

MARCHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Marcham Parish Council held on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May, 2009 in the residents' lounge, Duffield Place, Marcham at 7.30 p.m.

Present:

Mrs. J. Allan, Mr. C. Bough, Mr. W. Cumber, Mrs. M. Evans, Mr. D. Hutchinson,  
Mrs. C. Ricketts, Mrs. S. Turney, Mr. D. Walton  
Clerk: Mrs. L. Martin

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Walton the Vice-Chairman, took the chair for the start of the meeting.

2009/82

Election of Chairman

The Chairman for the start of the meeting, Mr. Walton, called for nominations for the election of a Chairman of the Council to hold office until the next Annual Meeting of the Council

It was moved by Mrs. Evans, seconded by Mr. Hutchinson and

RESOLVED: nem.con  
that Mr. Denton be elected Chairman of the Council to hold office until the next annual meeting of the Council

2009/83

Declaration of Acceptance of Chairman

RESOLVED:  
that Mr. Denton, being absent from the meeting, be authorised to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Chairman as Chairman at a later date, but as soon as possible and before the next meeting.

2009/84

Election of Vice-Chairman

In the absence of the newly elected Chairman, the Chairman for the start of the meeting, Mr. Walton called for nominations for the election of Vice-Chairman of the Council to hold office until the next annual meeting of the Council

It was moved by Mrs. Allan, seconded by Mr. Cumber, and

RESOLVED: nem.con  
that Mr. Walton be elected Vice-Chairman of the Council to hold office until the next annual meeting of the Council

Being the newly elected Vice-Chairman, Mr. Walton continued as Chairman for the duration of the meeting.

2009/85 Appointment of Planning Working Group

RESOLVED:

that the Clerk be given delegated powers in consultation with Mrs. Allan and Mr. Hutchinson to respond on behalf of the Council on planning applications requiring Council's comments before the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

2009/86 Appointment of Representative for the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils

RESOLVED:

- (i) that no specific member be appointed as representative
- (ii) that the agenda for these meetings be presented to Council, and members would decide at that time if they wished to attend

2009/87 Appointment of Public Transport Representative

RESOLVED:

that Mr. Walton represent the Council

2009/88 Appointment of Representative to Hills Aggregates Liaison Committee

RESOLVED:

that Mr. Cumber represent the Council

2009/89 Appointment of Representatives to the Anson Field Management Committee

RESOLVED:

that Mr. Bough and Mr. Hutchinson represent the Council

2009/90 Appointment of Members to the Churchyard Working Party

RESOLVED:

that Mrs. Allan and Mr. Charles represent the Council at meetings with 2 representatives nominated by the Parochial Church Council to discuss the maintenance of the closed Churchyard

2009/91 Appointment of Representative to the Reservoir Affected Parishes Group

RESOLVED:

that Mr. Hutchinson represent the Council

2009/92 Appointment of MAD News Correspondent

RESOLVED:

that the Clerk write a monthly article on Parish Council business for the village newsletter

2009/93 Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit Working Party

RESOLVED:

that Mr. Cumber and Mr. Walton serve on the review of effectiveness of internal audit working party

2009/94 Planning Consultation Working Party established by Cllr. J. Hanna

RESOLVED:

that Mr. Charles, Mrs. Evans, Mr. Hutchinson and Mr. Walton represent the Council on the working party established by Cllr. Hanna to discuss how to undertake parish consultation should a planning application for new housing and recreation facilities be lodged.

2009/95 Parishioner of the Year Award working party

RESOLVED:

that Mr. Hutchinson and Mrs. Ricketts form a working party to consider nominations for the Parishioner of the Year Award and to administer the arrangements for the Certificate.

2009/96 Village Garden Competition working party

RESOLVED:

that Mr. Bough assisted by Mrs. Turney if necessary undertake the arrangements for the garden competition and preparation of certificates.

