

PISHILLWITH STONOR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held at The Village Hall, Russells Water on Monday, 16th May 2011

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

Also present: District Cllr. Revd. Angie Paterson.
One member of the public: Mr. J. Scullard.

The Chairman welcomed all those present.

1. Apologies and reasons for absence County Councillor Mr. R. Belson (holiday)

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

The Chairman welcomed those present and outlined the work of the Parish Council over the past year.

On Planning Applications generally, there were 25 applications considered by the Parish Council, including one Appeal (Oak Tree Farm, Christmas Common), which is currently being considered by the Inspectors. Nine applications were approved by the Parish Council, four were refused and eleven had no strong views. SODC approved twenty-two and refused two, one of which is the subject of the appeal above.

The Parish Council also made representations to Mr. John Howell, MP, against the decision by SODC not to automatically refer applications to committee if the Parish Council and officers disagree in their recommendations. Unfortunately, the Parish Council was not successful.

Salt Bins: The Parish Council was offered yellow or green bins with chevrons. These were rejected by the Parish Council as being over-intrusive and ugly. An alternative suggestion made by the Parish Council that marker posts be placed to indicate where salt was delivered was not acceptable to OCC Highways.

Highways: The signs in Stonor have been replaced and now read "Stonor - Please Drive Carefully". Additionally within Stonor, the Parish Council was aiming to organise a speed survey and this was agreed and arranged with OCC Highways. However, it was decided to delay this until after the work to the Stonor Arms is complete, as it was felt that the presence of the contractors' vehicles etc., would automatically slow motorists.

There is an ongoing problem with the state of the roads and potholes. Mr. Keith Stenning (OCC Highways) visited the January meeting, when he explained that his maintenance budget had been cut by 40% and that only essential repairs were being undertaken. Therefore only potholes of a depth greater than 2" would be repaired. Effectively only minor roads are now to be maintained in emergencies.

The Parish Council has requested that the ditches and grips be cleared out, but only gully emptying has taken place to date.

Anniversary Walk: In recognition of the 10th Anniversary of the Chiltern Society, Mr. Guy Godfrey went to a great deal of trouble to organise a circular walk commencing at Maidensgrove. Unfortunately, despite advertising, there were no participants. The Chairman thanked Mr. Godfrey for his considerable efforts in this respect.

Fly-tipping: This continues to be an ongoing problem, particularly near the barn at the bottom of Hollandridge Lane.

Commons: Driving on the Commons and through fields of crops in the pursuit of deer and hares is an ongoing problem and continues to be carefully monitored.

Harvest Barbecue: The Parish Council, together with Pishill Church, organised a Harvest Barbecue at White Pond Farm, which was a great success. Mr. Dunn thanked the members of the Stracey family who had hosted and arranged the event. The Stracey family also offered to host a street party for the Royal Wedding, but an organiser was not forthcoming. However, there was a party on the Green at Russells Water, with a large screen and bouncy castle, which

Chairman's Report (cont)

was well attended.

Litter Blitz: This was again a success in tidying up litter from roadside verges. Mr. Dunn thanked all those who took part and, in particular, Mr. Richard Hunt for organising and arranging the event.

Mr. Dunn concluded by thanking his Vice Chairman and all fellow Parish Councillors for their hard work throughout the year which, to a large extent, goes recognised. Mr. Dunn particularly thanked the Clerk, who deals with an increasing level of bureaucracy from government, in spite of promises to cut red tape.

3. Report from County Councillor Mr.R. Belson

In his absence, Mr. Belson had submitted a report which was read to the meeting by Mr.Dunn.

The report stated that on 9th February 2011, a Council Tax increase of 2.75% was announced.

Libraries: Oxfordshire has 43 libraries and 82%of visitors use 23 of them. It is planned to keep these 23 open and cease funding the remainder. Watlington library is one of those being retained. Funding for the remainder is being explored by the County Council and may involve local communities.

Additional Highway Maintenance Funding: Following the harsh winter, the roads have been badly damaged. Central Government has therefore allocated an additional £3.5million to assist, which is to be used to improve the structure of the roads, thereby preventing potholes. Large areas of patching, resurfacing areas of road, and full reconstruction will be taking place where required. Central Government requires that the results must be published by September2011, with the programme being agreed during April and work commencing during May.

Speed Cameras: these are now operational again at the cost of Thames Valley Police and there will be more emphasis on mobile units. The funding for this is coming from the Speed Awareness Courses, the cost of which has risen from £79.50 to £95.00. The new process for prosecution is calculated using the speed limit, plus 10%, plus 9 mph, e.g. Speed Limit 30 mph, equalling a maximum speed of 42 mph. Only one course in any three year period will be permitted.

OCC will continue to fund the maintenance of the fixed sites.

Oxfordshire Boundary Review: the County is currently conducting a boundary review with the intention of reducing the number of councillors from 74 to 63. When the details are agreed, Cllr. Belson will forward the plan to the Parish Councils.

Landfill: the County has signed a contract to build an incinerator at Audley in north-west Oxfordshire. This facility will dispose of all Oxfordshire's residual (non recyclable) waste.

4. Address by District Councillor, Revd. Angie Paterson.

Mr .Dunn congratulated Cllr. Paterson on her recent re-election as District Councillor and invited her to address the meeting.

Cllr. Paterson responded by thanking all those who had voted for her re-election and explained that the former District Councillor, Mr. Rodney Mann, had resigned and Cllr. Anna Badcock had been elected in his place. When Cllr. Badcock has had time to accustom herself to the role, she and Cllr. Paterson will arrange to share responsibilities. Cllr. Paterson remains a member of the Planning Committee and has also been invited, and accepted, the office of Deputy Leader, which she will undertake for the next twelve months.

5. Open Forum - Questions from members of the public: None.

There being no further business to transact, the Chairman declared this section of the meeting closed.

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Chairman