

MARCHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Marcham Parish Council held on Wednesday 11th March, 2009 in the residents' lounge, Duffield Place, Marcham at 7.30 p.m.

Present:

Mr. M. Denton (Chairman), Mrs. J. Allan, Mr. C. Bough, Mrs. M. Evans,
Mr. D. Hutchinson, Mrs. C. Ricketts, Mrs. S. Turney, Mr. D. Walton
Clerk: Mrs. L. Martin
6 members of the public
Joined by Cllr. I. Brown (County Councillor)

- 2009/41 Apologies for Absence
Apologies for absence had been received from Mr. I. Charles, and Mr. W. Cumber.
- 2009/42 Declarations of Interest
Mrs. Ricketts declared a personal interest in the agenda item relating to the possible extension to 8 Longfields in that she knew the occupants. Mrs. Turney declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the agenda item relating to the possible extension to 8 Longfields in that she lived adjacent to this property.
- 2009/43 Minutes of the meeting held on 11th February, 2009
These were agreed and signed as a true record of the proceedings.
- 2009/44 Matters Arising from the Minutes of the meeting held on 11th February, 2009

Annual Parish Meeting
Council noted that the Vale of White Horse District Council had agreed to send an officer to the annual parish meeting on 20th May to give a presentation on the District Council's core strategy and the implications for Marcham. Brief discussion took place as to the presentation of the Parishioner of the Year award.
- 2009/45 Public Participation

Caravans – Howard Cornish Road
A resident placed on record his thanks to the Council for arranging the removal of the caravans that had been left on public amenity space at the junctions of Howard Cornish Road with Duffield Place and Howard Cornish Road with Fettiplace Road.

North Street – Lack of Street Light north of The Gap
The Clerk reported that a resident had expressed concern to her that the section of North Street without any footway, northwards from The Gap was particularly dark and would benefit from an additional street light as there was a danger for pedestrians who had no choice but to walk in the road. The Clerk was asked to draw this to the attention of the County Council.

Marcham Churchyard – lack of light on path from New Road

The Clerk reported that a resident had expressed concern to her that the light on the East wall of the Church which should light up the path through the Churchyard from New Road to the main door of the Church, was casting shadows and causing darkness owing to shrubbery being in the way. The Clerk reminded members that a sycamore tree had been felled last year at this location to allow more light onto the path. The Council's representatives on the Churchyard working party would check the situation.

2009/46

Planning Applications

a) Decisions on previous applications

Details pursuant to condition 35 of planning permission FYF 10304/6-CM and condition 26 of planning permission FYF 10304/8-CM
Tubney Woods Quarry and Landfill Site, Besselsleigh
Permitted 11th February, 2009

b) Applications dealt with prior to the meeting

MAR/5011/6 Retrospective application for the erection of a 1.8 high close boarded fence to the boundary of plot 2

Cotsdale, Abingdon Road

For: Cranbourne Homes Ltd

Comments: Council objected, the original approval showed the re-use of stone from the barn to construct the boundary enclosure. No attempt had been made to use this. The wooden fence was out of keeping with the stone wall on plot 3 which was already on the Cotsdale site.

MAR/6253/5 Proposed riding arena, with fencing in of paddock

Brushwood, Oxford Road

For: Mrs. R. Kitto

Comments: Council had no objections

c) Applications for consideration at the meeting

No planning applications had been received

Mrs. Turney left the room

Cllr. Brown joined the meeting

d) Other applications

A courtesy copy of an application for a 2 storey extension to 8 Longfields had been provided to the Council for comment, as this property was a shared equity house on a rural exception site.

The Rural Housing Trust which was the joint owner of the property had agreed to the extension. Council considered the principle of an extension to this property. Discussion took place on the fact that the land had been provided for affordable housing as starter homes, with the intention that families moved on as their needs grew. Members were of the opinion that if a 2 bedroom house were extended and made larger, the value would be increased and therefore the cost of the percentage share on a resale to local people would be more. This may in itself render the property unaffordable.