2009/97 Staff Committee/Working Party

Council considered the setting up of a staffing committee/working party and considered the terms of reference of such committees/working parties of two larger councils.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that a staff working party be set up comprising Mr. Denton, Mr. Walton and Mrs. Turney
- (ii) that terms of reference of such working parties of smaller Councils be sought
- (iii) that the working party meets within the next 3 months to consider suggested terms of reference to be approved by Council.

- 2009/98      Apologies for Absence  
Apologies for absence had been received from Mr. Charles, Mr. Denton and Cllr. I. Brown (County Councillor).
- 2009/99      Declarations of Interest  
Mr. Walton declared a personal interest in the agenda item relating to Cow Lane allotments in that his wife was an allotment holder. Mr. Hutchinson declared a personal interest in the agenda item relating to the grant application by the Youth and Children's Minister in that he served on the youth worker's support group. Mr. Cumber declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the agenda item relating to the Post Office in that he was a director of W. Cumber and Son (Theale) Ltd which owned the property.
- 2009/100     Minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2009  
These were agreed and signed as a true record of the proceedings. Mrs. Allan referred to a factual point in minute 2009/79 regarding the planting of bulbs at the junction of Howard Cornish Road/North Street/Sheepstead Road. Whilst this was a correct record of the meeting she stated that the brownies were celebrating 100 years and not 90 years.
- 2009/101     Matters Arising from the Minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2009  
Tarmacing of recycling bank area – Howard Cornish Road  
Council noted that the Vale of White Horse District Council and Salvation Army had confirmed that they would temporarily relocate the recycling banks to allow for a hardstanding to be installed.
- Bulb planting by Brownies – Howard Cornish Road/North Street.Sheepstead Road junction  
Mrs. Allan pointed out that the agenda item for this meeting which contained reference to her raising this issue should have in fact read Mrs. Ricketts. Council noted that the Vale of White Horse District Council and Vale Housing Association had no objections to planting in their land. The District Council wished to be advised as to the location of the bulbs for their records. The County Council, however, required a Licence to be granted and legislation of the New Roads and Street Works Act followed in regard to any works on the highway. These requirements were discussed by Council.
- RESOLVED:
- (i) that Council is extremely dismayed at the reaction of the County Council by applying the same strict requirements to brownies wishing to plant bulbs as to major highway works.
  - (ii) that Cllr. Brown (County Councillor) be advised of the Council's view.
- X15 Bus Service around the village  
Council noted correspondence that had been received from the County Council

that the decision to withdraw the service from Howard Cornish Road/North Street was a commercial one, and the County Council had no influence where the contractor was not under contract to the County Council. The Clerk has not received a reply from Thames Travel, the bus operator and would continue to make enquiries regarding this.

2009/102

Public Participation

Post office/Shop

Mr. Cumber under s. 12(2) of the Code of Conduct, as a director of the company which owned the building, made a statement. He stated that the Post Office Authorities remain keen on keeping a Post Office in the village. The Post Office Authorities were ensuring that the computer equipment remained "live", although there had been some difficulties with the telephone line. The Post Office Authorities would keep the Post Office going for 3 – 6 months until the situation with the shop was clearer. As regards a new tenant there has been some interest in the shop. Mr. Cumber stated that he hoped the Post Office would continue alongside the shop business.

Post Office/Shop

A resident stated that it was sad that a people pressure group had not been organised. He was of the opinion that the parish would not have found itself in the current situation if earlier action had been taken. He referred to the situation in St. Giles, Oxford where councillors had led a petition of 3,000 signatures. He referred to rubbish which had been left at the rear of the Post Office in Sweetbriar. He had personally removed paper and plastic items, but reported that metal shelving was still remaining. The Vale of White Horse District Council would not clear the items as part of its weekly collection.

2009/103

Planning Applications

a) Decisions on previous applications

MAR/5011/6 Retrospective application for the erection of 1.8 high close boarded timber fence to boundary of Plot 2  
Cotsdale, Abingdon Road  
Permitted 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2009

MAR/6253/5 Proposed riding arena with fencing in paddock. Change of use from grazing  
Brushwood Farm, Woodside  
Permitted 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2009

Single storey pitched and flat roofed extension to provide new classroom, wc, cloakroom and storage. Cycle shelter  
Marcham Primary School  
Permitted 27<sup>th</sup> April, 2009

b) Applications dealt with prior to the meeting

MAR/15176/1 Erection of 2 storey rear extension, insertion of two front elevation pitched roof dormers, together with internal refurbishment  
3 Mill Road

For: Mr. S. Middleton

Comments: No objections and Council supported the application

MAR/15176/2-LB 1 Erection of 2 storey rear extension, insertion of two front elevation pitched roof dormers, together with internal refurbishment  
3 Mill Road

For: Mr. S. Middleton

Comments: No objections and Council supported the application

MAR/20825 Erection of 2 storey side extension  
8 Longfields

For: Mr and Mrs Cousins

Comments: Council's view expressing concern about the long term affordability of properties on this rural exception site, as set out at the March meeting of this Council, were reiterated.

c) Applications for consideration at the meeting

Appropriate Assessment undertaken by Oxfordshire County Council, requested by Natural England on the impact of sand extraction on Cothill Fen  
Upwood Park

For: Hills Aggregates

Council noted that the application for sand extraction was due to be heard by the County Council's Planning and Regulation Committee on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May. Mr. Hutchinson gave a report on the assessment. The assessment had concluded that any impact on the Fen would be mitigated by conditions being imposed such as to the preparation of a water management plan. Mr. Hutchinson referred to the fact that local residents were holding a meeting that evening and were intending to have representatives speak at the County Council's Planning Committee. It was understood that the County Councillor Iain Brown would also be present.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that no comment be submitted on the Appropriate Assessment
- (ii) that Council not send a speaker to address Planning and Regulation Committee.

2009/104

District Councillor's Report

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

2009/105

County Councillor's Report

The Clerk reported the issues raised by Cllr. Brown when lodging his apologies

for the meeting. These included the arrangements for a grit bin, which had previously been reported. He had also referred to the fact that the County Council was willing to undertake a trial devolved budget arrangement with the Parish Council for weed spraying.

Council referred to this arrangement and was keen to pursue it. Reference was made to previous quotes and the requirements to provide a plan showing priority areas. Mrs. Ricketts and Mrs. Turney offered to assist with a priority plan of the village weeds. Mr. Hutchinson referred to a telephone call he had received from a resident in North Street who had expressed concern that the Vale of White Horse District Council was clearing the hollyhocks and wall flowers growing from walls, as part of a street cleaning schedule. He had attended a site meeting and had negotiated a compromise.

**RESOLVED**

- (i) that the street cleaning schedule be obtained from the Vale of White Horse District Council
- (ii) that the Clerk prepare a map of the village showing where a contractor should spray weeds and check the quotations previously received
- (iii) that Cllr. Brown be asked to pursue the devolved budget arrangements as soon as possible.

Mr. Cumber left the room

2009/106

Post Office

Mr. Walton stated he was sad to have lost the Post Office and that he was sure he spoke on behalf of the Council when saying this, as it was an important part of the village. The Clerk summarised the position in regard to the temporary arrangements for the Post Office as far as the Post Office Authorities had advised. They were still hopeful of being able to find a temporary replacement. It was suggested that the people who ran it whilst the previous tenants were away should be invited to run it. Council discussed the rubbish that had been left by the tenants.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) that the Clerk contact the Vale of White Horse District Council to arrange the removal of the rubbish left behind by the Post Office/shop tenants.
- (ii) that Council pays for its removal if necessary

Mr. Cumber rejoined the meeting

2009/107

Grant Request

Council noted that a grant request had been received for an event in June. Consideration of this application in the Autumn when Council usually

considered grants would be too late. Council discussed whether to take this item at this meeting.

RESOLVED:

that the grant request be considered at this meeting

Council considered a grant request from the Youth and Children's Minister to take a group of village children to Viney Hill, a Christian Activity Centre on an activity weekend. Council was concerned that there had been no forward planning and the request not lodged last Autumn so all grant applications could be considered together. Also there was little justification as to why it was necessary to subsidise the costs.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that a grant of £100 be awarded towards the costs of taking village children to Viney Hill Activity Centre
- (ii) that enquiries be made as to which organisation the cheque should be made payable.
- (iii) that the applicant be advised that forward planning was required so that applications could be considered together, and also more detailed information as to the need for funding would be required in future.

2009/108

A420 Contingency Planning Review Meeting

Council noted that the County Council was hosting a meeting at the Bell Hotel, Faringdon on 20<sup>th</sup> July at 1030 a.m. to demonstrate and review the progress of the County Council's A420 contingency plan.

RESOLVED:

that Mr. Denton represent this Council.

2009/109

Cow Lane Allotments

Council considered a request for the re-opening of the pedestrian gate off Sheepstead Road to enable allotment holders who walked to the site easier access rather than walking to the Cow Lane access. Council also considered a complaint that grass cuttings were being dumped in the hedge off Cow Lane. Council also considered two separate requests from Abingdon and Witney College and also from TWL training to permit the use of allotments by students undertaking training courses. The tenancy for the allotments would be in the names of residents of Marcham who happened to be employees of the colleges. Members considered that horticulture was therapeutic and gardening could be of benefit to those with learning difficulties. The Clerk, in her report, had advised Council to consider the terms on which the land was sold to the Parish Council, any implications of a commercial transaction and consultation with other

allotment users, the insurance position, the requirement of the Council's insurers for a risk assessment to be undertaken and means of transportation for the students.

Council discussed the letting of allotments to local residents but who would permit students to work the plots. Members felt that this was no different to any other allotment holder having assistance.

Council also considered a request from an allotment holder, Mrs. Holt, to site a shed on the plot that she rented. She had also requested permission to retain and reconnect a water supply, which had been installed without permission by a previous tenant of the plot, to her plot under the Cow Lane hedge.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that Council supports the use of the allotments for working by students from Abingdon and Witney College and TWL training, provided the tenancy agreements are in the names of local residents.
- (ii) that Mrs. Holt be advised that the water pipe was improperly placed, that hosepipes were not permitted
- (iii) that Council itself would consider whether additional water supplies were needed.
- (iv) that permission be granted to Mrs. Holt to place one shed on the allotment plot 8B nearest the hedge.

2009/110

Longfields – Play Area

Council considered a quotation from Falcon signs for the manufacture of a sign indicating "ownership" and "no dogs permitted" for the Longfields Play Area. Council noted that S.T. Grounds Maintenance had repaired the fence and trimmed bushes that were overhanging the play area.

RESOLVED:

that the information sign from Falcon signs for the Longfields play area be purchased at a cost of £60

2009/111

Centenary of North Berks Football League 1909 – 2009

Council considered a letter from the Centenary Committee of the North Berks Football League requesting that Council celebrate the Centenary of the League.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the letter regarding the Centenary of the North Berks Football League be passed to the Marcham Football Club
- (ii) that a letter of congratulations be sent to the League at the appropriate time later in the year prior to its celebration events.

2009/112

Environment Agency – Application for environmental permit  
Energy from Waste Incinerator – Sutton Courtenay

Mr. Walton gave a report on the Environmental Permit application. Council discussed concerns that cadmium was an extremely toxic metal, many batteries contained cadmium, and all refuse was being incinerated without being separated. This would lead to emissions of cadmium into the atmosphere in volumes much greater than permitted elsewhere such as California. It appeared that mid-range figures had been used when calculating what the incinerator would produce rather than taking the worse case scenario. There appeared to be a requirement for better filters. Monitoring was expected twice a year. This was not sufficient given the risks from emissions in the interim. Carbon capture had not been considered as part of the permit application. Didcot Power Station was considering a carbon capture rig, so WRG should consider carbon capture for the incinerator.

