

WOOTTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at 7.00pm on Tuesday 5th April 2016 at the Wootton & Dry Sandford Community Centre

Present: Councillors Ludlow (Chair), Bristow, Carter, Fysh, Langley, Mann, Parker, Rayner, Shaw, Werrell, Westell and White and County Cllr Bob Johnston

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 19th MAY 2015

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 19th May 2015 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 19th MAY 2015

As there was no longer a School Governor representing the Parish reports on Wootton St Peter's Primary School ceased in 2015.

4. REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN – Mr Andrew Ludlow

The Community Centre goes from strength to strength and the Parish Council continues to offer support. Due to the increased usage of the Centre, the car park has been enlarged and should have been resurfaced by now. Football should also be restarting this year.

The Playground on the parish land opposite the Church needs upgrading and we are working on a project of up to £80,000 and Cllr Bristow is taking the lead.

The proposal to build 64 houses in Wootton Business Park is now in and the Parish Council has submitted its comments. Some comments made by the Parish Council in 2012 were accepted such as parking being in front of properties instead of behind but parking remains an issue especially for visitors. Some of the roads on the development are too narrow and traffic on Besselsleigh Road will be a problem. Ideally there should be a roundabout at the entrance to the development which would also provide a turning circle for the No 4 bus. The Parish Council will be making representations on the use of the Section 106 planning gain money which has partly been allocated to areas with little community benefit.

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.

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.

No 4 bus – campaign; we continue to work with other Parish Councils and Dalton Barracks. Although the subsidy was withdrawn the service provider retained the evening, Sunday and Bank Holiday service. The Parish Council has been working closely with Oxford Bus Company under the leadership of Cllr Langley. This has resulted in the re-instatement of the half-hourly bus service. The dialogue with Oxford Bus Company combined with encouraging local residents needs to be continued to ensure that the service is retained

The Parish Council has made strong representations to Vale of White Horse District Council on Local Plan Part 1 which proposed building 200 houses in East Wootton. The proposal was removed from the Plan, but the Parish Council has raised further objections to the removal of three sites from the Green Belt. –Full details of the Inspector's report are awaited particularly on the Green Belt

We worked with Community Centre and Thames Valley Police to combat vandalism and to engage young people; there has been less vandalism following the action last year and the

establishment of Open Door.

Efforts are being made to pass responsibility from the County and the District Councils to the Parish Council particularly in areas such as grass cutting and footpath maintenance. Some grants are available but these are likely to be reduced after the first year leaving the cost to be borne on the Precept. Full details of the County Council's proposals are awaited.

The Parish Council is working to reclaim some unused Section 106 money which would be of particular interest for the playground.

The website has been updated and we would like to thank Cllr Bristow for the work he has done to deliver it, long may it carry on.

We also hope you have noticed the improvements to the Community Newsletter.

I would like to thank all Parish Councillors, County Councillor Johnston and put on record, that although our new District Councillor has been invited to attend our meetings, we still don't know what he looks like!

5. PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS

The 2014/15 Accounts were passed by the Internal and External Auditors, the only comment was a reminder to reclaim VAT; this will be done in May. The 2015/16 Accounts will be submitted to the Parish Council meeting on 7th June for approval and will then go to Internal and External Audit. The 2016/17 precept has been set at £40,000. In 2016/7 a grant of £384 will be 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 year until the full cost is met by the Precept. The Precept was increased by £1,000 to cover the increased cost of work transferred from Oxfordshire County Council to the Parish Council and the playground project. The Parish Council is still awaiting details about the areas of responsibility that might be transferred from OCC, but it is clear that the Precept has to be increased gradually to avoid a sudden increase if costs are transferred without adequate notice.

6. WOOTTON CHARITIES

Rev Jon Williams had written to say that the Wootton Parochial Charities had not yet been wound up, but given the small amount of funds in it he will close it down.

7. REPORT FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

County Cllr Bob Johnstone said that as a County Councillor he sits on the full Council, the Planning and Regulation of Projects Committee, the Joint Employers Consultative Committee and the Religious Education Committee. The County Councillor's report on current issues were taken at the beginning of the following Council meeting and are recorded in the Parish council minutes of 5th April 2016.

8. MATTERS RAISED BY PERSONS PRESENT AT THE MEETING

None.

SignedDate.....

Chairman