RESOLVED:

- a) that a letter be sent to the Rural Housing Trust setting out the Council's objections to permitting extensions to shared equity houses on a rural exception site on the following grounds.
 - (i) the land was provided for starter homes with the intention that families moved on as their needs changed leaving the smaller homes for new first time buyers.
 - (ii) that if extended the cost of the percentage share would increase thereby rendering the house not-affordable.
- b) that a similar letter also be sent to the Vale Housing Association who also had an interest in other shared equity houses in the parish.

Mrs. Turney rejoined the meeting.

2009/47

District Councillor's Report

In the absence of Cllr. Hanna no report was available.

2009/48

County Councillor's Report

Transport

Cllr. Brown encouraged members to view the Local Transport Plan and also the SCOTS (Southern Central Oxfordshire Transport Strategy) study. In regards to the latter report, he suggested that action should be taken for the whole of A415. Traffic in the South had grown by 7%. He supported a national speed limit reduction from 60 mph to 50 mph.

Budget

Cllr. Brown reported that there would be a 3.75% rise in the County Tax. The budget also contained a £5million shortfall in Council pension funding. There were to be no cuts in library services and Cogges Manor Farm was still being funded by the County Council.

Thames Water – Draft Water Resources Management Plan – Statement of Response

Cllr. Brown referred to the Statement of response and the hard copy that was available.

Hills Aggregates – Planning Application – Upwood Park

Cllr. Brown stated that the anticipated date for this planning application to go before committee was 18th May.

2009/49

Post Office

The Chairman had spoken to the Landlord and tenant of the Post Office/Shop regarding the possibility of a mediator to help sort out Lease terms. They had thought that this would not be helpful. The Clerk had contacted the Post Office Authorities who had given assurances that it was their intention to maintain a Post Office service within Marcham and that they were working towards finding a solution. The current Post Office would close temporarily on 22nd April. The Chairman reported that he understood that the Post Office Authorities were meeting with the Landlord of the shop in a few days time, and that it was the Landlord's intention to keep a Post Office / shop within the village. The following suggestions were made (i) that a temporary Post Office be provided until new arrangements could be sorted (ii) that details of alternative Post Offices be put in MAD News (iii) that those who organise the community bus be asked to take those without easy transport, to other Post Offices, if drivers could be found.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that a letter be written to the Post Office Authorities asking that the Post office be kept open on a temporary basis until permanent arrangements could be sorted.
- (ii) that the Post Office Authorities be asked to close the Post Office for the minimum time possible.
- (iii) that the Post Office Authorities be asked to keep the Council informed and included in the decision for the new arrangements.
- (iv) that residents be advised of alternative Post Offices via MAD News
- (v) that enquiries be made to see whether transport could be arranged to take less mobile residents to alternative Post offices.

2009/50

Oxfordshire County Council – Premium Bus Routes X30 and X31

Council noted comments from parishioners on the County Council's proposals for the premium bus routes. Council discussed the possibilities and

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the County Council be asked to install real time information be installed at the 4 eastbound (to Abingdon) bus stops in the village

- (ii) that the County Council be asked to consider the installation of a bus shelter eastbound at the Duffield Place bus stop.
- (iii) that the County Council be advised that the Budgens garage at Frilford was happy to host a cycle rack

2009/51

Grit Bins

Council noted that these could be provided by the County Council if there was a funder. The County Council would keep the bin topped up with grit. Cllr. Brown suggested that the County Council would also replace the bin if damaged. He was asked to check County Council policy on grit bins. Council considered possible areas where a grit bin could be sited.

RESOLVED:

that the County Council be asked to consider whether The Gap near the junction with North Street was a suitable location for a grit bin.

2009/52

Telegraph Pole – Junction of A415/North Street – Lack of vision

Council noted that Scottish Southern had investigated the Council's concern regarding lack of vision at this junction, and had concluded that the telegraph pole was not a problem. The company was, however, prepared to provide a quotation to have this relocated, should the Parish Council wish to proceed on this basis. The Clerk had advised that Council's statutory powers would need to be checked. Council discussed this and

RESOLVED:

that no further action be taken

2009/53

Thames Water – Response to consultation on draft water resources management plan

The Chairman gave a report on a meeting that he and Mr. Hutchinson attended. The reservoir now proposed was smaller and the timescale had been put back to 2026. Reference was made to leaks in Oxfordshire, and encouraging Thames Water to repair pipes in the county although it was acknowledged that the worst pipes were in London.

