

LEA, GARS DON & CLEVERTON PARISHES **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Lea, Garsdon & Cleverton Parishes held on Tuesday May 1st 2018 in Lea Village Hall commencing at 19:45 hours.

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

Cllrs: M J Crockett; B E Gore;

In attendance: Mrs Ellen Blacker Health Champion, Mr K Tibbs Chairman - Lea Village Hall Management Committee. 8 Parishioners were present.

Apologies: Cllr A. W. Barnes.

Welcome: The Chairman welcomed our Visitor and the Members of the Public.

Minutes:

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on May 2nd 2017 having been circulated 2017/1, 2017/2, 2017/3 & 2017/4 were taken as read and signed as true and correct record. **The Chairman signed the Minutes.**

Community Police Report:

No Report.

Chairman's report:

This is the tenth annual report that I have given, in those ten years there have been many changes but sadly some other issues remain.

Ten years ago we were looking at the fact that:

The Village Hall Committee were looking for new members; fly tipping was an ongoing problem; dog fouling was a major talking point and we were urging landowners to ensure that their ditches were kept clear of debris

On the plus side I believe that we as a Parish Council have moved forward and have a better understanding of the ever changing problems that face small rural communities and we have tried to tailor the way that we operate to suit the new and developing picture.

Planning matters have always been centre stage and our job has become more difficult over the years as planning policy - both national and county has become more complex and open to interpretation. Under the guidance of Stuart Suter our Planning Committee tries to factor in the "local view" while working within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and government direction.

Sometimes this is difficult when our well argued objections are all too often swept aside without what we believe to be sound judgement.

We will however continue to place our views on record and work tirelessly to ensure that the "local perspective" is at least recognised in the evaluation process.

The Village Hall Committee, under the guidance of Kevin Tibbs, have ensured that the hall continues to be popular but there is growing trend for users of the facility to be groups from outside the village. And the Committee are now facing problems with the floor and major remedial work will be required in the near future.

The Playing Field Committee has undergone some major changes in the way that their business is transacted. The Joint Management Committee has established a new structure to enable all parties to play a constructive role in the maintenance and development of this facility.

Both of these sub-committees are always looking for new members to share the fun of working for the Parish. The hard work of those two bodies is visible to all within the Parish but this is not always the case for those parishioners that help out in other ways.

The unseen jobs cover such things as the care of the Defibrillator Unit, keeping the Telephone Box Book Exchange clean and tidy, the management of the Emergency Plan and of course the

Chairman's report. (Cont'd):

Internal auditor. Plus the small band of volunteers who carry out ad-hoc jobs to keep the villages in shape.

We have embarked upon the process of creating a Neighbourhood Plan. Following the request for volunteers to help with this project I am delighted to report that we have several parishioners have stepped forward to assist. A small core design team has been established to plan and co-ordinate the way forward and once the process is up and running there will be opportunities for other parishioners to help in the tasks required. The Parish Council believes that the Plan should have community ownership and that is why the Core Design Team and the anticipated sub-groups will all be parishioners and the only Parish Councillor involved will be Cllr Tim Culling who will act as a conduit between the group and the Parish Council.

There are many reasons for undertaking this exercise at this time but the key part of the development of this plan is to ensure that the voice of the Parish is heard and understood in our responses to planning applications.

A Neighbourhood Plan that is soundly based and conforms to both local and national policies will demonstrate that we have a clear understanding of the needs of our community.

This plan will not be easy to produce and it cannot be done quickly - but when complete and endorsed by the Parish and accepted by Wiltshire Council it will embrace the considered thinking of the community.

The planned expansion of the school has progressed during the year and a planning application is expected very shortly. The intention is to purchase additional land to the north of the existing boundary, build a new classroom block and playing field.

However the continuing problem will be the parking problems caused at the drop off and pick-up times. The problem exists now and I can only see a greater problem in the future unless some radical proposal can be found.

What else has been going on during the year?

The promised new signs have been installed - signs alerting drivers to the playing field and a new village sign at the southern end of the village. We are awaiting the 30 MPH roundels to be painted on the roads either side of the playing field.

Crabmill Lane re-surfacing has created a few issues - but resolutions are all in hand - hopefully to the satisfaction of the residents.

Again this year we did not enter the BKVC and the reason for that decision was that the Parish Council felt that householders were not sufficiently interested in helping us present the village in the best possible light.

Our Unitary Councillor, Toby Sturgis has again provided help and guidance throughout the year - supporting us in our various "sorties and skirmishes" with Wiltshire Council.

We have maintained a good working relationship with Highways and received excellent service through the Parish Steward scheme, despite both of those elements of Wiltshire Council being under extreme financial pressure.

There were things that irked me during the year.

The lack of respect by the planners for the valid and well presented comments on planning applications. The slowness of the enforcement team to react

The continued disregard by a small percentage of dog walkers who fail to remove the dog waste from our streets - this is clearly antisocial behaviour and should be treated as such by hefty fine for anyone found to falling foul of this law - the pun was intended.

On the issue of local tax - there was a large increase in the Precept this year. This was due mainly to the new grass cutting contract. The contract has been placed at a figure significantly higher than the previous contractor. However the service that is now being provide shows a dramatic improvement in quality - something that parishioners were keen to see.

I would like to thank all of the Parish Councillors for their hard work and support during a year of challenging issues and changing times.

Chairman's report. (Cont'd):

One final thank you - and this is a special thank you - to John Parmiter our Parish Clerk and RFO, for all of his hard work during the year. John has give twenty years of invaluable service to this important job. 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 our community a safe, welcoming and enjoyable place to live.

Wiltshire Council Report: Due to Cllr Sturgis's absence there was no report.

Area Board Health Champion: Mrs Ellen Blacker reported on her activities during the past 12 months. She had visited 7 Parish Councils to date and had helped many people in the Area Boards of Malmesbury, Royal Wootton Bassett and Chippenham. Many grants had been obtained for people living in poverty. He Chairman thanked Ellen Blacker for all her report and her efforts on behalf of the Community. Mrs Blacker withdrew at 08.25 p.m.

Finance: Draft Receipts & Payments account for 2017/2018:

The RFO circulated copies of the draft Receipts and Payment accounts for the year ended March 31st 2018. This showed the various changes in indirect and direct costs for the period. It had not been necessary to increase the Precept for the year under review in fact due to Government Tax Support Grant the Precept was reduced by £89.00. The RFO reviewed the accounts in detail. Under the usual procedures the books and accounts would be submitted for both Internal and External Audit. They would be presented to the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council for confirmation and would be available for public inspection in due course.

Reports:

a) Lea Village Hall Management Committee Report:

Mr Kevin Tibbs reported that the Village Hall accounts showed a healthy financial position with revenue running at £3.5k which had allowed a reasonable amount of maintenance work to be carried out and new items purchased. Bookings were regular and included 1 day as a Polling Station and 2 days for a Public Inquiry. He thanked the committee members for their continuing support, noted that there had been one resignation and 2 new members recruited. A spring clean day would be organised shortly. Cllr Cull thanked Mr Tibbs for his comments and congratulated the Committee for its commitment.

b) Rights of Way Report:

Cllr Crockett reported that "Most of the stiles are in good condition and well used; the footpaths themselves are some in poor condition due to wet weather and some footpaths being excessively muddy; putting pressure on the other paths, one footpath bridle path is blocked by the land owner. This is in the hands of Wiltshire Council's footpath warden". The Chairman thanked Cllr Crockett for his comments.

c) Allotments - Lea: **Cllr Gore** report that Plot 10 was now taken although it was currently under the care of the adjacent Tenant. He had met with Mr Peacock who had transformed his plot into 4 sections which is making it look neat and tidy. Most of the plots are now of a high standard of neatness. The Tenants are looking forward to obtaining a good crop of vegetables. So after a very wet start to the year the Allotments are in good shape. Cllr Gore was thanked for his report.

d) Neighbourhood Watch Report: No report was submitted although Mr Porter had consistently circulated very important and relevant information. However it currently appeared that Mr Porter has ceased to operate.

Questions from the floor:

Footpaths: a suggestion that a footpath to Malmesbury should be opened up

Speeding: The Metro count had revealed that the mean speed within the village was 35 mph. This does not justify a Community Speed Watch. (CSW),

Questions from the floor: (Cont'd):

School Traffic Plan: The matter of a Traffic Plan for the Primary School was raised. It was advised that this would be an integral part of the School expansion.

Road Safety: The absence of white lining on "The Street" corners was raised as was the need for street lights. White lining at these two sites was not permitted under current Highway Regulations.

In the absence of any further matters for discussion the Chairman thanked all for their interest and attendance and closed the proceedings at 21:00 hours.

Signed:

Date: