**GARSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL**

The Monthly Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Monday 2nd December, commencing at 7.30pm. The Chairman, Chris Wright presided: present were Cllrs Anne Eastwood (Vice Chairman), Paul Bolam, Matthew Dovey, Ian Dickinson, Mike Patrick, Judith Westgate with J Eden in attendance. Also present were four members of the public.

12/13/1 Apologies for Absence

Cllr John Hieatt – family illness

County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay- Gale

District Cllr Elizabeth Gillespie

12/13/2 Declarations of Interest

None

12/13/3 Public Participation

It was agreed that as two members of the public attending had come to speak on specific items that were being discussed later, their participation would be included when the items came up on the Agenda

12/13/4 Minutes of the Monthly Meeting held on 4th November 2013

The Minutes were approved with the following amendments.

11/13/4 should read white lines at The Hill

11/13/9 should read Mr Shuker had written to the Planning Department seeking confirmation that the height/footprint of the new build would not exceed the current height/footprint of the existing building.

12/13/5 Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the Agenda

Cllr John Hieatt, had contacted the Clerk regarding Parslers Piece. He had not realised that once strimmed the grass needed to be removed. He had not pursued discussions with his possible contact. Chairman Chris Wright asked the Clerk to speak to Cllr Hieatt. If Cllr Hieatt was able to get the area strimmed, he would organise removal of the cut grass.

12/13/6 County Councillor’s Report

A copy of the County Councillor’s report had been received and circulated to the Parish Council.

County Councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale had sent her apologies, she was attending the public meeting on Home to School Transport in Watlington.

Cllr Mike Patrick reported that he had received a response from the Area Steward.

1. Trees in Combewell should be cut this week

2. White Lines at The Hill, work was scheduled to be carried out in December

3. Pettiwell, before any action could be considered, the County Council would require evidence by monitoring or a survey of the weight and speed of vehicles using this road.

12/13/7 District Councillor’s Report

An apology had been received from District Councillor Elizabeth Gillespie.

12/13/8 Finance

Barclays Current Account at 31st October £43,752.37 (November statement not yet received)

Council to note the DD payment to Grundons amounting to £61.28

The Clerk reported to the meeting that Colourplus had contacted her regarding payment for the October/November Newsletter. The cheque raised and signed in October had not been received. The Clerk had visited the bank, but because she was not a signatory on the account the Bank would not deal with her. Cllr Anne Eastwood, agreed to speak to the bank and get the cheque stopped, once confirmation had been received that the cheque had not been presented a new cheque would be raised.

The following cheques were approved for payment:

HMRC £68.80

Mr G Eden (Reflective Tape for Bollards in Wheatley Road) £15.22

Citizens Advise Bureau Donation £100

AON UK Ltd (additional insurance cover) £104.33

Colourplus December/January Newsletter £766.83

Clerks Salary for October £275.80

**Audit**

The Clerk had finally made contact with the External Auditor, Kevin Rose. He had requested some paperwork from the final Audit, which the Clerk would provide. He would then finalise any outstanding information. Chairman Chris Wright said that if we did not get a satisfactory response on the VAT issue he would personally become involved.

12/13/9 Planning

P13/S2995/FUL (2 amendments) Rookery House, Denton Lane

Demolition of existing block of 8 bedsits and 7 flats and erection of 6 two bedroom and 4 one bedroom flats with associated parking and landscaping.

Following a discussion regarding the increased height of the new build and the other amendments, the Parish Council by a majority vote recommended overall approval. However, it should be noted that there were concerns raised by Cllrs Anne Eastwood and Mike Patrick regarding the increased height of the new build. Cllr Westgate pointed out that the height of the windows on the upper floor was not increased, it was just the finished ridge of the building. It was noted that some concerns had been raised with the Planning Department by residents living adjacent to the proposed new build.

P13/S3651/HH Greystone House, 49 Southend. Removal of existing Porch and erection of new Porch.

The Parish Council did not have any objections to this application.

