

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 22nd May, 2013 at 7.30 p.m.

Present:

The chairman of the meeting David Walton, (chairman of Marcham Parish Council) and 5 members of the Parish Council

Guest Speaker: Andrew Haines, Chief Executive of the Civil Aviation Authority
19 members of the public

The chairman, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from parish councillors William Cumber, Matthew Hillis, and Ruth Mander. Apologies had also been received from Mr. Jim Asher.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd May, 2012

These minutes had been circulated and read by parishioners attending. Questions were asked as to where the tree to commemorate the Queen's jubilee was planted. This had been put into the Arboretum. A question was asked as whether an explanation of the purpose of the meeting, as referred to in the last minutes, could be given. The chairman explained the meeting was an opportunity for electors to raise issues relating to the parish and explained the difference from the annual meeting of the parish council.

The minutes were approved as a correct record of the meeting.

3. Presentation of the Parishioner of the Year Award

The chairman explained the history of the parishioner of the year award and the process of selecting the recipient. From those on the shortlist, Mrs. Janey Cumber had been the preferred recipient for 2012. Sadly Janey Cumber had passed away, but it had been agreed to continue with the nomination for her. The chairman read the citation from the certificate. Her husband was aware of the award, and he with other members of the family would be presented with the certificate in due course.

4. Guest Speaker : Mr. Andrew Haines, Chief Executive of the Civil Aviation Authority

Mr. Haines outlined the history of the CAA, a public corporation set up by Parliament in 1972. He provided statistics as to the number of UK registered aircraft, airlines, and licensed aerodromes. He outlined the role of the CAA which was to protect the public, looking after safety risks, and consumer protection. It did not involve itself in the national air traffic service, aircraft noise issues, military matters or investigating accidents. He referred to the airspace and its capacity within the area, and the segregation into different classes. Capacity would soon be reached at the London airports, and the Airports Commission was investigating how to increase capacity. One possible project was the London/Oxford airport which had been suggested some years ago, although this was extremely unlikely to come to fruition. Mr. Haines referred to ATOL (air travel operators' licensing) protection for holiday makers. Certificates were issued to customers to take away on holiday. This provided protection and would ensure return to the UK should a travel company collapse. He discussed the problems that had to be faced caused by the volcanic eruptions in Iceland. The aircraft industry was

looking at technical guidelines and was refining volcanic ash forecasting, and improving sources of data. Mr. Haines then answered questions.

5. New Councillors for Marcham

The District Councillor, Cllr. J. Hanna had resigned, and there had been County Council elections. The new councillors were Cllr. Mrs. Catherine Webber (Vale of White Horse District Council) and Cllr. Richard Webber (Oxfordshire County Council). Mr. Malcolm Denton read out a report submitted by Cllr. Richard Webber. This referred to the Division boundary changes and the formation of a new County Division of Sutton Courtenay, and Marcham. This included the parish of Drayton too. All 3 villages had much in common being of similar size and had similar issues regarding planning, infrastructure, traffic, and sustainability. They were all affected by the large market town of Abingdon and its problems and issues. The County Council was short of funding, and the social services and transport budgets had been trimmed, and officer numbers reduced too. Comments were made about the advantages of joint working with his wife as District Councillor as there was better understanding of the common problems and rapid communication between the two of them.

Mrs. Jane Fabes read a report from Cllr. Catherine Webber. She had been formally appointed as District Councillor earlier in the month, and had begun attending meetings. The most contentious issue over the previous 12 months had been planning matters, where Marcham, in common with other larger Vale villages had been at the mercy of speculative planning applications. The Local Plan would not be ready until late 2014. The local community led plan, whilst not having the same standing as a Neighbourhood Plan, would help guide those involved in the future of the village. As the District Councillor she saw her role as facilitating discussion and problem solving and helping to develop options for Marcham.

6. Parish Council

Mr. David Walton, summarised the activities of the Parish Council over the past 12 months. There had been several major planning applications, including the development of Kings Field and The Priory. The Parish Council had objected to those applications. There had been an application too from Taylor Wimpey to develop half of the Anson Field and to provide a community hub and sports pitches on a site to the north of Longfields and Hyde Copse. The District Council had resolved to approve this. He outlined the other functions of the Parish Council and referred to the efforts of the County Council in organising a replacement bus operator for the X15 route when RH transport ceased trading. He placed on record his thanks to Meriel Lewis for the work she did in producing the village newsletter, and to Iain Brown (County Councillor) and Jane Hanna (District Councillor) for their support of the parish, and to the Parish Councillors and clerk.

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 chairman answered questions. The Parochial Charity accounts were presented. Mrs. Christine Denton, clerk to the charities introduced these. Dividends were low, but funds had been given to the Primary School.

8. Marcham Primary School

Mrs. Viv Hutchinson, Headteacher of the school, gave a report on events in the school over the previous year. The children had visited a number of places for educational visits. Funding from local government was due to be cut back and activity centre provision was likely to be reduced. The children had written to the Deputy Director for Education at Oxfordshire County

Council regarding this and asking for reconsideration. It was her intention to visit the school and talk to the children about the plans to make the provision more cost effective. The children had been awarded a Duke of Marlborough Heritage Prize for their work done following a visit to Blenheim Palace. The children had enjoyed a range of additional activity, sporting competitions, games, and various clubs. Reference was made to the support of the governing body and PTA and a special mention was made of Jill Rowe and Joan Carter for their work with the school, and to the many members of the village community who volunteered their assistance.

9. GigaClear – Mr. Robin Band

Mr. Band outlined the changes taking place locally for villages to acquire superfast broadband. He explained the provision that his company could make. A BT service would use fibre optic cable to the cabinet and then use existing copper cable to the premises, whereas Gigaclear would use fibre optic straight to the premises. This linked into an existing wider network owned by Vodafone. The telephone service as well as fibre optics would be supplied by Gigaclear. The village of Appleton had implemented the services of this private company. A minimum number of houses would need to agree to the service in order for the company to lay the fibre optic cable. For Marcham it would be approximately 189 houses.

10. Any Other Business

Questions were raised on the following:

Zebra Crossing - Most of the work had been completed, but it was not operational owing to the electrical connections still being required.

Dog Faeces – This was a problem in the village. Attempts to educate residents to clear up after their dogs had failed, in that signs erected and been immediately destroyed. Comments were made that the dog waste bins were fairly old, not looking very nice and in need of replacement.

Didcot “A” Power Station – Since generator capacity at Didcot had been lost following the closure of the “A” station, questions were asked as to where capacity was going to come from.

The chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.10 p.m.

Refreshments were then provided for those wishing to stay.

Signed..... Date