

OLVESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held at Olveston Parish Hall, Tockington, on Thursday 29th April 2010 at 7.30 p.m.

Present	Mrs J Lyons (Chairman)	Mr A Clarke	Mr A Cogram
	Ms V Hudspeth	Mr J Hughes	Mrs I Reid
	Mr J Spratt	Mrs J Webb	
	Mr M Riddle (District Councillor)		12 Parishioners

Apologies for absence Mr A Heming.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, and thanked them for attending. She also thanked Mr Cogram, who had brought his computer to show the agenda and accounts on the new big screen at the Hall, with some views of the Parish.

Police report

PC Roger Hopes did not attend, but we have monthly reports in the Meeting Point now, as well as monthly surgeries at Olveston Stores.

Minutes of the last Annual Parish Assembly

The minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on Thursday 30th April 2009 were circulated, and Mrs Webb proposed that they should be signed by the Chairman as a correct record, seconded by Mrs Harper, all in favour.

Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising, but a parishioner expressed appreciation for the excellent work done by South Gloucestershire Council in the re-tarmacing of Lower Tockington Road. Mr Riddle was thanked for having this work carried out.

Chairman's report

The Chairman welcomed everyone, and advised that all the Councillors were wearing their new identity badges. We have a full complement of 9 Councilors and Mr. Riddle, District Councillor, attended 8 meetings. All the Councilors remained on the same committees as last year, with the same Chairmen. Once again, the Council has not raised the precept, and has money in reserve. Some of this will be used for the Tockington play area. The clerk's salary is in line with ALCA recommendations.

During the year, 5 parishioners attended our meetings, to discuss the proposed development on the Mill site, and the proposed refurbishment of the Parish Hall at Tockington for the pre-school (who received confirmation of a grant of £350,000. We also had two speakers – Reehana Sayeed with some of the young people of the area to discuss a youth project, and the Chairman of the Standards Committee to discuss their role in promoting good conduct and minimize complaints against Councillors. We also had two visitors to observe our meetings.

I would like to thank all the local clubs who have leases with the Parish Council for their continued success.

Last year things went well: the Parish Council is becoming Holding Trustee for the Parish Hall at Tockington and is pleased to be involved with the new development of the Hall; three new notice boards have been erected in the villages and a donation given for the new notice board at the Parish Hall in Tockington. The Council was very impressed with the IT suite at Olveston School and awarded a perpetual shield and 2 medals and gift vouchers for excellence in IT work. The youth of the Parish benefited from a summer course in Vicarage Lane and a week away, plus the use of facilities in Turnberries; the Council hopes this initiative will continue. The Council is also considering new play equipment in the Tockington play area, which will entail seeking out grants. We also hope to renew safety surfaces under the play equipment.

Parking at Olveston School and in general throughout the villages still poses a problem and the Council had a recent meeting with South Gloucestershire Council to discuss this. We also get complaints about dog fouling, and would ask dog owners to show more consideration and clear up after their pets.

The Recreation and Leisure Committee of four have monitored the play areas weekly throughout the year, maintenance work has been carried out as required and new signage installed, grass cutting has been monitored and leases for the Scouts and the Tennis Club renewed. Remedial work has been done between the Football Club and the Scouts land. Some dangerous trees at Old Down have been removed. The committee continues to work with the Police to ensure that the play areas are safe and not abused.

The planning committee of four has dealt with 47 planning applications, about 1/3 less than last year, and has attended site meetings, including the Scouts at Woodhouse Down, and the appeal for Windmill House car park. The committee has no further information regarding a suitable site for affordable housing.

Footpaths and the Environment: for most of the year the footpaths have been very wet and overgrown. Repairs have been carried out on stiles and kissing gates have been installed. The chestnut trees on the Aust Road were pollarded as they were becoming unsafe, and new lime trees have been planted. The footpath by the Parish Hall has been cut back, and I would remind dog walkers that dogs should be kept on leads whilst walking through fields with cattle or horses. Thanks are due to footpaths warden Peter Cabban, and to Rod Williams and parishioners who carried out two very successful "litter pickers" events, and those who co-ordinated the Village of the Year entries, as well as those who look after the bus shelters and planters and the Recreation and Leisure committee members who planted spring bulbs around the Parish. I also hope that more parishioners will use our footpaths and enjoy our beautiful countryside and remember to take their litter home.

