

The Parish Council of St. Helen Without
Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at 7.00 p.m. on Monday 13th May 2019
At Dry Sandford Primary School.

Present: Cllrs. C. Parkin, (Chair), M Page, P. Painting, Cllr. V. Talbot, R. Bahu, D. Churchouse

In attendance: Mr David O'Hara, Anna Clarke (Clerk).

1. Apologies for absence

None

2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 14th May 2018

The minutes were agreed and signed by the Chair.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

None

4. Report from Cllr Caroline Parkin, Chair St Helen Without Parish Council

It would be the understatement of the year to say that the Parish Council had been a little busy in the last 12 months. I will come to all that they have done shortly, however, firstly I would like to record our thanks to David O'Hara who has joined us as our Army Liaison. This is not an easy job, as he is required to bridge the gap between Parish and Military. Thus far he has succeeded, and we are most grateful.

The Planning Sub Committee have considered 42 Planning applications and made many site visits in order to make sure that their decisions have been in accordance with the Planning rules and at all times looked at from both parties. Thanks are due to them for all their time and effort in what has been a very busy year in Planning. Large scale developments have taken up much of their time in meetings and visits, all in order that the Parish residents can be sure that only the very best and of real need development takes place. It would seem that our residents are keen to extend their houses and as many applications require site visits, this subcommittee are kept very busy.

The Highways and Amenities Sub Committee have also been hard at work this year. After they received letters from the residents in Honeybottom Lane with regard to speed, they contacted OCC and arranged site visits and with the help from our County Councillor, brand new village gates have now been installed along with large 40mph speed limit signs and 'dragon teeth' markings on the road surface of the Eastbound carriageway. It is to be hoped that this will help with the speeding issues. They have also met with Highways in Barrow Road and are in the process of discussing ways that speeding in this road can be effectively dealt with. The Speed Awareness signs are now ready and will be installed in the next few months. This sub-committee also deals with Grass Cutting within the village gates in the Parish. This has proved most successful and effective, with a sensible timetable now agreed for cutting and keeping the verges tidy. A daffodil mass planting was arranged earlier in the year and again the results were excellent. The refurbishment of the village gates has now been completed. Holes in carriageways have been identified and dealt with and on a rotation basis Parish Councillors have checked Sandleigh Road Playing field and equipment, to ensure that all is safe and well maintained.

The Parish Council have been in consultation with the VOWH and the residents of the Parish with regard to LPP2, a two day meeting with the Inspector in the Summer took much planning and hard work by the Parish Council and we hope will result in the Inspector taking our wishes into consideration when he finalises his report.

I would like however to start with the Joint Neighbourhood Plan with Wootton. This is, at the moment, with the Examiner and we await his comments. However, a great deal of thanks are due to the Steering Group of the Joint Neighbourhood Plan and to their Chair, Carole Page, and Vice-Chair Jan Banfield in particular. They have proved a powerful driving force for the Joint Neighbourhood Plan and the work undertaken by the Steering Group has been commented upon by the VOWH as excellent. The speed with which they have had to react, review and research and bring the Neighbourhood Plan to this stage is unbelievable. They have always sought to incorporate wherever possible the wishes and fears of the residents of the Parish and the Parish Council would like to formally thank them for their hard work and diligence. Nothing has stopped them from bringing this Neighbourhood Plan to the Examiner on time. We all now await the findings of the Examiner.

This Parish Council is determined that going forward the wishes of residents in the Neighbourhood Plan will be fulfilled and to that end will be setting up a sub-committee to carry it forward when the time comes, to ensure that the hard work of the Steering Group is not lost.

LPP2 has and will have a huge impact on this Parish. It seems that we talk of little else at the moment, hardly surprising. Thanks are due to all the Parish Council for their diligence, report writing, endless emails, late nights and many conversations with residents in order to inform and listen to their hopes and wishes. From Public meetings to Banners, from newsletters to attending many Vale meetings, everyone has played their part.

The team who put together our response to the Main Modifications did an exceptional report on our behalf. Every point was well researched and answered and the Inspector can have no doubt as to both our robust views and to our expert knowledge.

Whatever the result is for the Parish, our work will in reality is only just beginning. We will have to ensure that we achieve the very best outcome for our residents in order that they will continue to live in the Parish they know and value and not be made to accept anything less. To that end we will be looking to our new District Council and seeking ways that they can help us achieve this.

I would like to thank our District Councillor, Catherine Webber and our Oxford County Councillor, Richard Webber, for their ongoing help. They certainly have proved to be most conscientious in their attendance at our meetings and we look forward to working once again with them in what will prove a challenging year ahead.

My Thanks are due to our Vice Chair Mike Page. No Chairman could have asked for better, ever ready to say yes when asked if he could manage one more job on top of a more than full workload.

My final vote of thanks goes to our Clerk Anna, her quiet and pleasant manner sometimes disguise her incredible work ethic. The amount of paperwork that is now required of a Parish Council all comes through her, is read and is sifted out to the correct committees, answers sought, and replies given. I owe her a great debt, we would not function without her.

It only remains for me to wish the new Chair and Vice Chair well and thank all the Parish Councillors for their continued hard work.

5. Report RFO

- The 2018-19 Accounts have been submitted to the Internal Auditor and I will notify Councillors of any issues that arise.
- As a smaller authority with Receipts and Spend of less than £25,000, the Accounts do not have to be submitted to the External Auditor, however a certificate of exemption needs to be signed and submitted to Moore Stephens, (external auditor), by 28th June 2019. The return must, however, still be publicly displayed on the Council's website. The notice of public rights and publication of unaudited annual governance & accountability return will run from 25th June to 5th August.
- The Statement of Accounts, Certificate of Exemption must be approved and signed at this meeting and the Annual Governance Statement and Accounts must be approved by the Parish Council at its meeting of 24th June and signed by the Chair and RFO.
- The Account is in balance and explanations of variances have been provided.
- The Accounts were examined by the Finance Sub Committee in December based on 9 months expenditure.

Opening Balance	£42,689
Receipts	£18,411.93
Expenditure	£21,640.59
Balance 31 st March 2019	£39,460

VAT refund is still to be reclaimed. This will amount to approx £2306.36.

Budget and Expenditure Form

The expenditure chart shows the actual expenditure from 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019. Most items are broadly in line with the budget.

Asset Register & Reserves

As per David's advice, I have tried to show depreciation in the Assets this time and reflect this in the reserves. As a consequence, the Assets value has been dramatically reduced and the Reserves increased. It's still a work in progress, so the figures may not be 100% spot on at this point.

N.B. Since the meeting, the Internal Auditor advised that Parish Council's must record their assets, for the purpose of audit, at the value at which they were purchased.

Assessment of Risk

The Risk Assessment is attached for approval. There are no changes.

6. Matters raised by members of the public

None in attendance

7. There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.25 p.m.

Signed.....Date.....

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