#### Garsington Parish Council

The Monthly Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Monday 1st December 2003 commencing at 7.30 pm

1. The Chairman, Councillor Godfrey Eden, presided; present were Councillors Paul Bolam, Anne Eastwood, John Goodey, Cliff Moss and Ann Tomline with G Russell in attendance. Also present were County Councillor David Turner and 5 residents of the Parish

2. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Gurdip Saini

3. Declarations of Interest

The Chairman said that both he and Cllr Bolam would have an interest when a letter from the Garsington Players is considered later in the meeting

4 Public Participation

(i) Mr Ernie Tipping said that parents parking cars in the area around the School continued to be a major problem for local residents and other road users. Mr Tipping was told that it was understood that Mr Brassington has written again to parents about this matter. The Chairman said that he would use the Newsletter to repeat requests to parents to be more considerate and to encourage more children to travel to school on foot. Cllr Moss said that much of the car parking was illegal and that if a police officer was present he would find plenty of cars to penalise.

(ii) Mr Tipping said that there are still several dead and dying trees in Pettiwell. Cllr Mrs Tomline said that she had raised this matter with Mike Dickenson, the County's Highways Inspector.

(iii) Mr Basil Townsend said that in his opinion the District Council is sending out too much literature to the residents. He felt that cost savings should be made. Cllr Mrs Tomline said that the Government encourages Councils to communicate with residents and that some of this activity is aided by Government grants.

5 Minutes of the Meeting of 3rd November

The Minutes of the Meeting were approved and signed as a correct record.

6 Matters Arising from the Minutes

(i) There have been over 3,000 objections to the proposals for new housing south of Grenoble Road which is detailed in the County's draft structure plan.

(ii) Mr Grace has cut the hedge around the Memorial Playing Field.

(iii) Two out of the five residents who are thought to be interested in taking up the vacant Parish Council positions have confirmed this to the Clerk in writing.

(iv) The Planning appeal re 26 Wheatley Road has been dismissed. Details of the Inspector's findings will be circulated.

(v) The Chairman has written to Mr Gwynne about the proposed drainage improvement scheme for Larch End and has received an acknowledgement saying that Mr Gwynne is awaiting replies from the other parties. Mr Wilbery has expressed his concern that local residents may be asked to contribute.

(vi) It was agreed that enquiries would be made to see if SODC would provide a grant to assist the Sports Club meet the costs of repairing the car park.

(vii) The Clerk has asked the SODC Forestry Officer to advise on maintenance of the trees behind the shops in Elm Drive.

(viii) Cllr Mrs Eastwood reported more examples of new graffiti and it was suggested that the Newsletter be used to advertise a reward for anyone who was able to identify those responsible.

7 County Councillor’s Report

County Cllr David Turner said that the County is experimenting with making the mobile library service available in the evenings to see if this would increase usage by residents unable to visit the libraries during the day. He said that the County's entire Library catalogue will soon be available on the Internet.

Cllr Turner confirmed that the County had received a massive number of objections to the idea of houses being built south of Grenoble Road.

He hoped that the County would be able limit the forthcoming rise in the County Council's tax to the 9% target. The rise may even be less than this but full details of Government grants were not yet available.

The Chairman and Cllr Turner agreed to progress the correct placement of the 30 mph signs. Cllr Mrs Tomline asked Cllr Turner to see on which roads 60 mph will remain the speed limit.

8 District Councillor’s Report

District Cllr Mrs Ann Tomline asked residents to let her know if the extra refuse bag for recycling Christmas refuse was not received and she urged everyone to participate in the opinion surveys carried out by the District Council.

She reported on the strength of feeling against the Structure Plan proposals that had been demonstrated at the recent meeting of the Oxford Forum. It would be March 2004 before the County officials would be able to present the results of the consultation to the full County Council.

Cllr Tomline commented that she believes the process of 'continuous assessment' is costing a lot of council taxpayers' money and the benefits are unproven.

9 Finance and cheques for signature

The Council's Annual Return and associated statements for the annual audit for the year ended 31st March 2003 were approved and signed by the Chairman and Clerk. The period of notice advising the public of their opportunity to see the accounts will now begin and advertisements to this effect will be placed on the notice boards.

Bank Balances:

Bank of Ireland 5th November £108,843.40 (Interest in month. £267.71)

Barclays Community Account 28th November £11,631.30

Barclays Base Rate Tracker Account 28th November £8,182.48

It was agreed that Ernie Tipping's Honorarium for looking after the Burial Ground and Playing area should be increased to £600 (last year £365 Burial Ground £180 Playing area)

The following cheques were approved for payment

Village Hall (room hire) £60.00

SODC (uncontested election) £79.00

C A Grace (hedge cutting around playing field) £164.50

E A Tipping (play area fence repair) £75.00

Clerk's salary & expenses £331.02

E. A Tipping (honorarium) £600.00

Thame CAB (donation) £200.00

It was also agreed to purchase three reference books from Shaw & Sons ('The Parish Councillor's Guide', 'Local Council Clerk's Guide' and 'Local Council Finance' for a total of £39.20.

