

PISHILL WITH STONOR PARISH COUNCIL

**Annual Parish Meeting held at The Village Hall, Russells Water on
Tuesday 17th May, 2016**

<u>Present</u>	Mr.T.Dunn	Chairman
	Mr.S. Stracey	Vice-Chairman
	Mr.R.Collett	
	Mr. P.G. Godfrey	
	Mr.R.Hunt	
	Mrs.P. Pearce	Clerk

Also present: OCC Councillor Mr. S. Harrod, SODC Councillor Ms. A. Badcock,
3 parishioners: Mrs. P. Godfrey, Mr. D. Leedham, Dr. B. Snell.

1. Apologies for absence None

2. Parish Report by the Chairman, Mr.T. Dunn

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming all those attending.

Planning Applications During 2015 (from Jan-Dec) there were ten applications received.

The PC gave 2 refusals, 3 no strong views, 5 approvals; SODC gave 9 approvals and one refusal.

Laminated planning notices - In response to a parish council query, these are no longer placed on every development. SODC had replied that 'Planning notices are posted if the property/area of land is a listed building; is in a conservation area; is a major development; affects a public right of way; is in an un-neighbourly development; is not in accordance to the development plan'

Community-Led Plan

The Parish Council had considered the preparation of a community-led plan, but felt that this was unnecessary at present.

Communications:

Mobile phone mast DSLAM equipment cabinet is being installed at Greenfield Farm, Christmas Common.

Broadband provision The Chairman thanked Mr.Stephen Haq, who has attended numerous meetings on behalf of the Parish Council as well as parish council meetings throughout the year. Mr.Haq's broadband report is shown below.

The Commons Select Committee visited the Village Hall at Russells Water in February to take evidence from interested parties.

Parish communications generally

Laminated notices are now on all notice boards giving details of the parish council website and the clerk's details.

The Clerk is currently compiling an email list of all parishioners interested in receiving occasional emails directly from the parish council.

Transparency Code

It is now necessary for the parish council to publish accounts on the website and this has already been done for 2014/15. The parish council is currently considering making an application for a grant to provide its own independent computer and scanner rather than continuing to use a privately-owned computer. (The grant would have also covered the provision of a website, but as the parish council has already provided this, we shall not be eligible for grant funding).

Parish potholes

OCC has accepted responsibility for the swale ditch in Stonor Park, since it was dug by them. Ditches in Balham's Lane have been cleared, but we are still waiting for the swale ditch in Stonor Park to be dealt with - OCC has said the work will be done when the weather improves.

New green Salt bin

The Parish Council has paid for another salt bin at a cost of £300.00 - provided from OCC, situated in Park Lane.

Litter Blitz 2016 - 4th-6th March 'Clean for the Queen'

This was co-ordinated by Richard Hunt with help from all parish councillors. Biffa delivered and collected bags from Upper Assendon Farm. Better communication has been requested by parishioners disappointed not to have been included in the litter picking teams and this request is being addressed.

Driving through fields

Occasional incidents during the year, which must now be reported to Thames Valley Police.

2. Parish Report by the Chairman, Mr.T. Dunn (cont)

Mobile Library

The route is now calling at Middle Assendon and then on to Maidensgrove missing out Stonor. The service will discontinue entirely during this year.

Tree Guard

The PC has replaced the temporary guard around the Jubilee Tree on Maidensgrove with a park-style metal guard.

Tree maintenance by Evelyn Trust

At the request of the parish council, some of the trees adjoining Pishill Church have been trimmed. The Evelyn Trust has also removed an oak tree on the B480 and a replacement is to be planted further away from the roadside

Meetings attended by Parish Councillors during the year

OALC Annual Meeting - Mr. Richard Hunt attended. The speaker was Mr. Anthony Stansfield (Police & Crime Commissioner), whom Richard reported to be a good speaker and very interesting.

May 2015 - Mr. Richard Hunt attended a meeting between Bix & Assendon Parish Council and OCC re: ditch clearance and on-going responsibilities in connection with ditches generally on the B480.

Mr. Richard Collett attended the SODC Town & Parish Council Forum, held in November.

We were fortunate to have our MP Mr. John Howell present at our meeting in September. He spoke on his support of the new Townlands Hospital redevelopment, and his opposition to the Just Racing event, which has now discontinued. He was aware of the motorbike nuisance on the A4130 and advised that OCC Cllr. Lorraine Lyndsay-Gale should be contacted.

Queen's 90th Birthday Party Lunch The Parish celebration will take place on Sunday 12th June from 12.30, at White Pond Farm, Stonor; the ticket sale response has been good so far with offers of salads and puddings forthcoming.

Quince Tree closure - this had occurred unexpectedly on 19th April 2016, but its future is not yet known.

The Chairman then invited the District Councillor, Ms. Anna Badcock to address the meeting.

3. Address by District Councillor, Ms. Anna Badcock

Cllr. Badcock handed the Clerk her annual report, which is attached to the parish council website, www.pishillwithstonorpc.co.uk, but her address primarily constituted a recommendation that the Parish Council considers formulating a Neighbourhood Plan to safeguard its environmental interests. Under Judicial Review, it has been established that SODC has failed to meet the Government criteria for house building numbers, and this will increasingly result in more housing being granted permission. Cllr. Badcock considers that the existence of an AONB is insufficient to prevent granting of planning applications in areas that would have previously been thought unlikely. Appeals are more frequently following refusal of SODC permission, and if too many appeals are received, central government could remove SODC's planning powers.

Cllr. Badcock also urged parish councillors to attend planning meetings if it had been decided to recommend refusal at parish level, in order to demonstrate the strength of local feeling.

Permission will be granted if it can be demonstrated that the application enhances the AONB.

Cllr. Badcock added that it is possible that, during the next few months, Planning Officers may wish to visit the Parish Council to establish whether a Neighbourhood Plan would be advisable.

SODC Officer Charlotte Colber will give advice on Neighbourhood Plans, and Paula Fox is always very helpful on general Planning matters.

4. Address by County Councillor, Mr. Stephen Harrod

(Cllr. Harrod's full Annual Report is attached to the parish council website www.pishillwithstonorpc.co.uk)

Cllr. Harrod began by explaining that this is the sixth year of OCC budget cuts, caused by cuts from central Government. Around 50% of OCC budget is spent on children's and adult's social care (2% of the population).

It was decided that there was no alternative but to cut subsidies for bus services, which will cease in July 2016. Bus service operators are co-operating with local parish councils to try to provide alternative timetables to provide a skeleton service. OCC has a fleet of buses which are under-utilised and could be used between school trips as 'Dial-A-Ride' services, or similar.

4. Address by County Councillor, Mr. Stephen Harrod (cont)

The Household Waste Recycling Centres are to remain open for the foreseeable future. OCC has written to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government asking for a change in the rules which prevent local councils from charging, as even a 50p charge per visit could more than cover the cost of maintaining the service.

Oxfordshire Together - Community Led Services. OCC hopes that, over time, more responsibilities will be taken on by communities. OCC has been working with parishes to jointly deliver services such as grass cutting.

Unitary Council - A unitary council combines the functions of a county council and a district council into one body. The Districts have commissioned management consultants to produce an evaluation report, but since OCC view is that a single country-wide unitary authority could be considered, which differs from the District view, a separate management consultants report should be commissioned.

During the past year, Cllr.Harrod has tabled two motions to the full Council, firstly to ask for the ability to charge for the use of Household Waste Recycling Centres, which received good support and resulted in the letter described earlier. The second was to call on the Council to instruct its officers to draw up regulations for all sportive and triathlon events, or where participants are timed, in order to provide greater safety to residents. This did not gain support, as officers are limited on what regulatory proposals they can include, since a 'loophole' exists whereby, as all cyclists have the right to use the roads, the nature of sportives means they do not require traffic management. Officers are now working with local cycle clubs to see how they can be encouraged to use routes most suited to such events.

With regard to Broadband, Cllr.Harrod was pleased to see that the roll-out is progressing well and he is hopeful that Village Networks may be able to deliver a suitable service for the Parish.

5. Open Forum - questions from Parish Councillors and members of the public

Questions to Cllr.Badcock (SODC)

Q: Could anybody with a large garden apply for permission?

A: It would be more likely that they would receive permission now than previously.

Q: Assuming the Parish has a Neighbourhood Plan, would it be more difficult to build outside the 'plan' area:

A: If it is outside the 'plan area' it would be more difficult, unless there were SODC Planning Policy reasons.

Questions to Cllr. S. Harrod (OCC)

Q: Who created the loophole you describe regarding the sportive events?

A: Central Government.

Q: Cyclists are frequently moving at more than 30 mph, i.e. above some local speed limits - how can this be regulated?

A: They could be deemed to be uncontrolled at this speed; it is therefore dangerous and a matter for the police.

Q: Road surfaces are getting worse with a lot of pot holes and little money, what can be done?

A: If the potholes do not appear dangerous following OCC inspection, they will be left until they regarded as dangerous.

Q: Has OCC put central Government under pressure to allow greater finance for road maintenance?

A: Yes. Since 2010 it is only permissible for County Councils to levy an additional 2% without a referendum, and OCC is pressing for this to be reformed. However, Town and Parish Councils are permitted to increase their precept by up to 10%, and are being encouraged to take on more of OCC's general responsibilities.

This completed the reports by the District and County Councillors and the Chairman thanked them both.

6. Broadband Report by Mr.S. Haq (Parish Broadband Champion)

Mr.Haq reported on the progress made over the past twelve months, which has been encouraging.

The Connect8 has met on a number o occasions. The main priority now is to have an alternative to BT and the Connect8 group is talking to an organisation called 'Village Networks', who have been instrumental in gaining broadband coverage in Hambleton, Bucks.

6. Broadband Report by Mr.S. Haq (Parish Broadband Champion)

The fact that a meeting of the Culture, Media & Sports Select Committee took place at the Village Hall, Russells Water, in April, has brought our local area more to the attention of BT and there seems to be a rise in planning applications from them for 'green boxes' to be installed locally, which will facilitate fibre connections. The Connect8 group will continue negotiations with Village Networks, but BT will also be attending the meeting on 7th June 2016 at 7.30 p.m. It will be useful to have a discussion with both organisations regarding the possible provision of broadband via fixed and wireless services.

Thames Valley Police have agreed for the Britwell Hill mast to be used, and transmitters can therefore be installed there. 'Back haul' is now required, which was planned to come from RAF Benson, but this is not unlikely. An alternative would be from Stonor Park where a former tenant paid for a high speed connection. It seems that the Hon.William Stonor may be keen to allow the use of this facility - Village Networks will need more than 25-30meg supply and Mr.Haq thinks that there may be an availability of up to 100 meg at Stonor Park. It is possible that BT may agree to subsidise this provision.

On the less positive side, central Government may reduce its commitment to provision of broadband for all, unless a community proves demand.

Mr.Haq is hopeful that our area will be supplied, possibly within the next 12 months. A 12 meg supply would give a decent service, BT have noted that even in cities, the take up of superfast b roadband has not been universal.

Regarding mobile phone services, broadband provision will have no effect unless a box is added to the individual's computer system.

Mr.Hunt reported that a company has approached Upper Assendon Farm to investigate the installation of a mobile mast in the field behind the farmhouse.

7. Close of meeting

There being no further reports to receive, the Chairman thanked the two Councillors and Mr. Haq, and also the parishioners for attending, and declared this section of the meeting closed.

The Annual Meeting followed immediately (separate Minutes)

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Chairman