12/13/10 Correspondence to Chairman and Clerk

John Howell MP – The Clerk had received a letter from Mr Howell following the comments made by County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale at the last Parish Council Meeting. This had been circulated to all Parish Councillors. Mr Howell MP wished to advise the Parish Council that the statement was false and that he is a strong supporter of the green belt and will continue to support the protection of the green belt around Oxfordshire.

Clerk had received a thank you letter from South and Vale Carers for the donation.

Clerk had received a letter from SODC regarding the Budgets and Precept for 2014/15, this to be circulated to all the Parish Councillors for discussion at the January Meeting.

12/13/11 School to Home Transport

Cllr Matthew Dovey outlined the details of the School to Home Transport questionnaire and the options. He had also provided a map of Garsington showing how the village would be split if the option of Geographical School rather than Catchment School was the decision taken by the County Council.

Eddie McDowall, Head of Governors at Garsington School told the Parish Council that 68.8% of the students at the School were from Garsington, with the remainder being made up from Denton, Cuddesdon and other areas. 99.9% of the students who resided in Garsington chose Wheatley Park as their preferred option. He also raised the issue of the free transport to Garsington School for the children of parents at Ripon College, this particular issue was not covered in the Home to School Transport Questionnaire.

Chairman Chris Wright said that the Parish Council could only consider the situation for Garsington residents and as had been stated 99.9% of the students from Garsington Parish choose to attend Wheatley Park School, currently the designated catchment school for the area and to which free transport was provided. This should be given as the option of choice when responding. However, the right should be reserved to make further comment should there be any changes.

Cllr Matthew Dovey also outlined the other costs for children who cannot get free transport. Cllr Mike Patrick said that as students attending 6th form studies currently have to pay towards transport costs, there did not appear to be a great deal of change.

It was agreed that the main response should be as outlined by Chairman Chris Wright and that Cllr Dovey would liaise closely with Garsington School and Governors to make sure that all responses to the County Council questionnaire concurred with one another.

12/13/12 Community Plan

Following an informal meeting between the Chairman Chris Wright and Steve Inch, Chairman of the Steering Group, the Parish Councillors had been circulated with an outline proposal for the planned village questionnaire, which was currently being compiled and would hopefully be complete ready for distribution to every household in the village early in 2014.

Cllr Paul Bolam commented that the questions should aim to get as much information as possible. Cllr Ian Dickinson said that the type of question asked needed to ensure that as much information as possible was gleaned from the responses.

Steve Inch asked if there were any burning issues that the Parish Council particularly wanted addressed.

For instance “funding via the precept, would an increase be acceptable and where should it be spent”

Chairman Chris Wright said that anything that forces people to make a choice is a good thing.

Cllr Matthew Dovey said that he would be looking at Traffic and Road Safety in the Village. These areas needed to be covered in the Questionnaire.

Steve Inch said that a prize might be offered to encourage residents to complete the questionnaire. One suggestion had been a meal for four people at the Three Horseshoes.

He also talked about working with Other Villages, The Green Belt and Schools. SODC would collate all the responses and this meant the questions needed to be asked in a particular way. It was very important that the questionnaire was compiled to cover all the possible areas.

Cllr Anne Eastwood asked who would be paying for the collation of the information. Steve Inch responded that this had all been covered in the budget proposal that had already been submitted to the Parish Council.

It was agreed that when the questionnaire was more formalised it should be discussed again with the Parish Council. In the meantime if Councillors thought of any particular questions that they would like to be included, they should contact Steve Inch or any member of the Steering Committee.

12/13/13 Village Maintenance

Burial Ground. The Clerk had received a response from the two Monumental Masons regarding the alignment of gravestones. Both companies had made the same comment, that headstones were placed at the head of each grave and the problem had been caused by the way in which each plot had been excavated. There was nothing that could be done to correct the situation in this particular line of graves. They suggested that some form of marker was put across the burial ground so that future plots were kept in line. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact Emma Pennington to find out who the gravedigger was and who appointed them.

Bus Shelter at Kings Copse – the Clerk had asked Malcolm Hill for a quote for the laying of paving slabs, this was still awaited.

The Clerk has spoken to Ernie Tipping following his hospital visit. He was making good progress following surgery and did not envisage any problems in continuing with the work he carried out for the Parish Council. At this time of year it only involved putting the waste bin out for collection at the Church and changing the waste bin bags in the Play Area. Grass cutting would not be required until next year.

