

WOOTTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at 7.00pm on Tuesday 1st May 2018 at the Wootton & Dry Sandford Community Centre

Present: Councillors Ludlow (Chair), Bristow, Carter, Fysh, Langley, Parker, Rayner, Shaw, Werrell, Westell and White.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 2nd May 2017

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 1st May 2017 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 1st May 2017

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 closure of Children's Centres in Oxfordshire have resulted in a re-negotiation of the lease arrangements between the Community centre and Oxfordshire County Council.

Playground

The playground opposite the Church has been a major project. It has been delayed due to the extremely wet weather, but is now nearing completion. Grants have been obtained from Wren, Awards for All and the VWHDC which, together with the £15,000 Section 106 money, has met most of the cost. The Parish Council has made a significant financial contribution, which will now include substantial additional costs for drainage

The annual 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 comment on planning applications. These have, on occasions been controversial; the construction of flats to replace Head to Toe fall into this category. The purchase of Foxcombe Lodge by the Peking University and the proposal to build 100 units of students' accommodation also promises to be controversial. The British Legion site in Wootton Village has been sold and an application for 'Change of Use' following by an application to build residential properties is expected. Planning Enforcement has started on the use of Lamborough House as a taxi business, but the process is extremely slow.

Wootton Business Park

Efforts continue to be made to reach agreement on the instalment of a bus turning circle in the entrance of Wootton Business Park, but staff shortages and the lack of financial resources in OCC have resulted in very slow progress.

The Neighbourhood Plan

The Joint Neighbourhood Plan is progressing rapidly. We have been fortunate in having a very active Steering Group of local residents who have done a tremendous amount of work. A number of events have been held addressing various issues including young people, the elderly and the business community. A questionnaire was sent to some 1,800 households and received a good response of some 30%. Grants were obtained from 'My Community' and the VWHDC to meet the cost of the public engagement questionnaire and Character Assessment. The Plan is now ready for the 6 week public consultation period before being modified and submitted to the VWHDC.

The VWHDC Local Plan Part 2

Following public consultation in early 2017, the Local Plan Part 2 has been developed. The objections to Whitecross being removed from the Green Belt were successful, but the objections to Shippon and the airfield being removed were not. As the army will not move out of the operational area in time to deliver the 1,200 houses in the Local Plan the proposal is to build the houses on the strip of the airfield immediately to the west of the operational area. The precise positioning of the development has still not been decided, but if it is to the north adjacent to Honeybottom Lane the No 4 bus service could be partly re-routed, thus reducing the service to Whitecross. The Parish Council and Steering Group have been involved in the Supplementary Planning Document workshops on the Dalton Barracks site.

No 4 bus – We are still continuing to work with Oxford Bus Company to maintain the improved bus service as well as with other Parish Councils and Dalton Barracks

The Parish Council has taken on responsibility for two grass cuts a year from Oxfordshire Highways. Oxfordshire Highways will remain responsible for one cut a year plus the legal responsibility for maintain visibility splays. Other areas where the Parish Council are likely to become involved is the maintenance of footpaths and cutting grips alongside highways.

5. PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS - Clerk

The 2016/17 Accounts were passed by the Internal and External Auditors without any significant comment. The 2017/18 Accounts will be submitted to the Parish Council meeting on 5th June for approval following Internal Audit and will then go to External Audit. The 2018/9 Precept has been set at £48,000. In 2017/18 a grant of £419 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 is being gradually withdrawn at the rate of 20% a next year the full cost will be met by the Precept. There is a general move following cuts at District and County level to pass responsibility for work to parish councils so this is likely to continue to have implications for the Parish Precept.

6. WOOTTON CHARITIES

The Wootton Charities has not yet been wound up, but there is only a very small sum in its account.

7. REPORT FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

As the County Councillor's report related to current issues, his comments are recorded in the minutes of the following Parish Council AGM dated 1st May 2018

8. MATTERS RAISED BY PERSONS PRESENT AT THE MEETING

None.

SignedDate.....

Chairman