On behalf of the Councillors, I would also like to thank Matthew Riddle, our District Councillor and the Police for all their help over the year, and Dave Webb who keeps our property well maintained and repaired. I would also like to thank the clerk for all her hard work and my fellow Councillors who give generously of their time ensuring the Parish Council runs smoothly.

Financial report

The proposed accounts for the year ended 31st March 2010 were shown on the screen and available as paper copies and the clerk/responsible financial officer advised that the audited accounts for last year and the accounts book were available for inspection. There were no queries on the accounts. 2/3

Any other business

A parishioner asked Mr Riddle about the car park at Windmill House, which has been refused on appeal, as there are fears that it will cause parking on the road outside the home. The Parish Council and Mr Riddle supported the application. Mr Riddle advised that they can park between the trees nearer the entrance. The owners also have to remove the laurel hedge which was planted without permission, but can then replant it, as planning permission is no longer required!! This is being discussed by South Gloucestershire Council. The owners also hope to apply for further building to allow for more residents – the present number is not held to be a viable business any more. Windmill House is very important, as it is the only residential home in the area. Mr Garrett mentioned that he has an old photo showing the actual windmill that was originally built on the site.

A parishioner thanked the Recreation and Leisure Committee for their work, especially for keeping the bank at Tockington cut so well throughout the year. He also asked about the Tennis Club wall. This is in a very bad state, but the clerk advised that the Club had promised to repaint it when they carried out the general spring maintenance.

Parking is also a problem throughout the villages, especially around the garage and shops and The Street in Olveston, and around Pool Corner in Tockington. It is also a problem by the school at 9 a.m. and 3.30 p.m. The Council has been trying to sort out the problems and has had many discussions with the Police trying to find a solution, but they have not come back with any suggestions. The Police have issued the Council with leaflets which can be placed under windscreen wipers advising that a car is causing a problem. One problem is that parking comes under South Gloucestershire Council jurisdiction now, and the traffic wardens very rarely come out this way. At least the parked cars do act as a traffic calming measure!! It is also a sign of a busy, positive area. The Parish Council will put the problem to the Safer, Stronger South Gloucestershire group for their comments and will arrange a meeting with highways. Parishioners had suggested a car park along the Aust Road verge, but this would have cost over £70,000 and there were concerns regarding gypsies using the area.

A parishioner remarked that he was not pleased with the work done to the chestnut trees along the Aust Road. He also asked if the White Hart had permission to paint the rendering along the side of the building – previously it was grey render. Mr Riddle will check.

The footpath from Haw Lane, Olveston to Tockington was discussed. It was previously a Church path, and was gravelled, but the landowner does not want a gravelled path. There are problems in two areas and the Parish Council will arrange a meeting to discuss these.

There were no further questions. Mrs Reid thanked the Chairman for all her hard work, and the assembly showed their appreciation in the usual way. The Chairman introduced the speaker, Mr Guy Astley-Jones, from South Gloucestershire Council, who gave an interesting talk on “Emergency Preparedness and Planning” and what we can do to be prepared. South Gloucestershire Council emergency planning unit has plans for all emergencies, including such possibilities as flooding, snow, motorway gridlock, and the risks and hazards of the power station and the industrial sites at Avonmouth, transport, airfields and the two Severn bridges and tunnels. The unit liaises with Police and other emergency services and carries out exercises to ensure their plans will work. People can also help themselves by planning for emergencies keeping a supply of tinned food, candles and water, knowing where services in the house such as electricity switches, gas supplies etc. are, and taking water and snacks on car journeys in case of hold-ups. These are simple things, and not difficult or costly. Mr Clarke thanked Mr Astley-Jones for his interesting talk, and he was duly applauded.

The meeting was closed and refreshments were served.