Garsington Parish Council

The Monthly Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Monday 6th March 2006 commencing at 7.30 pm.

The Chairman, Councillor Godfrey Eden, presided; present were Councillors David Baker, Paul Bolam, Anne Eastwood and Cliff Shuker with G Russell in attendance. Also present were County Cllr David Turner, District Cllr Ann Tomline, and seven residents of the Parish.

1. Apologies for Absence

None

2 Public Participation

a. Ernie Tipping complained about signs which advertised The Three Horseshoes being placed upon public land on The Green. The Chairman commented that there are other parts of the village where such things happen and the Council must be consistent in dealing with the matter. County Cllr Turner said that he would ask Highways for some advice.

b. Members of the Sports Club stressed the importance of urgent action to make the Sports Club secure after the gates to the car park had been damaged by a recent car accident. The Chairman said that the matter would be discussed later in the meeting.

c. Mike Patrick said that he did not agree that the residents had been fully consulted about the new traffic calming measures. The Chairman said that the scheme had involved both advance publicity, including the Newsletter and notice boards, and consultation with residents and had received the full support of the Parish Council.

d. Nigel Emptage of Seven Bells Cottage, 93 Southend, spoke about his planning applications P06/W0099 & W0117/LB which would be discussed later in the meeting. He said that the proposal to demolish the existing conservatory and construct a replacement garden room and single storey ground floor extension had been fully discussed with planning officials and would have no impact upon the property’s neighbours. He asked the Council to recommend approval.

3 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Paul Bolam declared a prejudicial interest in Planning Applications P06/W0099 & W0117/LB because the applicant is a colleague.

4 Minutes of the Meeting held on 6th February 2006

The Minutes of the meeting were approved and signed as a correct record after it was made clear that the review of the bus service mentioned in Paragraph 5 (g) on page 159 will take place in 2007.

5 Matters Arising from the Minutes

a. Sites for Affordable Housing: Suzanne Willers has reported to Cllr Bolam that SODC’s Housing Development officer, Mark Green, has identified six sites as worthy of further study, one of which might also accommodate a new village hall. She will report again after this further study has been completed.

b. Sports Club rent: the Clerk reported that further enquiries with NatWest in Cornmarket had disclosed that the bank account to which the Sports Club rent has been paid is in fact the account of the Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association, who had treated the income as a series of donations over the years. Future rental payments will be made to the Parish Council’s account at Barclays in Cowley. The sums of money involved are so small that he recommended no further action be taken and this was agreed.

6 County Councillor’s Report

Cllr Turner said that the traffic survey of heavy goods vehicles will take place on 7th June, an equivalent date to the last survey which will help comparison of the findings. He said that repairs to the bank and the railing of the High Path will be carried out in the next month.

So far there are no photographs showing the condition of Kiln Lane before the incident involving a vehicle owned by Thames Water.

Cllr Turner said that the County’s budget for youth services has only increased by £55,000 net but there is also a provision of £100,000 which can be used as matching funds. Cllr Turner asked the Council to consider whether it had any projects which might be candidates for funding on this basis.

7 District Councillor’s Report

Cllr Mrs Tomline said that the Council Tax for a Band D property in Garsington in 2006/7 will be £1,283.68 – an increase of around 4%.

The administrative details of the new concessionary fares scheme are not yet finalised but she will report them in the next Newsletter.

The ‘wheelie bin’ scheme for garden refuse will start in April but SODC has only ordered 4,000 bins. There have been several complaints about the administrative costs of the ‘high hedges’ scheme. The reporting fee of £400 is considered far too great and it is not returnable even if a complaint is upheld.

The Council’s inspection of mobile home parks has been completed.

8 Finance

Bank account balances:

Barclays Current £4,276.89; Barclays Community £50.15

Bank of Ireland at 14/2/06 £119,002.30 (interest earned £415.860)

The Village Hall Committee repaid £10,788.75 to the Parish Council, being the amount of the architect’s fees excluding VAT. It was agreed that the planning fee of £990 would be charged to the Parish Council.

Newsletter advertising receipts in the month amounted to £180

The following cheques were approved for signature:

Garsington Village Hall £70.00

Biffa Waste Services £96.39

National Association of Local Councils (sub) £14.00

Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association (sub) £35.00

Garsington Parochial Church Council £5,000.00

G Russell - Salary £302.40

Admin £86.20

Colourplus £613.72

Young Brothers £940.00

Cliff Shuker – planning application expenses £28.08

Wheatley Park School – special needs appeal £50.00

Cllr Turner will ask when the County intends to invoice the Parish Council for its share of the cost of the Traffic Calming scheme.

It was agreed that Brian Rollerson should be appointed as Internal auditor for 2005/6.

The Clerk reported that the quote for mower maintenance received from J Bark was the lower of the two and the work had been put in progress.

9 Planning

a. Applications

Greenwoods of Garsington – change of use (retrospective)

The Council recommends rejection of this application. The business activities on this land have expanded well beyond the area for which planning permission exists. This is ‘Green Belt’ land and the Council disapproves of the business use for which this land is being used. The business should be confined to the area for which permission was originally granted. Scrap vehicles may already be seen above the hedgerow which is believed to contravene the four vehicles high restriction.

(Cllr Bolam left the room while the following item was discussed)

P06/W0099 & W0117/LB Seven Bells Cottage, 93 Southend

Demolition of existing conservatory and construction of replacement garden room and single storey ground floor extension.

There were concerns about damaging the character of a listed building but, upon the casting vote of the Chairman, the Council agreed to recommend approval.

P06/W0125 21 & 23 Wheatley Road (re submission)

Erection of one three bedroom detached dwelling and three garage block. Alteration of existing access. Closure of second access.

The Council agreed to recommend approval.

P06/W0126 10 Combewell

Demolition of existing kitchen extension and construction of new single storey rear extension to both kitchen and dining room.

The Council agreed to recommend approval.

P06/W0128 131 Oxford Road, Garsington

Erection of a double garage to the rear of the dwelling - to allow the installation of one obscure glazed velux rooflight in garage roof. (Variation of condition 4 - restriction to the installation of windows of P05/W0664/RET).

The Council agreed to recommend approval.

P06/W0134 and W0133/LB Garsington House, 38-40 Oxford Road

External works, including new access gates and new railings to existing wall.

The Council agreed to recommend approval.

District Cllr Mrs Tomline commented that she has asked the Council’s planning enforcement officers to check that the work already completed at this property conforms with the permissions granted.

b. Decisions and other Planning matters

PO5/W1236 7 Wheatley Road

Erection of a two storey extension, single storey extension with glass roof and front. Detached garage.

The Council noted that planning permission was granted on 14th February 2006.

10 Correspondence to Chairman and Clerk

a. The Council approved a request that the Three Horse Shoes pub team use the main pitch on the playing field on Sunday mornings in 2006/7 and noted that Mike Patrick is now Secretary of the Sports Club with Clive Woodward the Chairman. Gill Saunders has retired.

b. Affordable Housing; copies of an information booklet had been received and more are available if required. A sample copy will be circulated and then retained for reference by Cllr Bolam.

c. Stephanie Byrne has asked the Council if it would provide temporary banking facilities for the new Garsington Baby and Toddler Group and this was agreed.

d. Cllr Cliff Moss has written submitting his resignation from the Council due to his recent illness. The Council accepted this resignation with regret and the Clerk will write to Cllr Moss to thank him for his years of service, most recently as Vice-Chairman.

The Council vacancy will be notified to SODC and the normal process for finding a replacement will now begin. Cllr Shuker suggested that all councillors should consider if they had any contacts who would be candidates for the vacancy.

11 Traffic Calming

Installation of the new measures is under way and will be completed soon. Cllrs Bolam and Shuker said that they were pleased with progress to date.

The Clerk reported that the County has prepared some new road safety posters and the Chairman said that he would make some enquiries about their availability.

12 Village Maintenance

a. Young Brothers quotation for Village Maintenance from 1st April to 31st October, including all work as before, amounted to £2,400 and this was approved.

Some repairs to the bus shelter outside The Plough are needed and Cllr Shuker said that he would ask Mr Hill to do these.

b. It was agreed that if there was no insurance cover the Parish Council would pay for the repairs to the gate to the Sports Club car park, which in the meantime would be secured by a heavy duty chain.

c. Following the resignation of Cllr Moss, Cllr Shuker will take special responsibility for monitoring the condition of the children’s play area and its equipment.

d. Cllr Bolam reported upon footpaths and stiles. The stile opposite ‘The Kennels’ is broken and the footpath is overgrown; the stile on Kiln Lane going over the late Mr Watts’s field is overgrown and the next one is broken. Cllr Bolam said that he was concerned about the ‘stone stile’ in the field behind Garsington House. The footpath had taken the wrong course over the last few years; the stile is overgrown and could easily be damaged by farm equipment.

e. The Council noted that damage has been done to the entrance to ‘Tadpole Lane’ and photographs were produced which showed the poor present state of the verge. The Clerk was asked to write to the owners of 26 Wheatley Road asking that this damage be repaired.

f. Cllr Baker said that part of the hedge along the boundary of Kiln Lane has been cut but not along its whole length. It was thought that Mr Surman might be able to help get this done and the Clerk will contact him.

13 Village Hall

Cllrs Baker, Bolam and Eastwood had attended the recent meeting of the Village Hall Committee and Cllr Baker had chaired the meeting. The general feeling had been that it would be sensible to go along with the idea of amalgamating with an extended Sports Club building but the footprint of the area for the new facilities is still to be finalised.

The original deeds of the Village Hall are believed to be with Basil Townsend.

14. Parish Council insurance cover

There was no interest in increasing the scope of the Council’s cover.

The meeting closed at 9.40 pm