

Minutes of the Monthly Parish Council Meeting held on 10th June 2008
in the recreation ground pavilion at 7.30 p.m.

Present:	Mr D Marsh (Chair)	S Lilly (Vice Chair)	Mr. M. Ricketts
	Mr G Taylor	Mr D Hayter	Mr R Thomas
	Mr F Trembl	Mrs M Turner (Dist Cllr)	Mr C Lamont (County Cllr)

Apologies:	Mr J Fisher	Mrs D Boughton-Waite	Mr R Waite (Dist Cllr)
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10 members of the public.

Mr Marsh opened the meeting by welcoming the public and PCSOs McCreath and Deane. Complaints had been received about two matters, and Mr Marsh invited the public to speak on these issues in an open forum.

Residents began by asking for help with the problem of anti-social behaviour in Westfield; the police have attended on numerous occasions but the problem has worsened, with disturbances involving noisy and drunken behaviour and damage to property. Older residents are now becoming afraid to leave their homes, as the miscreants responsible are there all day and well into the night. Mr McCreath explained that the officer who has been dealing with the complaints was not present, but that he himself would look into the matter, having just returned from leave. Three people have been arrested recently in connection with the disturbances, one of whom is not allowed into Harwell at all for the near future. Residents stated that although police attend quickly when called out by residents, the crowds causing the nuisance are not dispersed. Many among the crowd are not from Harwell at all.

Residents have been keeping nuisance diaries provided by Vale Housing Association, as the focus of the disturbance is two VHA properties in Westfield; these diaries have been handed in to VHA and police. Although not fully aware of the number of diaries already handed in, Mr McCreath stressed the need for as many residents as possible to fill in the diaries, which can then be used as evidence; verbal complaints are not permissible as evidence of anti-social behaviour. Once evidence from the diaries is collated, it can be used to argue that the perpetrators living in VHA housing should be removed from those properties.

Mr Lilly suggested that diaries be handed in to the Clerk, who will pass them on to Mr McCreath. The Council will then be able to apply pressure to VHA on behalf of the community, and ask for action against those causing the nuisance. Mr Marsh reminded residents that there is a Neighbourhood Watch meeting on 18th June in the church hall, at 10.30am; police will be in attendance. Mr Marsh sympathised with residents, but there is little the Council can do except offer support as above; the Council has no say in who is placed in Vale Housing properties. Mr McCreath asked for a copy of this part of the Minutes.

The PCSOs left the meeting at 7.50pm.

The second problem concerning residents is the proposed development of affordable housing in Orchard Way. Many residents were worried that the problems in Westfield could occur in the development in Orchard Way. Other concerns were that the latest plans do not reduce the numbers of people likely to live on the development, that only 4 smaller properties will be available for shared ownership, the rest being for rent, and that the Parish Council will not have a say in who eventually lives in the homes. One resident wanted to know why the Orchard Way site had been abandoned in the past. Mr Lilly explained that there was opposition at the time and other locations were then sought; several possible sites had been found, but after many months of investigation, these had all proved unsuitable, either because of planning difficulties (eg access to the site, exits onto a main road, etc), or because landowners were unwilling to sell. The Council had been left with the Orchard Way site, and following further residents' and councillors' concerns, had asked that plans be redesigned for fewer properties. The latest plans had been discussed at the Annual Parish Meeting in May. ORCC has supplied another Housing Needs Survey, which is to be delivered to all residents as soon as possible; once the results have been collated, there will be a clearer idea of what affordable housing is required in Harwell. This can then be taken into account by the Council, ORCC and housing associations when drawing up future plans for any development. No decisions will be made until this information is available.

Mr Marsh thanked residents for attending; they left at 8.10pm. The ordinary meeting was resumed at 8.12pm. Mrs K Beswick was invited to remain, having expressed an interest in being co-opted to the Council.

1. Minutes of the previous meeting(PC/05/08) – the Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting in May were signed as a true record.
2. Matters Arising – a) Affordable Housing – All councillors have now seen the plans for Orchard Way. Mr Lilly suggested that the Scouts be asked to deliver the Housing Needs Survey, and proposed a donation to their funds of £50 as a thank you gesture; seconded by Mr Thomas, carried unanimously. Mr Marsh to contact Mr Zimmerman to make enquiries. **ACTION: DM**
b) APM feedback/ Minutes – No feedback has been received other than concerns about affordable housing. The Minutes were not complete; deferred to July meeting.
3. County/District Councillors/Police/Neighbourhood Watch meeting
 Mrs Turner stated that she will push for any affordable housing to be made available to parishioners. Local Authority Standards Boards are now responsible for dealing with any complaints concerning breaches of the Code of Conduct.
 A new project to monitor dog fouling is under way in Faringdon, involving the use of high visibility stencils and adjacent notices.

