

## **APPLEFORD-ON-THAMES**

### **Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held in the Village Hall, Appleford on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2010.**

Present: Cllrs Alan Sharp (Chair), Audrey Sharp, Chris Martin, Judy Beck (Clerk) and nine members of the public.

#### **1. Apologies**

None.

#### **2. Minutes of the Parish Meeting 2009**

The minutes of the meeting held on 27th April 2009 were approved and signed as a correct record of that meeting.

#### **3. Report by the Chairman of the Parish Council**

The chairman gave a report for the year, which is attached below.

The council received reports of the past year from parish organisations and committees, namely

- Church of St Peter and St Paul
- Appleford Parish Trust Report and Accounts
- Appleford Womens Institute
- Appleford United Charity
- Appleford Village Hall Management Committee
- The Appleford Community Project.

County Councillor Stewart Lilley had sent a report, which the Chairman read to the meeting.

The Clerk gave a summary of the council's accounts and annual return for the year ended 31 March 2009.

#### **4. Open Forum**

The council was asked about recent developments with :

The village newsletter – The Pressings

The Incinerator application from WRG

Access to the village hall across the recreation ground.

There being no further business, Cllr Sharp declared the meeting closed at 8.42 p.m.

Signed .....

Date .....

(Chairman)

**APPLEFORD PARISH MEETING 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2010**  
**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT.**

I will do my best to report the Council's work although not in any specific order:- This year the Council agreed to meet monthly instead of every 6 weeks.

For many reasons it has been a rather difficult year with much happening. The resignation of Donald Alcorn and non-attendance of Gervase Duffield left 3 councillors and Judy to carry on. We need residents to come forward and join the council.

**First Great Western Train services.** The council were involved with FGW but the real effort to get the improved service came from Angela Jones and her excellent team also Ed Vaizey and Cllr Stewart Lilley. Thanks must go to them.

**The Incinerator** kept people busy with meetings, letter writing, sifting information etc. We cannot say this matter is over as a planning application to build one on this site has been approved by O.C.C.

**Buses.** I can now tell you that a new timetable is imminent and Appleford will have a DAILY BUS SERVICE to and from Abingdon AND Didcot (except Sundays) commencing in June. The first time in my memory that this has been the case. The Parish Council worked with our County Councillor, Stewart Lilley, and loudly stated the case for Appleford's bus services to O.C.C. **PLEASE USE THE BUSES AS OFTEN AS YOU CAN BECAUSE, IF NOT, WE WILL LOSE THEM.** As a small village with many elderly residents, families with young children, and no shop or Post Office it is so important for everyone to keep the bus services viable.

**Expansion of Didcot to the North.** As residents will know, we have successfully fought off expansion towards Appleford in the past but, again, this issue is being raised by S.O.D.C. and others. The 13 Parishes group are trying to regroup to keep an eye on this. I attend the Didcot Forum Meetings so that the Council may be aware at the early stages of any plans for Didcot that may effect our village – be it housing, traffic, or whatever. The Parish Council held a Public Forum here last Autumn to gauge the feeling of residents.

Also, I'm sure many of you will have noted in the local paper that our area is earmarked for much gravel extraction. We will be watching this carefully as extraction for the Sutton Courtenay area usually means Appleford.

**Parish Action Plan.** The Council was pleased to receive the completed Parish Action Plan last year, thanks to everyone who gave their time to take part. The issue causing most concern to a majority of residents and number one priority on the Plan was speeding through the village. Therefore we have been working with

Oxfordshire County Council, the Police and Neighbourhood Action Group listening to their advice on what options are available. We are at present awaiting information and costs from O.C.C. before we can proceed and inform the village what can be done. However, the Police agree there is a speeding issue in Appleford and intend to patrol here more frequently and increase the use of SID.

**Level Crossing Signage.** A new sign appeared last year “No Unauthorised Entry”. Chris Martin on behalf of the Council has taken this matter up with First Great Western as in living memory this has always been a Footpath and Bridleway to Didcot, and footpath to Sutton Courtenay. The Oxfordshire County Council signpost on the far side of the crossing has been thrown to the ground and Cllr Stewart Lilley is also taking this matter up with OCC to get it reinstated. The matter of the Level Crossing is still ongoing but as far as we know at present no-body has actually been refused access.

