

Minutes of the Annual Assembly of Local Government Electors for the Parish of Marcham duly convened and held in Marcham Primary School, Marcham on Wednesday 2nd May, 2012 at 7.30 p.m.

Present:

The chairman of the meeting David Walton, (chairman of Marcham Parish Council) and 7 members of the Parish Council
Recipients of the Parishioner of the Year Award – Mr. and Mrs. D. Creasy
50 members of the public
P.C. Steve Morton and PCSO Carly Milward
Joined by Cllr. J. Hanna

The chairman, welcomed everyone to the meeting and reported that although chairman of the Parish Council, his role also included chairing the annual meeting of electors.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Parish Councillors Matthew Hillis, and Samantha Turney.

4. Minutes of the Meeting held on 18th May 2011

These minutes had been circulated and read by parishioners attending. Questions were asked as to why the minutes did not specifically refer to the running down of Council's balances which had been raised as a question previously. There was a record of various questions being raised and the minutes could not be a verbatim record. The minutes were then agreed and signed by the Chairman as a true record of the proceedings. It was suggested that an explanation as to the nature of the meeting would be needed for the following year.

2. Presentation of the Parishioner of the Year Award

The chairman announced the winners of the Parishioner of the Year award – Mr. Donald and Mrs. Jean Creasy. He read the citation on the certificate and paid tribute to the contribution that they had both made to village life. Mrs. Creasy thanked everyone for the award and stated, that they did all the things that they did, because they enjoyed it and took pleasure in helping the village.

Mr. Cumber paid tribute to Mr. Alan Cross who was retiring from working with Royal Mail and who was one of the postmen in the village. Mr. Cross had been a familiar face in the village for many years. He was presented with a small gift for his devoted service. Mr. Cross thanked everyone for his gift.

Cllr. Jane Hanna (Vale of White Horse District Council) joined the meeting.

3. Proposed housing development on the Anson Field and new community hall rear of Hyde Copse/Longfields

Cllr. J. Hanna outlined the consultation process that she and her working group had been considering. There would be a questionnaire, hand delivered to the households with a yes/no vote. The counting and analysis would be undertaken by the working party who would report to Cllr. Hanna and the working party. She outlined the process for addressing the planning committee at the Vale of White Horse District Council.

The chairman invited comments and questions on points other than the consultation questionnaire.

Pitches

These would need to be moved from time to time to allow for wear and tear. The orientation was not correct.

Possible disturbance

There was the possibility of disturbance from late night events in the hall. The Anson Trust advised that comments were being gathered and would be reviewed by Sport England.

Deadline for responses on the planning application

Queries were raised regarding the deadline for planning responses to the Vale of White Horse District Council. Mr. Andy Cattermole from Taylor Wimpey stated that an agreement had been entered into between the company and the District Council to allow 20 weeks for determination rather than the usual 13 weeks. There was a legal obligation to take into account all comments up to the time of the decision. Early comments would allow time for any necessary adjustments.

MCG

Mr. Jim Asher on behalf of Marcham Community Group, stated that the group had been working hard on the details of the proposals. There were still some residual issues to be resolved. The internal layout was not regarded as final. A meeting to be held on 9th May, 2012 would try and obtain a consensus from the user groups.

Additional classrooms at the primary school. Mr. Cattermole spoke regarding s. 106 contributions and confirmed that funding would be paid to the County Council for education provision. There had also been a proposal to construct the classrooms.

It was asked whether the funding was just for the buildings or whether it could be used, for example, to extend the play area, or fund new teacher. Funding for teachers automatically followed the demand. The Anson Trust had asked for the funding to remain within the village, with Marcham Primary School being considered first. Any proposal affecting the primary school would have to be acceptable to the County Council. Taylor Wimpey had an educational consultant working on behalf of the company.

Sale of Field

A resident stated that when the initial proposal was put forward, the Trust had said that it would not build on more than half the field. He had calculated the area to be developed to be 54%. He understood that the remainder of the field could well be developed. Mr. Cattermole from Taylor Wimpey stated he was aware the Anson Trust had suggested that the Parish Council take on the remainder of the field, but that the Council had postponed discussions. Mr. Hoath from the Anson trust confirmed that the Trust was not selling the other half of the field.

Interim Housing Supply Policy

A resident requested an update on the IHSP. Cllr. Hanna confirmed that the IHSP had been put in place to meet the housing need in the Vale. There would be a relaxation of the Local Plan to enable building to take place. There would be central government funding for each new house built. The proposal would go to Cabinet later in the month. Mr. Walton, chairman of the Parish Council added that the Parish Council had been invited to comment. Sites for up to 225

houses had been identified, but the Parish Council preferred to wait until after the adoption of the policy, before commenting. If Taylor Wimpey were successful with its application this would reduce the number of houses required locally as stated in the IHSP but would not eliminate them.

