

Minutes of the West Hagbourne Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 17th
May 2012

22 members of the public were present.

1. Welcome

Chairman of the Parish Council Cllr Butler welcomed everyone to the meeting.

This is the Annual Parish Meeting. It is not a Parish Council meeting, although it must be chaired by the chairman or vice chairman of the PC. Resolutions made are not binding but will be taken into consideration at the next PC meeting.

We are obliged by law to have this between 1 March and 1 June, after 6 pm, and not in licensed premises.

We can have as many other Parish Meetings as we want but always after 6 pm and in unlicensed premises. There is nothing to stop villagers having something else, which might be called a "parish forum", for example, at any time or place they like.

The councillors here tonight took office in May 2011. We have been on training courses, which I think we all found helpful. At my chairman's course, as a warm up exercise they arranged us in a semicircle around the hall, in various orders - left to right. Number of electors, size of precept (our part of the council tax), and years of experience as a councillor. I just stood at the very end on the left, for all of them. We are a small village.

There have been some problems such as producing the newsletter and posting minutes on the website. The newsletter is on the agenda for this meeting, and steps have been taken to speed up production of the minutes.

The two major issues this year were the SODC Core Strategy and the Bloor Homes development on Park Road. The Core Strategy, as it affects us, basically came down to whether further development of Didcot should be to the north - which is the SODC proposal - or as some wanted (alternative land owners, developers and northern villages) to the south. Naturally we have been supporting development to the north and opposing further development to the south. There are other aspects of the Core Strategy on which representations were made, but that was the most important one. It should be noted that the Core Strategy recognises the need to keep space between Didcot and the villages, and also includes traffic calming measures for West Hagbourne. The Core Strategy is still undergoing examination but as far as I know the SODC plan for further development to the north is going ahead.

Despite opposition from many people, including West Hagbourne Parish Council and Didcot Town Council, SODC gave the go ahead for the Bloor Homes development on Park Road to proceed out of sequence with the rest of Great Western Park. This means that construction traffic will have to use Park Road. The good news is that the developer is required to provide Section 106 funding

for traffic calming in West Hagbourne, and that is on the agenda for this meeting. We have made submissions on there being a ban on construction traffic passing through the village.

The clerk and I attended an SODC presentation on the new planning powers for parish councils. They are not for us, nor for most - if not all - of the other councils present. We would have to put a planning infrastructure in place, with trained people. The cost of that would probably be from £35,000 upwards depending on the size of the parish.

In general the council has limited spending powers. We have specific powers to spend on certain categories. For any expenditure not specifically within our powers, there are two difficulties. Firstly we have an annual total budget for non-specific spending, depending on the number of electors. This year, with about 215 electors, the limit is about £1400. Secondly we have to be satisfied that the benefit to villagers is commensurate with the expense. People seeking donations from the PC need to explain carefully what the benefits are so that we can assess whether it is commensurate with the expense.

At an SODC event I spoke to an organisation that provides funds for building works such as the construction of village halls. They passed my contact details to somebody at SODC who called me to explain how a village goes about seeking funds for a parish meeting place. He said that it was vital to show that there would be sufficient demand to ensure that it was in regular use. A few parish council meetings and a few parish association meetings would not be enough. This may be something for the Parish Plan but plainly it is not enough to show that villagers want a meeting place. We will have to show that it would be in regular use.

The Parish Council does not have powers in respect of certain things that have troubled villagers, such as unauthorised signs. Our policy is to forward objections to the council concerned, such as SODC, without comment.

As regards problems with Highways, the Clerk takes these up with Oxfordshire County Council but it can often help if villagers also take these up directly with the County Council. If there are several complaints about a pothole, for example, it may be more effective than a complaint from the Clerk.

If any villager has an issue on which it is felt that the Parish Council should make a decision, the clerk should be notified at least a week before a Parish Council meeting, so that there is time to include it on the agenda. In general, the Parish Council will not make a decision on an issue that is not on the agenda, so any such issue will have to wait for the following meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Michelle Thornhill and Ted Kendrick.

3. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 18th June 2011

The minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting were agreed with one amendment and signed as a true record.

4. Matters Arising

Section 106

No further details have been received from the District Council however money will be available for traffic calming in West Hagbourne and for improvements to the footpath to Didcot.

Core Strategy

The Parish Council put in a submission to the EIP.

Village History Group

The cabinet has been removed from the Village Hall. When the current project is complete the group will move the archive to Didcot Library or the County History Centre.

Village Association

A new tent and tables have been purchased in time for the Jubilee Celebrations with help from a Lottery Grant. The Parish Council was thanked for its donation towards the Jubilee Party which looks like it will be a splendid day.

Village Meeting Place

No further progress has been made since last year. However the Parish Council have looked into available grants and in order to apply for money a need and not just a want for a hall would need to be proven.

Public Transport

Timings are still a problem for users.

Highways

The gulleys will be cleared in the next month.

Annual Parish Meeting Venue

Cllr Butler reported that in order to stay within the law that the Annual Parish Meeting should be between 1st March and 1st June after 6pm. The meeting agreed that they would prefer to have the meeting in West Hagbourne in the daytime. It was therefore agreed that next year a formal APM would be held as part of the ordinary March Parish Council meeting with an informal daytime meeting during the summer.

Monica Lawson Memorial Bench

The Parish Council has decided that it was unable to lawfully contribute such a large sum of money to the bench. However it would support any fundraising carried out by individuals in the parish.

5. Reports

Oxfordshire County Council Report for year 2011/2012

The Oxfordshire County Council

Conservative controlled that provides around 80% of the County's local authority services. These include social care, schools & children's services, waste management, trading standards, roads, transport planning, land use, countryside, the registration service, the fire and rescue service, countryside service, libraries, museums, emergency planning, public health and Youth services.

Cabinet Membership – Councillors

Ian Hudspeth	Leader of the Council
Rodney Rose	Deputy Leader of the Council
Arash Fatemian	Cabinet Member for Adult Services
Hilary Hibbert-Biles	Cabinet Member for Growth & Infrastructure
Kieron Mallon	Cabinet Member for Finance & Police
Louise Chapman	Cabinet Member for Children and the Voluntary Sector
Melinda Tilley	Cabinet Member for Education
Nick Carter	Cabinet Member for Business and Communication
Mrs J Heathcoat	Cabinet Member for Safer and Stronger Communities

Budget Setting for 2012/13

This budget is set within the framework of the Corporate Plan and in line with the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). For the second year the level of Council Tax has been frozen at **0%** due to a government grant of £7 million that is much welcomed due to declining incomes and increases in costs. For future years an increase is set of 3.75% as per the MTFP but subject to review. Much is owed to the council's long-term prudent planning. The council is still providing a **real choice** in many of the services it provides, although it has had to reduce that choice in some areas and the council has continued to provide those services with **improving cost effectiveness** year on year.

Last year the council decided to save £119 million over the medium term 2011/2016 and £55 million to be saved in year 2011/2012 that has been achieved but with considerable reinvestment. There has been 40% reduction in senior management and overall there are 600 less jobs than a year ago. As in the previous year, the council decided that front line service reductions would not be made in the two priority areas of children's social care (vulnerable children) and the fire and rescue service – **both life saving services**.

The council's primary theme is to ensure that Oxfordshire thrives and the council's medium term objectives have been amended to ensure that it can provide the leadership needed so that growth in the county will ensure a prosperous future for all its citizens. The continuing difficult economic climate means that, more than ever, the council needs to ensure that its services are as efficient as possible and to ensure that there is a focus on breaking the cycle of deprivation which exists across the county. The Corporate Plan sets out the detail of the council's vision and the delivery plan that is proposed for the coming year based on:

- (a) World Class Economy
- (b) Healthy & Thriving Communities

- (c) Enhancing the Environment
- (d) Efficient Public Services.

The Plan links to the Business Strategies for each of the directorates which have been updated and are available on the internet (www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/businessstrategies).

Council Priorities

These are focused on **low taxes, real choice, value or money** whilst recognising a reduction in the financial envelope. Some brief and bullet point details regarding the budget follow:-

Children and Youth

Improving school leadership: £300k over two years. Supporting 'The Every Child Reader Programme' with £700k. Money for troubled families £1.6m, with a possibility of recovering 40% from government. Schools have had a significant increase in pupil premium. Youth service: despite cuts is delivered in a different way providing a greater number of sessions.

Adult Social Care

Additional £1,2m in base budget for physical disability. An extra £3m for social care

Extra Care Housing £4m in capital programme taking pressure off revenue spending.

Community Services

Library savings reduced by £0.75m to leave £1m savings.

Environment

Area stewardship fund now to be renamed County Councillor Highways and Transport Fund is doubled. In essence that means in the Moreton Division there will be £40k to spend in the new financial year. In the last 6 months of last year there was £10k to spend and 4 projects were established of which the fund provided £10.5k (£500 borrowed) with the balance of costs being met by the parishes. A very good result of 3 VASs and one set of road markings. VAS now established on New Road East Habourne.

Highways maintenance continues with improved and speedier pot hole filling and an extra £1m capital for repairing damaged roads for Oxfordshire's 2,600 miles of roads within the county that are separate from the Highways Agency responsibilities such as the A34 and M40.

Broadband Infrastructure

Superfast broadband is programmed to reach 90% of premises in Oxfordshire by 2015. £10m plus government grant of £3.9m.

Big Society Fund

Now a bumper £1m community based fund.

Military

£100k now in base budget for year on year provision (that has been in the budget for the past 3 years), so that the council can continue to ensure the social, economic and environmental well-being of service personnel and their families in Oxfordshire.

Capital Programme

A reducing amount to £436m over the six years from the current year. Spending will be mainly on schools and roads.

Your Councillor

Elected as Chairman of the County Council in May 2011 that has proved to be a very busy task but most enjoyable. However, there has been time to deal with local matters within the division such as improving road safety. It has been decided to implement a 50mph speed limit on part of the A329 north of the Fairmile development yet to be established. Continually, requesting a better response to road repairs and for more speed checks to be undertaken. Always, remaining aware of all matters relating to roads, bridges and schooling within the division. Recently, supporting Communities against gravel extraction (CAGE) from the possibility of future gravel extraction in Cholsey. Other local issues to be given verbally.

Your councillor thanks the Parish Councillors for their co-operation throughout the past year.

Cllr Patrick Greene – Moreton Division – Oxfordshire County Council – March 2012

Cllr Greene agreed with Marion Judd that the County Council is not receiving value for money from the Highways Contractors and will be discussing the problem with the relevant Cabinet member.

Annual report of the East and West Hagbourne Cemetery Committee 2012

The committee met twice during the last year, on 20th June and 23rd January. Items discussed included the gaps in the Rosa Regosa hedge which Cynthia Napper has agreed to fill in. The oak tree planted in memory of Monica Lawson is growing well.

John Lawson is to arrange for a seat to be placed in the cemetery in memory of Monica Lawson but has not yet decided where it is to go. The matter has been left with him and he will advise the committee when he has made the final decision.

Cemetery charges were reviewed but after comparisons with other local charges it was decided not to increase them. Our charges are on a par with local villages but Didcot Town council charges are considerably higher. They will be reviewed again in June 2012. At the moment income covers expenditure. The last increase was in 2006.

Val Brownsword (West Hagbourne Parish Council representative.)

Hagbourne Charities: Annual Report 2011/12 for West Hagbourne Annual Parish Meeting

Current Trustees: I Duff, (chair), Sue Lay (representing West Hagbourne residents), Margaret Turner (representing Didcot Town Council), Yen Rickeard (nominee East Hagbourne Parish Council), A. Thompson, Marion Judd (representing West Hagbourne Parish Council) and Rev J. St John Nicolle.

The Trustees have not met during 2011/12.

The Charity made its usual annual grant to the Didcot Volunteer Centre.

West Hagbourne residents should be aware that under the terms of the Hagbourne Charities, residents are eligible to apply for grants from the Hagbourne Charities

Marion Judd

Representative for West Hagbourne residents
Hagbourne residents

Sue Lay

Representative for West

WEST HAGBOURNE VILLAGE ASSOCIATION REPORT FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING ON 17TH MAY 2012

On 21st May 2011, the Village Association hosted a Lasagne Supper in Upton Village Hall to celebrate three events: St George's Day, the Royal Wedding and the 90th birthday of the Royal British Legion. Entertainment was provided by Eva Pinkava's choir and a showing of Malcolm Brownsword's film of all dragons that entered the 2011 competition. Proceeds from the raffle (£93.60) were divided between the Royal British Legion and Help for Heroes.

The Annual General Meeting of the Village Association was held at the George and Dragon, Upton, on the evening of Tuesday 5th July 2011.

Judging for the Madge Trophy Competition for the best village garden took place in September 2011. Gardens were judged by Wesley Smith of South Today TV and Radio Oxford fame and the winner of the trophy was Mr. Bill Warner of Manor Close.

Later that month, members of the Village Association joined with the Village History Group to provide delicious cream teas for the History Group's very successful Village Archive Day held at York Farm.

On 24th January 2012, a meeting was held at Upton Village Hall to set up a committee to plan the village's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations. Some 24 people attended and many others, unable to attend, wished to be involved and offered their help. Two further meetings of this committee have since been held during March and April. The committee agreed that to ensure that every villager was able to join in celebrating this unique occasion there should be a free lunch for

everyone and their families followed by an afternoon full of fun and entertainment for young and old. Mr. and Mrs. Richard Allen have offered to host this event at York Farm which is to be held on Saturday 2nd June from 12 pm. The committee thanked Mr. and Mrs. Allen for their generosity.

The Village Association has applied for Lottery funding to provide new tables and chairs for use at village events and we await a decision. The Association has also purchased a new marquee for Village events.

The Jubilee Celebrations have already begun with our annual Dragon Competition to celebrate St. George's Day. Despite there being a crime scene in the duck pond and almost continuous rain, some 32 dragons, including a large specimen occupying the phone box, have been displayed on roof tops, on hedges and in trees, in tents, and even flying.

Afternoon Teas held at York Farm on Sunday 29th April, hosted by Mrs. Mary Allen of April, raised £210 which will be used to help fund the Jubilee Lunch and entertainments.

The Village Association's Hon Treasurer, Keith Walton, reported funds currently stand at £815.13.

HAGBOURNE VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE, 2011-2012

Report to West Hagbourne Parish Council Annual Meeting 02/05/11

In contrast to 2010-2011, which was a busy year, preoccupied with completing the extension, deciding on a charge schedule for the various rooms and opening the enlarged Village Hall, the past year has been quiet.

Topics for the year:

- 1) Committee meetings
- 2) Working parties
- 3) Energy consumption
- 4) Replacement for caretaker and for bookings secretary
- 5) West Hagbourne History Group

There have only been two committee meetings (8 August, which I was unable to attend, and 1 December).

By August 2011, the loan for the extension had been paid off, the Hall had £5700 in the bank and the treasurer was aiming for a surplus of income over expenditure of c.£15,000. It was agreed that hire charges would be kept the same as 2010-2011 for a further year.

The 2nd committee meeting immediately preceded the AGM. Minutes have not yet been circulated. All committee members were re-elected at the AGM. No committee meeting has yet been held in 2012.

Working parties take place as required to maintain the fabric and surroundings of the hall. Recent jobs have included: repairing locks; internal and external painting; fitting leaf guards to gutters; replacing uplighters in main hall. Anyone wishing to offer help will be most welcome.

Energy consumption has been an ongoing concern, comprising approximately 1/3 of annual expenditure, with the remaining 2/3 being shared approximately equally between caretaker fees and general repairs. In February, 2012, the Hall

committee was invited, via a mailing from Oxfordshire Rural Communities Council (ORCC), to participate in a series of workshops and audits to assess current energy usage and to explore means of saving energy (and money) in community buildings. Yen Rickeard duly completed the relevant forms but, to my knowledge, there has been no further action yet, other than a sentence in the ORCC April newsletter that grants of up to £600 are available to carry out an energy audit of a community building.

It was announced in December that Wendy Lewis, who had been appointed caretaker in early 2011, would be unable to continue because of ill-health and an urgent request was made for a successor to come forward. The post is part-time, approximately 30 hrs per month and covers caretaking and some cleaning. Anyone interested should contact Craig Barfoot (01235 818968) for further information.

An urgent request has also been made (attached) for a Bookings Secretary to replace Allison Huckle. Contact Craig Barfoot, as above, in the first instance. Last year we announced that the West Hagbourne Village History Group would be able to store its archive material in a secure cabinet in the new meeting room. Sadly, this has not proved possible for a number of reasons: security of items placed in the meeting room could not be guaranteed; the cabinet, which the history group had purchased, was damaged very soon after being installed in the room; and access to the archives was not possible at times when the Hagbourne Pre-school was using the Small Hall. The archives are now back in West Hagbourne and a secure, dedicated home is being sought for them.

Appeal for new Bookings Secretary.

Our bookings are very healthy. Allison Huckle is our current Bookings Secretary, but she has decided that it is now time to hand over to a new Secretary. She has done an excellent job over the last three years and has brought us into the 21st century by computerising the bookings sheet. The Committee is very grateful to her, but we now need someone new to collate the reservations from all our Regular Users, take phone enquiries from casual hirers and publish these data each month. There's a lot of information for hirers of the Hall on the Village website www.easthagbourne.net.

To make the Secretary's life simpler we have a mobile phone dedicated to Village Hall use. When we have found someone to take the post we will of course assist and advise the new Secretary to ensure a smooth transition of responsibilities. Without bookings the Village Hall cannot run. Please will each of you ask around and see if you can find someone who would be prepared to take on this post. We have until June 6th to find someone. This is becoming urgent.

Thank you.

WEST HAGBOURNE VILLAGE HISTORY GROUP ANNUAL REPORT

Annual General Meeting, 2011

The AGM took place at 7.30pm on 6th June 2011 in the new small meeting room at the Hagbourne Village Hall. It was followed by an open meeting which was well attended by several people from East Hagbourne, Blewbury and Upton. Everybody expressed a wish to continue with the joint meetings as it was felt

that it was important to share information and be able to have access to each other's material.

Forward Plan

In the absence of any new members in the last few years it has been decided to wind down the History Group. No new projects will be undertaken but it was agreed that we would complete the Millennium House Project. Part I - recording the houses in West Hagbourne in 2000 - has been completed. Part II involves researching and writing up the histories of the oldest houses in the village. Meetings will be informal working parties.

The collection of archive material and maintenance of historical records will continue.

The current archive will be transferred to storage once all the material has been listed and catalogued. This includes paper, photographs, CDROMs and electronic records.

Storage of Archives

The History Group's storage cabinet in the small meeting room in Hagbourne Village Hall has been removed for several reasons. The cabinet has been damaged by chairs stored in the room; security is uncertain when the public are attending events at the hall and access is a problem when the pre-school is in session. It has been decided to keep the material in West Hagbourne, as before, until the Millennium House project has been completed. It will then be transferred to a secure and publicly accessible place such as the Oxfordshire History Centre or Didcot Library. The Inclosure Award and map will be transferred to the Oxfordshire History Centre by the Parish Council.

History Afternoon

The History Group and the Village Association joined forces to hold an open History Afternoon at York Farm on 25 September 2011, courtesy of Mr and Mrs Richard Allen. This was very successful as many people came and enjoyed the History Group's collection of historical memorabilia, including scrap books, photographs, albums of local events, correspondence, maps, census returns, moving images, archaeology and computer presentations. Cream teas were provided by the Village Association.

6. Traffic Calming

County Cllr Greene agreed to use his some of his Stewardship Scheme to provide a VAS and repainted white lines if the Parish Council contributed £500 towards the cost. This was agreed by the meeting.

There was a discussion of various options for traffic calming in the village. Cllr Green agreed to arrange a meeting with Highways to discuss possible solutions. The Clerk will look into stickers for the wheely bins. It was agreed that traffic calming in Park Rd, Didcot to discourage traffic from coming into West Hagbourne is desirable.

7. Broadband

Parish Cllr. H. Lewis reported that despite winning the Race to Infinity West Hagbourne will not be receiving high speed broadband. It will be possible to get faster speeds but not the highest. The Parish Council propose to find out how many people would want to move to the higher speed product and how many aren't able to because the service isn't good enough. Cllr Lewis asked people to email him with their thoughts in order that the Parish Council can decide how to proceed.

8. Newsletter

Cllr Butler apologized for the lack of newsletter. There have been problems with the formatting of the newsletter and the distribution. If no volunteers come forward the format will be simplified. The Council will work to improve the situation.

9. Parish Plan

The Parish Plan Steering Group intend to produce an outline of the original plan followed by a short questionnaire. They don't believe that there are any new actions and hope to produce a draft plan by the end of the Autumn.

10. Open Forum

Concerns were raised about the problems caused by the recent power surge. There has been poor communication from Southern Electric and it has caused problems with equipment and telephone lines. The vehicles from Southern Electric have also damaged the verges. The Parish Council will write to Southern Electric.

Complaints were made about the cutting of the verges in the village. The Clerk will contact the contractors.

There being no further business the meeting was declared closed at 9.20pm.