

## CHARNEY BASSETT PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN ST. PETER'S CHURCH AT 7.30 PM ON WEDNESDAY 13 JANUARY 2010

**Present:** Mr G Rumble, Chairman  
Mr M Cox, Vice-chairman  
Mrs J Bath  
Mr J Harper  
Mr D Hughes

Dr S K Cowlam, Clerk

#### **10/01 Apologies and Declarations of Interest**

An apology had been received from County Councillor Melinda Tilley. Six members of the public were also in attendance. There were no declarations of interest.

#### **10/02 Confirmation of Appointment of a new Clerk**

Stephen Cowlam had volunteered to take over as Clerk from Peter Davies. He was proposed by Mr Cox, seconded by Mrs Bath, and duly accepted.

RESOLVED that Stephen Cowlam be appointed as Clerk to the Parish Council.

#### **10/03 Minutes of the November 2009 Meeting**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the November 2009 meeting be approved and signed by the Chairman.

#### **10/04 County Council Matters**

The Clerk reported information forwarded by Councillor Tilley, as follows:-

- Council tax increases will be set at the Budget Council Meeting in February.
- She expected criticism over road conditions and OCC's response to the winter weather. There had been plenty of grit ready, but she thought that the situation had overwhelmed the Council.

#### **10/05 District Council Matters**

None reported.

#### **10/06 Clerk's Financial Report**

The Clerk presented his financial report CBPC/FIN/10/01 (appended to Minutes) which had been distributed to Councillors. The Internal Auditor had commented favourably on its content. The Chairman felt it important to distinguish more clearly some aspects of detail between PC and VHP funds, particularly VAT reclaimed from HMRC. The Council agreed to make donations of £30 each to Abingdon Citizens' Advice Bureau; Hanney Royal British Legion; South & Vale Carers; Oxon Association for the Blind; Independent Advice Centre, Wantage; Oxfordshire Woodland Trust; and Thames Valley & Chiltern Air Ambulance.

RESOLVED that the Report be adopted.

RESOLVED that the Chairman (who is CHAFT representative for the VHP) and the Clerk distinguish details of VHP and PC funds more clearly.

**10/07 Setting the Precept**

The Council discussed paper CBPC/FIN/PRE1011 prepared by the Clerk, setting out the expenditure budget for financial year 2010/11.

Councillors agreed the sums budgeted for the items costed in the table, but wished to replace the donation to the Vale & Downland Museum with a donation of the same amount to the Thames Valley & Chiltern Air Ambulance. The Councillors did not want to see the further reduction of the balance of current account funds carried forward to the new financial year, and indeed wished to restore it to the level at April 2009, namely about £1800. They also wished to provide a contingency for unforeseen action that may be required, particularly for the management of Charney Field, and for flood avoidance. These objectives could not be met with an unchanged precept. Accordingly, it is necessary to increase the precept, and Councillors agreed that this should be set at £3,800.

RESOLVED that the Clerk should request a parish precept for 2010/11 of £3,800, from VWHDC.

During discussion Mr Harper probed the Playsafety inspection of the children's play equipment on Charney Field.

RESOLVED that the Chairman would report back to the Council on CHAFT's inspection report from Playsafety.

**10/08 Planning Matters**

There were no planning applications awaiting Council comments.

**10/09 Village Hall Project**

Work on the Village Hall extension was proceeding well, on time and within budget. However, the Chairman (who is also the CHAFT representative for the VHP) thought it possible that there might be a time delay in completion – due to the recent winter weather, though the contractor had not reported such, to date. He believed that completion would be in February.

**10/10 Clerk's Correspondence**

**10/10/01 Flooding** The Clerk had been copied an email from Peter Dela (Principal Engineer, VWHDC) to Dr Etherington of Longworth Road. Mr Dela said that he would inspect the ditch on Longworth Road following work done by Charles Dingwall to clear it.

**10/10/02 Telephone Box** The previous Clerk (Peter Davies) had signed a contract with BT to purchase the telephone box for the nominal sum of £1.

**10/10/03 Oxfordshire Woodland Project** The Clerk had received telephone and email communication from David Rees of OWP. He is concerned that VWHDC may withdraw future funding of the OWP. He had asked that the PC write to VWHDC and tell them that we have valued the services (provided free of charge) which we have received, and would regret the loss of their service, and wished to use their services again.

RESOLVED that the Clerk write to Councillor Tony de Vere to express the PC's regret if the services of the OWP are lost.

**10/10/04 Grant for Local Flood Group** The Clerk had received a letter from VWHDC approving our application for a grant of £2,346 towards the cost of tools and equipment for project Chaffinch.

**10/10/05 Other Duties carried out by the Previous Clerk** Editorship of Charney Chatter has been taken over by Mr John Daghish. Management of the Village website has been taken over by Mr John Wright. Councillors expressed their gratitude to these parishioners. It was remarked that the role, and not inconsiderable workload, of the previous Clerk now required the work of three new people!

**10/11 Information Exchange** The Vice-chairman reported on new arrangements for refuse and recycling collection to be implemented by VWHDC in October 2010. These will be more complicated than at present, and householders will be provided with information detailing requirements in advance of the planned introduction. Some information had already been trailed in Charney Chatter.

Two questions were asked by a member of the public (Mrs M Nellist). Could the owner of the silver birch tree at the end of Chapel Lane have it trimmed? It obstructs pedestrians. The tree is owned by the village.

RESOLVED that the Charney Army would trim the tree at the end of Chapel Lane.

An emergency planning review was carried out in 1988. Does the PC have any information on this?

RESOLVED that the Clerk would investigate Council records.

However, the Council and members of the public felt that the sense of community in the village is high, in possible contrast to urban and dormitory locations, so that the strengths and vulnerabilities of members of our own community are known. The network of communication and action, such as in the present winter weather, appears to be functioning satisfactorily.

Finally, the Chairman wished to acknowledge the role that Peter Davies had fulfilled as Clerk over many years, and the high esteem in which he is held. The Vice-chairman proposed a vote of thanks, which should be recorded in the Minutes. This was heartily endorsed by all the Councillors, the new Clerk, and the parishioners present.

#### **10/12 Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held at 7.30 pm on Wednesday, 10 March 2010 at a venue to be decided (but it is hoped that this will be the refurbished and extended Village Hall).

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.45 pm with thanks to all those who attended.

Signed ..... Date .....  
Chairman