

**HORNTON PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD IN THE PAVILION ON**  
**MONDAY 11 APRIL 2016 AT 7.30pm**

**Present:** Chairman Offord and Cllrs Burden, Griffiths, Hewlett and Wain

**Also in attendance:** Clerk & RFO Katherine Mills

**Members of the public:** Mrs Burden, Mrs Furneaux, Mr Miles, Mrs Wain and Mr Woodcock

**1. Apologies**

County Councillor George Reynolds, District Cllr Douglas Webb and Cllr David Jarratt gave their apologies and these were accepted.

**2. Minutes of previous Annual Parish Meeting held on 18 May 2015**

The minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

**3. Matters arising from the minutes of the 18 May 2015**

There were no matters arising

**4. Chairman's report**

The report was presented by Chair John Offord.

The Chair spoke about the work of the Parish Council, one area of which was an involvement in Planning issues; there had been a contentious application last year which had required the time and attention of the Parish Council and which had been satisfactorily resolved. The Parish Council had also been involved in the development of the village website and the installation of fast broadband which most residents now had access to. The ongoing issues of parking, speeding and dog mess required continual discussion but were difficult to manage effectively. The Parish Council gave financial support to the maintenance of the church grave yard and the printing of the Gossip. The Chair reflected on the positive community attitude in the village; many organisations were run on a voluntary basis and various events took place throughout the year which the Parish Council endeavoured to support whenever possible. The Chair summarised by thanking the parish councillors for their support and hard work and announced that sadly Cllr Griffiths had decided to hand in her resignation as Cllr. The Chair thanked Cllr Griffiths for all of her time and efforts on the parish council over the last few years. The Parish Council now had two vacancies and would now be looking for replacements.

**5. District Councillors Report**

Cllr Douglas Webb's report was presented by the Chair

Cherwell District Council has a balanced budget with no increase in council tax. Priorities and focus remained on Value for Money and the Cleaner / Brighter future for the district. The Cherwell Local Plan is out and Cherwell had the required housing numbers at present. However, the district will get a share of Oxfords housing. In Banbury there is a regeneration of affordable housing the remaining housing would still need to be built which will affect both Banbury and the surrounding areas. A copy of the Banbury master plan has been sent to the Parish Council for comment. An Affordable Housing review had also been circulated.

## 6. County Councillor's report

County Councillor George Reynolds report was presented by the Chair.

It has been a quiet year as a backbencher as the main concerns this year have been with the budget and devolution which has now morphed in a debate on unitary councils. Both the budget and devolution were dealt with by the Cabinet with very little input or knowledge from the backbenchers.

As you all know now the budget proved very difficult for the County as the Government squeeze on spending gets tighter. This has meant less money for highways, children's centres and buses. The amended budget that was passed may mean there is a little extra money available but it will only be for this year and I suspect very little will filter down. This has led to OCC trying to get parishes to take over their responsibilities in the highway area, Save money for OCC but make the parishes pay (Council taxes payers pay whichever). With the exception of mowing inside 30mph signs there has been very little uptake by parishes due to cost and responsibility problems. Likewise the idea of parishes paying to keep the buses running has also struggled to make headway again due to cost but also the almost total lack of information from OCC.

Devolution was a fancy name for the Government allowing areas of the Country to have more say in how local monies were spent with promises of extra cash. Despite a lot of work being done on this project, including amalgamation Social Care and some Health care, it floundered on the government's insistence on having an elected mayor for the whole of Oxfordshire. Nobody liked this idea. An alternative was to have unitary authorities (one council dealing with all functions). This has led to a difference of opinions between the districts & the county (clearly one or the other would have to go). This will roll on until autumn when there will be a consultation for residents within the County. It is no secret that my preference is for a local unitary where local parish councils & residents have easy access to local officers rather than having to deal with Oxford this is based on my firm belief in local democracy.

Once again highway repairs have been squeezed although we continue to hear of extra government money for potholes. I can only repeat that all of us need to constantly & continually complain either through the service centre or on the internet 'Fix-my-street@ app.

