

CHARNEY BASSETT PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT 7.30 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY 28th NOVEMBER 2007 IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Present: Mr G Beer, Chairman
Mrs J Bath
Mr J Stiles

Mr P G Davies (Clerk)

07/59 Apologies

Apologies had been received from Councillors Harper and Rumble and District Councillor Anthony Hayward. Two members of the public were also in attendance. There were no declarations of interest.

07/60 Minutes of the September 2007 Meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the September 2007 meeting be approved and signed by the Chairman.

07/61 Matters Arising

(07/45) Registration of green pieces in the village

The Clerk had still been unable to proceed with registration of the assorted pieces of land around the village. He has been using the registration of the Village Hall as a “test case” and this has been delayed.

(07/57) Application of Section 215 of T&CP Act to McBains

The Clerk was reminded that he had undertaken to consult Vale planners over applying Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act (the untidy land notice) to the Old School to get it tidied up. Despite the fact that this might upset Mr McBain, it was felt that on balance the village’s interest was more important. The Clerk reported that the planning permission for the McBain site for seven houses had now lapsed as it was a requirement that the details of the development be provided to the planners by September 2007.

07/62 County and District Councillors’ Reports

County Councillor Melinda Tilley reported on two items which might have implications for Charney Bassett. She was actively involved in attempting to persuade OCC Highways that a new bridge over the Thames at Newbridge would be a mistake, opening up the A415 to Witney to HGVs which would have difficulty passing. She feels the road should be downgraded with a weight limit to force HGVs on to alternative routes to minimise environmental damage. She reported on the attempt by Hanson to obtain permission for mineral extraction at Longworth which would have significant effects on traffic across the A420 between Charney Bassett and Longworth and she believes that OCC Highways have been persuaded that Hanson’s traffic plans are completely unacceptable.

In the absence of District Councillor Anthony Hayward (who did not receive the meeting notice sent by e-mail) he was unable to report on District Council matters. However, Councillor Tilley made a plea on his behalf for the Council to consider the Vale policy of designating rural exception sites on which affordable housing could be built. In debating this topic, it was pointed out that the Council had addressed the question of providing a site within the village for affordable housing some years ago and a village referendum had rejected the idea.

The village has no regular bus service and no amenities such as a shop which makes it unsuitable for this type of housing, despite a desire to provide it for the families of residents.

07/63 Residents' Questions

The Clerk reported that he had been advised by OALC that the rules for public participation in Council debates could be changed to allow this to happen for each agenda item and need no longer be confined to the ten minutes announced in meeting notices. The contribution of the public to any debate would be recorded as an integral part of the meeting minutes. Councillors agreed to accept this change of policy which would take immediate effect. The Clerk reported that he would amend Standing Orders and seek the Council's approval for the revision at the next meeting.

RESOLVED that the NALC/OALC advice on dealing with public participation should be accepted in principle and be applied immediately and that revised Standing Orders should be approved at the next meeting..

07/64 Clerk's Financial Report

The Clerk presented his financial report CBPC/FIN/078/06 (appended to minutes) which had been distributed to councillors.

RESOLVED that the report be adopted.

07/65 Planning Matters

There are two planning applications awaiting consideration by the Council, a conservatory at "Fairfields", Buckland Road and an extension to Willow Cottage. An application for a conservatory at "Marleigh" had not raised any objection.

07/56 Clerk's Correspondence

The Clerk reported that two meetings of the Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG2) which would cover the village has been held and a further series of meetings is planned, including one at Charney Bassett on Thursday 29th November. The Council agreed to pay the £7 cost of hiring the Village Hall for this meeting. A pilot study of community needs has been mounted in East and West Hanney and this produced a prioritised list of concerns. Speeding was number 1, vandalism/anti-social behaviour number 2 and theft/burglary number 3. This has revealed the concerns of the residents in those villages which the NAG will need to address. The Clerk has volunteered to act as Minute Taker to the Group.

OCC Highways had been asked to examine the culvert under Main Street which failed to cope with the flooding as it was suspected it could be blocked. An inspection revealed the culvert is in good condition and not blocked. A report by the Environment Agency into flooding in the Vale is due to be published early in 2008.

The Clerk produced a copy of the updated "Welcome to Charney Bassett" pamphlet which he had printed himself. He reported that the Charney Chatter printer could produce them at £0.85 each. It was agreed that it would not be necessary to give a copy to everyone in the village but that a small number could be produced initially and given to new residents and should this result in a further demand, further batches could be produced "on demand".

07/57 Information Exchange

The Chairman reported on his attendance at the AGM of OALC (to which 91% of Oxfordshire parish councils belong). An increase of 2.5% in the annual subscription to OALC will be made in 2008; this will not have a significant effect on the Council's budget. He reported that many villages were scathing in their condemnation of the Environment Agency's apparent lack of action in preparing for a repeat of the severe July flooding. **The**

Clerk offered to e-mail his contact in the EA to stress the need for action and to enquire when the report on the flooding was to be published.

Mrs Dahele reported that action by a farmer in re-routing a pipe to a feeding trough had created a “boom” causing a build of debris at Lyford Bridge. The Clerk commented that this should be dealt with by The EA.

The Chairman had received an appeal for funds from The Vale and Downland Museum in Wantage which he proposed to pass on to The Clerk for consideration at the March meeting when applications for donations are considered.

There was some discussion on the matter of significant fencing work which was going on around the village and although this did not seem to be presenting any problems to villagers it was agreed that people should be vigilant and report any obstructions caused by fencing. The Cherbury Camp footpath is a case where an apparent barrier had appeared then been removed.

Ideas were discussed for giving Mr Fitzgerald-O’Connor due recognition for his continuing service to the community by cutting Charney Field. There was no consensus as to what would constitute an acceptable gift of wine but Mrs Dahele suggested he could be invited to her Open House on Sunday December 2nd where he could be thanked in person if he attended.

Mr Daglish reported that the Charney Army were now the owners of a very useful scythe which had been presented by Mrs Jane Dale.

07/58 Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 9th, 2008 at 7.30 p.m. in the Village Hall.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.53 p.m. with thanks to all those who attended.

Signed

Chairman