

Minutes of the Combe Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 11th May 2011

Present:

Michael Green (Chairman), Elena Softley (Vice-Chairman), Celia Adamson, Paul Williams, Simon Oliver, Gillian Oldfield (District Councillor), Neil Owen (County Councillor), Julia Sharpe (Clerk), Wendy Foster - Head Teacher Combe School, Roger Pursell - Reading Room Trustee John Hunt - Village Hall and Recreation Ground Chairman and 11 members of the public

No.	Item	
01/11	Apologies	None
02/11	Minutes of 2010 AGM	Minutes from the 2010 meeting were circulated. No comments were raised.
03/11	CLA Traffic report	<p>Mr Wall and Mr St John from the CLA attended and reported that together with OCC, WODC, Highways, Enterprise, Mouchells and TVP planning for dealing with traffic attracted to the area for the Game Fair had begun back in 2010. He said that following the appalling traffic conditions in 2008 it was imperative that new strategies to cope with the volume of traffic were in place otherwise the Game Fair would not be able to return.</p> <p>Mr Wall reported the following: The plan has been prepared taking into account the recommendations made in the W.O.D.C report issued in 2009 as a result of 2008. Continued on-going discussions with all the relevant agencies to ensure up to the minute assessments.</p> <p>Two 2 additional car parks (A4095 Oxford Airport and Roundhill (A4095) at Long Hanborough) have been acquired.</p> <p>Oxford County Council Highways Department have agreed to remove the road narrowing hatching on 2 roundabouts west bound on A44 between Peartree Roundabout and Bladon to enable the road to remain 2 lanes and thus speed up the traffic.</p> <p>The provision of the Thames Valley Police motorcyclists and a patrol car along with personnel within the Event Control.</p> <p>The provision of a rail and ride scheme between Oxford Railway station and Blenheim with input from S.W. Trains and Stagecoach. Also between Long Hanborough Railway Station and the Event.</p> <p>Stagecoach will provide additional <u>local</u> buses (S8 route) to ensure <u>local</u> users are not inconvenienced by additional traffic using the roads.</p> <p>Stagecoach will provide internal busses between the Caravan Site (near Ditchley) to the show site and also a service to and from Woodstock to the Caravan site in the evening. Additionally coaches will convey those who park in the new Airport Car Park to eagle Lodge.</p> <p>Signed local diversion routes to enable vehicles to travel between Woodstock and Oxford and Bladon and Oxford avoiding severe delays.</p> <p>Successful negotiation means that The Game Fair will pay for free usage of Swinford Toll Bridge during the 3 days of the show.</p> <p>A helicopter with a video down link to our Event Control will allow real time observations of traffic flows. This will be complimented by the</p>

		<p>use of movable cameras fitted on the Variable Messaging Boards which provide pictures via Broadband to the Event Control. CLA will employ a number of experienced motorcycle spotters who can monitor traffic flows and incident impacting upon the road network.</p> <p>AA Signing will be in place earlier than in previous years with advanced signing to warn of traffic delays (stressing it is only the morning at the request of Woodstock Town Council) in place well in advance of the event.</p> <p>Permanently manned portable temporary traffic lights positioned strategically to ensure traffic flows are maintained as far as is possible. Additionally the local authorities will man permanent lights which will have impact upon our traffic flows.</p> <p>He finished by saying that the CLA were still having on going meetings and presentations to local Parish Councils, investigating the use of Facebook / Twitter as a means of passing out relevant up to the minute traffic plans, circulating 1.2 million leaflets with map showing traffic routes to the event and are making further investigation into the use of post code for sat nav systems</p> <p>Mr Wall confirmed that access to the Game Fair would be available from Ditchley Gate and that stewards would be in place to regulate pedestrians crossing the road in Bladon.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked both for coming to the meeting and for bringing the Game Fair to Blenheim.</p>
04/11	Combe School Report	<p>Combe CE Primary School continues to be a popular school in the local area, we currently have 110 children on roll and we have a number of families trying to get places for their child in the school.</p> <p>Our admission number for entry into each year group remains at 15, and recently the governing body of the school confirmed that this number must not be exceeded as classes greater than 30 seriously impact on the quality of learning, teaching and the relationships within the classes.</p> <p>This year we had over 62 families put Combe as their first choice of school, so competition for places is tight. Our admission policy is clear and states how places are allocated.</p> <p>We have managed to keep the existing team of teachers in place for two years, and it is unfortunate that we are losing one teacher at the end of the summer term. We are currently working hard to find a suitable replacement. We are interviewing on Friday 20th May. We have received about 46 applications for the post.</p> <p>Combe Primary School remains an outstanding school in the eyes of Ofsted, we have recently received our interim inspection report which concludes by saying as our standards remain high we will not be having a full Ofsted inspection this year.</p> <p>We have put together a new vision statement for the school; this takes the form of a visual vision statement. Stakeholders were invited to contribute thoughts and ideas. Staff, children, parents and governors have worked together to produce a set of values which underpin</p>

		<p>everything that goes on in the school. We aim to have this vision statement up in our hall as a permanent feature/reminder of our core aims and values.</p> <p>Successes this year: We school continues to perform highly in national tests, we were one of the top 100 schools last year, and as we are an Outstanding school, we have been invited by the Secretary of State for Education to consider academy status and opt out of local authority control.</p> <p>We have made preliminary enquiries and have nothing much to report here.</p> <p>We had a visit from David Bell earlier this year; he is the Permanent Secretary for the Department for Education. He seemed to enjoy his 'informal' visit to the school very much.</p> <p>Combe has won various sports competitions which are run and organised by the Woodstock Partnership of schools. We take part in a whole host of activities and events and the children really enjoy the experiences. This year Combe won three prizes at the Duke of Marlborough's Annual Heritage Awards and some children and staff were invited to attend Prize Giving and tea at Blenheim Palace.</p> <p>We are very keen to keep developing our outdoor environment and planting trees was a really important thing to do. We have a lot on on-going maintenance work at the moment, with the field being re-seeded and the drainage difficulties being sorted out. Once all the work is completed we will be moving the wooden gazebo further away from our boundary.</p> <p>As are school field is out of action for the rest of the summer, we would like to ask if we could use the village green as an additional play area once again on the odd occasion.</p> <p>I would like to end by saying that it is the wish of everyone in the school to continue to build and establish really positive ties and links with all aspects of village life and we aim to support whatever event or initiative we can. The wider and local community is welcome in school and we look forward to working in partnership now and in the future.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked Mrs Foster for attending the meeting, congratulated her on the success of the school and agreed to the use of the village green for play and sports activities.</p> <p>Q. Update on the drainage problem.</p> <p>R. Work had now begun to rectify the problem and an additional broken pipe under the allotment area had been discovered.</p> <p>Clerk to write for an update on the situation</p>
05/11	Chairman's Report	<p>The Chairman began by thanking the Clerk and other Councillors for their support. He also thanked the two retiring members - John Hunt who remains a member of the VH&RG committee and Gillian Oldfield who remains a District Councillor for all of their hard work and support over the past years.</p> <p>Areas incurring parish Council involvement over the past year have included the Adventure Play Park. This has until now been a project lead</p>

		<p>by John Hunt and together with Paul Williams both have devoted a lot of time of effort on the project which remains ongoing.</p> <p>The Rural Exception housing development has now begun after many years. The Parish Council has always supported the idea and is now keeping a close watch on who is considered and is keen to ensure that only people connected with Combe are allocated properties.</p> <p>With this in mind there will be a Public Meeting before the next Parish Council meeting on 8th June to clearly explain the eligibility criteria and allocation process.</p> <p>The parish Council continue to support the work of the VH&RG Committee and this year donated £5,000 of the Parish savings to the development of the new storage facility at the village hall.</p> <p>The precept was kept at last year's figure and the Parish Council has managed to keep within that figure.</p> <p>The Parish Council is working with the showmen that attend Combe Feast to ensure that there is not a repeat of last year's problems. It has been agreed that the date of the feast should revert to the first Sunday after the 10th August in line with the true feast of the Church.</p> <p>The members of the firework committee again worked hard and produced an excellent show for the village for which I thank them.</p> <p>Other issues that have been addressed over the past year have been the planting of a new tree on the little green to eventually replace the overgrown Christmas tree and I thank Paul Williams for all of his hard work on this matter. The police have been asked to carry out speed checks at various locations and times and we await their report. The flooding in Horns Lane is now finally being addressed after many meetings and delays. There is now a working Emergency Plan should the need arise. Work to replace the village noticeboards is in hand. The reporting of pot holes and their subsequent repair remains on-going. It is the intention to purchase 2 tonnes of salt to assist with road gritting should the need arise in the winter. The general upkeep, maintenance and safety checks of the children's play area remain an on-going commitment. The Parish Council continues to consider the many planning applications and report comments and concerns to the Planning Committee at WODC.</p> <p>The Parish Council web-site holds copies of all approved minutes.</p>
06/11	County Councillor's Report	<p>The past year has been a difficult one for the County Council. All our services are under threat of financial cuts because, basically, there is no money in the kitty! Libraries are a prominent victim of threatened cuts.</p> <p>The severe winter weather was a major challenge to OCC Highways. Whilst their performance was better than their previous response to severe weather, there is room for improvement. Salt supplies this time were adequate and more local farmers signed up for the snow-clearance scheme. But the gravest consequence of the severe winter is the devastation of our road surfaces. An extra £1.1 million was pumped into Highways during the last week or so, specifically to speed up</p>

		<p>pothole repairs. We shall wait and see! The performance of Atkins, the OCC Contractor to Highways, concerns me. I believe the management structure between them and OCC is too biased in their favour. In short, they appear to be unaccountable to us. During the next year I shall attempt to make them more accessible to my representations on your behalf.</p> <p>On a personal note, I am proud to represent Combe as your Country Councillor. I attend as many Parish Council meetings as I can - I have about 12 on my patch.</p> <p>I serve on WODC Planning, Economic and Environment Scrutiny Committee and Development Control.</p> <p>At County I am on the Children's Scrutiny Committee, the Adoption Panel, the Planning Committee, the Joint Health and the Joint Schools Committees.</p> <p>I am Chairman of the Democracy and Organisation Committee, the Appeals Panel and the Pensions and Redundancy Panel.</p> <p>In conclusion may I thank the Parish Council and residents of Combe for putting up with me!</p>
07/11	District Councillor's Report	<p>During the year public participation was introduced at Planning meetings. At the end of the trial period, the scheme was reviewed and it was confirmed that it should continue.</p> <p>Review of the Local Development Framework, to cover the years from 2011 to 2027/28, has continued during the year, with the latest public consultation period just ending.</p> <p>The new waste and re-cycling collection service started in November. While the new days and bins were confusing at first, hopefully the rounds have now settled down and people are being able to take advantage of the increased re-cycling and green waste facilities.</p>
08/11	Combe Reading Room Chairman's Report	<p>2010 was another successful and stimulating year for the Reading Room. Our most significant undertaking was the complete overhaul of the kitchen at a cost of some £4,200 and which was completed this time last year. Here our grateful thanks are extended to our own Parish Council for granting us £1200 and to WODC for £945. The benefits have become apparent in the form of enhanced fund raising; principally for summer cream teas where seven village organisations shared over £2000 and in significantly improved profits at our regular coffee morning. We also replaced the guttering on the garden side of the long room. Here we are indebted once again to the hard work and support of Bob Days who not only did an excellent job but also did it at cost.</p> <p>2011 is again a busy time. We have replaced the lavatory windows with double glazed units not only improving the appearance but also giving them longevity and robustness. This work was kindly carried out at cost by Paul Colbourne of Elite Windows here in Combe. You will notice that the exterior painting is in the process of completion with the higher levels now being attended to. This has not been done for many years and as such is quite an undertaking, but should greatly improve</p>

		<p>the external appearance. We are also in the process of repairing the rear Long Room roof. This has deteriorated over the years creating water damage to the ceiling and needs to be addressed before contemplating any refurbishment of the building. We propose to consult our main users prior to undertaking any significant improvements or changes to the Long Room. We are also looking to repair the iron railings at the front and side of the building. Over the coming months we will be funding a replacement for the WI notice board.</p> <p>Thanks largely to the hard work of my fellow Trustees and the support of the Parish Council and WODC our surplus of income over expenditure in 2010 was some £800 giving rise to a yearend balance at the bank of £2,800. Our principal sources of regular income are Coffee Mornings £2,200. Room Hire £1600 and The 100 Club £700. The financial outlook for 2011 looks reasonably positive and even allowing for our maintenance and repair programme we could have £3500 in the bank at the end of the year.</p> <p>The support we get from the village is magnificent and much appreciated. Our coffee mornings continue to be very well attended and most productive. The curry supper held in February was a great success both financially and socially. In addition we are running a village garage sale in June and co-ordinating the summer cream teas.</p> <p>I can't end without heartfelt thanks firstly to your Trustees whose commitment and dedication are the foundation of our recent successes and secondly to Sue and Gary Golder whose hard work in managing the day to day running of the Reading Room not only enhances its fundraising potential but also make our lives as trustees significantly easier.</p>
09/11	Combe Charities Report	<p>Combe Charities was started in the 17th century by the Church and other local dignitaries, originally consisting of four small Charities, now only two.</p> <p>As of 7th April The Community Account stood at £2,210.01 and the smaller Business Premium Account, as of 7th March, 2011 was £285.70 making a total of £2,495.71.</p> <p>Monies paid out in 2010 -11 totalled £420. 00 and monies paid in, in 2010, were £40.</p> <p>Requests are confidential and are usually up to £200 in amount.</p> <p>The requests reflect the current increase in expense such as funeral and memorial headstone costs and of disability aids which can be very expensive if specifically made for someone. These expenses can be daunting to many but particularly to a retired person on a pension.</p> <p>In view of our conviction and wish that this village fund must continue we are planning to have a Cream Tea on Saturday 18th June at the Reading Room to help raise awareness and funds for this village Charity.</p>
10/11	Police Report	None

11/11	VH&RG Report	<p>Another busy year at the village hall and recreation ground. The new storage facility has been completed and was officially opened on 16th April. A big thank-you goes to our treasurer, Gail Slatter whose form filling and e-mails to various organisations obtained large amounts of money towards the build costs. As did the generous £5,000 given by the Parish Council which was gratefully received.</p> <p>The playing field has been top-dressed at a cost of nearly £1,000 and again many thanks to the Parish Council for a donation of £500 to help pay these costs.</p> <p>We have seen departures and arrivals of committee members. Thanks go to Tony Hyder our retiring Chairman, his wife Margaret and Anne Taylor who have been hardworking members of our committee for many years.</p> <p>The new arrivals are Chris and Michelle Eely, Simon Oliver and Cathy Owen who, with the help of the rest of the committee help keep the wheels turning.</p> <p>Thanks go to Don Slatter for his continued grass-cutting, village hall maintenance etc., etc. he is no longer on the committee but is still always willing to help.</p> <p>Men's and Junior sports still take an active role throughout the year as does Michelle Eely's keep fit and Pilate's classes.</p> <p>Now that the building work has finished our attention will return to fund-raising for continued improvement of this great village asset.</p> <p>Q. What plans for a new and larger building? R. Plans for a complete re-development have been shelved for the time-being and improvements to the existing building made instead.</p> <p>Q. What plans for improving the drainage of the field? R. This was looked into and a cost of £12,000 had been identified. The committee would be looking into the matter again.</p>
12/11	Any Other Business	None

The meeting ended at 9.15pm.