RESOLVED:

that a letter be sent to the Environment Agency expressing Councils concern over the incineration of items containing cadmium, the release of cadmium into the atmosphere and the consequent impact on the area and on public health. The letter to contain reference to better monitoring and the suggestion for a carbon capture mechanism, as was being considered for other industrial premises.

2009/113

Correspondence

- a) Vale of White Horse District Council – Standards Committee agenda 28<sup>th</sup> April
- b) Equality and Human Rights Commission – Public Sector Equality Duties
- c) The Playing Field – magazine – Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association
- d) Vale of White Horse District Council – Assisted travel schemes information
- e) Letter from parishioner – removal of flowers in North Street. – This had been referred to minute 2009/105
- f) Training course information entitled “Granting, exercising and transferring rights of burial” 25<sup>th</sup> June. £40 per delegate.
- g) OALC – AGM 8<sup>th</sup> June, Exeter Hall, Kidlington
- h) Vale of White Horse District Council – Agenda 20<sup>th</sup> May

2009/114

Accounts

Council considered placing a schedule of payments onto the part of the agenda automatically disclosed to the public, and for putting a full list of cheques within the main body of the minutes and not as an appendix. Mr. Walton stated he had asked for Council to consider this as there appeared to be a case for doing this and also in the interests of being open. He reminded members that other councils did this. The Clerk had provided information as to the provisions of the Data Protection Act and the disclosure of personal information. This confirmed certain information should not be disclosed

without the consent of the person who was the subject of the data. After general discussion it was recognised that the summary receipts and payments, and the budget were available automatically. Mr. Walton stated that Council had agreed to publish its annual return, and that the scale of staff salaries should be recorded in the minutes.

**RESOLVED:**

that Council not disclose the full list of cheques automatically in the public domain.

Council noted the list of cheques to be signed and authorised payments totalling £3910.59 in respect of administration costs, parishioner of the year award, and grass cutting.

2009/115

Matters Raised by members for information

Parishioner of the Year Certificate

The Parishioner of the Year Certificate had been presented by way of surprise to the recipients. They would be in attendance at the Annual Meeting for Electors to be formally presented.

Register of Interests

Mr. Bough reminded the Clerk that he had asked for members of the Council to be reminded of the contents of the register of interests each had completed.

Sports wall on Anson Field

Mr. Bough stated that he had spoken with the project management officer for WREN. It was likely that funding towards the cost of a sports wall would be forthcoming. He hoped that the Parish Council would support the project and asked for this to be an agenda item for the June meeting.

Anson Trust – New Community Facilities

Mr. Bough, as a Trustee advised Council that discussions were taking place with commercial parties and that real progress was being made.

2009/116

The duration of the meeting was 2 hours and Council

**RESOLVED:**

to suspend Standing Order no 1a to allow business be continued

Longfields – Play Area fence

It was pointed out that the inherited fence at the front of the play area site was not suitable for the purpose. The chain link fencing had been pulled out of its frame and the wooden top rails had been used as balancing beams by the children. It was thought that it would not be durable, although it had been repaired. Council may have to budget for a replacement fence.

Annual Meeting for Electors

Mr. Cumber offered to arrange for the purchase the refreshments for the annual meeting of electors.

Revd. Richard Zair

Mrs. Allan passed on the thanks of Revd. Zair regarding the Parish Council maintaining the closed churchyard.

Tower Close / Orchard Way – parked cars

It was reported that there were numerous cars parked on the highway verges and paths.

Morland Road / Howard Cornish Road junction

It was reported that there were potholes at this junction. The details of the Oxfordshire gateway were provided, so that the matter could be reported direct.

2009/117

Items for MAD News

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

2009/118

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Council would be held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> June, 2009 in the residents' lounge, Duffield Place at 7.30 p.m.

The meeting closed at 9.40 p.m.

Signed ..... Date .....