus saving money.

Mrs Dahele reported that the Village Hall Committee wished to receive a formal request from the Parish Council for the extension of its remit to cover management of Charney Field. The Committee had raised a

number of issues, which they felt needed addressing before they agreed to the extension. It was agreed to meet with the Committee when purchase of the Field was nearly complete.

5. CHARNEY MILL

The Clerk reported on his efforts to resolve the question of insurance for The Mill. The Vale Conservation Officer had now conceded that, in the event of a total loss, the Vale Council would not require the full reinstatement of the Mill to full working order. The Clerk has therefore written back to the insurers for a new insurance quotation, which would cover basic things such as storm damage, but not rebuilding. The question of damage to The Mill from an accident to Mill Cottage should be raised. The Council was reminded that it had agreed to meet Ms Quirke when purchase had been completed but this had not yet happened.

6. VILLAGE COLLEGE

Mrs Dahele had distributed a questionnaire around the village and had been encouraged by a 10% response. She was continuing a dialogue with Abingdon College.

7. CLERK'S CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk had received a reply to his letter asking OCC to reinstate the south approach to the village, currently designated a "failed" road. It stated that there were many other roads in a worse state than this and it was unlikely that the limited increase in road funding would stretch to dealing with the problem.

Mr Harper had asked that a letter from "Home-Start South Oxon" should be discussed but in his absence, this was deferred to the next meeting.

8. TEN MINUTES FOR RESIDENTS' QUESTIONS

The Clerk reported, in response to a question, that there was not yet any information on the Best Kept Village Competition, as judging had not finished.

It was suggested that long grass in front of the bench on Ock Green should be cut. **The Clerk** would look into this.

It was commented that there were some dangerous potholes in Longworth Road, which should be reported. **The Clerk** was asked to do this and re-stock the Post Office with the pre-paid cards for doing this.

A question was asked about water flow along the millstream. **The Clerk** reported that the Environment Agency was planning to do something about this and he would contact them again for news.

A resident had suggested that the bus shelter should be replaced with something smarter. Discussion of this proposal revealed no support for it.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mrs Douglas reported that she had received a letter from OCC, consulting over local subsidised bus routes. It had been determined that nobody from Charney used the "shoppers' bus" to Abingdon on a Monday and OCC were therefore minded to cancel it. Objections to this action, or suggested alternative arrangements, needed to be conveyed to OCC by 13 July 2000. One suggestion from the floor was that it could run on each third Monday of the month when the new Farmers' Market was held in Abingdon. **The Clerk** was asked to bring this matter to the attention of villagers by means of notices on the Notice Board and in the Post Office. During discussion, it was revealed that not many people knew that the early morning school bus to Wantage was licensed for fare paying passengers and this, too, should be made known.

It was reported that a number of tyres collected during the village clean-up were still behind the bus shelter. **The Clerk** was asked to arrange their removal.

The Chairman raised the issue of the sale of New Manor Farm and its possible impact on the village. During the long debate which ensued, it was revealed that a number of villagers were concerned that the parcelling of the land for sale into six lots would lead to development. The Clerk reported that this would not be possible due to covenants on the sale preventing it. In addition, a policy in the Local Plan, which would, after renewal, run to 2011, prevents development on parcels of land which form part of a village's character. This would prevent development of Lot 6, the paddock adjacent to the Green. The debate considered the possibility that the Parish Council might purchase the land but as the sale involved sealed bids, this was not feasible and in the light of protection afforded by covenants, not necessary. Nevertheless, the Council believed it should be seen to be doing something to protect the village environment. It was therefore agreed that a letter should be sent to the District Councillor, Mr Terry Cox asking him to seek assurances that the Local Plan will always include protection against development, especially on the paddock adjacent to The Green.

There was further discussion of the plan to build a significant number of new houses in Oxfordshire and **The Clerk** was asked to write again to OCC, expressing the Parish Council's objections.

10. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 12 July 2000 at 7.30 p.m. in the Village Hall.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.18 p.m. with thanks to all those who attended. He also asked that the minutes should record his special thanks to The Clerk for his continuing efforts in serving the Council.

Signed.....
Chairman