

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF RADLEY PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON FRIDAY, 11 APRIL 2003, AT 8.00 PM IN THE CHURCH ROOM, RADLEY.

Those present included: Cr D J Buckle (in the Chair)
Crs Blanks, Butterworth, Crowley, Dockar-Drysdale, Johnston, Mott, Standen
5 members of the public

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Blake, Gamble, and Nutt.

2. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 10 May 2002, which had been circulated to the meeting, were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

3. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF MINUTES

- (a) **PARKING ON PAVEMENTS:** It was noted that this continued to be a problem. This caused considerable damage to footways, and notices were available to put on cars if there was a persistent problem.
- (b) **FLY TIPPING – SHAWS COPSE:** It was noted that the charge for collecting bulky items was £15 for three items, but there was no charge for fridges or freezers. This would be published in Radley News.
- (c) **DEAD TREES – CHURCH ROAD:** The dead trees had been reported to Radley College and the OCC, and a lot had been removed.
- (d) **DUMPING OF GARDEN RUBBISH IN THE COPSE, CHURCH ROAD:** Concern was expressed about the amount of garden rubbish dumped in this area.

4. FINANCIAL STATEMENT AND REPORT

A copy of the payment and receipts for 2001/02 had been circulated to the meeting, and Cr Butterworth, as Chairman of the Finance and Administration Committee, presented the report. The following points were made:

- At the start of the financial year there was a balance of £26,862.69, but with the precept of £40,000, the interest, VAT refund, and other items, the Parish Council's total income was £75,396.51.

- The actual expenditure shows the amount spent in 2002/03, ie the main items of expenditure are Administration (£10,583.79), Annual Subscriptions (£371.01), Donations (£225), Playing Field Expenditure (£6,952.12), Conservation (£5,984.16), General Maintenance Budget, and the loan repayment (£7,456.50). However, adjustments have to be made to show a true figure on what the Parish Council spent in relation to the audit costs, the Clerk's salary and expenses, grass cutting and gardening.
- A lot of maintenance work had been undertaken, although work on the sports pavilion was outstanding. Some of the work was required because of vandalism.
- The main aim of the Parish Council had been to obtain the funding to allow the Parish Council to provide a new play area at Gooseacre, and, except for the third party funding required to cover the grants from the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment (TOE) and Waste Recycling Environmental Ltd (WREN), the Parish Council had probably got the money to proceed (written confirmation from WREN was outstanding). The funding we have obtained is as follows:

Awards for All:	£5,000
Radley College:	£2,000
TOE:	£5,000
WREN:	£13,000
Parish Council:	£18,000

- This would leave the Parish Council with a very low balance at the end of next financial year, and was why it had been necessary to increase the precept to £42,000, a 5% increase on 2002/2003. However, the Parish Council felt this was a very worthwhile project and an essential facility for the younger members of our community.
- An internal auditor, Mr Roger Symes, had been appointed in relation to the new Audit regulations.
- The Parish Council had adopted the National Association of Local Councils' Financial Regulations.
- The auditor has approved the 2001/2002 accounts.

Cr Buckle thanked Cr Butterworth for the report, and for the work he had undertaken as Chairman of the Finance and Administration Committee. Cr Butterworth indicated that he had thoroughly enjoyed his time on the Parish Council since 1992, but would not be standing for re-election. He thanked the Chairman and Clerk for their support.

5. CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT ON THE WORK OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

The Chairman indicated that the Annual Parish Meeting gave him an opportunity to report on the activities of the Parish Council over the last year, before a new Council was appointed in May. He summarized the achievements of the Parish Council over the last twelve months:

- Repairs/maintenance had been undertaken in relation to Parish Council buildings and equipment.
- Money had been raised to allow the Parish Council to replace the play area.
- The vandalized bus shelter in Foxborough Road had been demolished, and a new cantilever bus shelter would be erected in May/June 2003.
- A very useful ecology report on the pond in Church Road has been received, which will allow good management of the area.
- The problem of litter in the Parish had been addressed.
- The Garden Competition continued to be a great success.
- Oxfordshire County Council Environmental Services (Highways) has promised some action in relation to areas of great concern.
- Footpath 8 has a tarmac surface and a wider bridge.

All this has been achieved, whilst keeping a close watch on the income and expenditure of the Parish Council.

He then gave a more detailed report on the work undertaken:

1. Planning Applications

For the eleven months since April 2002, the Parish Council had been consulted on 34 plans, compared with 33 in twelve months the previous year, 2001/2002. The Parish Council to nine, the District Council had so far given permission to four of these, one had been refused, and two had been withdrawn.

The Chairman had attended the Planning and Development Committee of the DC in relation to the planning application in relation to changes to the flats, with a new dwelling, in Church Road, to press the objections made by the Parish Council, but the District Council approved the plans. The Parish Council was disappointed in the way the District Council handled the application, and had followed this up with the Chief Executive.

2. Highway Matters

The Parish Council had continually pressed the Oxfordshire County Council on highway matters – the main matters being the poor footways in the Parish, the hazardous junction at Whites Lane/Foxborough Road/Thrupp Lane, ditches in Lower Radley, traffic calming along Foxborough and Church Roads, improved access to and from Abingdon, especially for the disabled, cyclists, parents with buggies, and pedestrians, and Sandford Lane, speeding vehicles.

3. Police Matters

Inspector Rickard attended one meeting during the year, and had been unable to attend a second planned meeting. Radley was an area of low crime, but even so there had been a spate of thefts from cars in the Church Road car park, at Radley College, and other parts of the Parish during the year. The Parish Council would continue to liaise with the police, and would be pressing Inspector Rickard to attend further Parish Council meetings.

4. Conservation

The Parish Council had regular discussions on conservation matters, aided by the working groups led by Paddy Dockar-Drysdale. Current matters under discussion were:

- **Tree Planting:** The Parish Council decided not to avail itself of the Amenity Tree Planting Scheme this year, as it had not been possible to provide the necessary maintenance required. A lime tree was destroyed along Whites Lane in a road accident, and this would be replaced.
- **Tree Pruning:** Pruning work had taken place on the trees around the periphery of the Gooseacre playing field.
- **Village Green, Lower Radley:** A tree-planting scheme had been undertaken, following discussion with nearby residents. Posts had been provided, more weeds have been cleared, and the area had been grass seeded. The area looked much better for the work undertaken.
- **The Annual Garden Competition:** The seventh Annual Garden Competition would be held on Saturday, 12 July 2003.
- **Litter:** The District Council was no longer participating in the national litter blitz, but an appeal has been made to local organisations to take responsibility for various areas in the Parish. In addition, Mrs Pam Bibby had agreed to collect litter for the Parish Council, and other residents and the primary school had volunteered to keep certain areas litter free.

- The District Council had refused our application for a dog waste bin in the vicinity of the Church Road shops, although this matter would be kept under review.
- Village Pond: The Parish Council was still considering the fencing for this area. More detailed proposals were under discussion at the present time.
- An ecologist had reviewed the pond contents and its management, and a very useful report had been received. Following this, a management committee consisting representatives from the Parish Council, Radley Primary School and Radley College was being set up.
- Waste Collection: There had been lots of concerns about the poor service being given through the District Council.
- Best Kept Village Competition: The Parish Council had entered the Competition again, and the village would be reviewed during May and June.

The Chairman thanked Cr Dockar-Drysdale for all the work he had undertaken, and the high standard he had set.

5. Sports Pavilion, Playing Field and Play Area

The Chairman reported that the Parish Council had found a good firm, which had a lot of experience with local authority requirements, to undertake repair and maintenance work.

- **Sports Pavilion:** A sign had been erected which indicates that vandals would be prosecuted if names were known. The Radley Youth Football Club used the Thrupp Lane car park, and this had made it easier for the users of the Village Hall car park.
- **Playing Fields:** The fields were maintained well by J V Strong, and the Parish Council would be meeting the contractors shortly regarding the contract for 2003. The trees had been pruned around the periphery of the field, Radley College had provided a cover for the drainage, and trees damaged by the high winds had been removed.
- **Play Area:** The Chairman reiterated the report given by Cr Butterworth. It was hoped that the work on the new play area would commence shortly.

