Garsington Parish Council

The Monthly Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Monday 7th March 2005 commencing at 7.30 pm.

The Chairman, Councillor Godfrey Eden, presided; present were Councillors Paul Bolam, David Baker, Anne Eastwood and Cliff Moss, with G Russell in attendance. County Cllr David Turner, District Cllr Ann Tomline and Mrs Suzanne Willers of ORCC were present for part of the meeting. Also present was one resident.

Cllr David Baker signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, which was witnessed by the Clerk

1. Apologies for Absence were accepted from Cllrs Gurdip Saini and Cliff Shuker who were away on holiday.

2 Public Participation

None

3 Declarations of Interest

None

4 Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of 7th February 2005

These Minutes were signed and approved as a correct record after Cllr Mrs Eastwood's absence was recorded as being because she was ill rather than on holiday.

5 Matters Arising from the Minutes

a. The Clerk has been in touch with Mr Grace to obtain his advice and a quotation for cutting the hedge on the boundary of the Play Area. Mr Grace had said that in his opinion the best time to cut the hedge would be in August or September and that the hedge should be cut to a height of 8' in order to retain some shelter for users of the play equipment. The hedge would need to be cut from both sides. The neighbouring farmer's permission would therefore be needed. Mr Grace said that he thought that for health & safety reasons it would be necessary to close the Play Area for 2/3 days while the job was being done and the cost would be in the order of a maximum of £1,200. It was agreed that a quote from Young Brothers be obtained.

b. The Chairman has written to Royal Mail requesting reinstatement of the Wheatley Road post box.

c. The free trees have been delivered by SODC.

d. The Clerk said that he had received a reply from Sarah Uhart of Countryside Services concerning the hedge adjacent to Kiln Lane. No action is planned in the immediate future because the height of the hedge does not adversely affect public use of the lane. She will arrange for the hedge to be reduced if she does have a team working there in the future but has no objection if the resident (Malcolm Roberts of 30 Combewell) wishes to have the hedge cut back himself. The Clerk was asked to convey this news to Mr Roberts.

e. The Clerk reported that the reason for the bin in Oxford Road being unemptied was because it was apparently not on the contractor's schedule. It is now.

f The Sports Club is certain that the payments of the 'peppercorn rent' have been made; further research is being carried out.

g. Peter Rodger has reported to the Village Hall Committee that the planners have asked for visual representations to show how the design and/or location of the proposed Community Hall might be changed to make it more acceptable.

In the meantime the appeal against the District Council's decision is proceeding. The Clerk was asked to contact Mr Rodger to see if he wished the Council to make any written representation to the inspector. The deadline for doing so is 25th March.

h. A quotation for cutting down the trees at Birch Road has still not been received.

i. The Chairman asked Cllr Mrs Eastwood to find out if the school plan to use the playing field on a regular basis.

j The Chairman said that before the next meeting he hoped to talk to both Mr John Palmer about the land next to the Old School and Mr Collins about the planting on Oxford Road.

k. Cllr Bolam said that following a review of his declaration for the Councillors' Register of Interests, he needed to add that he regularly provides bed and breakfast to singers performing at Garsington Opera. Cllr Mrs Eastwood had no changes.

6 County Councillor’s Report

County Cllr Turner reported his meeting about weight restrictions with neighbouring county councillors and the police. There is to be further study of hgv movements in the area and this will be followed by proposals for consultation.

The County's tax increase of 4.5% is lower than previous years and has been helped by a better government grant.

Cllr Turner referred to the SEERA Plan consultation exercise and pointed out if all or most of the 83 villages in the District could progress small-scale affordable housing schemes it would have a huge impact upon the District's housing waiting list of 2,100 people. He said the waiting list in Oxford City is approximately 4,500.

There is now a connection with the London bus service from Lewknor via the 101 bus service to Watlington.

Cllr Turner said that he would try to progress action on the dead elm trees near Guydens Farm and the quotation that is awaited for work on the Birch Grove trees. Cllr Mrs Tomline asked him to see if action could be taken soon to complete the repairs to the collapsed bank by the High Path in Southend. The matter had been outstanding now for several years. Cllr Mrs Eastwood asked for the scheduling of repairs to the footpath surface on Clinkards Hill.

7 District Councillor’s Report

District Cllr Mrs Tomline said that the District's tax increase was 2.5%. Approximately £5 million has been taken out of the Council's Community Project Fund to go into the pension fund.

She said that Trevor Gwynne has confirmed that work on the flood relief scheme is due to start immediately.

Cllr Tomline has reported to the Enforcement Officer that there are breaches in relation to the planning conditions which were set for the scrap yard. She confirmed that enforcement action is continuing at Kiln Lane and 26 Wheatley Road.

8 Finance and cheques for signature

The balances were reported as:

Barclays Bank on 28th February £4,519.25

Bank of Ireland on 7th Feb £114,216.72

Bank of Ireland receipt of interest was £437.19. Advertising receipts were £265

The following cheques were approved for payment

Biffa £84.01

OPFA sub £35.00

Clerk salary Feb/Mar £262.69

Clerk expenses Feb/Mar £83.52

Colourplus £585.54

It was agreed that s donation of £75 should be given to the 'Playbus' appeal

9 a) Planning Application

P04/W1157 97 Southend; amendment to location of roof lights on proposed oak framed garage/office

It was unanimously agreed that there were no objections to the amendment

b) Planning Decisions and other Planning Matters

P04/W0178 Community Hall Appeal:

The matter will be decided on the basis of written statements & a site visit by the inspector. Any further representations are required by 25th March.

