

CHARNEY BASSETT PARISH COUNCILMINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11 JANUARY 1995

PRESENT: Mr C Eld (Chairman)
 Mr G Rumble (Vice-chairman)
 Mr E J Clarke
 Mrs T Cox
 Mrs J Fry

Mr P G Davies (Clerk)

Mr Terry Cox, District Councillor was in attendance together with 25 members of the public. Three experts, identified below, attended for agenda item 6.

An apology was received from Col John Walton, County Councillor.

AGENDA

1. Minutes of the last meeting
2. Matters arising from those minutes
3. Treasurer's report
4. Precept for 1995/96
5. Planning matters
6. Playing Field and Low Cost Housing
7. Commemoration of VE-Day
8. Appeal for donations: CAB and Kingsmoor Day Centre
9. Ten minutes for Residents' questions etc.
10. Any other business

1. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of 9 November 1994 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

2. MATTERS ARISING

- a. Manor Farm Road: The Land Register search revealed that the road was not registered. This has been reported to OALC who are considering the next step. The Clerk had sought clues to ownership of the road in the original planning documents but without success.
- b. Jack's Corner: The signpost had been repaired.
- c. Signs: The Clerk had asked VWHDC to repair two street signs for New Road and Chapel Lane. Mr Rumble had procured a small "no through road" sign to be added to the latter once this was done. **The Clerk** was also asked to seek repair of the signs at the end of Bridle Path, the Cherbury Camp footpath and the Pusey bridle path as well as a hydrant sign in Buckland Rd.
- d. Mount Pleasant: The Clerk reported no change in the situation regarding Mount Pleasant. VWHDC had replaced boarding-up after an attempted break-in.
- e. Litter bin: **The Clerk** was asked to order a new litter bin from VWHDC.
- f. New Road Hedge: This had been cut and paid for by Oxon CC.
- g. Street cleaning: Still no response to the adverts for a street cleaner.
- h. Village Green Seat: Mr Bert Smith has repaired the seat. **Mr Clarke** would chase him for a bill.
- i. Playing Field Notice: It was agreed not to spend money on a new sign.

j. Speed Limit: The request for a speed limit through the village was to be discussed by the County Traffic and Works Sub-committee in February 1995. Col Walton had advised on the best way to lobby the committee and it was agreed that **The Clerk** should write to Col Walton outlining the case.

6. THE PLAYING FIELD AND LOW COST HOUSING

This item was taken out of sequence for the convenience of the experts attending. Mr Harvey Pitt, Assistant Development Manager (Acquisitions) of Oxford Citizens Housing Association (OCHA) Ltd. introduced the topic by explaining OCHA's background and proposal to conduct a survey in and around Charney Bassett to determine the need (if any) for low cost housing (LCH). He explained how LCH was funded and the planning constraints which would be applied to ensure that ownership or renting of LCH would be confined to residents of the village and any other village the Council wished to see included in the survey. The price of such houses would be limited to make them affordable. OCHA funds were drying up which made the timescale urgent for completion of the survey and nomination of a scheme if the survey showed it was justified.

In response to questions, Mr Pitt produced an outline scheme for 9 units of 2 or 3 bedroomed houses on the Buckland Road plot, taking up part of the northern end of the existing playing field. The number chosen was arbitrary as it would depend on the outcome of the survey. There was no connection with the planning consent held by Mr McBain for five properties on the Old School site. The McBain proposal did not fall within the formal definition of a low cost housing development.

Mr Peter Seddon, Land Agent acting for Oxfordshire County Council outlined OCC policy and said there would appear to be no problem in selling the land required for LCH. He had instructions to dispose of OCC land to the south-west of the village but was holding back on all of it except the field to the west of the new footpath, pending a resolution of the playing field problem. He considered that an extension of the lease on the existing field was possible until the various options had been considered but it would only be short term. He explained that OCC was obliged by law to obtain the best price in disposing of its land, even if that meant a village losing its leisure amenity.

Mrs Cox presented a scheme for three parcels of land along the north side of Buckland Road. It comprised three plots for speculative housing, adjacent to "Fairfield", a plot for a pavilion or village hall cum carpark and play area and a 3 to 5 acre plot for a playing field which could include a full-sized football pitch. No planning application had yet been made. The architect needed an answer to the proposal by 27 February 1995.

Mr Rodger Hood, Principal Planning Officer (Strategy Policy) of VWHDC explained District Council planning policy. He emphasised that he, as an official of the DC, had to confine himself to advice to councillors on pure planning matters only, using the Local Plan as his guide. He explained that LCH could qualify as an exception to the Local Plan, if the need for it was established. He saw no basic problem with the OCHA proposal. It would be subject to strict planning requirements on such matters as site access, the need for it would have to be established by a survey, it would be priced to meet a social need and it would require the approval of the Parish Council. He did see problems with the Cox proposal because speculative housing would not be permitted if it infringed the Local Plan and developing three properties did not comply with planning requirements that infill development in a small village (the category in which Charney was placed) should be on a single plot basis. Mr Terry Cox added that the planning committee would not normally go against the advice of its officers. Even if the village wished to see the development, the precedent it would create of a developer offering an inducement to a village to get around the Local Plan would be resisted.

