

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
10th May 2016 at 7.00pm in The Memorial Hall, North Cerney

- PRESENT:** Councillors M Tufnell, N Wilkes, C Wakefield, B Smith, P Sergeant and A Stoten, County Councillor P Hodgkinson and District Councillor J Forde
- APOLOGIES:** Councillor E Russell-Brown, PCSO A Shutt, Mrs D Ewbank and Mrs & Mrs Brian Oliver
- PRESIDING:** Councillor M Tufnell, Chairman
- CLERK / RFO:** V Hancock / S Telling

1. MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Chairman proposed and the Meeting **resolved** that the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting, held on 15th May 2015 in the Memorial Hall, North Cerney be approved and signed.

2. REPORTS FROM THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

- 2.1 Councillor Hodgkinson reported that he had been elected leader of the Liberal Democrat group on the County Council and, as such, leader of the opposition.

On highway issues, he was assisting with the problem of speeding on the A435. He was working with GCC Highways and others in a task group to improve safety on the A429, on which there had been 6 deaths in the past year on the stretch between Cirencester and Bourton-on-the-Water. It was proposed to install additional signage and overtaking lanes.

Under the Lengthman Scheme, it had been confirmed that a number of potholes on roads in the Parish would be dealt with, and Ameys would also deal with the cutting back of the hedgerows in Dark Lane, and the clearing of the footpath to Dark Lane.

He was pressing for action on Ambulance response times in the Cotswolds, which were currently the worst in the South-West. Against a 75% target of reaching emergencies in 8 minutes, only 35% was being achieved. There were now more First Responders, and he understood that the Fire Service would be helping.

The County Council were strongly opposed to the proposal by Cotswold District Council to form a Unitary Authority with West Oxfordshire District Council. The proposed authority would cross regions as well as Counties, which would impact on public services including police, fire and rescue services, social care, and highways.

- 2.2 Councillor Forde reported on her first year as a District Councillor.

She was not permanently on the Planning Committee but had attended meetings as a substitute. The Planning Committee is non-partisan, and the public can attend. The planning officers were willing to meet with the Council to discuss any particularly controversial or sensitive application.

Litter and dog mess were ongoing issues.

She had joined the "Parking Project Board" looking for a solution to the shortage of parking spaces in Cirencester. The Council had committed resources and funds to provide more parking,

and had carried out an assessment of demand, current availability, and future need. A number of sites were being considered, and the possibility of building a “decked” car park. At present, free parking was available in the CDC car park at weekends, and after 3 pm in The Brewery and The Forum car parks. Payment could be made by text or online with MI permit.

She was keen to encourage more cycling in the area, and the Council was looking at ways of supporting this with better facilities for cyclists.

Regarding the Council's proposal to form a Unitary Authority with West Oxfordshire District Council, she said that concerns had been raised regarding public services, and a number of organisations were opposing the proposal. A feasibility study was in hand, and it was likely that a public consultation would be carried out during the summer, before any final bid was submitted to the Government in October.

3 REPORT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

The Chairman reviewed the Council's activities during the year. The Council considered all planning applications, and there was always some action needed in connection with Woodmancote playground. It continued to monitor the noise from Rendcomb airfield.

The possible provision of affordable housing in North Cerney was ongoing, although no planning application had yet been lodged.

The bench at the bus stop in North Cerney had been provided by the Council.

Faster broadband was now available in North Cerney, but not yet in Calmsden.

The Chairman thanked Elmore Crump for cutting the grass on the village green, Councillor Wilkes for his work with the Village Hall committee, Councillor Sergeant for setting up the Council's website, Councillor Smith for organising the dog waste bins, and PCSO Andrea Shutt and PC Victoria Stinchcombe for their help with parking, and speeding on the A435. He also thanked Councillors Hodgkinson and Forde, and Sara Telling and Valerie Hancock for their work as RFO and Clerk respectively.

4 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS AND FINANCIAL REVIEW

The financial review was circulated and the RFO reported that the bank balance at the year end for 2015/16 was £2,218. Total income for the year was the precept of £5,400 (including Council Tax Support Grant of £286) and reclaimed VAT of £151.20. Total expenditure was £5,245. A saving of £214 on the budget for last year was achieved, due to the non-use of the budgets for training and the clerk's administration expenses, but owing to the provision of the bus stop bench, the contingencies exceeded budget by £224.

The bench had been added to the Council's assets, and the total value of the assets (at cost) was £54,032.

A precept of £5,500 had been agreed for the current year (including the Council Tax Support Grant of £214).

A copy of the Internal Audit Report was produced to the meeting.

5 REPORT FROM NORTH CERNEY SCHOOL

The Head Teacher was unable to attend, but had sent a Report taken from the 2015/16 School Evaluation Form. The school was small, but served a wide catchment area, and pupil numbers were expected to increase to 65 by this September. Currently there were more boys than girls, and pupils came from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, with a higher than average number entitled to free school meals. The School has a full complement of staff.

It was also mentioned that a fence is to be erected around the school premises for greater security.

6 ACCOUNTS OF THE MEMORIAL HALL

A copy of the Accounts for the year ending 30 September 2015 was on the Hall's website.

Denise Ewbank was unable to attend the meeting, but had sent a brief report. The roofing works had gone well and were due to be completed very shortly. The Committee were grateful for the donation from the Parish Council.

There would be a Grand Sale in the Hall on 14th May, Wine Tasting in September and a Show in October. The regular fitness classes are well-supported, and hires for private events are increasing. There would be some volunteer weekends to carry out a spring clean, and some other minor works.

The next challenge was to refurbish the kitchen, and then address the false ceiling and lighting.

7 REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES OF THE CALMSDEN POOR DOWNS ALLOTMENT

The Chairman, in his capacity as a trustee of the charity, apologised for having omitted to bring the Accounts with him. He reported that the trustees continued to hold the capital funds, which raised a very small amount of income, which was distributed in accordance with the terms of the charity.

8 REPORT ON NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Councillor Wilkes reported that, despite his efforts, there were still only some 6 residents involved in North Cerney. The continuing issues were parking and speeding. There had been very little crime in the village.

Councillor Wakefield said that the Scheme was fairly active in Woodmancote, and he kept members informed of local crime and other issues. There was concern about inconsiderate parking, and traffic speeding through the village. Two residents were willing to be trained for community speed-watch.

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Councillor Wakefield raised concern about the state of the road from Woodmancote to Rendcomb, and Councillor Hodgkinson offered to meet with him about this.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.55 pm

Signed:(Chairman)

Date:

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT for the FINANCIAL YEAR 2015/2016

Parish Council: North Cerney
Internal Auditor: Veronika Forte
Date: 25 April 2016

The internal audit was carried out on 25 April 2016. The Council's accounts were found to be accurate and in good order.

My observations are as follows: -

1. MINUTES
All income needs to be minuted in the same way as expenditure.
There is reference in the minutes as to the first tranche of the precept, albeit without a specific amount, but not of the second tranche.
2. RESERVES
The reserves at year end 2016 appear to be rather high. GAPTC will be able to advise as to the correct levels.
3. PERSONNEL
For the purposes of the internal audit it would be good practice for the PC to have a record on file confirming the agreed and minuted salaries for the Clerk and the RFO.
4. RISK ASSESSMENT
I understand that there is a proper record of risk assessments/inspections of the playground, but not of the three bus shelters (2 in North Cerney and 1 in Woodmancote) and of the new bench. As a matter of good practice these should be inspected twice a year and the inspection *should be recorded/minuted appropriately*.
5. WOODMANCOTE PLAYGROUND
. Since all the councillors involved in the refurbishment of the playground have now retired, it would be advisable to arrange for a note to be kept on file stating the whereabouts of the balance still held by Mrs Teakle as treasurer of the defunct Woodmancote Association

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V Forte
Internal Auditor to North Cerney Parish Council

PS: For the sake of continuity, please note that I would be prepared to stay on as Internal Auditor for another year to enable your current RFO to take over from me.