10. Precept 2004/5

The Clerk circulated a schedule of actual expenditure in 2002/3, estimated expenditure in 2003/4 and possible expenditure in 2004/5.

Cllr Goodey proposed that the Precept for 2004/5 should be reduced from £20,000 to £17,500. This was seconded by Cllr Bolam and approved by 4 votes to 2 against.

11. Planning

Application

i) P03/W1002/LD 75, Southend

Garages and workshop ancillary to residential use - Lawful Development Certificate

(Cllr Mrs Tomline said that the applicants are known to her; she declared an interest and took no part in the discussion).

The Parish Council decided that it could not comment upon this application due to having insufficient knowledge about the use of this site over the past 10 years.

Planning Decisions

Lomond House PO3/W0866/RET

Ridge height change - permission granted on 13th November

26 Wheatley Road

Appeals dismissed and enforcement notice upheld

12 Correspondence to Chairman and Clerk

i) The Chairman had been sent a letter by Mr and Mrs Styles of Fox Close setting out their opposition to traffic calming measures

ii) Mr Pym of 44 Wheatley Road has asked the Parish Council to support his complaint to SODC about dogs at 26 Wheatley Road barking at all times of the day and night. Cllr Mrs Tomline said that she had spoken to Mr Pym and the Council on this matter and evidence in the form of a diary of times the barking occurred was needed before any prosecution or action could be taken.

iii) Garsington Players have requested the Council's permission to put a seat in the burial ground in memory of Michael Royal. This would be at the Players' expense. (Cllrs Eden and Bolam declared an interest and took no part in the discussion). This was approved.

iv) It was agreed that correspondence received from the Ramblers Association, OCC Countryside Services, the Lord Mayor of Oxford, Speedwatch, the Oxfordshire Woodlands Project and English Nature would be circulated.

v) The Council had been invited to send representatives to the AGMs of Thame CAB and TOE but was unable to do so. Apologies would be sent.

vi) South & Vale Carers had written to thank the Council for its recent donation.

vii) Playdale Playgrounds have confirmed that under guarantee they have replaced some of the poles in the Play Area and repaired part of the safety surfacing.

viii) The Council noted early warning of the next meeting of Oxford Fringe to be held on 20th January 2004.

viii) It was agreed that the Council should sign up to the network of local community Internet websites, known as 'The Local Channel'. This gave the Council a web site and an opportunity to earn a 15% revenue share from all advertising placed on the site. The Clerk will be the 'parish administrator' for the time being.

ix) Following the recent reference of Cllr Eden to the Standards Board by a local resident and the Board's subsequent investigation, Marie Ainsworth, the Monitoring Officer from South Oxfordshire District Council, has offered to hold a discussion about code of conduct issues with all councillors. This will be held jointly with Marsh Baldon Parish Council and it was hoped that this could take place on 9th January. The Clerk will make these arrangements.

13 Allocation of responsibilities to Councillors

Cllr Bolam had prepared a draft of the responsibilities and how they might be shared out. After some discussion it was agreed that a revised list should be prepared and circulated for further discussion at the January meeting.

14 Village Maintenance

The Clerk said that he had made contact made with John Palmer about the state of his property off The Green and reminded Mr Palmer that it was now more than one year since their informal site meeting. Mr Palmer had promised to progress the matter.

The Clerk was asked to contact Ian Young to request a price for grass cutting and routine village maintenance duties in 2004.

The poor state of the gullies along Oxford Road was noted that and it was agreed that the matter should be raised with Brian Purcell-Smith of Oxfordshire Highways.

The road sign outside the Village Hall has been knocked down and Cllr Mrs Tomline will contact SODC.

Cllr Mrs Eastwood said that several seats in the Village need refurbishment. The Chairman will progress the recommendations about further litterbins and Cllr Mrs Tomline will obtain prices for dog waste bins.

15 Street Lighting

Carried forward to next meeting

16 Purchase of land off Oxford Road

The draft contract is still being circulated for comments by members of the Parish Council.

The Chairman has received a joint letter from residents living adjacent to the property expressing their concerns about the possible loss of privacy, increase in noise levels etc that might follow this purchase. The Clerk was asked to contact these residents and re-assure them that they will have an opportunity to discuss their concerns with the Council.

17 Parish Council Vacancies

Carried forward to next meeting

18 Traffic Calming

Carried forward to next meeting

The next meeting of the Council will take place on Monday 5th January 2004

The meeting closed at 9.48 pm