Garsington Parish Council

The Monthly Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Monday 2nd July 2007 commencing at 7.30 pm. The Chairman, Cllr Godfrey Eden, presided; present were Cllrs David Baker, Anne Eastwood, John Hieatt, Judith Westgate and Chris Wright with G Russell in attendance. Also present were County Cllr David Turner and one resident.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were accepted from Cllr Paul Bolam and District Councillor Elizabeth Gillespie who were on holiday.

2 Public Participation

None

3 Declarations of Interest

None

4 Minutes of the Meeting held on 4th June 2007

These were approved and signed as a true record.

5 Matters Arising from the Minutes

a). Cllr Bolam has asked that, in his absence, discussion about the Council’s contract with Total Pest Control be held over until the next meeting.

b). The Clerk asked if the cost of producing the consultation leaflet (£307.85) should be added to the calculation of the expenses which should be claimed back from the Sports Club.

c) Jamie King had told the Clerk that he intended to start preparing the playground equipment for repainting in the next few days.

d) The Chairman said that he is looking into ways of discouraging playground users from tunnelling in the area.

6 County Councillor’s Report

County Cllr David Turner said that the recent letter about the increase in weight restriction was a result of a European Union directive. Other parishes have also objected saying that the present weight limit was already too high.

Cllr Turner said that the traffic survey had taken place on 6th June – four years after the previous one – and analysis of its findings is now underway. When all the figures have been received and considered he will call a meeting of the Five Parishes Group (to which Marsh & Toot Baldon will now be added).

Cllr Turner said that before the next Council meets there will be discussions with Pete Ronald from County Highways about taking measures to improve safety at the junction outside The Plough and recommendations will be made available.

Cllr Turner asked for feedback about usage of the late night bus service which is available from Oxford back to the village at weekends.

The proposed change of route of the bridle way which leads to BMW will be discussed again during July.

Cllr Turner will find out if there is to be any enforcement action at the Greewoods site now that the appeal has been dropped.

7 District Councillor’s Report

District Cllr Elizabeth Gillespie was unable to attend the meeting but had submitted a report in writing via the Clerk.

She said that she was hoping to visit one of the plastics and glass recycling centres in order to see how waste is separated before processing and she would be able to arrange for other councillors to come along as well. All councillors expressed an interest in doing this.

Cllr Gillespie said that the Council is organizing school holiday activities for young people in the District for the periods 23rd July to 31st August; activities include athletics, hockey, golf, cricket, tennis and swimming.

The District Council is to receive a planning delivery grant of £44,600 from the government thanks to its efficient planning performance and service and will invest this money to improve the service further.

The Council web site has information regarding the new smoke free regulations for enclosed areas which came into operation on 1st July. They have decided to take a softly, softly approach at the onset of this policy.

Cllr Gillespie said that she has been appointed to the Planning Committee, the Community Investment Fund Panel, the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee, and she is a substitute on the NNDR Appeals Panel and the General Licensing Panel. She has also been appointed to the Oxfordshire Museums Advisory Council.

8 Finance

Barclays Current Account at 29th June £9,066.67

Bank of Ireland at 5th June £126,058.01 (interest earned £479.08)

The following cheques were approved for payment:

Nicholson Nurseries £23,796.06

G Russell (Clerk’s salary) £315.90

G Russell (Admin) £106.40

The Clerk said the mandate forms to add Cllr Wright to the list of approved signatories are progressing through the system.

9 Planning

a. Application

No applications had been received this month but the Council was told about some correspondence concerning a proposal to erect a telephone mast in the Parish and there were concerns that one mast might become an attraction for three or four more such structures. The Chairman has the details of what is proposed and will discuss the matter with the residents who live closest to the proposed site.

b. Decisions and other planning matters

The Council noted the following decisions:

P06/W0513 Hill Farm, Cuddesdon Road, Chiselhampton

The applicant’s appeal against rejection of new conservatory was dismissed.

