

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Piddington & Wheeler End Parish Council held on Tuesday 12th May 2014 at 8.15pm in Piddington Village Hall

Present: Cllrs Mr S. Digby, Mr A Hackett, Mrs S. Storey, Mrs J. Galliven, Mrs W. Pitcher, Mrs H. Glasgow, Clerk

5 members of the public. Mr Steve Baker (MP).

Apologies were accepted from Cllr J Redfern, County Cllr Darren Hayday, District Cllrs I McEnnis & J Teesdale.

1. Cllr Simon Digby as Chairman welcomed everyone present and thanked them for their support over the previous year.

2. Chairman's Report

Piddington and Wheeler End Parish Council continues the quest of leaving a legacy of which its parishioners can be proud.

Every year, the Parish Council undertakes to make quality decisions for the local environment in the best interests of the residents. We deliberate at length to ensure that money is spent where it is needed and never wasted.

Some of the activities that we have undertaken in the last twelve months are –

- A full overhaul of the War Memorial in Wheeler End – one of only two wooden ones in Britain
- Verge cut at Wheeler End
- Purchase and siting of two extra dog bins on Wheeler End Common
- Foliage cut back on the Dashwood Hill
- Maintenance and access to the playing field
- Footpath created at the corner of the Old Oxford Road and Chipps Hill
- Clearance of broken glass in the playground
- ROSPA playground inspection and maintenance of equipment
- White lines to create responsible parking around Piddington
- Allotments managed to full capacity
- Allotments cleared and trees taken out
- Attendance at LAFs, NAGs and Rural Forum Meetings
- DCLG, BCC and BASC Conferences attended
- Removal of a wayward buddleia on Wellfield Road and the Deriaz Slater sign on Piddington Green
- Money donated to the Village Hall to improve the parking surface and also to the M40 Group and the Sue Ryder Nettlebed Hospice
- New clerk hired and Sharon Henson happily retired
- Oak tree replaced twice on Wheeler End Common
- Agreement to take on the grass cutting on Wheeler End Common
- Picnic table reinstated in the playing field
- Water leaks sorted out with Thames Water

Continual improvement can be a very difficult process and largely depends on the attributes of one person in particular to determine how effective the Parish Council ultimately becomes. That individual is the Parish Clerk, and we have been blessed to have worked with one of the finest of that ilk.

Sharon Henson arrived in the post-nuclear fall-out of a warring Council as the dust was settling. Her commonsense approach, allied to an uncanny ability to get things done has meant that the last seven years has been one of harmonic achievement. Her spread of experience from handling three

parish councils meant that she knew where to go to get things done; and depending on the efficacy of the organisation would be an easy or a frustrating experience. Whichever, there was always a smile and a laugh. I have dwelt long in my Chairman's reports over the years on Sharon's capabilities. Little more needs to be said now except to thank her wholeheartedly from the bottom of this Council's heart and to wish her the very best of luck in her impending, but not quite, retirement, and hope that she now gets to spend more time in her garden and being spoilt by Mike.

This all leaves big boots to fill, and I am delighted to welcome Hayley Glasgow to the position of clerk at Piddington and Wheeler End. Hayley too has multi-Council experience; currently being the incumbent clerk at Lane End. I am sorry to disappoint her tonight by not having a thirty page PowerPoint presentation, with pictures, on our year's achievements but do promise that we will be having a cup of tea well before 10.30 this evening. We welcome Hayley with open arms and her start with us certainly indicates a successful future ahead. I thank her for easy style, quick communication and the ability to squeeze a grin when one of her children bounces off the trampoline on to his head, her internet goes down and she has to produce the agenda for the next meeting. We will lean heavily on her skills and promise exciting times ahead.

I would like to thank my Parish Councillors individually. Alan Hackett ably deputised for me during the year as vice-chairman and has a secret alter-ego as a rural Womble; he is seen regularly collecting bags of discarded rubbish on his morning walks around the Parish leaving the environ much tidier as a result. Wendy Pitcher is our authority on all things farming and is a font of knowledge on the ebb and flow of country matters. Jean Galliven adds an intelligent view on many topics and is an opinion I will always seek. Sylvia Storey is the eyes and ears of Piddington. As well as being the playground monitor, she strikes fear into the marrow of wayward continental lorry drivers who dare defy the parking restrictions on the Old Oxford Road. Jo Redfern has always been willing to get involved and understand the needs of the Parishioners. I'd like to thank Fraiser Swainston for his inputs but who has had to stand down due to his business travelling commitments. I am mightily relieved that all of the Councillors managed to defy the bureaucracy involved around serving another term and are here once more to do their voluntary duty.

We receive support from our District Councillors, Jean Teasdale and Ian McEnnis. Loyal supporters who turn up regularly and assist us whenever and wherever they can. I'd like to sincerely thank them for all of their help. County Councillor Darren Hayday is another stalwart of our Council, always ready to push our case with the ever procrastinating Bucks County Council. Actions would not have happened without his help, and I am very appreciative.

Our parishioners are always willing to make their voices heard. John Lindeman and his neighbours from George Lee Court has been ever vocal in telling us about the opportunities for improvement. Pam Harris has attended many meetings and led the Chairman around the Village pointing out issues big and small and is thanked by me for caring so much about where she lives. Wayne Mitchell from The Dashwood Arms continually communicates with the Parish Council and makes his plans clear well in advance. It is in the interest of the community to have a vibrant local and we will help where we can. Sir Edward Dashwood is very accommodating when asked for cooperation or permission to improve things around the Parish.

Look around! Drive slowly up Chipps Hill and enjoy the wild flowers on both sides of the road. Walk down the Old Oxford Road and see hundreds of daffodils nodding at you in the breeze, see the old country craftsmanship that went into laying the playing field hedge – a view unencumbered by HGVs due to the Traffic Restriction Order. See children kicking footballs with their parents, the younger children swinging and sliding watched over by people on the bench. See the produce from the allotments at the Horticultural Show and rejoice that you live in such a lovely part of the world. And don't, if you can help it, have a Cardiac Arrest. But if you do, there is a defibrillator at the Village Hall.

My thanks to all who have helped this happen and I relish the opportunity of us all working together in the future to do even more.

3. Annual Accounts

The Responsible Financial Officer, Mrs Glasgow had issued sets of accounts. The Accounts were prepared by Mrs S Henson.

4. Open Forum and reports from other bodies

County Cllr Darren Hayday asked the following short report to be read: "It has been a busy year from the Council. It's never easy with dealing in 'speed' with Ringway Jacobs the contractors working for 'Transport for Bucks', however this is what has been done and what I'm looking to push forward in the near future:

- The A40 going past Piddington has been re surfaced.
- Dashwood Hill footpath has finally been cut back
- Resurfacing has also been done along Chipps Hill.
- Old Oxford Road has been patched and planed

For the future, I shall be pushing through the major resurfacing works in; Princes, Queen & King Street & Wellfield Road. This is likely to be in 2016 (to be confirmed)

I am always accessible; please contact me with any County problems and I shall instantly deal with them".

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.50pm.