**GARSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL**

The Monthly Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 6th May, 2014 commencing at 7.30pm. The Chairman, Chris Wright presided: present were Cllrs Anne Eastwood, (Vice Chairman), Paul Bolam, Matthew Dovey, Mike Patrick with J Eden in attendance. Also present were 4 members of the public.

5/14/1 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Ian Dickinson – away on business

Cllr Judith Westgate – away on family business

County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale – attending annual meeting at Stadhampton

District Cllr Elizabeth Gillespie – Family illness

5/14/2 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Paul Bolam declared an interest regarding one of the items for discussion under Planning.

5/14/3 Public Participation

Mr Tipping raised the following issues.

1. Burial Ground - recent Grave placement, why was this particular grave out of line with the others.

Chairman Chris Wright explained that it was due to the problems uncovered when the Grave Digger tried to excavate a plot at the end of the current row. This would be discussed further in Village Maintenance.

2. Badgers, it was difficult to cut the grass, also it appears that someone, possibly the grave digger had tried to fill in some of the holes the badgers had dug.

Chairman Chris Wright said the situation with the Badgers in the Burial Ground was ongoing, the Parish Council were in consultation with Natural England who are the body responsible and nothing could be done until after the breeding season was finished in June. This item would also be discussed further in Village Maintenance.

3. Moles in the Play Area at the Memorial Playing Fields. Action needed to be taken. It was difficult to mow the area with all the mole hills. This was also on the agenda for discussion.

4. Greenwoods, the parked vehicles and raised gullies on the road in Pettiwell, made it very dangerous for other road users. Chairman Chris Wright pointed out that this would be discussed later in Planning and Mr Tipping was very welcome to stay and listen.

Mrs Holmes came to respond to the previous request regarding the hedge around her father’s property in Wheatley Road. She advised that she had spoken with the rest of the family. They would not be reducing the size of the hedge because the garden level was much higher than the road level and advised the Council that the hedge was regularly maintained and cut back from the road side. She also felt that it was not all a hedge problem and pointed out that tractors often appeared to drive through the village faster than was necessary, in view of the narrow roads and speed limit.

5/14/4 Minutes of the Monthly Meeting held on 7th April 2014

The Minutes as circulated were approved with two amendments

4/14/7 Cllr Anne Eastwood said she had not mentioned Church Toilets. Amend to read - Cllr Anne Eastwood asked what sort of project qualified. District Cllr Elizabeth Gillespie said that most community projects would be considered, all projects needed to have 50% matching funds available for any grant that was given.

4/14/20 Any Other Business – should read Mr Peter Cowan from BT

5/14/5 Matters arising from the Minutes

Cllr Anne Eastwood had spoken to the owner of the van parked at the bottom of the hill in Oxford Road, requesting that it was not parked there in future.

Clerk had not yet written to PCC regarding the re-use of graves, this would be actioned.

Cllr Anne Eastwood reported that a working party had removed the pallets from the footpath, the surface of the footpath was now very wet and difficult to walk on. Clive Woodward who has just moved into one of the properties close to the footpath is planning to carry out work on his house and when this happens he said he would put some of the hard core from the building being demolished along the footpath.

5/14/6 County Councillor’s Report

Copy of the County Councillor’s report had been circulated.

Unfortunately the County Councillor was unable to attend the Garsington meeting due to the Annual Parish Meeting in Stadhampton.

Southend - Chairman Chris Wright said he had spoken to Mr Exley following his email to the County Council regarding the road and water problems in Southend. Mr Exley had not yet received a response to his email.

Cllr Mike Patrick reported that he has sent a list of outstanding village problems and new ones to the County Council as requested at the last meeting. County Council would look at the erosion of the bank and exposed drainage covers in Pettiwell. This did not mean work would be carried out.

Gulley digging allowing the surface water to run into the ditches. Response received had been that ditches were the responsibility of the landowners, Cllr Patrick had advised the County Council that it was the gully on the verges that need digging out not the ditches.

Moving the sign on the Wheatley Road, no response received.

Cllr Patrick said he would continue to liaise with the County Council regarding outstanding items.

5/14/7 District Councillor’s Report

None

5/14/8 Finance

Barclays Current Account at 30th April 2014 £41,164.66

Receipts:

First payment of Precept £10,400.00

Additional Financial Support Grant £958

ORCC Grant £500

Council noted the DD payment to Grundon in March amounting to £49.03

The following cheques were approved and signed

Playdale – New seats for the baby swings £215.95

Litho and Digital Impressions Ltd £430.80

Clerks Salary £275.60

Mrs Hodson (Key Holder Parslers Piece) £200

Newsletter Editor £95.61

HMRC/PAYE £95.61

Admininstration Costs £15.85

Matthew Dovey £26.24

**Insurance -** Clerk had received quotes from AON Ltd (current insurers) and Zurich Insurance. The Insurers who act for the Village Hall had been asked to quote, but after receiving the information advised they are unable handle insurances for Parish Councils.

AON UK Ltd had originally sent in a renewal quote of £2051.05 they then re-quoted at £1247.01 when they realised that other insurers were quoting.

Zurich Insurance quoted £1247.61 based on a 3year long term agreement

The Clerk advised the meeting that the quote from Zurich was competitive, it gave additional cover and the excess on any claim was £100 compared to £125 currently.

The Council agreed to go with the quote from Zurich Insurance based on the 3 year long term agreement. Clerk to action the renewal.

**Budget 2014/15** – This had been prepared and circulated to all the Councillors and was agreed.

The Clerk was having difficulty, contacting the Internal Auditor, who previously had audited both Garsington and Dorchester accounts. It was agreed that the clerk would approach Aries Accountants to see if they could carry out the internal audit.

5/14/9 Planning

P14/S1029 18 Poplar Close

Erection of a two storey extension, no objections were raised to the application

P14/S0159/HH 21 Oxford Road

Single storey extension to form new bedroom and en suite bathroom

Cllr Paul Bolam did not take part in discussions on this application.

The remaining Councillors did not raise any objections to the application.

P14/S1167/LB Lanesra Cottage, Pettiwell

Repaint external window woodwork to maintain structural integrity. Currently have white windows with a brown grey surrounding frame. Wish to amend slightly the colour to match Farrow & Ball’s ‘London Stone’. It is a small change from the existing and better complinets the painted masonry which is magnolia.

No objections were raised to this application.

5/14/10 Correspondence to Chairman and Clerk

Solar Farm – Chairman Chris Wright had received an email from Daniel Gandolfo regarding the possibility of a solar farm on land in Garsington Parish. He said he was writing on behalf of Milton (Abingdon) Parish Council. The Clerk had spoken to the clerk at Milton and had established that this was not correct. Although Milton Parish Council had tried to assist Mr Gandolfo with finding possible sites in their area nothing suitable could be found. The Chairman had asked Mr Gandolfo a number of questions but had not yet received a response. It was agreed that this would be put on hold for now.

New Wall at the Plough – A number of residents had spoken or emailed both the Chairman and the Clerk about this, generally it was felt that the brick being used did not fit in with the rest of the conservation area, the height of the wall seemed excessive and the foundations did not appear to be adequate for the wall.

Mr Williams who owned the property was present at the meeting, after a lengthy discussion, the conclusion was that he was complying with all the conditions that had been imposed by the Building Inspector and the Conservation Officer. The new wall would be capped with Cotswold stone, foundations on the left hand side were considered to be alright and new foundations were being installed for the wall to the rear of the Bus Shelter. Mr Williams advised that both the Conservation Officer and the Building Inspector were happy with the work. The brick being used was the one specified and matched the brick on the existing building.

Southend – see item 5/14/6

Electricity Supply to the Christmas Tree – the Clerk had now obtained a verbal quote from the Electricity Company which was £600/£800 for dealing with moving the power supply in addition to this an Electrician would need to move the box and install new power points, the Clerk has spoken to Taylors Services who visited the site, their suggestion was that the box was moved to the end of the wall nearest the Old School Garden and a new cable was laid with power points installed near the Christmas Tree, the estimated cost for this would be several hundred pounds, it would also be better to retain the existing electric box as this alone would cost approximately £600 if replaced. It was agreed that until Councillors had looked at the area again, a decision on the removal of the wall could not be taken.

The Clerk had received an email from Helen West asking why her father’s grave was never mown. Clerk had visited the Burial Ground, the grave in question had not been mown (although others in the same row had been), the grass was very long, the grave area was flat and did not have any ornaments other than a headstone and flower pots. Cllr Mike Patrick agreed to speak to Mr Tipping regarding this particular problem. In general the Burial Ground was not very tidy at the moment with the badgers and the weather making grass cutting difficult.

5/14/11 Community Plan

Cllr Matthew Dovey reported that the Questionnaires had now been collected, 800 plus had been returned.

The Clerk advised that a resident in Wheatley Road had spoken to her because the questionnaire had not been collected. Cllr Anne Eastwood said that Cllr Judith Westgate had not received a questionnaire. Clerk will email Cllr Dovey the details.

5/14/12 Village Maintenance

Burial Ground – concerns have been raised regarding the random placing of a recent burial plot. The Grave Digger advised that the reason the plot was put on the end of the row was that the deceased was a large man and the plot needed to be 8-10 inches longer than normal. They tried to place large plots on the end of a row where possible to prevent alignment problems with other graves. Unfortunately when digging the first plot they found a badger run and needed to excavate a second plot and took the decision to move one row forward.

Chairman Chris Wright questioned who is responsible for giving permission for graves to be dug, it appears that this is not clear, Rev. Emma Pennington is currently ill and the Grave Digger did not know who to contact.

Chairman Chris Wright said the Parish Council should have the responsibility for deciding who and where graves are placed, the land is owned by the Parish.

Cllr Mike Patrick had suggested that the PCC took over the responsibility. This could be a problem as the ground was currently maintained by the parish council as a Parish Asset. Cllr Anne Eastwood pointed out that the Churchyard was maintained by volunteers.

It was agreed that Chairman Chris Wright would discuss the situation with the Church Warden and report back.

Chairman Chris Wright also showed Wyn Jones’s plan/ideas for making the burial ground a more welcoming area for people to visit. No objections were raised to the ideas. Further discussions would need to take place.

Badgers – Clerk had applied for the licence, however, further information was required before this would be granted. Chairman had been passed the letter and agreed to action the request.

A site visit had been arranged with Natural England and a date was agreed, 2nd June 2014, Clerk would confirm time. Chairman Chris Wright said he would not be available, it was agreed that the Clerk and Cllr Mike Patrick would attend.

Overhanging Trees and Hedges

Wheatley Road, see comments in Public Participation.

Pettiwell – Chairman Chris Wright said he would deal with this

Oxford Road – Cllr Mike Patrick had already spoken to resident at Kiln Lane, he also agreed to speak to other residents in Oxford Road.

Cllr Anne Eastwood said that she would be dealing with her hedges in due course, after the birds had finished nesting.

5/14/13 Playground

Cllr Paul Bolam said he had not yet fixed the new baby seats or ordered the sign and would action both items shortly.

Moles in the Play Area, although this was a problem when cutting the grass, no action to remove them would be taken at the present time. Cllr Bolam said that he was prepared to go at the weekend and flatten the mole hills. It was suggested that perhaps some form of mole deterrent was purchased. Cllr Matthew Dovey said he would look into the options available.

Cllr Paul Bolam said he had carried out an inspection of the Play Area, he was still picking up stones from the bark, he also felt the area in general was untidy, the grass was quite long and the grass clippings had been put in a pile by the hedge. The picnic tables needed some attention. Clerk would see if Malcolm Hill would look at this.

5/14/14 Village Bus Service

Cllr Matthew Dovey reported that the service was running fairly well, a new timetable and additional morning commuter bus would be introduced in June, with slight variations in the evening timetable. All buses would now go into the Unipart site. (Details would appear in the June/July Newsletter). Should some of the bus stop names be changed in the village? It was suggested The Plough could be renamed Village Hall and The Red Lion could be renamed Fox Close, as the former public houses were now both residential properties. Not everyone thought this was necessary.

5/14/15 Policing/Speed Monitoring

Cllr Matthew Dovey had obtained a quote from Westcotec Traffic Systems for a portable switchable roundel sign, cost £2625 + VAT for sign, two batteries, a charger and fixing brackets. It was possible to purchase a data collection device at an additional cost of £250 = + VAT. In principle the total costs were agreed, however, confirmation was still required that it was possible to fix the device to existing street furniture. Cllr Matthew Dovey was still looking into this.

5/14/16 Annual Parish Meeting/Community Fair

Cllr Matthew Dovey reported that interest in the Community Fair was low, he only had one firm response, other organisation had shown interest but had not confirmed, it was therefore unlikely to take place.

Cllr Mike Patrick gave his apologies for the Annual Parish Meeting as he was on holiday.

5/14/17 Any Other Business

Chairman, Chris Wright gave his apologies for June Parish Council Meeting he would be away.

Cllr Anne Eastwood gave her apologies for the next meeting.

Cllr John Hieatt had been unable to get the bag of salt removed from beside Elm Drive Shops, he had received complaints about the general state of the area, he had asked Biffa Waste to contact the Clerk with a quote for removal. Cllr Anne Eastwood felt the council should remove it, it was agreed that she would contact them and see if this was possible.

Cllr Paul Bolam raised the problems recently experienced by Janet Bolam the Parish Council’s School Governor. Efforts to improve the way people parked at the School had been met in some instances with abuse and she felt she needed to re-consider her position. The Councillors agreed that it was a difficult issue to resolve, but they would definitely like her to continue as a Governor, everyone appreciated all the effort she was putting in in to try and resolve the parking issues.

The Meeting closed at 9.25 pm