PO5/W0108/RLB The Red Lion Pub.

Application for retrospective listed building consent for kitchen extractor ductwork has been withdrawn

P05/W0008 23 The Hill;

Single storey rear extension

Planning permission granted 17th February

P05/W0026 14 Combewell;

Demolition of existing garage and construction of a new garage to include cloakroom and utility room

Planning permission granted 11th February

P04/W1151 The Well House, 15, Southend: Change of use from agricultural land to paddock and relocation of existing stable building to new paddock.

Planning permission granted 8th February with several conditions

10 Correspondence to Chairman and Clerk

a. Review of Code of Conduct

At the Government's request the Standards Board of England is conducting a review of the Code of Conduct. Details were circulated and it was agreed that the Council would discuss the matter at its April meeting.

b The Chairman said that the Editor of the Newsletter has given him an opportunity to respond to a letter which is written by former councillor John Goodey and which is critical of the Parish Council. It was agreed that the Chairman should take advantage of this offer.

c The Council noted the County Council order dated 4th March reference the extension to existing A329 Little Milton 30 mph speed limit

d The County is to start work on the Little Milton entry treatments in week commencing 14th March.

e Details of the District Council's Litter Action Pack which asks parishes to help the campaign via newsletters, notice boards etc were passed to the Newsletter editor.

f Information has been received about the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Bill, which gives new powers for Parish Councils to issue fixed penalty notices for litter, graffiti, dog control, fly posting etc. The details will be circulated.

g The Chairman said that he would try to accept the County Youth Service's invitation to a meeting at County Hall about appointing a youth officer in the area.

h. Cllr Moss will try to attend the Playing Fields Association Road show on 25th May, at Chalgrove commencing at 6.30 pm

i Details of the Oxford Inspires 2007 invitation to meetings later this month will be circulated.

11 Village Maintenance

Geoff Young has responded to the Council's request that, following the 24% increase in the quotation for grass cutting in the 2005 season, Young Brothers agree to hold this price for 2006. Mr Young was unwilling to do so and it was therefore agreed that the contract should be awarded for 2005 only, with the Council able to obtain other quotes for 2006.

After reviewing the quotations submitted by four local contractors for work between The Hill and Sadlers Croft and at the Kings Copse Bus Shelter, it was agreed to appoint Rob Jeffrey General Building Services to carry out the specified tasks.

More quotes are required for the resurfacing work in Sadlers Croft.

The Clerk reported that the District Council has agreed to replace the litter bin outside the School.

It was agreed that the small trees which have been supplied free of charge by the District Council should be planted on The Green, but there was concern about whether it was appropriate to do this without approval from Highways. Other places considered were the Play Area, the Sports Field and the Burial Ground.

Cllr Moss said that he understood that plans had been produced for the construction of wheelchair access to the Elm Drive shops but it was pointed out that this is a matter for the District not the Parish Council.

It was agreed that Cllr Moss should draft a job specification that itemised the tasks that the Council would like Mr Tipping to carry out in the Play Area.

Cllr Mrs Eastwood said that the bench by the Gizzel needs refurbishment. Cllr Baker said that the Kings Copse notice board that had been paid for by the Parish Council had gone from its previous site and that the public telephone box outside the entrance to Kings Copse, which had been destroyed in a traffic accident, had not been replaced. The Clerk was asked to investigate both of these matters.

12 Land off Oxford Road

It was agreed that more quotes are required.

13 Traffic Calming

Prior to this meeting the Parish Council had received a presentation from Peter Ronald of County Highways, which had shown a detailed scheme of constructing speed cushions in both Oxford and Wheatley Roads. The costs of implementing such proposals were estimated at £20,000 with the Parish being asked to pay half.

Mr Ronald had emphasised that the County will only be prepared to progress this scheme if it receives general acceptance from both the Parish Council and residents. He had provided sufficient copies of plans illustrating the proposals for all residents living close to the proposed features to be consulted.

All councillors were in favour of the scheme and it was agreed to send residents a copy of the plans along with an explanatory letter and to request comments as soon as possible.

14. Affordable Housing

Suzanne Willers from ORCC reported that out of eighteen sites which had been identified as possible locations for building affordable housing schemes, Jane Randall has agreed that sites off Kiln Lane and Oxford Road are the most promising. A site behind Rookery House is to be revisited.

Cllr Moss suggested that the Affordable Housing sub-committee should consider the matter in depth and report back to the full Council. This was agreed.

15 Consultation on The South East Plan

The Clerk reported an approach from the Baldons Parish Council who were keen that Garsington should promote a good response from residents to the document "Your Shout" which has to be returned by 15th April. Parish Councils are encouraged to write direct to SEERA as well.

It was agreed that Cllr Mrs Eastwood should prepare displays for the notice boards.

16 Annual Parish Meeting

It was agreed that the Annual Parish Meeting should be held on Monday 9th May commencing at 7.30 pm. This would be followed by the AGM of the Parish Council.