

# ***LEA, GARSDON & CLEVERTON PARISHES***

## **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Lea, Garsdon & Cleverton Parishes held on Tuesday May 2<sup>nd</sup> 2017 in Lea Village Hall commencing at 20:00 hours.

**Present:** Cllr. J M Cull; **(In the Chair),**

Cllrs: A W Barnes, J Crockett; B E Gore S N Suter and T Culling.

In attendance: Cllr T R Sturgis – 8.00 to 8.20 p.m.

Mrs Ellen Blacker - Health & Wellbeing Champion. 8:00 to 8:30 p.m.

7 members of the Public present

**Apologies:** Cllrs J B Wood; N T Maidment and D E Maidment. (Business)

Mr K Tibbs – Chairman Village Hall Management Committee

Parishioners: Bridget Haines, Christopher Daws Jackie Maylor and Mo Whiteford.

**Welcome:** The Chairman welcomed our Visitors and Members of the public.

**Minutes:**

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2016 having been circulated APM 2016/1,2016/2,2016/3,2016/4 were taken as read and signed as true and correct record. **The Chairman signed the Minutes.**

**Police report:** No written report or attendance.

**Wiltshire Council:** Cllr T R Sturgis: Cabinet Member Strategic Planning, Development Management, Property and Waste made the following presentation:

**a) Planning policy:**

The Cabinet has recommended Council should adopt the Chippenham Sites Allocation Policy following the Inspector's Report, which found the plan to be sound after modifications were made prior to the resumption of the examination.

The adoption of the above plan allowed the Housing Land Supply Calculation to be revised upwards. The revised figure means the council now has sufficient sites to demonstrate five years of housing supply against their housing requirements as set out in the National Planning policy Framework. This allows the council to defend speculative developments that fail to meet the policies in our Local Plan.

The adoption of Neighbourhood Plans also provides evidence for plan lead development and will provide defence against speculative development.

The adoption of affordable housing on small sites was thrown into confusion following a Written Ministerial Statement raising the threshold for affordable housing in conflict with our own policy. This was subject to legal challenge by West Berks District Council and Reading Borough Council, resulting in Planning Inspectors making different decisions according to their interpretations of the judgement, this has now been clarified by the Planning Inspectorate confirming decisions should be made in accordance with our Core Policy 43 in our Local Plan, where there is fresh evidence of need and we have five years of housing supply.

**b) Development Control.**

There has been a large increase in the number of applications received and the percentage of applications determined within the agreed target has risen from 79% in the first quarter of 14/15 to 97% in the same quarter 16/17. The number of decisions overturned at appeal has fallen by 10%.

**c) Waste.**

The amount of waste per household after recycling continues to fall and the forecast for this year is 560Kgs compared with 595 Kgs 4 years ago. The percentage going to landfill continues to fall this year 20.58% compared with 26.7% 4 years ago. The amount of garden waste fly tips as 5 of all fly tips has fallen from 12.5% last year to 10.7% this year.

Having reviewed the HRC usage following the introduction of van and trailer permits last year the HRCs at Chippenham, Trowbridge and Salisbury will now open an extra day and all sites will open an extra hour in the morning during the summer

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING MAY 2nd 2017****Wiltshire Council: (Cont'd)**

**d) Questions:** Cllr Sturgis commented on the Feasibility Study in respect of Lea and Cleverton Primary School which was currently under review. We should await the outcome. A member raised the point asking if our MP James Gray was involved in the matter at this time. There was a lot of misinformation circulating regarding the School study. The matter of the disposal of "Tetra packs" was also raised.

The Chair thanked Cllr Sturgis for his report and comments. Cllr Sturgis then withdrew at 8.20 pm.

**Mrs Ellen Blacker - Health & Wellbeing Champion.**

Statistics for last year – Look at the Area Board minutes which are available on the Wiltshire Council web site

**Switching energy supplier.** Switching can save lots of money and is quite simple to do. Wiltshire Council can support you through the process, call 0300 003 4575, Warm and Safe Wiltshire for more details

**MACT grants.** Grants are available for those in need and qualify – see flyer

**ICE cards** – In Case of Emergency – details of whom to contact if you have an emergency whilst out and about. Particularly useful if you are a carer.

**MIAB** – Message In A Bottle. The sticker should be placed on the inside of your front door and the bottle with the completed form with all details be placed in your refrigerator so that it may be easily found in an emergency.

**Dementia Action Alliance** in the Malmesbury Community Area and Dementia Friendly Communities – Can you help. It was suggested that the Parish Council should consider setting up a group in support

The Parish Clerk holds a small stock of MIAB bottles and ICE cards.

Mrs Blacker was thanked from the floor for a most interesting and valuable report which would be of great benefit to the entire Community. Mrs Blacker then withdrew from the Meeting at 8.30 p.m.

**Chairman's Annual report:**

The Chairman started by thanking the members of this Parish Council for the time and effort that they have put in not only during the past twelve months but for the preceding years.

The year has seen a new Councillor join the ranks – Tim Culling – who brings a wealth of experience and a considerable level of skill to the Council. Sadly John Wood has not sought re-election due to work pressures. The Chairman thanked John for his input as a Parish Councillor – he was a valuable member and will be missed.

During the year there have been a few subtle changes to way that the Parish Council runs its activities.

The way that planning matters are handled has been changed. The Planning Committee is now led by Stuart Suter, who brings the same level of detail and accuracy to the task that he did while organising the Emergency Plan. This change means that there is a dedicated head to this specialist committee and allows an in depth focus on this important aspect of village life.

Changes have been made to the way that we care for the playing field. Funds are still raised by the hard working and very successful "Social Committee". However any work that has needed to be carried out on the playing field has been co-ordinated by John Wood. He has managed to get "willing volunteers" to carry out the ad hoc tasks required. And he has agreed to carry on with this task despite standing down as a councillor.

There are now in essence three semi-independent groups - the Village Hall Management Committee under the guidance of Kevin Tibbs, Planning guided by Stuart Suter as a separate function and the two aspects of the Playing Field.

Add to this the work carried out by councillors who shoulder the responsibilities for Rights of Way and Allotments and the new framework covers the issues that matter within our community.

Also there are a host of people that who have helped behind the scenes. Paul Fuller as Allotment Supervisor, Mike Porter as Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator; Mike Saxty keeps a watchful eye on the Telephone Box Book Exchange facility, Margaret Knight who has taken over from Sue Avent in looking after the Defibrillator unit, Nigel Higginbottom guiding the Emergency Plan and Andrew Gill who carries out the internal audit on our accounts and procedures.

Also of course the Council are indebted to the willing members of the Village Hall Committee, the volunteers for the Playing Field working parties and the members of the "Social Committee". All of these bodies need additional members to help in the running of these functions. These roles make a difference within our parish; jobs that many parishioners are totally never see.

In March work was also undertaken by the 1<sup>st</sup> Crudwell Scout Group, a body run by Lee Matthews from our village, they installed new post and rail fencing and gave the Playing Field a general "tidy up" plus a whole scale cleaning of the bus shelter at Lea Top. They did an excellent job.

Throughout the year the Council affairs have been within budget despite the n increased demands to do more for ourselves as the money available from the Government and Wiltshire Council has continued to shrink. Also the difficult task of registering of all of our Parish buildings and land with the Land Registry has been completed.

Our Unitary Councillor, Toby Sturgis has provided help and guidance throughout the year.

**Chairman's Annual report: (Cont'd)**

Despite a few difficult battles the Council have worked successfully with most of the departments within Wiltshire Council.

With the Highways organisation we have taken steps to try to increase safety within the village by having signs saying "Playing Field" fixed to the 30mph signs when approaching from Lea top and similar signs fixed to existing posts when coming from the direction of the church. Also there will be 30 mph roundels painted on the road close to these signs and at the entrance of the village near the school. Measures have been agreed that will increase the visibility at the Lea Top junction by altering the line of site towards Malmesbury.

The Parish Steward Scheme has worked very well carrying out general maintenance within the Parish to good effect – this is one scheme within Wiltshire that is effective; it just needs more money

However the Council failed miserably to prompt or persuade the Enforcement Officers into action to rectify several longstanding issues – this has been the most frustrating aspect of the year.

The next big challenge will arise when the Feasibility Study on Primary School Places is released for consultation. Some of the issues remain in focus despite everyone's efforts – fly tipping and the ongoing problem of Dog Fouling - both are clearly anti-social behaviour that is blight on our countryside and villages. Despite constant reminders and notices some dog owners still allow their dogs to foul the pavements and open spaces without picking up their mess. It is suspected that this fouling takes place during the hours of darkness when the perpetrators feel safe from being observed breaking the law or they send out their children without either the knowledge of what to do or suitable bags for collection .

Anyone clearly identified and proven to be ignoring their responsibility will be prosecuted without warning under the Anti Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act of 2014 – and the fines are increasing.

Finally a special thank you to our Parish Clerk and RFO, John Parmiter for all of his hard work during the year - a year that has been difficult for him following a couple of eye operations that meant that not only was his sight affected but he was not able to drive. His dedication to the roles has meant that we as Council and the community are well served.

Who knows what the next few months will bring but I can assure you that this Parish Council will try its hardest to make this community a good and welcoming place to live.

**Finance: Draft Receipts & Payments account for 2016/2017:**

The RFO circulated copies of the draft Trial Balance together with a draft Receipts and Payments account for the year ended March 31<sup>st</sup> 2017. Many of the items were highlighted both in Receipts and Payments and the Trial Balance. Playing Field Funds of £16,000 had been moved to "Ear Marked Reserves" following last year's external audit when comment was made regarding the level of general reserves which Grant Thornton felt to be too high. This movement of funds reduced the total to 1.2% rather than some 3% plus last year. The Precept had been increased by £523.00 for the year under review. The RFO advised that as some of the contingencies had not been spent so the reserves had increased which may be required should we proceed with the CAT-G proposals for additional signage and road marking for which we would be required to contribute 30% of the cost. Under the usual procedures the books and accounts had been submitted to the internal auditor and had been approved. The period for public inspection would be announced after the draft accounts had been presented to the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council for confirmation and completion. They would then be uploaded to the Council Website under the requirements of the Transparency Code 2014 and would also be available for public inspection of the hard copy in due course.

**Reports:****a) Planning Committee Activities: May 2016 to May 2017**

Clr Stuart Suter, Chair of the Planning Committee presented his report as follows:

"During the year the Parish Council considered, discussed and responded to some twenty applications for planning permission. These were varied and included requests to remove hedges and pollard trees, to remove and reconstruct garages, convert barns, and to construct extensions and new dwellings.

The Parish Council has adopted a consultative, collective and structured approach to assessing all planning applications. This approach has focused on assessing the potential impacts and benefits of each application measured against local socio-economic and environmental conditions in the parish, as well as testing applications against Wiltshire Core Strategy objectives and Planning Policies.

During the year the Parish Council has either supported or had no objection to the majority of planning applications. Notable exceptions, to which the Parish Council objected, have been applications for developments at School Lane and Winkworth Farm. The former was subsequently refused by Wiltshire Council and again following a Planning Appeal, and the latter application has been withdrawn.

The Parish Council also objected to an application for a property extension in Crab Mill Lane which lies in the Lea village Conservation Area. The objection was based on an assessment of potential environmental and social impacts, balanced against potential benefits. That objection was subsequently over-ruled by Wiltshire Council planners.

**a) Planning Committee Activities: May 2016 to May 2017. (Cont'd)**

As a result, and to assist with the assessment of future planning applications, the Parish Council is currently engaging with county planners to define more clearly the process of how impacts are judged against benefits, and to clarify the characteristics for which the Conservation Area within the Parish is designated."

**b) Lea Village Hall Management Committee Report:**

Due to Mr Kevin Tibbs Chairman of the Lea Village Hall Management Committee being unable to be present to submit his Annual Report the Chair Cllr John Cull present a resume of the salient points. This enthusiasm reflected highly on the work which he and his committee had put into the running of the hall. It was a credit to the community and was well used. Various works had been carried out to enhance the facilities, installation of LED lights and also new electric wall heaters. Easier rear access had been made for those people with mobility problems. Finances were sound and the project to replace the front doors had been carried out.

**c) Rights of Way Report:**

Cllr Crockett reported that the footpaths have had another busy year by both ramblers and dog walkers. There have been no incidents of blockages and few repairs needed. We are lucky to have so many interesting walks. Cllr Crockett was thanked for his comments.

**d) Allotments - Lea:**

Cllr Gore reported "

It is great to see all the plots being worked on, and special thanks must go to tenant of plot Number 5 in bringing this neglected plot back into use.

Although the site is kept tidy the only down side is that some piles of waste produce and weeds are being left on the back walkway and if left there will negate their Tenancy agreement.

Let's hope it will be a good growing year and that we see a good entry into the village Flower and Produce show this year. Cllr Gore was thanked for his report

**e) Allotments –Cleverton:** There was no progress to report on the matter of access to the site.

**f) Neighbourhood Watch Report:** No report was submitted although Mr Porter was very consistently circulating very important and relevant information. For this good work the Chair thanked him in his absence

**g) Questions:**

The matter of the upcoming "Frolic" was raised with particular reference to the reports circulating in the village that the Jubilee Playing Field would be used as a car park. The Chair emphatically advised the meeting that no such use would be permitted under any circumstance.

In the absence of any further matters for discussion the Chairman thanked all for their interest and attendance and closed the proceedings at 9.20 p.m.

Signed:

Date: