

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH OF HAMBLEDEN
HELD ON MONDAY 14TH MAY 2007 AT 8.15PM IN THE PARISH ROOMS, HAMBLEDEN

Present: Cllrs Mr T. Nixey, Mr R. Baird, Mrs E. Robinson, Mr J. Jackson, Mr D, White,
Mrs S. Walker (Allies), Mr A. Armstrong.
Clerk: Mrs S. Henson Dist Cllr R. Emmett 12 Members of the public

Chairman's Report

Cllr Nixey welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming.

I should like to start my report by thanking my fellow Councillors for the contributions they have made over the past year. Many thanks must go to the two Councillors who retired at the recent election; Mrs Jane O'Leary who has served our community for many years and Mrs Andy Chanter, who although only serving for four years, has made great contributions, especially to our comments on Planning.

I should also like to congratulate those who have been re-elected in the South Ward and welcome Mr Angus Armstrong elected for the first time and bringing new young blood into the Parish Council – may he serve and enjoy many years on our Council.

We have all been very busy over the issues we are responsible for.

Open Spaces

Once again thanks must go to our grass cutting contractors, Mr Pete Gomme and Mr Roger Symes, for keeping our grassed areas to the standard we all expect. For the next 3 years the maintenance in Frieth will be carried out by Mr Gomme and in Hambleden and Skirmett by Mr Armstrong.

Pheasants Hill Common

This is the twenty third year that we have been overseeing the Common on behalf of you the Parishioners. My thanks to Roddy Baird who keeps a watch on the trees and the undergrowth.

Donate a Gate

We have been partners with Bucks County Council and members of the parish who have contributed to this scheme. More kissing gates are being installed to make it easier for the elderly and those mums with young children to use the many footpaths in our Parish. This scheme has been far more successful than expected which has caused a backlog in putting up the new gates.

Planning issues

This is probably the most contentious and time consuming part of all our business. We have to make our comments on the basis of the Wycombe District Local Plan and also take on board the concerns and issues of our residents. In the future, both planning applications and plans will be carried out electronically and will be passed onto Parish Councils in the same manner.

BCC speed limits

For the past two years I have reported that reduced speed limits were going to be put in place by Bucks County Council. This has not taken place probably because of financial restrictions and the sheer logistics of implementing the whole County, area by area. Area 8, our Area, is the next to be put in place and I am sure we hope that this will be carried out sooner than later.

Wycombe Air Park

Cllr David White continues to be our representative on the Joint Consultative Committee. Thanks should go to him for taking on board your issues on aircraft and especially helicopter noise.

Finally may I thank our District Councillor Roger Emmett and County Councillor Bob Woollard for their help and support and also to Sharon Henson, our Clerk for her continued guidance and personal help to us all. Thank you Sharon.

Financial Report from the RFO

Everyone present had a copy of the accounts in front of them and the figures were explained. We kept our precept at £18,000 and received donations from Cllr Emmett's Community Leaders Fund for the purchase of 5 litter picking tools and a seat to be placed in Skirmett; we received £250 from the Donate a Gate scheme and money that was donated to Hambleden's Golden Jubilee Celebrations was paid back and it has been such a successful event. Our expenditure was very similar to the previous year, with the Clerk's salary being reviewed under the NALC/SLCC guidelines. We have created our own website. Insurance increased once again and will very likely increase year on year. We have had to pay a large amount out to repair several of our street lights which were found to have asbestos in them. Our open spaces budget expenditure was lower this year as there were no major projects carried out and the very dry weather reduced the amount of grass cutting necessary. We have now had the bill for £7000 for the installation of the kerb stones in Frieth and this was paid in April although the work was carried out in the financial year we are talking about. We end the year with a balance of £16208.47, with £9030 of this money allocated to the Churchyard Wall Fund.

