

WOOTTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at 7.00pm on Tuesday 1st April 2014 at the Wootton & Dry Sandford Community Centre

Present: Councillors Ludlow (Chair), Berrill, Carter, Fysh, Langley, Mann, Parker, Rayner, Werrell, Westell and White

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Westell, County Cllr Bob Johnston and Rev Jon Williams

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 2nd APRIL 2013

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 2nd April 2013 were approved and signed by the Chairman

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 2nd APRIL 2013

None

4. REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN – Mr Andrew Ludlow

The Community Centre goes from strength to strength and the Parish Council continues to offer support. The Parish Council Chairman is now a member of the Community Centre Board and the Community Centre Chairman is a Parish Councillor.

Allotments – This project has now been successfully completed. All plots have been taken and there is now a waiting list.

Speeding - Discussions have taken place with Oxfordshire County Council to reduce the speed limit on Old Boars Hill and on the small section on the East side of Wootton Village to 30mph. The process is now under way and we are awaiting the decision of the OCC Cabinet Member for transport

Community Governance Review - A consultation is taking place to move 147 houses in Dry Sandford into Wootton and to bring the whole of Henwood into Wootton. The Parish Council has recommended that the parish boundary in Dry Sandford should remain as it is. Wootton Parish Council and St Helen Without Parish Council are continuing to liaise closely on matters of mutual interest to their residents.

The Vale of White Horse District Council Local Plan Part 1 - The Parish Council will be representing the views of residents in objecting to the current proposal in the Plan for 200 new houses on Lamborough Hill and releasing three sites in Wootton from the Green Belt.

The Playground - on the parish land opposite the Church needs upgrading and the Parish Council will be working on this together with the community group PATCH

Wootton Business Park - the proposal to build 64 houses in Wootton Business Park is still under consideration by the Vale of White Horse District Council - the Parish Council has supported the project in principle subject to learning lessons in areas such as parking from the Deerhurst Park Development and ensuring that the village obtains some additional benefits from the development.

Broadband - The Parish Council is keen to see the broadband speeds in Wootton improved and has been closely monitoring developments which are expected to come to fruition during the course of the year.

Christmas lights - The switching on of the Christmas lights was very well attended and with the help of the Bystander, Stroud Electrics, the Vicar and the Wootton Players was a very successful event.

Planning - The Parish Council continues to work closely with the Vale of White Horse District Council on planning issues, with Thames Valley Police on neighbourhood policing and with OCC Highways on road maintenance. Our councillors have continued to lobby the Oxford Bus Company on improving the bus service.

Thanks to all Parish Councillors, County Councillor Johnston and District Councillors Shaw and Miles.

5. PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS

The 2012/13 were examined by the Internal and External Auditors and passed without any significant comment. Actual expenditure in 2012/13 was £41,422.35 of which £5,837.23 related to the Community Centre. Receipts were £39,860.20. Some £25,415 was spent on the Allotments project in 2013/14; this was offset by £12,000 in grants and just over £4,000 in reclaimable VAT. The 2014/5 Precept was set at £38,000. The Precept was increased by £500 to cover increased costs including the quadrupling of dog bin maintenance and vandalism. A grant of £1,762 has been received from the Vale of White Horse District Council towards concessionary Council tax the cost of which has been transferred to parishes. The grant will go towards these additional costs but is being gradually withdrawn at the rate of 20% a year until the full cost is met by the Precept.

6. REPORT ON WOOTTON ST PETER'S PRIMARY SCHOOL 2013-2014 **Mr Allen Perkins**

Summary

Although there have been some staff changes this year, these have not disrupted the school routine. The school has had another good year with the usual round of activities and with excellent results in the KS1 and KS2 tests.

Staffing and school roll

One of the two part-time secretaries resigned at the end of 2013; her successor took over in January and has settled in well. We are hoping that she will extend her role by taking on some bursar responsibilities.

The part-time teachers for the foundation stage and for class 3 both resigned and we were pleased that we were able to appoint two very good teachers to fill the vacancies.

There are currently 108 children on the roll and 4 vacancies.

We had 34 applications for 16 places, for entry in September 2014; 17 of these selected Wootton as their first preference, 5 as the second and 12 as the third.

Budget

The budget allocation for the year was approximately £475 000 and we are expecting to end up with a small surplus. Setting the budget for this coming year and future years is proving to be more difficult.

Academic results

At KS1, 86 per cent of the children (ie 12 out of the cohort of 14) reached or exceeded the expected level of 2b in all the subjects viz reading, writing, maths and science.

At KS2, 93 per cent of the children (13 out of 14) reached or exceeded the expected level of 4 in reading; all the children reached or exceeded level 4 in writing, maths and science.

They were excellent results all round.

Reading counsellors continue to provide support for all the children. The teaching of French has been maintained and the Latin club is still meeting.

We were given notice of an Ofsted inspection in the autumn term but this had to be cancelled at the last minute; we are waiting to hear when the re-arranged inspection is to take place.

Buildings

We were awarded a grant to upgrade the heating system during the summer break but this was withdrawn because the money was needed for major emergency building work on another primary school in the county. We are waiting to hear whether our bid will be successful in the coming funding allocation. However we did manage to have the last of the old single glazed windows replaced by double glazing units.

Other events in the school year

The link with the school in China continues with communication via letter, email and Skype.

The Rev Jon Williams has continued to take some of the school assemblies and services are held in St Peter's church on high days and holidays.

The annual infants nativity play was performed for an invited village audience, who were later entertained to afternoon tea.

All the children are given swimming lessons during school hours in the Oxford Brookes pool on their Westminster site; in addition sports and PE are supported by lessons during the school day and by clubs meeting during the lunch hour or after school.

The children have organised events throughout the year to raise money for charities of their own choosing. Lunchtime clubs meet on three days a week covering a range of topics other than sport.

The parents' committee is very active in organising various social events that raise money for the school that is then used to benefit the children in a variety of ways that could not otherwise be afforded.

General conclusion

The school continues to provide a good all-round education for all the children and to encourage them to develop whatever talents they have. It provides a caring environment for the children, and they always seem to me to be a cheerful and friendly bunch.

The Chairman thanked Mr Perkins for his report.

7. WOOTTON CHARITIES

Rev Jon Williams had written to say that the Wootton Parochial Charities had not yet been wound up.

8. REPORT FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

A report had been received from County Cllr Bob Johnston; this is recorded in the minutes of the Council meeting held on 1st April 2014.

9. MATTERS RAISED BY PERSONS PRESENT AT THE MEETING

None

Signed

.....**Date**.....

Chairman