

LONGWICK-cum-ILMER PARISH COUNCIL

INFORMAL MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD 15th APRIL 2014

Present: Councillors, Mrs Valerie McPherson, Mr Brian Richards, Mrs Jane Rogers, Mr Graham Walters and Mr Ian Walker.
Clerk Mrs Susanne Griffiths
5 Parishioners.

1 **INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME**

Cllr Mrs Valerie McPherson welcomed everyone and introduced the Parish Councillors and the Clerk

2 **REPORT FROM THE POLICE**

P C Marea Logan gave a report on crimes in the area.

The team has not changed with 1 Sgt, 4 full time PC's, 2 part-time PC's and 2 PCSO's.

There have been no issues in Longwick with the police attention being paid to local beauty spots and clear your car campaign. This campaign involves Officers checking cars to see if anything is left in it with letters being sent out to the owner.

The campaign has proven successful as PC Andy Ralph was completing a check of a beauty spot when he caught some offenders.

Country watch is being promoted to farms and small holdings. This is to let them know that the police are taking rural crime seriously and to let offenders know that the police and owners are working together.

PC Marea Logan advised the members of the public that they are their eyes and ears and if they feel something is not right to dial 101 and the police will check it out.

3 **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Cllr Val McPherson, Chairman of the Longwick-cum-Ilmer Parish Council gave the following report:-

"Following the retirement of the previous chairman George Harper after serving on the council for many years, we were able to find a replacement in James Butler who also lives in Ilmer, this then allows us to follow the practice in ensuring that the council has members who live in each of our communities and to reflect the communities view to the parish council.

As a Parish Council we are advised of every planning application within the parish and invited to comment, but we only have a limited influence in the current planning regulations and do not always achieve success. This was shown in the recent permission being granted to build a house next to the adjacent village post office and shop in Longwick, although we objected along with several members of the community.

Planning applications so far 31 considered, 26 have been approved and 3 refused.

Our Parish Clerk Sue Griffiths was awarded "Clerk of the Year for Bucks & Milton Keynes" in recognition of her work. Sue is an experienced and competent clerk and we feel privileged to have someone who acts as a source of reference and information to the councillors.

The annual Remembrance service for the parish took place at the War memorial in Longwick on Monday 11 November at 11.00 and was well attended by parishioners and Year 6 from Longwick School. 3 of the children also took part in the service and Jane Rogers read out the roll of honour.

The Christmas Carol service is always well attended, but 2013 was exceptional, the hall was full to the brim and we nearly ran out of chairs – although we did run out of mince pies!! Some ladies from the WI took over the refreshments, to which Jane and myself were grateful.

Every year the children from the school choir perform the carols but last year we were in for a surprise as the choir of the "Longwick Old Boys" took the lead in the singing trained, and conducted by Neville Trout. A special thank you must go to George O'Neill who arranged the whole service and everyone enjoyed the event.

In the summer months last year we had some problems with graffiti on the skate park, someone lighting a fire within one of the bins and then scattering the contents on the net ball/ basket ball

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pitch. The bushes behind the bin caught fire but luckily did not spread too far and a tree was uprooted and damaged. Senseless destruction

You might have noticed that there were a number of small trees that we were given by the Woodland Trust which Ian Walker and his brother planted around the edge of the field, unfortunately a number have been pulled out which is a shame as they would have formed some protective cover for the edge of the field.

James is looking at updating our web-site to make it more attractive to new visitors and attracting the returning visitors.

The most dominant issue for concern is the local plan for Wycombe District which will affect all of us, regarding the proposed housing development within Princes Risborough and also possibly for Longwick. The Parish Council decided to hold a public meeting and invited Penelope Tollitt the head of planning and sustainability from WDC along with Rosie Brake in the same department to give us a presentation on the proposals and to take questions from the floor. We were delighted with the response from the parish in the village hall with over 110 attendees.

We had to say goodbye to George O'Neill who decided to resign from the council after 14 years, and had also been the Vice Chair for the last 6 years. George has arranged many a Remembrance Service and Carol Service in the past attended many meetings on behalf of the Parish Council especially being a school governor, which he still currently maintains. He is also still helping with the delivery of newsletters to his contacts. He will be missed."

4. REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR BILL BENDYSHE-BROWN ON MATTERS CONCERNING LONGWICK-CUM-ILMER.

Cllr B Bendyshe-Brown reported on the work completed during the past year and the work currently in progress by Highways on the footways and roads in the Parish. The Parish Council has been successful in obtaining a small amount of funding through devolved services which has resulted in the Parish arranging to get the road signs cleaned and vegetation cleared from the footways.

5. REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR STEVE LACEY ON MATTERS CONCERNING LONGWICK-CUM-ILMER

Cllr S Lacey reported on the new litter collection that has been introduced into the Wycombe District and the savings experienced to date with the reduction in the amount sent to landfill. Cllr Lacey clarified where the funding for the Handycross development was coming from and briefly discussed the Local Plan consultation.

6. PARISH ACCOUNTS AND PRECEPT

Copies of the Estimates Summary which showed the actual spend £13,685.78 against the budget £16,563.00 in the financial year 2013/2014 and the proposed budget for the year 2014/2015 of £17,305.00 were distributed to the members of the public.

Vice- Chairman Cllr Brian Richards explained the makeup of the precept. The Parish Council has requested an amount of £17,609.00 which is an increase of 5%, £1.22 for the year for each band D property in the parish. The precept has remained virtually the same for eight years but due to the increase in the costs of maintenance and repairs, the proposed upgrade of the website, funding for the Risborough Area Community Bus and the need to build reserves, it was agreed to raise it by a relatively small amount. The District Council will give a reduced grant of £291.65 in response to the reduction in tax base for the Localised Council Tax Scheme. This is likely to be reduced again next year.

Cllr Brian Richards finished his report by saying that he hoped the residents of the Parish had approved of the expenditure of the Parish Council and that the Councillors welcome any

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feedback.

Cllr Valerie McPherson thanked the other Parish Councillors for their help and support during the past year.

A resident thanked the Parish Council for its work during the past year.

OPEN FORUM

Questions were raised and answered on litter, dog waste and CCTV. It was agreed to send a letter of thanks to the Girl Guides for their help in a litter pick organised by the Longwick Old Guys (LOGS) in the village.

There being no further questions, the meeting closed at 8.05pm