

Culham Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held in the School on Monday 12th April 2010 at 7.30pm

Present: Mr G Bartley (Chair), Mr J Woodley-Shead and Mr A Steele.

In attendance: Mrs L Dalby(Clerk) and County Cllr L Lindsay-Gale.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Mr J Thomas, Dr T Price and District Cllr P Tomlinson.

2. Minutes for Approval

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 20th April 2009 were approved and signed as correct.

3. Annual Report of the Parish Council – Cllr G Bartley

Welcome to the Annual Culham Parish Meeting. All Parish and Town Councils throughout England are required by law to hold an annual parish meeting at this time each year. It is a forum for parish electors and interested local organisations where electors may set the agenda, local activities and achievements may be celebrated and current issues in the community debated. I would like to report the key activities and issues discussed during Parish Council meetings since May 2009.

Along with the usual general upkeep to the village and surrounding area including grass & hedge cutting, household planning issues and financial matters, during the past year the Parish Council have either resolved or are dealing with the following:

Now that the road at the village green approaching the Burial Ground has been repaired, the issue of making access easier within the actual Burial Ground has been highlighted in that the grassy slope is not ideal and that a more substantial metalled path or steps are needed. Also the management of the Burial Ground needs reassessing and a proper plan drawn up to make record keeping and allocation of graves easier and more consistent.

The playing field tractor shed was repaired once again following further vandalism. The windows were properly boarded and made more secure - thanks to Cllr Woodley-Shead for organising and implementing this work. A skip was hired and all the Parish Councillors volunteered to help clear the many years of accumulated rubbish and redundant items from inside the shed.

The shed is one of the few community assets remaining in the village and whilst it is not actually used very much at present (having been a changing room/pavilion in the past), there is always the possibility that its potential may be realised in the future. Therefore the Parish Council believes this sometimes costly maintenance is important and justified. The same can be said for the children's play area, which is also in line for further work and improvement.

And with the fate of The Lion public house resolved last year with a private dwelling finally taking its place it is easy to see how such amenities can be lost forever.

The issue of speeding traffic is often on the agenda and the situation appears to be relatively stable at present, this despite the occasional misguided thought of the Highways department at Oxford County Council. In September OCC decided it would be a good idea to *raise* the speed limit on the A415 outside the European School from 30 to 40mph. This prompted the largest gathering for public participation at a PC meeting in recent memory, and after subsequent feverish correspondence with the school, Cllr Lindsey-Gale, myself and OCC Highways the plan was dropped by the end of the following day. People power *can* work...

As mentioned in my last report figures had been requested from OCC regarding the speed of traffic through the village - this information was received and proved to be fairly inconclusive with regard to the actual levels and frequency of speeding traffic; it is available to members of the public to make their own conclusions.

The primary ongoing issue of the past year has been the debate surrounding the Waste Incinerator proposal at Sutton Courtenay, and the concern that how such a facility would affect the wider area, including our community. This is not the forum to go into great detail on this matter, but I am sure that many people are aware of the successful outcome for those opposing this plan and I would like to thank Cllr Paul Gibbs for his dedicated effort on behalf of the majority of the Parish Council, and parishioners, for voicing our strong concerns to the authorities.

However, just as one big issue appears to be resolved another pops up - this time it is gravel extraction. I have recently attended a meeting presented by OCC to allow affected communities to voice an opinion on the proposals. It quickly became apparent that those affected are very keen not to have yet more large-scale gravel extraction on *their* doorstep, and consequently I believe Culham Parish should be no different in holding a similar view. If opinions on such issues are not made clear to the authorities then it is all too easy for decisions to be made that are in the best interests of other communities at the expense of our community. It is still early days as OCC makes its plans known and the Parish Council is monitoring the situation closely.

This is just a brief record of the main items discussed over the year. Remember that detailed minutes of meetings are available from the Clerk or on the village website: www.culhamvillage.org.uk Despite general business being pretty mundane, the Parish Council would encourage electors to attend meetings, raise matters that are of concern to them and generally participate in village issues.

Last year we said goodbye and thanks to Judy Beck, our clerk from October 2007, and welcomed new clerk Lucy Dalby who joined us in September 2009. And after three years as Chairman of CPC I can confirm today that I have decided to stand down to allow me to concentrate more on family and business commitments - there will be a vote amongst the Parish Councillors at the beginning of the May Parish Council meeting to elect a new chairman.

I would like to record my thanks to my colleagues for their balanced and thoughtful approach to the business of the Parish Council and also to those who have presented reports for this meeting, to those listed on the back page of The Mouthpiece Newsletter and any others who by their activities continue to make valuable contributions to village life.

4. Report from District Cllr P. Tomlinson

A report had been received from Mrs Tomlinson, a copy is held on file.

5. Report from County Cllr L. Lindsay –Gale

Cllr Lindsay-Gale gave a report a copy of which is held on file.

6. Audited Statement of Accounts at 31st March 2009

The Clerk circulated copies of the annual report and accounts 2008-2009. The balance in hand at 31/03/09 was £7947.

7. Culham Poor Allotments Trust

A report had been received from Mrs Hayden, secretary to the Trustees. A copy is held on file.

8. Culham Parochial School

A report had been received from Steph Fawdrey – Local Authority Lead Practitioner Headteacher. A copy is held on file.

9. Culham Pre School

No report had been received.

10. St Paul's Church

No report had been received.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.25pm.

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