Density of Housing

General points were raised regarding the density of housing, the ground levels which were higher in the field than the housing in Abingdon Road

Facilities during construction

The lack of sport facilities during construction would be taken care of. A transition plan was in place.

Government Funding

Central government funding and the direct homes bonus, which was likely to go to the District Council. Cllr. Hanna confirmed it was important to keep the s. 106 funding in the village.

Infrastructure

Comments were made that 51 houses would generate 102 cars and the infrastructure could not accommodate the increase in traffic. There would be a constant flow of traffic and difficulties exiting on to the Abingdon Road. It seemed that the scheme had not been well thought out and questions were asked as to whether such problems had been considered by the traffic officer.

Tennis Courts

A question was asked that if classrooms were built on the site of the tennis courts, where would the new tennis facilities be accommodated. The clerk summarised the terms of occupation. The tennis courts were part of the school site and a Licence agreement existed between Oxfordshire County Council and the Parish Council, an annual Licence fee was paid and there was a period of notice to terminate the agreement.

Loss of field

Statements had been made regarding the construction of housing on the Anson field, and it was thought that the equation was not being considered equally and the loss of the field should be evaluated. Comments from some attending were that the Taylor Wimpey proposal gave greater benefit than that of other developers

Ground Levels

Comments were made again regarding the ground levels of the Abingdon Road properties which were lower than the field. An engineering solution would be required if planning consent were granted.

Drainage

Questions were asked regarding provision for surface water from the proposed new development. Sustainable urban drainage would be constructed and attenuation tanks would be used to take excess water. It would then go into the sewer at a controlled rate.

Planning consent and ground engineering

Planning dealt with the exterior of the building and impact on flooding. The layout of the site would not change when an engineering solution was created. It would probably mean a deeper foundation on the houses to stop land sliding. A resident responded that the houses would end

up like Great Western Park at Didcot, considerably higher than those surrounding the site. The planning consent should have conditions so that ground levels match existing. Piling would be dependent on ground conditions. Whilst archaeological digs had been done, the soil conditions on a large part of the site were not known.

Timeframe

Questions were asked as to the timeframe for development. A new hub and car park would take approximately 9 months, 6 months would be required to sort out the pitches and then there would be an 18-24 month build period.

Thanks

A statement was made that regardless of people's opinion as to the proposal to develop part of the Anson field and construct a new hall elsewhere, people had put in a lot of work, and thanks should be recorded to them.

The chairman closed this section of the meeting at 8.50 p.m. and moved to other agenda items.

4. Report from Cllr. Jane Hanna

Cllr. Hanna advised that the Liberal Democrat party had been in opposition since the last election at the District Council. They had opposed the cuts of small community grants. 2 hours free parking had been introduced. Questions were asked as to the new homes bonus and central government grants.

5. Cllr. Iain Brown

Cllr. Brown was unable to attend the meeting. It was noted that there had been budget cuts at the County Council.

6. Parish Council

Mr. David Walton, outlined the meeting schedule of the Council and summarised the activities of the Parish Council over the past 12 months. He referred to the support of the Parish Council in the community led plan and the community shop and the grants awarded by it. The Parish Council had also set aside £400 to fund a roadside barrier near the Baptist Church. This had now been installed. The no. 31 bus route had retained its County Council subsidy so would continue to run as at present. Measures for crossing over Packhorse Lane were being considered.

The following question was put by a resident and answered by Parish Councillor Ruth Mander.

Footpath extension opposite the Baptist Church to The Priory

A parishioner asked whether the path could be installed from The Priory entrance westwards. It was understood that the County Council required a path width of 1.5 m and therefore land in excess of this would be required for construction. Crossing the road at that point would be difficult owing to lack of vision. It was private land and the matter would not proceed.

7. Parish Council/Burial Committee/Parochial Charity Accounts

The Parish Council's and Burial Committee's budget had been presented to the parishioners attending. The clerk explained the content of the documents, and audited balances as at 31st March 2011 and unaudited balances as at 31st March, 2012. The Parochial Charity accounts were presented. Mrs. Christine Denton, clerk to the charities introduced these.

8. Any Other Business

It was suggested that a roving microphone be used in the future to help those who could not hear.

A question was asked regarding archaeological finds on the Anson field. Some roman tools had been found also a burial area. A request was made for boards on the heras fencing around the dig site. Taylor Wimpey would put an article in MAD News. If planning consent for development was granted then archaeologists would need to work on the land. An open day for the village was suggested.

Tree for Queen's Jubilee

A question was raised regarding planting a tree to commemorate the Queen's Jubilee. This was being planned.

The chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.15 p.m.

Refreshments were then provided for those wishing to stay.

Signed..... Date