

CHARNEY BASSETT PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN ST. PETER'S CHURCH AT 7.30 PM ON WEDNESDAY 10 MARCH 2010

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

Dr S K Cowlam, Clerk

10/13 Apologies and Declarations of Interest

Apologies had been received from District Councillor Anthony Hayward, Councillor Jos Bath, and County Councillor Melinda Tilley. Five members of the public were also in attendance. There were no declarations of interest.

10/14 Minutes of the January 2010 Meeting

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the January 2010 meeting be approved and signed by the Chairman.

10/15 County Council Matters

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

- A council tax increase of 2.75% was set at the Budget Council Meeting in February.
- The County Council had also agreed the five-year medium-term financial plan & capital programme to 2014/15.
- Savings of £70.8M have been proposed over the period of the medium-term plan, and a further £3M should be possible, to total £73.8M.
- The Thames Valley Police Authority was expected to seek a 2% increase in its precept.

10/16 District Council Matters

None reported.

10/17 Clerk's Financial Report

The Clerk presented his financial report CBPC/FIN/10/02 (appended to Minutes) which had been distributed to Councillors. The Chairman noted the clear distinction of detail between PC and VHP funds.

RESOLVED that the Report be adopted.

The Clerk noted the following details for the forthcoming financial year 2010/11.

- We expect the first tranche of the precept in April.
- We expect a flood group grant from VWHDC of £2,346 in April, subject to confirmation of a means of secure storage of the equipment to be purchased using the grant.
- The external audit is likely to cost in the order of £500 this year (compared to £57 last year) as a result of the increased turnover due to the Village Hall Project.
- We expect an annual cost of £57.50 to maintain the Village Website.
- A third VAT claim has been made to HMRC for £2,698.45.

RESOLVED that the Clerk respond to VWHDC's letter awarding the flood group grant, regarding secure storage of equipment purchased from the grant.

RESOLVED that the forthcoming cost of the external audit be shared by the PC and the VHP according to the expenditure by each.

10/18 Audit Arrangements & Risk Assessment

A requirement of the audit process is that the Council's documents dealing with risk assessment and the effectiveness of audit should be reviewed annually and approved by the Council. The Clerk had circulated updated documents on these two topics.

RESOLVED that

- Audit arrangements are satisfactory, but the Council needs to find a new Internal Auditor. (Mr Peter Leaver, the current auditor, wishes to retire at the end of the financial year).
- Risk assessment is satisfactory. A new risk is adequately covered: the forthcoming provision of equipment for the Charney Army/Project CHAFFINCH. The provision includes training in the use of a chainsaw, and the Council has appropriate insurance cover.

10/19 Planning Matters

The Clerk reported on two matters.

- VWHDC Planning Department had given permission for the installation of ground-mounted photovoltaic panels at Byways, Charney Bassett. Members expressed interest in seeing the progress of this project.
- Approval had been sought by the residents of (old) Manor Farm House for the removal of two trees. One is dead and does not need approval, the other awaits a VWHDC decision, though the PC has no objection to its removal.

10/20 Village Hall Project

The Chairman (who is also the CHAFT representative for the VHP) thought that completion by the builder would be at about the end of March. Some decoration and other minor work would be carried out by the Charney Army and other villagers. Funding amounting to about £19,000 is still expected from OCC (via ORCC), VWHDC, and in gift aid from HMRC.

10/21 Village College

The Clerk reported information that had been provided by Councillor Bath.

- We continue to use Denchworth Village Hall while our own is being extended. Its hire is more expensive than our own, so we are particularly grateful for a grant of £400 from CLET.
- Pilates and yoga attract 15 students at present.
- Computing and flower-arranging are planned when our own hall resumes use.
- At least six people are interested in French conversation classes, and a tutor is being sought.
- Taster sessions are being considered in art and wine-tasting.
- A third person is needed to help with administration.

10/22 Charney Army/Project CHAFFINCH

- VWHDC is organizing another community flood group meeting in April. The Clerk and the former Clerk attended the earlier one in October, and found the information exchange very useful. We plan to send delegates to the April meeting, to learn particularly of the success of the Hanneys Group and the Carswell Marsh Group.
- See also paragraph 10/17.

10/23 Parish Council Website

The Clerk reported information that had been provided by Mr John Wright, who had taken responsibility for re-establishing the website.

- John has been working with UKVillages(Oxbury Media Services Ltd) following the disastrous corruption of the old website.
- The new website (at the same address as before, <http://charneybassettpc.org.uk>), is up and running, and is the first of a new system.
- There are PAGES for non-timely information; and POSTS for up-to-the-minute information, that will be archived monthly.
- The Parish Council will invite community groups to publish their activities. Individuals and groups should send PAGES and POSTS to John. He will edit and/or publish these. PAGES and POSTS should be sent to him (in more or less any electronic form) either as publishable copy, or for editing by John, as directed by the author.

Members expressed their thanks to John for his work in re-establishing the website.

10/24 Telephone Box

Councillors Bath and Harper had taken responsibility for a project for reuse of the telephone box when the PC takes ownership of it from BT. Councillor Harper had received a number of suggestions from residents for proposed uses.

RESOLVED that Councillors Bath & Harper would report to the Council with their proposals for use of the telephone box after they have reviewed suggestions that they are receiving.

10/25 Clerk's Correspondence

10/25/01 High Court Appeal in relation to land at New Manor Farm. After a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act, the VWHDC solicitor informed the Clerk that VWHDC had incurred costs of £16,824.50, and lost its appeal, in connection with its refusal to grant planning permission for workers' cottages at New Manor Farm.

10/25/02 Grass Cutting The Clerk had replied to Mr AJ Baxter to renew his contract for grass cutting in 2010/11, at the same rates as last year.

10/25/03 Oxfordshire Rural Community Council The Clerk had submitted an article and completed a questionnaire to describe community activities in Charney Bassett. This will be compiled into a publication covering Oxfordshire communities to celebrate 90 years of ORCC.

10/26 Information Exchange

10/26/01 Village Hall Project The Chairman (as VHP Treasurer) had received a communication from TOE concerning the title deed to the Village Hall upon completion of the improvements to the existing building.

RESOLVED that the Chairman would write to TOE to propose that the title deed does not need to be changed.

10/26/02 Polling Station We expect that the Village Hall will have reopened before the forthcoming general election, and could therefore be used as a polling station.

RESOLVED that the Clerk would contact the Elections Officer at VWHDC to advise of the availability of the Village Hall as a polling station.

10/26/03 Unsung Heroes of the Community The Parish Council had nominated John & Mary Daghish to receive this award by VWHDC. They attended a lunch at the Guildhall in Abingdon, taking

as their guests, Eunice Davies and Geoff & Julie Rumble. The Councillors, the Clerk, and members of the public present offered their congratulations on this well deserved honour.

10/27 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at 7.30 pm on Wednesday, 12 May 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 8.50 pm with thanks to all those who attended.

Signed Date
Chairman