PO7/WO342 69 Southend. Demolition of existing dwelling and construction of new dwelling approved

PO7/WO351 31 Oxford Road New two storey side/rear extension approved

10 Correspondence to Chairman and Clerk

a). The Council had no objection to the proposal that a brown tourism sign for The Three Horseshoes should be located at the junction of Watlington Road with Southend.

b). The Council agreed that the County should continue to fund the external transport post held by Alix Michaelis of ORCC. She had been extremely helpful in the past and has offered further assistance if the Council wishes to pursue the idea of running its own transport scheme.

c). Oxford West End Area Action Plan; the consultation documents were passed to the Chairman for comment if required.

11 Police Community Support Officer

The Council welcomed the newly appointed PCSO Ken Cooney who is based at Wheatley and includes Wheatley, Holton, Garsington, Horspath and the surrounding small villages within his territory. He said that he intends to visit Garsington at least twice a week and that it is hoped another PCSO will be appointed with effect from October. The brief includes responsibility for acting against anti-social behaviour, local disputes, small value burglaries and car theft. Parking is another responsibility but PCSOs have no powers to issue ‘tickets’ which include licence endorsements.

He hoped to attend Parish Council meetings regularly, perhaps in alternate months, other duties permitting.

The Parish Council will be contacted later in the year about the start of a Police Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG).

PCSO Cooney said that although his post is fully funded by the Police Authority his means of transport is paid for by the District Council and this is obviously a crucial element in his ability to cover his territory properly and thoroughly.

The meeting asked about the presence of a small group of travellers on the roadside verge at the bottom of Pettiwell. They have been issued with a landowner’s request to move on (by the County Council). There is no need for police involvement since no offence has been committed.

County Cllr Turner commented that the travellers have been conforming to the code of conduct and, having been allowed to remain in place for about eight weeks, would be asked to move on in two weeks’ time.

12 Burial Ground Regulations

This matter is being dealt with by Cllr Bolam and will be held over until August.

13 Village Maintenance

Cllr Wright said that there are signs that some garden refuse has been dumped in Phipps Well, although probably not very recently. Much of the area is overgrown. It was agreed that Cllrs Eastwood and Wright should try to survey the whole area and establish the condition of the boundary fence.

Cllr Hieatt said that he would contact the City authority about clearing graffiti.

The Clerk is to write to the occupants of The Old School House saying that the County Highways officers believe them to be responsible for cutting back the hedge over the fence at the bottom of their gardens.

Two more dog bins are to be installed: one in Kiln Lane, the other in Wheatley Road near the entrance to Thames Water.

14 Future storage of Minute Books

It was agreed that the Clerk should find out if County Records at Cowley would be able to store the older books. Basil Townsend has been asked if he can locate the minute books covering part of the 1960s.

15 Parsler’s Piece

The Clerk said that the grants officer from SODC has raised concerns about disabled access. It was hoped that the County might adopt part of the access as a new footpath. It might be possible to improve the access from Oxford Road for the benefit of all types of wheeled vehicles.

The grant from TOE, amounting to £5,000 will now be claimed; the grant from SODC, amounting to £7,000, is subject to a further inspection.

The Council noted that Mr and Mrs Marriott are pleased with the Council’s planting of the hedge.

16 Code of Conduct: revisions & declarations of interest.

Following the circulation to councillors of all the details, the Council agreed unanimously that

(a) the mandatory provisions in the Model Code of Conduct set out in Statutory Instrument 2007/1159 be adopted as the Garsington Parish Council Code of Conduct, to be effective from 2nd July 2007, i.e. with immediate effect, subject to:

(i) the inclusion of the "general principles" as an Annex to the Code, with a footnote to explain that it is not a part of the Code but is included as an Annex because of the requirement in paragraph 1(2) of the Code for members to have regard to the principles; and

(ii) the addition of paragraph 12(2) of the Model Code, but excluding the words in brackets

each as recommended by the Standards Board for England and South Oxfordshire District Council; and

(b) the Clerk be requested to notify the Monitoring Officer of South Oxfordshire District Council of the passing of the above resolution

All councillors agreed to complete their declarations of interest and to send them to the Clerk as soon as possible.

The meeting closed at 9.40 p.m.