**Village Hall Management Committee.** The Council still requires a representative on the Committee. Cllr Chris Martin has agreed to attend meetings as a non-committee member until such time as someone is appointed. So far I understand no meeting has been held. Last year the Parish Council handed £1000 grant from the Vale to the Village Hall Committee for the new curtains.

**The ACP** has a change of role and ceased to be part of the Village Hall Committee or a sub-committee of the Parish Council but no doubt they will be giving their own report later.

**St. Edmunds Football Club** has continued to use the field during the 2009/10 season which is a useful source of income for the parish and we hope to enter discussions with them for the coming season and negotiate a written agreement between us on payment and upkeep of the field.

We do still need an **Editor for the Pressings**. Stuart has very kindly taken this on as a temporary measure but unless someone comes forward then sadly it may have to cease.

I am sure we were all very sad late last year at the prospect of losing **our village pub!** The Parish Council and other residents contacted Greene King asking them to keep it open and were extremely pleased when Mark and Sam arrived. I am sure we all wish them well for the future.

**Recreation Ground and Village Hall Access.**

Due to continued damage by vehicles driving over the recreation ground, especially during wet weather, the Council agreed last year to prohibit motorised vehicles from the ground and bring an existing byelaw into operation, for the following reasons:

- a) flagstones outside the village hall have been broken by vehicles and repaired three times at a cost to the council.
- b) deepening tracks and worsening condition of the field.
- c) risk involved in vehicles passing the play area. The PC was reminded by their insurers that they have a duty of care not only to the children but all users of the playing field and could be culpable for costs in the event of an accident.

To enable easy and safe access to the village hall a suitable tarmac footpath has been made and a Disabled Parking Bay marked out at the end of the path in the car park. The council have also on order a seat to be installed halfway along the path, and are at present looking into what form of lighting can be installed, if possible before next winter. Chris Martin for the Council contacted O.R.C.C. and explained what facilities are available for the disabled and was told they were quite adequate.

**Play Area/Aerial Runway.** These are regularly inspected by me for the Council and annually by ROSPA. More chippings have been spread under the aerial runway and extra will be required in the near future. This brings me to dog fouling.

**Dog Fouling.** There are still problems with dog fouling on the playing field. We do appreciate that others from outside the village bring their dogs but it is still a filthy problem and most unhygienic where children play and people wish to picnic on the grass. In recent months the dogs seem to have taken to using the chippings under the Aerial Runway as a toilet. Some days it is really disgusting. Children jump and run on that particular area. At the next meeting of the Council I will be asking for agreement to request the Vale Dog Wardens and Environmental people to visit the playing field at various times to try to control this and warn offending dog owners. This is now being done in surrounding villages with some success and owners need to be aware that it is an offence not to clear up the mess.

**Car Park.** Sadly we have had some petty vandalism. A new sign was daubed over with white paint in the car park and luckily Chris was able to deal with this quickly. There was also an instance of a van being driven over the mound at the end of the car park into the recreation ground. Posts have since been erected. This may be just petty and mindless vandalism but, of course, it does cost the council and the village money. We have a quotation for hardcore for repair of potholes and hope to proceed with this soon.

**Precept.** Due to increasing costs, the Council reluctantly agreed to raise the precept by 2% as we have very little reserves and need to look very carefully at our spending during the coming year.

**Gervase Duffield.** I will now explain that Gervase Duffield was automatically disqualified from this Council for non-attendance over six months after the Council sought advice. He is not present this evening, although invited as our District Councillor, and I will read his reply sent recently to the Parish Council for your information.....

Last but certainly not least I would like to extend thanks and acknowledge the work and help of:

Our Clerk, Judy, and my fellow councillors Audrey and Chris.

Cllr Stewart Lilley, who although he cannot be with us tonight attends most of our meetings.

Liaison Committee Members, Paul Horton, Andrew Helby, and Chris Martin.

Millenium Common Members, Richard Lewington and Chris Owen.

Angela Greenwell and her team on the Parish Action Plan.

Angela Jones and her team on Train Services and her valuable work on the Incinerator issues.

Donald Alcorn for his help as a councillor during the early part of last year and on the Incinerator meetings.

Ed Vaizey for his help during the past year.

Jim McCarthy for his work with paving stones and chippings, etc. on the Playing Field.

Mandy Klyne and Stuart Fisher for their work on the Pressings and the residents who distribute them each month. Also WRG especially Sue for help printing.

If I have forgotten anyone who has helped in any way during the year I apologise but believe me you are all appreciated.

Thank you  
Alan Sharp  
12.04.10