

KIRTLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING Held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 24th May 2017 at 7.30 p.m.

Parish Council members present: S Jenkins, Mr D Pratt (Chairman), R Sadler, S Tylor,
Mrs R Powles (Parish Clerk),
Apologies: Dr H Macbeth, D Richardson
Cherwell District Council: Barry Wood (from 7.45 p.m.)
Parishioners attending: Mr T Brett, Mrs M Forey, Mr J East, Mrs J Shackleton, Mrs J Sprake
Mr T Summerfield, a member of the public

Cllr Pratt opened the meeting and gave apologies on behalf of Councillors Macbeth and Richardson, and introduced Cllr Jenkins as the newly co-opted member.

1. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Annual Parish meeting of 31st May 2016 were approved.

2. Chairman's Report

As presented.

3. Financial Report

Cllr Sadler presented the End of Year Financial Statement to 31st March 2017. Payments of £31,590 had exceeded income of £29,220 by about £2,370 but VAT of over £2,500 was reclaimable so the Council had operated within its means. At present the New Homes Bonus scheme grants from Cherwell District Council were easing the load; the cost of running the parish was now above £24,000 p/a, in addition much free work was provided by parishioners. There had been government and wider concern about increased parish precept levels. In Kirtlington the 9% Precept increase for 2017 – 2018 to £24,000 from £22,000 represented a cost of about £1 per household per week, up from about 92p. The increase in annual running costs over the past few years was due in large part to a step change in the national planning climate, so that typically the Clerk worked up to 20 hours a week (exceptionally 30 to 40 hours a week), and two parish councillors were known to work also about 20 hours a week although parish councillors were unpaid. Cllr Sadler suggested the Precept was therefore good value, but that without the New Homes Bonus Grant the Council would be nearly £4,000 short. The cash at bank, at about £31,900, included ringfenced sums for the Churchyard extension and improvements to the Pond, and so the Council's target reserves at £33,450 were realistic. The Public Works Loan Board loan towards the construction of the Village Hall had now been repaid. *There were no questions.*

4. Reports by the District Councillor and Village organisations

Cllr Pratt invited District Councillor Barry Wood to speak.

Cllr Wood (also Leader of Cherwell District Council) thanked the Parish Council for its work and interface with Cherwell DC. He reported that Cherwell DC had been able to peg its Council Tax for the eighth consecutive year. It seemed the New Homes Bonus scheme would continue as new building schemes got under way; retained business rates were also important to the District Council because they incentivized growth.

Cherwell DC continued to be very wary of the national planning system and of development companies seeking to exploit it. The County Council's wish to become a unitary authority was a threat and a potential disadvantage to the District, as for example it might undermine the current protection of services. He noted however that District authorities did not have the burden of adult social care. In his view government would have higher priorities over the coming year than the implementation of the unitary proposal. He referred to Cherwell DC's redevelopment initiatives for Banbury, and confirmed that settlement growth in the district would be concentrated on Banbury, Bicester and Heyford Park as the most sustainable locations, and as protection from speculative development. *He concluded by inviting questions.*

Mr East asked if the proposal for a doctor's surgery at Heyford Park had been abandoned. Cllr Wood said discussion was continuing with the aim of providing a surgery; general practitioners now preferred large-scale surgeries offering many more facilities, and he anticipated future changes in this regard.

Mrs Shackleton asked why no mention had been made of development in the Kidlington area; Cllr Wood said that the Bicester Plan stipulated the formulation of a strategy to cater for Oxford's housing needs within two years; after the General Election proposals would be put to Cherwell DC with an emphasis on development in the Kidlington area, although much of that was in the Oxford Green Belt. Mrs Shackleton queried whether the new Oxford Parkway Station provided a "special case" which would override Green Belt restrictions; Cllr Wood commented that he agreed with that logic.

Mr East asked what weight Cherwell DC gave to the SHLAA (Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2014). Cllr Wood advised that the SHMA (Strategic Housing Market Assessment) was accorded weight, and referred to the Oxfordshire Growth Board's role in its production; the Growth Board had contracted out the SHMA work, and this was then incorporated into Cherwell DC's Local Plan submission; following the Local Plan Inspector's validation of the Local Plan the SHMA was now part of it.

Cllr Pratt thanked Cllr Wood, who then left the meeting.

Village organizations: verbal reports were presented:

Parish Council public transport representatives: Mrs Shackleton spoke on behalf of Cllr Macbeth – the 25A bus service continued thanks to the S06 subsidy from the developers of Heyford Park (Dorchester) and this subsidy would continue for a further seven years. Cllr Macbeth remained in contact with both Thames Travel and Dorchester. It was important that parishioners use the service, and any problems should be reported to Cllr Macbeth so that they could be taken up with Thames Travel.

Kirtlington Village News: Mrs J Shackleton reported there were 275 village subscribers to the publication, 9 postal, 10 copies were for sale at the Shop and 5 free copies were distributed to the Shop and the School. Advertising now subsidized the cost. The Village News had campaigned successfully for the purchase of a defibrillator, with assistance from Cllr Richardson, and a launch event and demonstration evening had been held. The location of the defibrillator had been chosen following careful consideration of factors including safe parking and the need for an electricity supply. The surplus from the fundraising had been given to the Village Hall Committee to offset electricity running costs. The Village News was able to make occasional donations to village causes. She asked that parishioners provide dates for the Calendar section.

Kirtlington Good Neighbour Scheme: Mrs Jan Sprake described this new scheme, which had a committee of six and 24 registered volunteers, all of whom had had the necessary DBS checks. Parishioners who needed help could phone or email for assistance.

Kirtlington Youth Club: Mr Tony Brett reported on the Club's year – set up in 2009 it had about twenty members between 10 and 16, mostly in the 10 to 12 age group. The group organized activities and trips and was led by part time youth paid youth worker Dave Rudge. Villagers had given financial support following a Village News article, but grant applications were being made and additional funds were needed. Volunteers were needed also, and he hoped the Youth Club would be able to continue, as it was a valuable asset to the community.

Parochial Church Council: Mrs Forey reported that the building contractors Underwoods had completed the repairs. The PCC would organize an event later in the year to mark the end of the building work, as required by the Lottery Grant conditions. A display cabinet in the church now provided a changing display of items of village interest. Access to the bell chamber was dangerous so repair work would be needed here also. Legacies were an important means of being able to fund such work. Sir Robert Dashwood's memorial of 1691 to his servant Thomas, who was buried in the chancel, had been relocated to the inside of the church and a pamphlet had been written describing its history.

Cllr Pratt thanked all the contributors for their work in the village.

Written reports were presented as received from:

Kirtlington Care: *Mr Summerfield presented this report on behalf of Mrs Summerfield.*

The Kirtlington Charities

Film Club

Footpaths Society: *the Parish Council expressed sympathy for landowners whose fencing and stiles were vandalized, and whose land was polluted by dog bags left by thoughtless dog-owners.*

Village Hall Management Committee: *Cllr Pratt expressed the Parish Council's thanks for the hard work of the Committee.*

Royal British Legion

School Endowment Trust

Kirtlington Stars (under 11's football)

Sustainable Kirtlington

Reports not received:

Allotments Association, KWACS, Oxfordshire County Council (Cllr Griffiths), Thames Valley Police

5. Any Other Business

Mr East stated that hedgehogs attracted badgers, and the presence of hedgehogs could therefore increase the risk of TB on farmland.

Cllr Pratt closed the meeting at 9 p.m.

Signed

D.M. RICHARDSON

Chairman

Date

23rd MAY 2018.