The Hambleden Film Fund is looked after by the Parish Council but the money is always kept totally separate. This year the fund 'grew' by £1300 and donations to the value of £1000 were made to Frieth Village Society, Hambleden Parish Rooms and the Thames Valley & Chilterns Air Ambulance. We end the year with a balance of £607.53

Report from District Councillor Roger Emmett

Cllr Emmett gave a brief report on his activities within Wycombe District Council in relation to his role as our District Councillor. He has represented the Parish Council and parishioners on a variety of planning applications. For the past 12 months he has been a Member of the Development Control Committee, the Joint Waste Committee, the Wycombe Air Park JCC and the Rural Forum, and the Thames Valley Energy Management Board. He personally sits on the Royal Agricultural Society of England representing Buckinghamshire.

The Joint Waste Committee has been working on ways of improving the environment and reducing the amount of CO2 emissions by encouraging developers and home owners to consider these issues at the planning stage of development. By using wind power, solar heating, solar energy and ground source heating we can reduce our use of finite energy supplies. For £6-7,000 less a grant a 3 / 4 bed roomed house could be heated by ground source heat.

The Thames Valley Energy group is now burning waste at the plant in Slough and this is supplying heat and power. There are plans to create a similar plant for Buckinghamshire. Wycombe District Council has to increase the amount of recycling carried out within the District to meet Government targets and to that end is gradually increasing the amount of recycling collections they carry out. Green waste collections are gradually increasing and High Heavens are selling compost to the public. All these projects depend on funding from Defra.

He will continue to work to safeguard our environment, communities and areas of outstanding natural beauty and we are represented on the Chilterns Conservation Board by parish representatives and members from the County and District Councils as well as from Government.

Report on Wycombe Air Park JCC from Councillor David White

The JCC held its normal 3 meetings (the statutory minimum) over the past 12 months. Total movements at the Air Park were 81,000 in the past 11 months, 13,000 less than the prior year. Only helicopter movements were slightly higher than a year ago.

Residents' formal complaints totalled around 250 in the past year, with the lion's share of these coming from Frieth and neighbouring areas. As in past years, Air Park management were only able to follow up a disappointing (for residents and management) 10 – 15% of these, because of insufficient detail to identify the specific plane or helicopter. If visible, the final two letters of the registration are required for certain identification. Otherwise, precise time and a good description may suffice.

WAP management have refused to invest in the additional resources in the Control Tower (3 extra staff) which would permit the precise logging of every take-off and landing of aircraft performing repetitive circuits.

At the most recent JCC meeting, official monitoring reports by Wycombe DC for the first time showed some days with 20-30% of movements in breach of the agreed NAZ. This is much more in line with the subjective impressions of affected residents and the monitoring data collected by Keith Chanter on behalf of FVS. The explanation seems principally to relate to early turning from the take-off leg into the cross-wind leg of the agreed route. The turn should take place behind St Katharine's at Parmoor. There have also been complaints from Fingest about planes not turning early enough from the cross-wind leg into the down-wind leg. Air Park management have undertaken to readdress these points in pilot briefing/training.

There has regrettably been no sign yet of last year's promised objective assessment of the benefits of fitting silencers. We understand that there are differences of interpretation between WDC Environmental Services staff and WAP management. At the April JCC meeting, we were told that we would be receiving an extensive report shortly.

In this day and age, it is an anomalous fact that current CAA and Environmental legislation places no restrictions on noise nuisance caused by light aircraft and helicopters. (As an aside, despite the massively raised profile of CO2 emissions from all sources, we have also learned that the Dept of Transport holds no CO2 data on light aircraft and helicopters.) We have made contact with our MP, Paul Goodman, on this matter and he has gone into print stating that he believes there is an imbalance between the rights of pilots to enjoy their leisure activity and the rights of surrounding residents to enjoy a tranquil environment. He has said that, if he gets the opportunity to introduce a Private Members Bill, he will consider doing so on this topic.

For the first 3 of my 4 years on the JCC, I felt a somewhat lonely figure representing affected residents, and WAP management regularly expressed the view that unhappiness was confined to a small number of "serial complainers on the SW fringes of Frieth". However, there have been some positive developments over the past 12 months in terms of broader community representation:-

1. Following a letter which our Parish Clerk wrote last year to all neighbouring PCs, and a sub-committee formed by the JCC to review its constitution, it has been agreed that all neighbouring PCs will henceforth be formally invited to nominate a representative to the JCC and that WDC Councillor membership will be similarly adjusted.
2. The increase in helicopter traffic, notably those performing circuits, led last summer to a major upsurge in complaints from residents adjacent to Moor Common. Dissatisfied with the JCC, they have formed a Helicopter Action Group (web address www.helicopter-noise.org.uk) and affiliated themselves to the AEF, a pan-European community group, one of whose goals is that there shall be no repetitive circuit flying from noon on Saturdays and all day on Sundays and Public Holidays.
3. Residents in Sands and the Chisbridge area have been vocal in complaints. A Sands resident spoke eloquently at the April JCC about the difference between observing the Law and being socially responsible.

While the JCC has no executive power, and since WDC state that they are unable unilaterally to introduce new conditions into the WAP lease agreement (which dates from 1972), we can only hope that the increasingly broad base of community concern will encourage Air Park management in their enforcement of current policies and in the making of meaningful concessions to their affected neighbours in line with social responsibility in the

21st century. In the longer term, it seems very clear that major change will require new legislation applicable to all Air Parks, light aircraft and helicopters.

It was agreed that a copy of this report would be sent to Mr Paul Goodman MP, Mr Orchard, Manager of WAP and Cllr Blanksby, Chairman of JCC

Report from Cllr Mrs Susan Walker (Allies) on the recent traffic survey in Skirmett

Cllr Mrs Walker (Allies) and volunteers from Skirmett operated the Speed Indicator Device (SID) supplied by Bucks County Council for two days in April. This was to support our request for the Area 8 Speed Review to be implemented as soon as possible and not wait until Spring 2008. This study was compared to a previous one carried out in 2003. Members and the public present at the meeting were handed out a report which was then explained. The report is included in these minutes. Copies of the report and official statistics will be sent to Cllr Mrs Letheren, BCC Cabinet member for Transport, County Cllr Bob Woollard, our County Councillor and Mr Alan Baverstock, BCC Road and Safety Division.

Open Forum

Mr Whitehead asked if the Parish Council could do anything to obtain broadband in the Hambleden Valley. Cllr Mrs Walker reported that a group were currently working on this project. They have been to the House of Commons, spoken to Avanti and BT and been working on this issue for nearly two years. The Parish Council gave them a sum of money to help set up the company necessary to facilitate the work necessary.

Mr Whitehead asked if a better surface could be made on the newly created lay by in Pheasants Hill as the chalk/clay slip is making a mess. Cllr Baird reported that all the work has been carried out in a voluntary capacity and had been free of charge but will investigate what can be done.

Mrs Whitehead asked if extra more local recycling facilities could be created, in particular at the WDC Car Park at Mill End as currently a great deal of travelling is involved in taking materials to recycling centres. Cllr Emmett said that he would ask about this as will the Parish Council.

Mrs Spratley, Chairman of the Parish Rooms Committee, reported that as a result of a village meeting about the Parish Rooms, they will be modernised and will need support from the Parish Council as they are applying for a Lottery Grant of £250,000. Any support from the Parish Council for fundraising would also be appreciated.

Mr Packer thanked Mrs Chanter and Mrs Henson for their work. He asked that serious consideration should be given to the co-option of a Councillor for the North Ward as Frieth is the largest village and currently only has one Councillor – David White representing it. Cllr Nixey stated that he had always represented the village as he had worked and been involved in the village throughout his life. Mr Packer felt that as a Governor of the School Cllr Nixey had a conflict of interests and could not truly represent the community. Mr Packer felt that the recently placed Public Car Parking sign has been placed in the wrong position – the position was agreed by the Parish Council prior to its erection. A second sign has always been planned once permission has been given by the Village Hall Committee – this sign will direct people to the area in front of the school for public parking. Mr Packer felt that the BCC sign on the front of the school property prevented people from parking on the land in front of the school. Cllr Nixey can do nothing about this sign as it is legally placed there by the County Council.