6. Other Matters

A great deal of other items were discussed in the course of a year, and the following showed the range:

- Radley Railway Station: The Parish Council was disappointed in the lack of response from Dr Evan Harris, the local MP. The Parish Council had ascertained that little action could be taken until October 2004, when the Disability Discrimination Commission required action by public services to allow better access to the services they were providing. The Parish Council would be following this up as soon as possible.
- Bus Shelter, Foxborough Road: The bus shelter had been demolished, and a new cantilever bus shelter would be provided during May/June 2003. The Parish Council had obtained a 50% grant towards this from the Oxfordshire County Council.
- Meetings with Innogy: Regular meetings had taken place with Innogy, and the usual site visit was taking place on the 17 May 2003. In addition, one of their representatives had attended a Parish Council meeting to discuss a planning application for further work, and a site meeting had been held to look at the flooding along the cycle track off Thrupp Lane.
- Government's White Paper: Our Countryside: the future, a fair deal for rural England. The question of Quality Parish Councils has been discussed, and this is something the new Parish Council will have to come to grips with. DEFRA has indicated that further guidance will be issued later this year
- The Duty to Promote Race Equality: The Parish Council has accepted the statutory code of practice and non-statutory guides for public authority.
- Freedom of Information Act 2000: The Parish Council has adopted the Parish Council Model Scheme; the Information Commission has approved this for a period from 28 February 2003 to 28 February 2007.
- National Association of Local Councils – Model Financial Regulations: The Parish Council has adopted a set of Financial Regulations, which will be reviewed annually.
- Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998: The Parish Council reviewed the Parish Council's role in relation to Section 17.
- Footpath and Cycle Track: A map of the new cycle-ways around Abingdon is available from Abingdon Town Council.

- Seats in Radley Village: The Parish Council has considered a request for more seats in the village. It hopes to provide one next year, and it is possible that Radley College will provide a second seat.

Reports and correspondence have been received on numerous subjects, and the following list shows the diversity of subjects, which Parish Councillors were asked to be involved:

Review of Parliamentary Polling Districts and Polling Places
 Northeast Forum – Concessionary Fares and Discretionary Grants
 Developing Partnerships for Rural Oxfordshire
 Highway Management Policy Manual
 Abingdon Integrated Transport Strategy
 Oxfordshire Community Health Council – Annual Report 2001/2002
 Thames Valley Police Authority – Annual Policing Plan 2002/2003
 Innogy 360 – Report 2002
 Trust for Oxfordshire’s Environment Ltd – Annual Review 2000-2001
 Part III Local Government Act 2002 – Local Codes of Conduct
 Local Plan – Deposit Draft
 Waste Management – report from cag Oxfordshire (Community Action Group)
 Thames Valley Police – Race Equality Schemes
 OCC Casualty Report 2001 and Road Safety Plan 2002/2003
 Local Plan 2011
 Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance
 Your Guide to Road Safety in Oxfordshire 2003
 Involvement in a five-year programme of cultural events in Oxfordshire

The Chairman emphasised that the complexity of matters raised with Parish Councils was very time consuming, as are the changes in local government. Qualifying to become a Quality Parish Council with the new standards it had set would be something of prime importance for the new Parish Council to consider.

Cr Buckle reported that this would be his last year as a Parish Councillor. It was his 52nd year as a Parish Councillor and, except for a break of one year he had been a Councillor since 1951. He had also been Chairman of the Parish Council for several periods, amounting to a total of 18 years.

The Chairman indicated that it was disappointing to leave the Parish Council at a time of such challenge, but he wished future Parish Councils well in what he had found a worthwhile commitment.

He took the opportunity to thank the Councillors and Clerk for all the help and support they have given during the last twelve months, and to wish them well in the future.

7. ITEMS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

- (a) **CR DAVID BUCKLE:** Appreciation was expressed of Cr Buckle's long service, and it was hoped that the Parish Council would consider some form of recognition of his service.
- (b) **ELECTRICITY CUTS:** Lower Radley appeared to suffer more cuts than the rest of the village, and it did not appear on the Southern Electric map when repair work was being undertaken.
- (c) **SEWAGE SYSTEM – SHAW'S COPSE:** Problems were being experienced by the residents of Shaw's Copse, and it was hoped that the Parish Council would follow this up with Thames Water.
- (d) **ATTACK ON ELDERLY LADY:** It was hoped the Parish Council would discuss this with the police.

The Chairman thanked members of the public for attending the Annual Parish Meeting.

Date:

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Chairman