Chairman Chris Wright and Cllr Paul Bolam said they hoped to continue with the clearance of ivy from the wall at the rear of the Old Stone Cross the following weekend, weather permitting, Cllr Anne Eastwood had already made a start on this work.

Cllr Paul Bolam reported that the cleaning of the bus shelter in Oxford Road had taken place.

12/13/14 Playground

Cllr Paul Bolam confirmed that he had carried out some of the remedial work at the Playground. He still had to get quotes for replacing the seats on the baby swings and he also thought that some of the wood needed to be replaced on the climbing frame. Although the inspector had not considered it to be a hazard, it was in a poor state and a quote would also be obtained for this.

The notice recommended by the Inspector had not yet been ordered, but would be sorted out as soon as possible.

The Clerk reported that Malcolm Hill had been asked to quote for repainting the EIIR Climbing Frame next spring.

12/13/15 Community Assets

The Clerk had not completed the paperwork for Old School Garden, this item to be carried over to January meeting.

12/13/16 Village Bus Service

Cllr Matthew Dovey reported on the Transport Meeting at County Hall that he had attended with Cllr Mike Patrick. There had been more changes to personnel at Thames Travel. Edmund Tresham and Phil Cooper promised that the service would improve. They had said all the right things, but it was difficult to establish if anything would really improve.

Subsidies were discussed. Currently the early bus is subsidised and the rest of the timetable is run on a commercial basis. There would be a review of the area in 2016 and it was possible there would be further cuts.

Kings Copse service was discussed. There was not really a suitable solution to the problem at the present time, Cllr Matthew Dovey said he will speak to Danny @ Go Ride to see if he is able to help with providing a service.

There were some minor changes to the timetable which were being introduced. These would not cause a problem if the bus ran on time. Unfortunately, this was not always the case.

Real Time traffic information. Although this would be helpful, the options regarding information are limited and it would not advise you if the bus was not running.

The Enquiry Service is moving to the Oxford Bus Company, hopefully this might improve the information available.

12/13/17 Policing and Speed Monitoring

As the County Councillor was not at the meeting no further information was available on speed monitoring in Southend.

12/13/18 Annual Parish Meeting and Freshers Fair

Cllr Matthew Dovey said he had not started work on this as he had been very busy during November. Chairman Chris Wright asked if it could be given an appropriate name.

Cllr Anne Eastwood pointed out that Monday 5th May 2014 was a bank holiday and normally the Parish Council meeting would meet on the next Monday, 12th May which was the date that had previously agreed for the Annual Parish Meeting. Clerk will speak to Marie Holmes to see if the Village Hall is available on Tuesday 6th May for the Parish Council Meeting.

12/13/19 Any Other Business

Cllr Mike Patrick reported that there had been more activity in Kiln Lane. A JCB digger had recently been brought to plot Number 9 on a large vehicle, the delivery of which had caused concern to residents. Due to the potholes in the lane, residents felt that their cars had been at risk of damage during the delivery of this heavy machinery. Earth and rubble had been moved from Number 9 to the vacant plot on the other side of the lane. There were also problems of limited access for this type of large vehicle. Turning at the end of the lane was very restricted since the new owners at the farm had installed a gate. It was assumed that because of these problems the lorry and JCB remained on site. Cllr Mike Patrick asked if there had been any further updates from SODC.

Chairman Chris Wright said he would talk to District Councillor Elizabeth Gillespie.

Cllr Paul Bolam once again raised the issue of a School Crossing Officer. In spite of advertising, the School had not received a single application for the position. Eddie McDowall said there had been an incident recently when a child could have been seriously injured whilst crossing the road. Parking at the School was a real problem and in spite of there being an arrangement with the Three Horseshoes, many parents still parked on the roads adjacent to the School. Cllr Anne Eastwood said the times and the rate of pay offered did not make the job very attractive. Chairman Chris Wright asked if an increase in the rate of pay would make it more attractive. It might be something the Parish Council would be prepared to look at, to see if there was any possibility of assisting with funding.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm