

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 8<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2019**  
**AT 7.30PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL**

**Present:** Cllr A Sheppard, Chair of the Parish Council  
Six members of the Parish Council and the Parish Clerk  
County Councillor S Harrod  
District Councillor C Newton  
9 members of the public

The Chairman welcomed everyone. The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 9 April 2018 were approved and signed.

**Chairman of the Parish Council's Report**

Well this has been my first Year as Chairman, I salute David Simcox and would like to record my thanks to him, as Deputy Chairman he has given me invaluable support and help from his impressive and extensive knowledge of all things both Parish Council and Village. He will be much missed on this Parish Council I am sure you will all join with me in wishing him a very well-earned retirement after 30 years dedicated service as this will be his last Parish Council meeting.

This year also sees the highly notable retirement of Deirdre, no surname required, who has achieved an amazing 40 Years service on the Parish Council; a formidable Councillor, never without a strong opinion and never one to hold back from giving her views and stating her case but always keeping her ear to the ground and a demon with the telephone! In those years she has been Deputy Chairman and also Treasurer in the days before Parish Clerk's were invented! Thank you, Deirdre for your dedicated service for an exceptional period of time and I am sure you will continue your involvement in all things 'village'.

John Andrews is also stepping down after 8 years service; always the most well prepared Councillor at any meeting, with a great enthusiasm and knowledge of the workings and procedures of local government. Thank you for your service, and finally this is the last meeting for Cllr Heath Harvey after 4 years service, thank you Heath.

Parish Councillors are unpaid volunteers who freely give their time for the benefit of the community they live in and the amount of service from these Councillors is nothing short of remarkable - the new batch of Parish Councillors have some big shoes to fill.

Our new clerk Andrea Oughton, started a year ago, she has quickly proved to be a great asset, particularly with excellent technical knowledge, which she has built up in her current full-time job working for Thame Council. I would like to personally thank her for helping guide me through this year, which has been a massive learning curve for me in the role of Chairman.

This year has been a very busy one, not least of all in considering planning applications. The Parish Council has reviewed over 40 Planning Applications this Year, they keep rising each year, and included not just the usual extensions/new builds but some technically challenging ones.

The new houses in the Parish, in some circumstances, mean that the Parish may receive a payment known as a CIL, which stand for Community Infrastructure Levy. The Parish Council currently has received two payments worth £3252, and we anticipate we will receive monies this year and over the next few years. There are tight conditions on how the money can be spent, including that it has to be spent on infrastructure, the Parish Council plans at the moment to accrue the money as it becomes clearer how much we will be getting so it can be spent on a meaningful project that is something the village wants and needs.

I mentioned some of the technical planning applications we have reviewed during the year, one such example was the relocation of the Cattle Market, and the industrial units to the north of the Parish but also The Gas Generating Power Plants just north of the A40. They were all challenging, and

each application contained a raft of documents about three inches high and covered new areas of Planning Policy that do not normally feature for a small Parish Council.

The Power Station plans have been submitted twice now, both times strongly opposed by the Parish Council and there is clearly strong local opposition to this highly industrialised development in open countryside. Currently no final decision has yet been reached by the District Council.

The Parish Council supported the move of the Cattle Market, its lease was running out in the centre of Thame and most of the land around the town is earmarked for housing and the Parish Council felt this locally owned facility was unique and qualified for approval under planning regulations and the approval was granted by the District Council.

We objected to the industrial units, which the District Planning Officer recommended for approval, our case was put forward at the Planning Committee meeting, and supported by our District Councillor Caroline Newton, for which we thank her. At this point no decision has been reached.

These last two applications have made the Parish Council think about how best it can protect the most northern part of the Parish from development creeping up the A329, we therefore took advice from the District Council and had informal discussions with Thame Town Council. Thame is reviewing its neighbourhood plan, and has written to all its neighbours with adjacent boundaries as Thame are short of employment land and it could be helpful for the Parish Council and Thame to include the land between their boundary up to and including the Cattle Market should the Planning consent be given for the industrial estate (that we are resisting). This is quite a technical discussion for the Parish Council to consider further in the coming months.

The Parish Council has also kept up to date with the progress of the latest revision of the District Local Plan to 2034, attending Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet and Full Council meetings. Despite a vigorous fight against Chalgrove being included particularly by Martin Baker the leaseholders; it has remained in the Plan but with no expectation of any housing being built for at least five years in recognition that only a Compulsory purchase would secure the land for building.

The Parish Council felt much more positive about this latest version of the Plan and responded in detail to the final Consultation, which now includes sites such as Grenoble Road, but regrettably still Chalgrove. Harrington again was put forward for this stage and was rejected but we know that they will present their case to the Planning Inspector and that is the next stage of the process. The Parish Council has requested to be included in the Public part of that examination.

The Parish Council also recently responded to the consultation launched by a joint Oxfordshire body on housing numbers in Oxfordshire over the next 50 years.

The Parish Council has also been very involved with meetings on the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway, which remains a concern and has written to MP's and Government Ministers. We remain alert, and further announcements and a long overdue consultation process are expected in the autumn. It has to be said that consultation fatigue is in danger of setting in.

The final matter on planning I want to mention, is that the Parish Council was asked by the Parochial Church Council (PCC) to assist them with the planning process for a much needed extension to the churchyard. Following donation of the requisite land, Cllr David Simcox, on behalf of the Parish Council submitted the Planning Application, which was funded by the Parish Council.

The Parish Council also worked with Simon Cronk and the PCC on making sure the we memorably commemorated the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Armistice Day: with the Fly past of helicopters over the War Memorial and a presence from RAF Benson, as well as our local trumpeter performing the very moving 'Last Post'. The Parish Council also purchased a 'Tommy' figure to be displayed by the War Memorial, the proceeds of the purchase supporting military charities. The History Group ensured all the names on the War Memorial were remembered as part of the 'Everyone Remembered' Campaign. A very large number of the community gathered at the War Memorial for the event.

One of the Parish Council's key functions is looking after the Parish's assets, The Cross Field, Playing Fields and Millennium wood, for example. The recent Spring Clean and litter pick organised by the Parish Council was supported by around 40 villagers, who were once again treated to a delicious lunch by Jane Simcox for those who wanted it. The Millennium Wood got some much needed pruning and tidying in particular. We also installed some great new play equipment in The Cross Field and, in the last week, new fencing to keep the area secure.

The Parish Council, for many years had been holding a lease on the 'School Garden' that came up for renewal from Oxfordshire County Council (OCC). The land, north of Back Way, has poor access and has generally been left to nature and is pretty impenetrable. The lease renewal provoked various discussions and eventually OCC asked for open bids, but then retreated from any decision to relook at the lease and whether the land should be sold. The situation remains in limbo.

The Parish Council also made a contribution during the year, of paying for half of the cost of the brown road signs for the pub, in support of this valued asset to the village.

Last March, the production of The Haseleys was offered out to parishioners and three agreed to pick up the task, Gill Seymour Taylor, Daisy Cope and Colin Sheppard. They have put their own stamp on the magazine adding recipes, local business profiles and most popularly the local walks with maps. They also encouraged the Parish Council to give them the go ahead to re-launch the Haseley Alert email to a wider audience by sending an email once a week of notable village events and over 100 residents have signed up and feedback has been positive.

I think it is important for the Parish Council to continue to reach out further to the community to ensure that it does not work in isolation, and it would be nice to see more people coming along to the meetings and I thank those who have attended.

I would like to thank all my fellow Councillors for their contributions during the year, for their support to me as Chair and whilst we say 'goodbye' to some, we look forward to welcoming and working alongside the new Councillors, Paul Woodrow, Caroline Pickett, Alice Ghessari and Caroline McGuirk who I am sure will do an excellent job of representing their community. I am however somewhat mollified to realise that I will take over as the oldest Councillor!

I look forward to continuing to serve you all over the next four years.

Presentations were made to Cllrs Andrews, Mann & Simcox.

### Responsible Financial Officer's Report

The 2018-19 financial year has been the first for me as Responsible Financial Officer for Great Haseley Parish Council.

The internal audit was undertaken by Mr Lee, and the Annual Governance and Accountability Return submitted to the External Auditors in June.

The Council received a satisfactory audit of the 2017-18 accounts in September but the process from June to September was challenging, partly with me being new to the role but also it being the first year for Moore Stephens acting as External Auditors for all Town and Parish Councils in Oxfordshire.

The External Auditor's report noted that a scope of works had not been agreed in advance of the internal audit and that the Parish Council was holding what seemed a large sum of reserves which were not allocated against a particular spend or project.

I am pleased to report that the Parish Council approved a Reserves Policy in February and now has clear ear marked reserves to specific areas. The Parish Council also agreed a Scope of Works for the Internal Auditor for 2018-19 and we hope the annual audit will run more smoothly this year!

A number of charitable donations were made during the year, the final piece of play equipment was installed in The Cross Field in June and final payment made to the equipment provider. The Parish Council has continued to support the Village Hall and also St Peter's Church with a planning application to extend the churchyard and an unexpected repair to the church clock.

Finally, I would like to thank Jane Simcox who retired as Parish Clerk a year ago for her support and also the Parish Councillors for their support throughout the year.

### County Councillor's Report

County Councillor Harrod had sent his Annual Report which the Clerk will circulate to Councillors. The proposal for Unitary Government for Oxfordshire was submitted to Government in Spring 2017. There had been no further progress on the situation to date.

The County Council Budget for 2019-20 was approved on 12 February 2019 with £1m boost for youth provision across Oxfordshire over the next two years. Other measures approved in the Budget include highway improvements, new school buildings and a change to LED energy-efficient street lighting.

Pressure on funding for day-to-day council services continues as the council increases funding to support Oxfordshire's most vulnerable children and adults. The County Council is changing the way it operates to ensure it runs more effectively and efficiently, including customer services by making it easier to access services online.

The County Council is spending an extra £13m on capital funding for road maintenance in the coming financial year on top of the existing £18.5m programme of works. The latest figures on people who are unnecessarily in hospital while awaiting care have improved with five fewer than November and 20 less than the same time last year. This improvement is better than figures nationally.

In response to the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway, the County Council is to request that Government consult residents in Oxfordshire before any routes are announced. The chances of Government agreeing to this is quite slim. Once the route is selected the County Council will demand the best mitigation possible to help affected residents.

A total of £150m of funding has been secured through the Oxfordshire Housing & Growth Deal, signed in April 2018 to provide infrastructure for the proposed housing. As part of the deal Oxfordshire's councils are working jointly on a countywide strategic plan integrating planning for growth and infrastructure, the Joint Strategic Spatial Plan (JSSP).

Oxfordshire County Council has the best recycling rates in England.

After answer a number of questions the Chair thanked Cllr Harrod for his report.

### District Councillor's Report

District Councillor Newton had circulated the Annual Report to Councillors and picked out some of the highlights.

South Oxfordshire was ranked in the top six best places to live in the Country and the best in the South East by the latest Halifax Quality of Life Survey. Cllr Newton had been a District Councillor for the last 18 months and was immensely proud, being a native of South Oxfordshire to be the local District Councillor.

It was no accident that South Oxfordshire was rated so highly with so many committed individuals working together in so many ways to enrich local communities. This combined with the hard work of the Officers at the District and County Councils and the work of local parish councillors. There were not many local councils who were losing over 70 years of experience as Great Haseley will with the retirement of their four Councillors.

The District's Local Plan 2034 was submitted to Government on 29 March 2019 for independent examination. The publication of the Inspector's report is expected later in the year. Vital to the successful growth of the District is the provision of infrastructure and the District Council has worked closely with other local authorities to secure additional funding from central Government to meet this need. One of the important elements of the Local Plan is the focus on affordable housing and all developments of 10 or more dwellings will be required to provide at least 40% affordable housing.

South Oxfordshire remains one of the best local authorities in the Country for recycling, compost and managing household waste. 63% of waste (by weight) was either recycled or composted, the second highest figure in the Country. Of the remaining waste, almost all was incinerated at Ardley, generating power equivalent to that needed to power 53,000 homes.

One of the less well-known duties the District Council performs is to arrange funerals for the deceased who have no next of kin. Unusually, eight such funerals have been arranged during 2018-19, double that of the previous year.

After answering a number of questions the Chair thanked Cllr Newton for her report.

#### Reports from Organisations in the Parish

**Great Haseley Sports Club** – Unfortunately the report was not available for the meeting and an update will be published in The Haseleys.

**Great Haseley History Group** – A copy of the new leaflet 'A Walk Around Great Haseley' was distributed at the meeting. It was planned to distribute the leaflet with The Haseleys magazine.

The Group's next task was transcribing and mapping the tombstones in St Peter's churchyard. There are 500 and some have weathered quite badly. The History Group would welcome volunteers who would like to help with the project which is due to start in 2-3 weeks.

The History Group still does not have a permanent home to meet in or store archives. If anyone knows of a suitable room please let a member of the Group know. The History Group meets at the Village Hall and everyone is welcome.

**Haseley Coffee Club** – Attendee numbers have varied through the year, however numbers are now on the increase. In the past year £150 has been raised for Children in Need, £120 for Cancer Research and £90 for the Village Hall.

**Great Haseley Cricket Club** - For Season 2018, Great Haseley Cricket Club arranged six home fixtures at the Haseley Cricket Ground (HCG), of which two were fulfilled and 1 Won – a 50% Win ratio...

Matches against Headington Quarry, Cuddington Kites, Chalgrove and the Sutton Coutenay were either affected by player availability or the weather, mainly the former as people presumably took advantage of the fine weather for activities other than cricket.

#### ***Great Haseley v Gussets 10th June (extended match report in the July 2018 Haseleys)***

Great Haseley batted first and scored 148 for the loss of 7 wickets in 30 overs (J Batty 57). Gussets managed 149 for 7 in 29.5 overs (J Batty 3-21).

**Gussets won by 3 wickets**

### **Great Haseley v Bodleian 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2018**

Great Haseley won the toss, batted first and scored 124 all out in 29 overs (C.J. Groves 50). In reply, Bodleian were all out for 105 (B Watts 4-21)

### **Great Haseley won by 19 runs**

### **2019 Season**

Ariens requested use of the recreation ground to test their new tractor mower/scarifier. This is an opportunity not to be missed as it should, by its very nature improve the quality of the outfield for the coming season. At the expense of Tiddington CC, the cricket square has been maintained over the winter by the company that also look after the Wormsley estate cricket ground. It was “handed back” at the beginning of April and plans to ready the ground for the coming season are solidifying (roller and mowing schedule to be finalised).

### **Fixtures**

Tiddington CC - 9 League fixtures, Great Haseley CC - 6 fixtures and Private Hire - 2 fixtures.

### **GHCC Fixtures 2019 (Home)**

19 May	Headington Quarry
9 June	Gussets
11 June (Tues)	Fingletoads (NZ)
23 June	Tappers
28 July	Bodleian
25 August	Sutton Courtney

### **Outlook**

The now annual fixtures against Headington Quarry, Sutton Courtenay and the Gussets have been secured. We have a new fixture against the Tappers, and an exciting new venture, a midweek game vs the Fingletoads, a touring team from New Zealand with local connections. With another year in the bank for our crop of young talent to support the failing eyes, bones and muscles of the usuals, 2019 should be an interesting chapter in the annals of Great Haseley Cricket Club.

As ever, we stress that GHCC is not a club exclusive to residents of Great Haseley, the Club warmly welcomes all-comers of all abilities from across the parish and surrounding villages so if you feel inclined, please make contact and come and join us in 2019.

**Village Hall** – It had been another busy year - there are 6-7 keep fit classes hiring the hall on a regular basis, the pamper evening was a success with happy stall holders as well as customers, also the jazz evening and the Christmas raffle. Later this year a garden party is planned in conjunction with St Peter’s church.

The Committee were not happy with the proposed system for the heating and a new system is now proposed and an application is to be submitted in the next few weeks. The Committee expressed thanks to Caroline Pickett for planting and looking after the window boxes.

The Committee’s primary purpose was not fund raising but to look after the fabric of the building. It was grateful for the money provided by the Parish Council which helps with the day to day running costs / maintenance. The money raised from fundraising helped with extras such as decorating. It was nice to see the hall used by so many different groups in the village.

### **Open Forum – Questions from Electors / Public Discussion**

No questions were raised.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.30pm

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Chairman  
13 April 2020