

CHARNEY BASSETT PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30 PM ON WEDNESDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2012

Present:

Mr M Cox, Chairman
Mr D Nellist, Vice-chairman
Mrs J Fry
Mr D Roberts
Mrs S Dobson

Dr SK Cowlam, Clerk

Eleven members of the public were in attendance.

12/70 Apologies and Declarations of Interest

County Councillor Melinda Tilley and Village College Manager Lynn Brookes had sent their apologies for absence. There were no declarations of interest.

12/71 To approve the Minutes of the March Meeting and Matters Arising

RESOLVED: the minutes of the September 2012 meeting be approved and signed by the Chairman.

Matters arising from the September 2012 meeting were as follows.

- 11/68 RESOLVED. The PC was to identify pieces of land of interest on a map with a view to researching their ownership. The action arose originally in connection with riparian ownership along the R Ock and the Charney Wick Ditch, but this was resolved. The Clerk had obtained deeds for Charney Field and the Mill lease documents from a Wantage solicitor who is ceasing his practice. This action is now complete.
- 12/40 RESOLVED. The next step in flood avoidance continues to be to explain Jim Gardiner's findings and proposals to the Environment Agency, and seek their support for the measures. A meeting with EA has been scheduled for mid-December. See paragraph 12/76.
- 12/61 RESOLVED. The Clerk had discussed concerns with Diney Godfrey over flooding on her property.
- 12/62 The Neighbourhood/Community Plan project working group was recommended (by Melinda Tilley) to seek advice from Anthony Hayward.
- 12/65 David Nellist to prepare an emergency plan for the village. See paragraph 12/80.

12/72 County Councillor's News

None reported.

12/73 District Councillor's News

Anthony Hayward reported on the house-building approval at Kingston Bagpuize, and the unhappiness that it has created for the residents, whose desire for a different location had been overridden. He commented on two other sites in the village that would gain approval, if they could be shown to be sustainable. We asked about the proposal for 77 houses at Stanford in the Vale, and our concern over the flood risk and possible downstream impact on Charney Bassett. He was unable to comment on consideration of the matter by the Environment Agency.

12/74 Clerk's Financial Report

The Clerk presented the financial report CBPC/FIN/12/06 (appended to minutes) which had been distributed to councillors. The figures represented the situation at 20 October 2012, and had been approved by the internal auditor. The PC account holds £300 of Jubilee funds on behalf of CHAFT/Jubilee Committee, and £1506.63 remains of the flood grant. The position is satisfactory. RESOLVED: the report was adopted.

12/75 Estimation of the 2013/14 Precept

The Parish Council has maintained an unchanged precept of £3800 for the last three years, in line with Government requirements for county and district councils (though not for parish councils). Last year precept-setting had to be brought forward to the November meeting. This year there has been no advice yet, as counties and districts await the Chancellor's December financial statement. However, we have thought it prudent to draft a budget, and this was reported by the Clerk in paper CBPC/FIN/PRE1314. We note that Government is changing the rules on rebate arrangements, and is cutting by 10% its grant to local authorities, though the consequences for council tax payers are unknown at present. Our calculations show that last year's precept is sufficient, and any reduction that we might offer is unlikely to offset any increase that the county or district might demand. Accordingly, at this time, a precept of £3800 seems appropriate.

RESOLVED: the PC agreed to seek a precept of £3800, with the proviso that it could be revisited when advice is received from VWHDC.

12/76 Flooding/Project CHAFFINCH

The Clerk had arranged with the Environment Agency for us to make a presentation to them on proposed flood avoidance measures. This is scheduled for mid-December 2012.

12/77 Neighbourhood/Community Plan Project

Hugh Brookes (one of the working party) had prepared a summary of the responses to the questionnaire that had been sent to residents. This is appended to the minutes. There is a difference of opinion among the working group members over the type of plan that is needed. The Clerk had taken expert advice from ORCC to try to resolve the situation. This is that a Neighbourhood Plan is inappropriate for a community as small as ours, and would not prevent housing development. The PC had noted that it is also unaffordable. Cheaper, quicker alternatives are a Village Design Statement, and a Community-led Plan.

RESOLVED: the Clerk would seek a consultation with ORCC on the next steps for the project.

12/78 Jubilee Orchard Project

The project is proceeding well. The land has been prepared, and the gate repaired and painted. Fund-raising and a gift from the Jubilee committee had realised £423.30. Nine of the twelve trees had been bought and planted, and several fruit bushes had been given by residents. Work continues.

12/79 Village College Report

Lynn Brookes had provided a report as follows.

- Patchwork & Quilting classes are running with morning, afternoon and evening sessions, with 25 students.
- Yoga and pilates classes continue on Fridays.
- Recruitment for Saturday workshops in calligraphy and singing is promising planned for early 2013.

12/80 Emergency Plans

David Nellist had drafted the framework of a plan adapting appropriate headings from the OCC emergency plan, a Government leaflet, and the Thames Valley local resilience forum.

RESOLVED: that David Nellist circulate his draft emergency plan to the PC for comment.

12/81 Planning Matters

A number of planning applications had been approved by VWHDC.

- Extensions at Home Close.
- Erection of two agricultural dwellings at New Manor Farm.
- Conversion of a barn at Northfield Farm.
- Demolish a conservatory and erect an extension at Windrush.

12/82 Clerk's Correspondence

- The Chairman and the Clerk plan to attend the November workshop held by VWHDC.

12/83 Information Exchange

- The Post Office had written to the Clerk stating its intention to keep a post office service in Charney Bassett, following the retirement of the postmistress.
- New Road is to be closed temporarily for Thames Water to fix a leak.
- Jim Harper had attended a Longworth Charities Trust meeting. He reported that £250 had been donated to Kingsmoor Day Centre. (The sum will be £500 pa.)
- Mr & Mrs Castle of the White House have a right of access across the village green (which is PC property) from the unadopted road (known as The Green) to their property. They had asked to buy this access way from the PC.

RESOLVED: the PC did not wish to sell the land, but is content for the Castles to tarmacadamize the access way at their own expense and to maintain it. The Clerk would draft a letter to this effect.

- Steve Champion noted the speeding vehicles (particularly at rush hour) entering the village.

RESOLVED: the Clerk to enquire of OCC about relocating the speed limit and other signs at the entrances to the village to positions 100m further away.

12/84 Date of next meeting

9 January 2013, at 7:30 pm in the Village Hall.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9:00pm.

Signed Date
Chairman