## 7. Finance report

As RFO to the Parish Council I have continued to work with the Treasurer of the Pavilion, Justina Marot, the Treasurer of JUMPA, Simon Woolfe and the Treasurer of the Playground, David Miles, throughout the year. All are in the process of preparing their accounts for the annual return which I am aiming to submit for approval at the AGM on the 16<sup>th</sup> May. Thank you to the subcommittee Treasurers for their work again this year, all of which is on a voluntary basis. The internal audit will again be carried out by Arrow Accounting.

Following a new government transparency code parish councils are now required to publish their annual return document, their asset register along with any expenditures over £100 on the parish council website. An audit of assets is currently being carried out and once completed the relevant documents will be added to the website.

The Parish Council has agreed to continue financing the full cost of the insurance policy as well as the audit costs in the 2016-17 financial year; no costs will be passed on to the sub committees. The current insurance policy with Came and Company comes to an end in October and I will be requesting quotes from several companies for the parish council to consider. The contract with SSE for electricity also comes to an end in October and similarly I will be sourcing competitive quotes to present to the parish council.

The Parish Council did not change the precept of £9,000 for the financial year 2016-17. This was in the face of likely future Oxfordshire County Council budget cuts. Parish Councils were likely to see the complete withdrawal of some services provided by County Council such as grass cutting, drainage, grit maintenance, cutting back hedges and vegetation on pavements, maintenance of public rights of way, salt bin management and public highway inspections. Capping of the Parish Council Precept by the Government was also likely as was the end of payments of New Homes Bonus from Cherwell District Council.

## **8. Roads and Highways report**

The report was presented by Cllr Tim Hewlett.

The Highways report for the APM 2016 covers Highway Maintenance, bus service, EE proposals, WPD proposals and future planning in given reduced financial support from OCC and CDC.

Generally, OCC's response to highways issues has been good with the majority of potholes and broken verges dealt with in a reasonable timescale. If the service was based on prevention rather than cure, then a more efficient service could be provided. The village centre and village green area has been particularly bad although most of the damaged surface has now been repaired.

In response to reduced Government funding HPC has been notified that the subsidized bus service will be terminated in July. There is the option of a replacement dial a ride service which has served Hornton in the past. This will cost £5 for a return trip to Banbury but may not be available on Thursdays. Appropriate Registration Forms for this service have been passed to Cllr Glenis Griffiths to distribute amongst the regular users.

EE, the mobile phone company had offered HPC the chance to improve mobile phone coverage and internet access with the installation of a micro network. The project required up to 4 aerials fitted to non-listed houses. The village response to the concept was luke warm and the project was not pursued.

Western Power Distribution have also approached HPC to remove as much overhead cabling as possible and replace with 2 ground level sub stations and underground cabling. This is partially in response to individual enquiries from residents but mainly driven by WPD to upgrade their ageing equipment. WPD have outsourced the work to a specialist company, Freedom, and their representative is currently engaged with the HPC on the sighting of the 2 sub stations.

Future work. Following the anticipated cuts from OCC and CDC, there is an initiative by local Parish Councils in looking at the best way to maintain the village addressing issues such as grass cutting, minor footways clearance, fly poster removal, public rights of way clearance, verge maintenance, serving hedge cutting notices, weed spraying, drain rodding and road sign cleaning. HPC will be represented at a meeting to take this forward on April 20th in Balscote.

## **9. Allotments report**

Cllr Paul Burden presented his report.

Councillors, ladies and gentlemen,

After a cold March, tenants are now busy preparing the ground for the coming season, with a few making early sowings. We have a few new tenants over the past two years, they are joining in enthusiastically and are keen to ask questions and take advice.

Rents have all been collected in, and at present the allotments number 7 full plots, and 5 half plots, with nearly all looking well used.

I would like to thank Martin Hemmings for mowing the grass on a regular basis, and remind tenants to keep the main pathway free of stones.

If any villager would like a good piece of fertile land, there are two plots remaining, but they will need some hard work to get them ready for sowing.

Allotments are available for rent at £10 per year, and I can be contacted on 670664 I would like to end my report by wishing every gardener a successful season.

#### **10. Playground report**

Treasurer David Miles presented a report.

The Playground Committee consists of Don Wain (Chair), Paul Burden (Vice Chair), David Miles (Secretary and Treasurer), David Jarrett, Ben Tyrell and Kevin Wain. We also have Ian Donaldson who does not want to be on the committee but helps us with the mowing. The committee has been fairly active again this past 12 months. We have had the dilapidated rocking rocket replaced with a new rocking horse and this seems to be very well used. We have also installed some new signage welcoming people to the playground and displaying general safety information about the playground. In addition to this we have been regularly mowing, strimming and generally keeping the playground tidy.