Mr Lamont read extracts from OCC's Annual Report (available soon on its website); OCC has received 3 stars in the auditor's report, down slightly from last year. Harwell is included in part of the Southern Oxfordshire Quadrant, an area also including Didcot, Milton and Grove, which it is hoped will develop a leading economy for enterprise and innovation. Household waste in Oxfordshire is still low in national figures. OCC Highways have recently removed around 200 road signs in the area to de-clutter roads.

Mr Marsh thanked the councillors for attending; they left at 8.45pm.

The Neighbourhood Watch meeting was mentioned in the open forum.

4. Planning Matters

Formal Notice of Permission has been received in respect of;

HAR/9429/4 Erection of ground floor & first floor extensions at Jasmine Cottage, 19 Kings Lane, for Mr & Mrs Thorley.

3 new Applications have been received as follows;

SUT/HAR/7886/7 Erection of new portacabin office unit at Concrete Block Plant, Sutton Courtenay, for Hanson Building Products Ltd.

HAR/20538 Demolition of existing extension, proposed new ground floor extension, new roof structure to provide bedrooms, study & bathroom at Thistledome, Grove Road, for Mr & Mrs Robertson.

HAR/9712/2 Insertion of front dormer window at Overton, High Street, for Dr Bewley.

The Council asked that neighbours' comments are borne in mind by Planners when considering these applications.

VWHDC has confirmed it has no objections to Work to Trees planned at Pillar House, High Street (Various works).

Keep Harwell Rural has supplied Minutes from its last meeting. Mr Ricketts, Mr Hayter and Mr Lilly volunteered to attend future meetings. Clerk to check whether any meeting of Western Villages Alliance is planned.

ACTION: C

SODC has a new website concerning Didcot; www.futuredidcot.co.uk .

ORCC has produced a report on Improving Rural Reach; copy to be kept for reference.

OCC has produced a newsletter concerning its Minerals and Waste Plan; Mr Ricketts and Mr Hayter took copies. OCC is also holding a consultation on Planning Enforcement; Mr Lilly took the document on the Council's behalf.

ACTION:MR,DH,SL

VWHDC has sent a draft of its Your Vale Your Future document; Mr Ricketts took it on the Council's behalf; VWHDC also sent a draft of its Planning Enforcement Policy; Mr Lilly took this document on the Council's behalf. Comments due by 30th June.

ACTION:MR,SL

Thames Water's draft Water Resources Management Plan is online. Mr Marsh to attend a public consultation on this matter on 21st July.

ACTION:DM

SEERA has produced a consultation document concerning future aggregates extraction; Mr Lilly took this document on the Council's behalf.

ACTION:SL

He also took a communiqué from South East Vision, a report on sustainability. **ACTION:SL**

5. Financial Matters – a) Receipts & payments cashbook for May 2008 - The cashbook was signed as a true record; Mr Treml had checked petty cash and has volunteered to undertake bank reconciliation each month. **ACTION:FT**

b) New pavilion – Resolution to agree that the Council joins the consortium with a commitment of 35% of the cost of the project for the initial planning process – Mr Lilly declared an interest in this matter as a planning adviser to the consortium, and took no part in the discussion of the resolution. The Agreement drawn up commits the Council financially until the initial planning process is complete; after that time a new legally binding agreement will be required, which will cover funding, running costs and management of the building. The Consortium has reached the stage of commissioning professional and detailed plans for submission for planning permission for the proposed building. It is estimated that final planning costs will be in the region of £3000, although there were concerns that no monetary amount or limit is stated on the agreement, solely percentages. Other concerns were raised that a commitment of 35% of the cost was not agreed in Council before being committed to paper, that the Council has not set aside a specific sum of money to pay for this amount, assuming it is payable in the current financial year, and that existing financial difficulties of some members of the consortium may be a problem.

Mr Marsh pointed out that although there is no specified financial limit, the agreement does have a procedural limit. After further discussion, Mr Ricketts proposed that the Resolution be moved as set out on the Agenda (above); seconded by Mr Hayter, carried unanimously. Mr Marsh signed the agreement on behalf of the Council.

c) Standing Orders – to approve revised Orders (draft circulated June 2008) - All councillors had seen the draft (copy attached to these Minutes). Mr Lilly proposed the revised Standing Orders be adopted immediately, seconded by Mr Ricketts, carried unanimously.

d) Internal audit – to approve accounts to year end March 31st 2008 / approve payment to internal auditor – all councillors had received a copy of the statement of accounts and the Statement of Income and Expenditure. Mrs Roberts had completed the internal audit. Mr Lilly proposed that the Council approve the Statement of Income & Expenditure, the Annual Governance statement and the Statement

of Accounts, and that the internal auditor should be paid £200. Seconded by Mr Hayter, carried unanimously. The Chairman and Clerk (as RFO) both signed the Annual Return.

e) VWHDC Cleansing grant/ OCC grass cutting grant – the Cleansing grant has been received, amount £784.80. The grass cutting grant has been claimed, amount £2496 net of VAT.

6. Matters relating to Council Owned Lands

a) Recommendations from Lands & Recreation Committee -

i) Pitch fees – the Committee recommended that pitch fees remain the same as last year, with some of the fees being used to provide equipment when possible. Mr Thomas proposed that the Council accept this recommendation; seconded by Mr Taylor, carried unanimously. Pitch fees for 2008/9 will therefore be (seasonal fees except where stated otherwise); Harwell FC - £750, Harwell & Hendred Boys FC - £270 per team, Harwell Rugby Club - £30 per game RBL Aunt Sally pitch - £25. These fees are net of VAT.

ii) Rec – bollards, gate, flamvault – Committee suggested installing fewer bollards around the edge of the playing field; R H Fencing is to erect a gate asap so that the flamvault can be collected and installed at the rear of the pavilion. Committee also recommended that in future years, the groundsman has final say as to whether vehicles will be permitted onto the fields for Harwell Feast; this year's heavy rain has caused problems with the surface. Feast Committee could be invited to a Council meeting to discuss this further.

Mr Fisher volunteered to organise parking on the day of the RBL parades in July, using the rec and leaving the parking area free to allow the parade to pass.

The Council agreed with these recommendations; ratified.

iii) Cemetery – Bishop's visit – The Committee had studied Mr Ricketts' plan for the cemetery; Mr Ricketts had proposed that the plan be adopted asap and the alterations done before the Bishop comes to consecrate the cemetery extension. The Committee had recommended that the plan is an excellent long term plan, but that general tidying and access to the new area would be sufficient for the Bishop. Deferred until July meeting.

b) Risk Assessment – deferred until July meeting.

c) Tennis & Bowls Clubs - Mr Lilly has written to the Council's solicitor outlining terms for the Leases.

d) Dilapidated stable – 2 enquiries have been received following the publication of Notice.

e) Little Pippins gatepost – Little Pippins has agreed to pay half the cost.

f) Rec – request for use – a resident has requested the use of the pavilion toilets for a children's party in July, and asked permission to have a barbeque on the rec. The Council asked for a returnable deposit of £50 for the keys to the pavilion, asked that any barbeque used is not a disposable one, that there is a suitable fire extinguisher kept nearby, and that any damage will be the resident's responsibility, howsoever caused. Site of the barbeque to be agreed with the Clerk.

7. Environment – a) Vale & Downland Museum – to be invited to next year's APM.

b) Waste – proposed incinerator – notes not yet received.

c) War memorial – Clerk to contact Mr Waite to set a date for cleaning; several councillors volunteered to help. It was noted that Mr Ricketts had strimmed the grass in time for the Harwell Feast.

d) Harwell reception – Clerk reminded councillors to reply to UKAEA.

e) Flu workshop – Mr Ricketts explained that the second workshop is only a repeat of the first; no attendance is required.

8. Any Other Business

Mr Lilly took the VWHDC Standards Committee agenda, and will attend the meeting if possible.,

Mr Lilly provided a copy of the plan for the new interchange at Milton; to be placed on the notice board.

Mr Hayter reported damage to a tree following the latest collection by Veolia. He has complained to VWHDC. OCC has removed the tree.

The meeting closed at 10.10pm.