2009/54

Oxfordshire County Council – Street Lighting

Council noted correspondence from the County Council which stated that that Authority was trying to reduce carbon emissions and street lighting produced 19% of those emissions. It was considering changing its policy of keeping street lighting on all night in rural areas and switching it off from 12.30 a.m. to 5.30 a.m. Council discussed this suggestion

RESOLVED:

that this Council supports in principle the

switching off of street lights in rural areas
between 12.30 a.m. and 5.30 a.m.

2009/55

Oxfordshire County Council – Contingency Planning – Diversion Routes A420

Council noted that the County Council was making plans for traffic control should the A420 be closed in emergencies. It proposed to divert traffic along the A34 and the A415 through the village of Marcham, and invited comments on the proposals. Council discussed these and

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the Council objected to these proposals
- (ii) that the County Council be advised that although an “A” road, the main A415 through the village with very tight bends was not suitable to take the vehicles that might result from a closure of the A420.

2009/56

Correspondence

- a) Jenks, Oxford – Aboricultural Contractors – Company looking for sites to deposit wood chips.
- b) Vale of White Horse District Council – Summons and Agenda 25th February
- c) Oxfordshire Waste Partnership – “Oxfordshire Spring Clean”
- d) Oxford Green Belt Networks – An invitation to subscribe to the network
- e) Standards Board – Town and Parish Standard magazine
- f) Vale of White Horse District Council – Core Strategy – Preferred Options Sustainability Appraisal.
- g) Oxfordshire County Council – Dial a Ride
Council noted that funding was continuing and that this scheme would run at least until 2012.
Mrs. Evans queried whether the scheme would be able to take residents from rural areas to the White Horse Leisure Centre to the swimming pool. The Centre was some distance from Abingdon and there was no longer a bus service to it. The Clerk would make enquiries.
- h) Oxfordshire NHS – Health News
- i) Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils – February update
- j) Thames Valley Police – Community Policing Awards Scheme
Council discussed the award scheme and

RESOLVED:

that no nomination be put forward

- k) Environment Agency – Environmental Permit Application received for the Energy from Waste Incinerator at Sutton Courtenay. Comments invited.

2009/57

Accounts

Council noted the list of cheques numbered 1965-1969 to be signed and authorised payments totalling £1713.27 in respect of administration costs, play area/maintenance and grant awarded

2009/58

Matters Raised by members for information

Litter Blitz

Mr. Denton stated that the volunteer group was planning a Spring Clean on 28th March.

North Street – Quality of Road surface

Concerns were raised about the quality of the road surface in North Street. There were large puddles and residents had to walk in the centre of the road where there was no footway. This would be brought to the attention of the County Council.

Vale of White Horse District Council – Core Strategy - Reservoir

Cllr. Brown pointed out that the District Council had not supported the reservoir, but had also stated that it would not permit development in the vicinity in the meantime. These two statements contradicted each other.

Allotments

Mr. Walton, reported that an allotment shed had been burned down. The Clerk was asked if a letter of sympathy to be sent to the allotment holder. Mr. Denton, who was also Chairman of the Neighbourhood Action Group, stated that such action was a real problem and a concern for the Rural NAG. He referred to recent break-ins in the village and also advised that some burglars had been caught.

Churchyard

It was reported that unfortunately a tradesman's vehicle who was undertaking work at the Church had driven over the path edging. S.T. Grounds Maintenance would be asked to re-do this edging. It was also reported that the area grass damaged in the Churchyard from vehicles involved in the rebuilding of the stone wall along the path to the Cemetery, had not really recovered. The Clerk was asked to see whether something could be done.

A415 – Cyclists

Concern was raised regarding the number of cyclists using the A415 rather than the designated cycle track.

Howard Cornish Road – Speeding

Reference was made also to a Police car speeding at approximately 45 mph in the 30 mph limit in Howard Cornish Road. Mr. Denton would bring this to the attention of the Police via the Neighbourhood Action Group.

2009/59

Items for MAD News

Council noted the list of items for inclusion in the village newsletter.

2009/60

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Council would be held on Wednesday 8th April, 2009 in the residents' lounge, Duffield Place at 7.30 p.m.

The meeting closed at 8.50 p.m.

Signed Date

