

CHARNEY BASSETT PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL WEDNESDAY 11 MAY 2005

Present: Mr G Beer
Mr J Harper
Mr G Rumble

Mr P G Davies (Clerk)

Apologies had been received from Mrs Penny McGuire, Mr J Stiles and District Councillor Elsa Boyce. Police Constable Martyn Holder and County Councillor Melinda Tilley attended part of the meeting. Eighteen members of the public also attended.

1. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr Beer was proposed as Chairman by Mr Rumble, seconded by Mr Harper and duly elected.
Mr Harper was proposed as Vice-chairman by Mr Beer, seconded by Mr Rumble and duly elected.

2. TIMES AND DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was agreed to continue to hold meetings at 7.30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of every odd month.

3. OTHER APPOINTMENTS

Council representatives to other committees were elected as follows: -

Minibus Committee: Mr Beer (combining his role of driver representative.)

Transport Representative: Mr Harper.

Village Hall Committee (CHAFT): Mr Stiles and Mrs McGuire.

The Clerk would look after grass cutting (liaising with the Chairman) and would be the Cherbury News reporter.

Mr Peter Leaver was re-appointed as internal auditor to the Council.

The Chairman thanked his fellow councillors and The Clerk for their continued support during the year.

CHARNEY BASSETT PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL ASSEMBLY WEDNESDAY 11 MAY 2005

Present: Mr G Beer
Mr J Harper
Mr G Rumble

Mr P G Davies (Clerk)

Apologies had been received from Mrs Penny McGuire, Mr J Stiles and District Councillor Elsa Boyce. Police Constable Martyn Holder and County Councillor Melinda Tilley attended part of the meeting. Eighteen members of the public also attended.

PC Martyn Holder, beat officer and Melinda Tilley, County Councillor addressed the meeting.

PC Holder said that there were three reported crimes in Charney Bassett during the previous year. One was theft from a motor vehicle in which BMW badges were removed from a parked vehicle during the night and the other two were assaults, one domestic and the other a road rage incident. Although all crimes are bad news, this makes Charney Bassett a relatively crime-free village. He reviewed the deluge of recent legislation including Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) which could now be applied to motor vehicles, for example those driven recklessly or with loud music being played. On the question of speeding he had spoken to his traffic division and they explained that the layout of the village was unsuitable for mounting a speed trap as there was no straight section of road long enough. However, he would certainly take action by speaking to the driver of a speeding car if the car's registration number was made known to him. He noted that unlike other places in the area, there had been no thefts from sheds in Charney Bassett, a crime which frequently results in very late reporting because such thefts are not discovered until the need for the first grass cut, by which time it is too late to trace the thieves. It is essential that any reports of crimes are made immediately if there is to be any chance of police action. He reminded the meeting that he was happy to be contacted at any time on his home phone number (01367 870232) or his mobile (07970 145294), however only if he was on duty at the time would he be able to come to the scene of an incident. At all other times (except when on holiday) he would take notes and take action as soon as he was on duty. Asked about low-flying helicopters, he had experience of effects on livestock elsewhere in the Vale but it was matter for the Ministry of Defence, not the police. However, he warned that attempting to distract pilots by using high-powered torches could result in police action.

Councillor Melinda Tilley introduced herself as the newly elected County Councillor for the Kingston Bagpuize ward with little news to give about County Council activities as the new council had yet to meet. She is currently also a District Councillor for the Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor ward and leader of the Conservative opposition party on the Vale of White Horse District Council. She hoped to be able to attend all the Charney Bassett Parish Council meetings in future although she was responsible for 12 parish councils spreading as far as Stanford-in-the-Vale. She would always be available for consultation and would help deal with any county council matters affecting villagers. In response to a question about efficient use of highway repair funds she observed that the repair of potholes would be given greater priority in future as the number of incidents caused by them had increased. Mention was made of the need to restore sight lines along Buckland road where it was believed the county council had retained ownership of a strip of verge. **The Clerk** said he would raise this matter with OCC and keep Councillor Tilley informed. She was thanked for her response to a complaint from Mrs Yvonne Cox about the withdrawal of travel tokens and she was reminded that with a minimal bus service, Charney Bassett residents had been discriminated against with this decision. She commented that should her party regain control of the Vale Council in 2007, they would re-visit this issue as they had offered an alternative strategy which retained the tokens during the recent budget negotiations.

1. MINUTES OF THE 9 MARCH MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING.

The minutes of the March meeting were approved and signed by the Chairman.

The Clerk reported that the two seats donated by villagers had been placed on Orchard Green and adjacent to the telephone box. The Chairman expressed the Council's thanks to the donors. Work to repair the railings on Ock Green had started with removal of the old posts and new posts and rails would be installed shortly.

2. CLERK'S FINANCIAL REPORT

The Clerk presented his regular financial report which had been copied to councillors and this was adopted. The figures in the report were for the financial year 2004/05 and were also presented in the Annual Return, copied to councillors. He also tabled Section 4 of the Annual Return, signed by the Internal Auditor, which showed that the accounts were in order. The Statement of Accounts and the Statement of Assurance in the Annual Return were accordingly approved by the Council and signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

In response to a question from Mr Harper, The Clerk explained that the payments to the grass cutting contractor varied because the cutting cycles of the various areas cut were different, quoting the most recent invoice as an example.

Payment of £45.72 to The Clerk, comprising £31.32 for slabs and concrete for the benches and £14.40 for printing the May edition of Charney Chatter was approved.

It was agreed that the Council should continue its membership of the Campaign to Protect Rural England and pay the annual donation of £25. Expenditure on budget items, insurance and membership of OALC, were also approved and cheques signed.

3. PLANNING MATTERS

An application for the extension of Minmere Bungalow to include a granny flat was considered by councillors who had no comment to make on it.

4. CHARNEY FIELD

Work had continued on clearing the spinney alongside the children's play area, acting on the advice of Mr Bob Plumtre, an acknowledged tree expert. It was planned to plant additional native trees in some of the cleared areas to provide a variety of species.

It was reported that evidence of dog fouling had been found inside the fenced area around the children's play area and that this could have resulted from inadequate protection from the access gate. The Clerk was asked to look into modifying the gate with vertical slats to prevent a recurrence.

5. CHARNEY MILL

It was reported that the parking area adjacent to the Mill had become overgrown again. It was pointed out that the proposal to place hard core on this area to facilitate parking off the road at a dangerous bend had never been carried out and **the Council** was urged to consider this matter again.

In response to a question about providing water to the Mill, The Clerk reported that of the various options considered, only pumping for occasional running of the Mill was feasible in the light of the need to ensure the risk of flooding was not increased. This is an extremely (six figure) expensive option and the restorers are now pursuing the option of running the Mill with auxiliary power in the form of an electric motor.

6. VILLAGE COLLEGE

The Clerk, in his capacity as College Administrator reported that the College continued to offer courses to residents of Charney Bassett and Lyford and was open to suggestions for additional courses. It seemed possible that further computer courses could be run with digital photography being suggested as a topic.

The College had recently submitted its first annual report to CLET for this body to consider whether to continue to fund the College through a grant for the next academic year. Ms Cross, Mrs Dahele and The Clerk had attended the May CLET meeting to flesh out the report.

7. CLERK'S CORRESPONDENCE

None

8. RESIDENTS' QUESTIONS

Widespread concern was expressed at the number of reported sightings of rats in the village. The location of these sightings caused suspicion that the source is the farm on Buckland Road where a colony of at least 30 rats had recently been observed. The Clerk reported that he had discussed this with the Vale Rodent Officer who explained that the owner Mr Chris Cox (who was known to be in hospital at the moment) had undertaken to bait the farm and this had been carried out; in addition, someone had been shooting the rats. The Clerk reminded the meeting that everyone was required by law to report rat sightings and the full scale of the problem would only be brought to light if every sighting was reported to the Vale Council Environmental Health Department.

There was general agreement that the farm needed a major clean-up which could now be legally required under a new EU Regulation. However, it was agreed that the first step should be for **The Clerk** to write to Mr Cox to invite him to discuss the matter with the Council and the letter should be copied to the Vale Council.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr Harper raised the issue of the recent sewage blockages caused by the disposal of wipes into the sewage system and the unfortunate incident at Deddington reported in the recent edition of Charney Chatter. He considered the matter should be more widely publicised in Cherbury News and on the Notice Board to try and ensure it did not happen again. **The Clerk** agreed to see how this could be done.

Mr Daglish pointed out that there is small print on water bills which offer a reduction in water charges if a consumer is on a meter and does not discharge rainwater into the sewage system.

10. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 13 July 2005 at 7.30 p.m. in the Village Hall.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.56 p.m. with thanks to all those who attended.

Signed.....

Chairman

Date.....