We have had a very successful coffee morning in the playground last August and we raised "220 for Helen and Douglas House Hospice. It is intended to hold a coffee morning this August with proceeds going to the hospice. We have received a kind donation from Adrian Horsley to put towards a project in memory of his late mother Joan Horsley and we have decided to use this money to renovate the seats in the playground.

With the sale of West End House (Lady Tweedmuir's former residence) we have lost the use of her garage as a lawn mower store so we have decided to erect a small mower store at the west end of the playground. We also intend to do some routine maintenance in the playground this year such as painting some of the equipment and levelling some areas of uneven ground. We have been carrying out weekly inspections and ROSPA carried out our annual inspection in September. There were no major issues and our Risk Assessment was medium risk.

#### **11. Pavilion report**

Cllr Kevin Wain presented the report from Pavilion Chairman Glen Walther

The pavilion is being prepared for another major overhaul, this time we are looking to improve the entrance/lobby area, toilets and expand the changing rooms. The current changing rooms aren't adequate for the number of players each team has available for today's football teams.

We already have planning permission for the changing room expansion but this left us no options on improving the lobby/entrance area and the main objective improve the facilities. As such it was felt we should take this opportunity to make additional plans to enhance the end of the pavilion.

Graham Campbell has created some basic plans for us to get quotes for the work involved, and this process is underway at the moment. It's also obvious we will need additional funds so we are both fund raising and seeking grants from various sources. Anne Joyner has been busy writing to various people and organisations for donations and we have already received £5000 from both Hubert Keller and Robert Waley-Cohen.

Anne Joyner & Jo Langton are instrumental in completing the necessary forms for the grants and we all hope these will result in successful applications.

There are also several fund raising events taking place in the coming months including a theme night in April, Mayday activities, combined summer 70's disco with JUMPA and Anne Joyner has already written a script for a panto in February. There are also several other ideas in the planning stages.

The regular pavilion bookings include keep-fit, palates, brownies, gardening club and it would be nice to get additional bookings so please advertise the pavilion to friends for parties, christenings, weddings and any other gatherings you can think of. We have a great asset here and it will be even better once the improvements have been completed.

We are also looking for a treasurer as Justine Marriott is stepping down, we thank Justine for keeping our finances in order and she has agreed to stay on for a short time while we find a replacement. She will also help the new person take over the reins and get them up and running.

## **12. JUMPA report**

Steve Woodcock presented a report.

Jumpa continues to thrive, the new surface giving it a renewed lease of life and the net wire has also been replaced. So hopefully ready for some sunny weather!

Around the court the volunteers continue to manage the grass and shrubs, the latter being now very well matured, and we have the addition of a small plantation of Christmas trees at one end of the plot. Mowing is now a lot easier with the purchase of a bespoke mower and secure storage is in hand, which should be finished this month.

Fund raising continues to be healthy with the Golden Mile, contributions from the bowling on May Day, croquet and last year's barn dance. Many thanks to all involved in those events.

Future events include a 1970s/80s themed disco "Boogie Night" on Sat 18 June.

(Whilst the finances are healthy we need to build-up reserves for the inevitable eventual resurfacing, which is a five figure cost.)

As with so many village activities, Jumpa relies on a small team whose hard work in mowing, book keeping, maintenance, fund raising, inspections and even concrete base laying is gratefully acknowledged.

We welcome new ideas for getting the most from what is a significant asset to the village. If you want to get involved then please contact Jumpa secretary - Ian Donaldson - or any of the other committee members, including myself.

## **13. Hornton WI**

Mrs Wain presented a report.

Hornton & District WI meet on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month in the Methodist chapel. We currently have 22 members, not only from Hornton but also Horley, Balscote, Avon Dassett and Banbury.

This past year we have seen a diversity of speakers ranging from Tai Chi, local history, leprosy work in Nepal and a very scary meeting with live tarantulas, as well as several outside meetings.

Last year saw our 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the WI and one lucky member of our WI attended a special Garden Party at Buckingham Palace, hosted by HRH The Duchess of Cornwall and the Countess of Wessex. There were also more localised celebrations which we joined with other Oxfordshire WIs.

We welcome new members and visitors to join us to enjoy socialising and hopefully learning something new each month!

#### **14. Hornton History Group**

Laurie Furneaux presented the report.

The History Group meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month at the Dun Cow pub and there is a regular group of 11 to 12 people. Last year, following the May Day celebrations, the group went on a tour of Radway to coincide with the opening of the new exhibition in the church. They also went on an interesting guided tour of unseen places in Warwick in July.

The History Group has an ongoing project of a survey of the graveyard; grave yard stones are being plotted and fading inscriptions on stones are being noted for prosperity.

The group needs new display material. Dauphin Display had loaned equipment at a previous event and the group were now able to purchase 2 upright display units from the company at a good rate. Additional display panels were also needed and funding was being sought from the Banbury Trust. Chris Woodcock had sent off an application for a grant of between £3,000 and £4,000. The equipment would support major projects and the group aimed to put on another History Weekend next year.

A tour of Proffitts House had taken place with local amateur historian Paul Clark and the group had gained a real insight in to the medieval building. There was ongoing research for the 2017 Hornton Domesday project which had the theme of Trades and Professions across the centuries. A resident survey from 2008 was also being updated and would give an insight in to current resident occupations, places of work and interests.

Future planned events were a visit to Rousham House and Gardens, a trip to Bristol and a film night in May focusing on all aspects of quarrying life in Hornton. There would be interactive displays, talks and refreshments. The History Group would also be at the May Day celebrations with new costumes and vegetables for the fruit machine.

#### **15. Hornton Primary School report**

The report was presented by Cllr Kevin Wain.

The school is now an academy school and is part of the Warriner Multi-Academy trust; this includes The Warriner School, Bishop Carpenter CE Primary School, Hornton primary School and Sibford Gower Endowment Primary School.

It also has a new Head Teacher in Matthew Green and new chair of Governors Jenny Perry. Peachtree Playgroup is now under the school governance and is being integrated into the school management, its first objective being to increase the number of children attending Peachtree.

The school is progressing very well and is looking forward to an exciting future under Matt's leadership and within the Warriner Trust.

Parking is still a challenge but the school reminds the parents on a regular basis about sensible parking, the staff can now park in the pub car park which will release road parking space for parents.

The chapel car park is also used by parents, which helps the situation.

**16. Village website redesign**

Cllr Kevin Wain presented the report.

The Hornton website has undergone a re-build by James Prentice, James also updates the website with all the village news and information.

We owe James a debt of thanks for all the work he puts in and the excellent job he's made of the re-build. We are still in the process of improving the site with an online payment system to help with ticket sales and fund raising events. We are also considering a charity page with online payments; we feel the village could nominate a charity to be the preferred charity for a period of time. We would encourage fund raisers to donate part of the money raised at an event to give to the charity. The village raises a lot of money and we feel it would be good to share a small % with a worthy cause.

We welcome any comments for improvement from villagers and have ideas to perhaps add a kid's page and combine with the village flag for birthdays with a photo on the website.

**17. Hornton Methodist church**

The report was presented by Mrs.Burden.

We continue to enjoy many different styles of worship and work well with the parish church, often joining together for celebration services and occasions such as Cafe church - which is an informal gathering, catering for young families and include a short act of worship, refreshments and craft activities.

We hold a Monday lunch on the first Monday of every month, and a coffee morning every Friday.

On the last Friday of every month we hold a special coffee morning for K H H, in the first three months of this year we have raised well over £300.00 our next one will be on April 29<sup>th</sup>.

Six ladies did a sponsored knit for Sports Relief and raised over £330.00.

We feel that it is important to support the needs of others as well the maintenance and running of our own building.

The school use the chapel for three week days and it is used by the WI, Yoga and Knit and Natter on a regular basis .

Our aim is to show the Christian way of life by showing care in our community.

**18. Hornton Keep Fit**

The report was presented by Mrs.Burden.

The keep fit group still meet every Wednesday from 7 to 8 pm. Our numbers remain fairly constant, eight to ten.

We exercise for an hour to music, our instructor is well trained and the programme we follow is varied and for all capabilities, we would welcome any new members.

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The Chairman John Offord thanked all for their attendance and the meeting ended at 8.30pm.

Signed:.....