In summarising the outcome of a long discussion, the Chairman, aided by a show of hands when appropriate, concluded that a survey should be undertaken, the scope of which would be Charney and surrounding small villages within a radius of about 3 miles. It appeared that if LCH did go ahead on the Buckland site, it would be unlikely to result in a planning deal of any additional benefit to the village.

The playing field lease did appear to be open to extension but only in the short term. The Cox scheme appeared to face enormous planning hurdles, however, at Mrs Fry's insistence he asked the public whether they approved of it and on a show of hands they did. OCC appeared to be more flexible than they had been at first and he was encouraged by Mr Seddon's comment that "anything is possible".

The Clerk was asked to write to (a) Mr Selby, architect for the Cox scheme, explaining why it was not possible to make a decision on the scheme by his deadline but explaining that the scheme had not been rejected and (b) Mr Seddon seeking prices for the schemes which would emerge if LCH went ahead.

After the discussion on the playing field, Mr Seddon updated the Council on the sale of part of the Paddock on the Green to Mr Tabor which had been stopped at the request of the Council. He undertook to contact Mr Tabor to see if he was still interested and whether he wished to discuss it with the Council to see if a mutually acceptable solution could be found.

3. TREASURER'S REPORT

The report was adopted on the proposal of Mr Clarke, seconded by Mrs Fry.

4. PRECEPT FOR 1995/96

On the proposal of Mr Rumble, seconded by Mrs Cox, the precept was set at £1,200, the same as last year. Although, strictly, there could be a zero precept this year, it was felt prudent to keep funds available in case the cost of Manor Farm road repairs and legal expenses arising from playing field purchase fell on the Council.

5. PLANNING MATTERS

The willow tree on Ock Green had been felled. Two applications, for an extension to "Whitegates" in Longworth Road and replacement of "Brilia" in The Bridle Path with two new properties had been circulated to councillors. They unanimously recommended rejection of both proposals. **The Chairman** undertook to convey the Council's views on the first proposal to VWHDC as the Clerk had a personal interest in it. **The Clerk** was instructed to convey the Council's views on the second proposal.

7. COMMEMORATION OF VE-DAY

The Chairman referred to a circular received from the Royal British Legion, concerning plans for celebrating VE-Day. Mrs Barrett, The Chequers, outlined plans the pub had to help with the celebrations which included a pig roast, a 40s disco in 40s dress, a Glenn Miller-style band on the Village Green and other ideas. A collection would be opened in the pub to help fund some of these activities. It was agreed that the arrangements would not interfere with the plans Mrs Gardiner had to celebrate May Day one week late on the new Bank Holiday date, 8 May 1995. **Mr Clarke** undertook to be the RBL co-ordinator and Mary Kraushur and Pam Barrett would help with co-ordinating the other activities.

Mr Terry Cox announced that Charney would qualify for a grant of £100 from VWHDC and it was agreed that a suitable use for this could be the purchase of commemorative medals for village children. **Mr Clarke** would look into this.

8. APPEAL FOR DONATIONS

The Council discussed appeals for funds from the Citizen's Advice Bureau and the Kingsmoor Day Centre. Although uncertain whether the CAB was an appropriate use of Parish funds, they were high enough to warrant a one-off donation and £25 was proposed by Mrs Fry, seconded by Mr Clarke and

carried. Mr David Douglas, from the floor, supported the appeal from the Kingsmoor Day Centre which included Charney within its catchment area. It was proposed by Mrs Cox, seconded by Mrs Fry and carried that £25 be donated

9. QUESTIONS ETC. FROM RESIDENTS

Mrs Venn raised two matters, the first that she did not wish to be paid for continuing to look after the bus shelter and the second that dog fouling appeared to be getting worse. The Chairman explained that unless the culprit (dog or owner) was observed fouling, there was little the Council could do.

A number of residents asked whether the Council intended to protest at the proposal to build an international airport near the village. The Chairman stated that the Parish Council would take a lead from the District Council and sought the advice of Mr Terry Cox. The latter announced that an extraordinary meeting of the Vale Council, with all-party support, was being held in public at Abingdon on 17 January 1995. He reviewed the situation, explaining that the proposal was being taken very seriously but it depended to a large extent on the Government's attitude to a new airport on a greenfield site. Meanwhile **The Clerk** was asked to convey the Parish Council's outrage at the proposal to the Chief Executive of VWHDC, Robert Jackson MP, Dr Brian Mawhinney MP, Secretary of State for Transport and Colonel Walton.

The Council was thanked from the floor for the Christmas Tree and lights on the Village Green. Mr Clarke had thanked Mr and Mrs Gildersleeves for the electricity for the lights.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr Rumble proposed that a donation of £15 be made to Hanney British Legion to cover the cost of the wreath on Remembrance Day and this was carried.

Mrs Cox asked that the question of payment of a wage to the Clerk should be placed on the agenda for the next meeting; this was agreed.

11. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 8 March 1995 at 7.30 p.m. in the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 10.42 p.m.

Signed.....

Chairman