Mr Packer asked if we had paid for the kerb stones and road surfacing. The RFO reported that the invoice for just under £7000 was received in early April and has now been paid. Mr Packer asked if the Parish Council were now going to consider placing kerb stones along the remainder of the Main Road both toward the Church and the remainder of the top part of the road. Cllr Nixey reported that not all the land is Common Land. Not all residents are happy about the kerb stones.

Local residents raised the issue of a 'stable' placed in the field near Bacres.

Cllr Nixey invited everyone to stay for light refreshments.

Hambleden Parish Council

Receipts & Payments For the year 2006/2007

	2006	2007
OPENING BALANCE	9048.75	13198.16
INCOME		
Precept	18000.00	18000.00
Interest on investments	449.18	617.86
Refund on stopped cheque	---	15.00
Hambleden Film Fund (Church Wall)	400.00	---
For Hambleden Film Fund	---	600.00
Wayleaves	85.71	88.75
VAT refund	973.07	1218.17
Donation	---	60.00
Golden Jubilee refund	---	200.00
Community Leaders Fund	---	369.44
Donate a Gate refund	---	250.00
Total Income	19907.96	21419.22
EXPENDITURE		
General Administration:		
Chairman's allowance	100.00	100.00
Clerks room allowance	100.00	100.00
Clerks salary	4201.31	4976.59
Postage	86.28	92.00
Photocopying	26.90	80.40
New Printer	73.94	---
Stationery	50.86	76.70
Telephone, fax, email, domain name	264.70	295.53
Create website (1 st year of 3 years)	---	680.00
Petrol (mileage) & parking	374.00	447.83
Audit fee and internal auditor	170.00	171.00
Insurance	751.39	792.87
Bouquet/gifts	17.00	76.00
Technical Notes and book	---	15.99
Filing cabinet	--	47.00
	6216.38	7951.91
Public lighting	619.82	2145.44
Hire of Halls	105.00	137.00
Training	---	30.00
	724.82	2312.44
Subscriptions & Donations from Parish Council:		
SLCC	46.50	40.00
WDALC	4.00	4.00
NALC	187.48	187.63
Chiltern Society	25.00	25.00
Open Spaces Society	30.00	30.00
CPRE	25.00	26.00
Skirmett Village Hall	1000.00	---
Hambleden PCC – light at Frieth Church	150.00	150.00
Hambleden Golden Jubilee Fund	---	200.00
War Memorials Trust	---	50.00
Hambleden Film Fund	---	600.00
	1467.981	1312.63

Parks & Open Spaces:

Regular maintenance	4913.00	4125.00
Hedge cutting	422.00	73.00
Frieth – posts, repairs,n/board,cones	550.65	65.00
Ellery Rise rental & maint	60.00	160.00
Noticeboards	110.00	---
Kenrick Memorial fence	210.00	---
6 x litter pickers	97.40	---
Tree works	---	774.26
Donate a Gate	---	250.00
Car Park sign	---	131.50
Best Kept Village Comp	8.00	---
	6371.05	5578.76

VAT on payments	978.32	1218.17
Bank Charges	---	35.00
Expenditure	15758.55	18408.91
Less Film Fund Transfer	---	600.00
Actual Expenditure	15758.55	17808.91

This balance includes the sum of £9030 for the Church Wall Fund

Opening Balance	13198.16
Income	21419.22
Total	34617.38
Expenditure	18408.91
Balance	16208.47

BANK RECONCILIATION:

Bank balance – current	2237.75
Bank balance – deposit	89.06
Bank of Ireland	13881.66
Total	16208.47