

CHARNEY BASSETT PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 10 MARCH 1999

PRESENT:

Mr G Beer (Chairman)
Mrs B Douglas
Mr S Callaghan
Mrs E Dahele

Mr P G Davies (Clerk)

An apology was received from Mr N Boyd. 4 members of the public were in attendance.

Before the meeting proper, the Chairman welcomed PC Roger Foster who was attending his last Council meeting as the village beat officer. PC Foster explained that as Thames Valley Police sector boundaries were being changed to align with local council boundaries, policing of Charney Bassett would revert to the Wantage/Faringdon sector. The change was brought about as a result of the new Crime and Disorder Act which would involve local authorities, such as Parish Councils, more closely in policing plans. The new beat officer was PC Martyn Holder of Buckland who had been the village beat officer previously and knew the area well; the Inspector was Paul Kirkland of Wantage. Contact details for these officers would be published in the Cherbury News. They would be pleased to arrange speakers on police matters for any village meeting.

PC Foster was pleased to report that only 8 crimes had been reported in the village in the past twelve months: 4 burglaries, 3 thefts and a stolen vehicle. This compared favourably with Southmoor, for example, where the rate was a factor of ten higher. He was currently concerned with two issues: drugs and hare coursing. There did not seem to be a drugs problem in Charney Bassett at present but hare coursing in the surrounding area was a problem. The law was not helpful and recourse had to be made to other legislation and surveillance to deter the presence of this undesirable element.

PC Foster thanked the Council for its support over his eight years as beat officer and in response the Chairman, on behalf of the Council and residents, thanked him for his help and consideration in village matters and wished him well on his new patch.

AGENDA

1. Minutes of the meeting on 13 January 1999.
2. Matters arising from those minutes.
3. Clerk's Financial Report.
4. Playing Field.
5. Millennium Celebrations.
6. Clerk's Correspondence.
7. Best Kept Village competition.
8. Ten minutes for Residents' Questions.
9. Any Other Business.

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 13 JANUARY 1999.

These were approved and signed by the Chairman.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM 13 JANUARY MEETING

Highways: The bollards at the New Road/Buckland Road junction had been replaced.

Village Hall: Repair work is complete. The Clerk had not yet been able to produce a summary of accounts for the work as there is still one invoice outstanding, for the flat roof.

Millennium: See agenda item for discussion of celebration ideas. The Clerk had contacted Mr Richard Pike to invite Lyford to join in any planned celebrations. He had discussed emergency planning in the event of disruption of services due to the millennium bug and had determined that both OCC and Vale of White Horse Council had made contingency plans. No action was needed by the Parish Council. PC Foster recommended approaching the new police inspector to get an assurance that the rural community would not be neglected in planning police duties over this critical period.

Grass Cutting: See Clerk's Financial Report.

Clerk's Correspondence: The Clerk had established that the track from the vicinity of the Camp towards Pusey was not a public right of way but had information on how to get it adopted as a footpath.

New Road Hedge: It was agreed that the hedge needed a shorter cut but this would be done next year or when the speed limit signs were erected.

3. CLERK'S FINANCIAL REPORT

The Clerk's financial report was adopted.

The Clerk had paid the bill of £225 for the playing field rent and a grant of £25 to the Citizens Advice Bureau in Abingdon. It was agreed to pay the three budget items outstanding, namely The Clerk's expenses of £45; the hiring fee for the Village Hall of £28 and a donation to Hanney British Legion of £15 for the Remembrance Day wreath. It was also agreed to renew the CPRE subscription.

The Clerk had drawn up a specification for grass cutting in the village and had sought tenders from four contractors, including the current one. Two tenders had been received and it was agreed to place the contract for the 1999 cutting season with the lower tender, from the existing contractor, Mr A J Baxter.

4. PLAYING FIELD

The Clerk and Mrs Dahele had prepared an application for funding and had submitted it to the Trust for Oxfordshire Environment (TOE), set up to allocate monies collected from landfill tax. The proposal was discussed at the TOE board meeting on 24 February 1999. The project had proved interesting to TOE but they required more information on the long-term plans for the field before approving funding. It was agreed to convene a meeting of the playing field sub-committee for Monday, 22 March 1999 in The Chequers to discuss a response.

5. MILLENNIUM CELEBRATIONS

The Clerk had arranged for "voting slips" to be inserted into every copy of the Cherbury News delivered in the village. Of the 120 sent out, 33 had been returned with the 15 ideas receiving 90 mentions. The most popular suggestion was restoration of the Mill stream and pond with a stained glass window in the church second and purchase of the paddock by the Green third. As there was no clear preference, it was agreed to raise the issue with the village at the Parish Assembly and have a discussion on the practicality of the suggestions made. By this time the new Council would be in place. An organising sub-committee could be formed following this discussion. The decision that any celebration would be in the summer of 2000 meant that time would be available to organise this.

6. CLERK'S CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk had received an entry form for the Oxfordshire Best Kept Village competition. It was agreed that although there were many eyesores in the village, it would be a useful incentive to the village to enter, thus hopefully provoking efforts to tidy the village up. It was agreed to take part in National Spring Clean Week with a working party at on Saturday, 17 April (10.00 a.m. on The Green) as part of the clean-up plan. Also on this day, councillors would "audit" the village to identify trouble spots with a view to a further working party on the following week-end, should this be necessary. **The Clerk** was asked to advertise the clean-up in the Cherbury News, together with a gentle exhortation to villagers to look to their environment and tidy it up if need be.

The Clerk had received notification of the Oxfordshire Special Conservation Award scheme for environmental projects but no such scheme in the village would qualify.

Notice of, and nominations for, Council elections had been received. The election (if more than five nominations are received) will be held on Thursday, 6 May 1999.

7. TEN MINUTES FOR RESIDENTS' QUESTIONS

Mr Mills asked for, and was given, a list of dates when the Village Hall would be needed during 1999.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman reported that he, Mrs Douglas and The Clerk had met Mr Geoff Barrell of OCC and PC Tony Currell of Thames Valley Police on 9 March 1999 and had agreed on the siting of speed limit signs on the four approaches to the village. Some of the village name signs would also be moved to reduce clutter. The limit should be in place by early 2000. Location of repeaters would be arranged later.

Mr Callaghan expressed concern that the date chosen for the Village Feast coincided with Uffington Show and attendance might be adversely affected by this. It was agreed that this was not a matter for the Parish Council and, since a number of bookings had already been made for this date, it could not be changed.

The Clerk noted that a number of the street signs in the village were showing signs of corrosion and it was agreed that he should write to Vale of White Horse Council to seek replacements.

The Chairman noted that the footpath to Denchworth from the parish boundary needed stile maintenance and hedge cutting. **The Clerk** was asked to draw this to the attention of OCC. Comment was made on the state of Sedges Farm alongside this footpath and on the smells apparently emanating from the farm. **The Clerk** was asked to publicise the phone number of the Environmental Health Dept. of Vale of White Horse Council to whom complaints of smells should be made.

9. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 12 May 1999 at 7.30 p.m. in the Village Hall. The Parish Assembly would be held on 26 May 1999 at 7.30 p.m. in the Village Hall. **The Clerk** was asked to draft a Green Paper for early consideration by the existing Council and then by the new Council at the 12 May meeting and for issue to villagers before the Assembly.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.11 p.m. with thanks to all those who attended.

Signed.....
Chairman