

**Minutes of the Annual Oving Parish Meeting held at All Saints Church, Oving
on Thursday 10th May 2007 at 8.00pm**

Present: Cllr Ambrose McGinn – Chairman Oving Parish Council
Cllr Roger Ball – Oving Parish Council
Cllr Chris George – Oving Parish Council
Cllr Jack Peeters – Oving Parish Council
Glyn Thomas – Oving Parish Clerk

Attendees: 40 Oving Residents

Item 1 – To accept Apologies for absence

Brenda Ball, Diana Hilton-Jones, Pollie Newman, John Palmer, Catrina Storman, Val ??

Item 2 - Review of Oving Parish Council 2006/2007 and plans for 2007/2008– Ambrose McGinn

The Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr Ambrose McGinn, thanked villagers for attending and presented his report as follows:

“Recent Elections

Thanks to all my fellow councilors and clerk, Glyn Thomas for all their hard work during the last year. Especially to Vice Chairman Roger Ball who has consistently made himself available to manage issues as they arose, attended district and council meetings and deputised for myself on a number of occasions, as well as chairing the recreation ground sub committee.

Following the election, which was not contested, Ambrose McGinn has been re-elected Chairman, Roger Ball as Vice Chairman and Jack Peeters has joined the council. Stuart Nicholls has remained on the council, Chris George has been co-opted to the council and Mark Ryan has stood down. Thanks are due to Mark for his experienced input.

The focus for the parish council over the last year has been on general housekeeping duties and taking forward the development of the pavilion project.

Housekeeping.

Speed reduction and traffic calming remains a focus. The introduction of the new speed limits appears to have reduced speeds however the volume of traffic passing through the village has undoubtedly increased due to the road development at Watermead and the Horse and Jockey. Dealing with Bucks County Council has, as ever, been challenging with slow response times and lack of budget for action resulting in many requests being significantly slowed up e.g. name signs for the village. Following endless chasing of BCC and Eon energy we have finally managed to get a replacement streetlight - courtesy of Whitchurch PC releasing a spare fitting - fitted in Pitchcott Rd. It is clear that this will be a time consuming and expensive activity if it has to be repeated as this light replacement cost some £1500.

OPC has continued to support the facilities on the rec' ground and the football club, tennis club and others have continued to thrive with now a cricket net installed thanks to fundraising by local boys.

Thanks are due to Reg Porter for continuing to do a sterling job in maintaining the tidy but attractive feel of the village as a result of his diligent grass mowing and general upkeep. Some residents have expressed a desire for a more manicured feel however the PC feel that we strike the correct balance at the moment between a smart appearance and rural charm.

The final set of chairs in the reading room has now been refurbished and this now presents a very acceptable meeting room which is being used more regularly than ever by residents and was just recently used as a polling station in the recent local elections.

The PC has contributed on a regular basis to the various planning applications that have arisen and has sought to find a careful route through the various demands of infilling, redevelopment and new build. It is noted that the fallow land in Stone View is up for sale, having been the subject of a major campaign to stop house building a few years ago. The council is watching this closely and will act as soon as is necessary to stop any development on this site against the wishes of the village and the current covenant on the land which prevents building - albeit this covenant could be revoked on appeal to the Land Tribunal.

Agreements have been struck with both the Tennis and Football club regarding payment for use of the recreation ground by way of a contribution to running costs. These will be reviewed periodically.

Budget

The income for the year was £24,232, which includes monies on deposit of £9,591 forming the payment towards pavilion improvements from the Church Farm development. The available income at £14,641 was made up from the planned budget of £12,655 supplemented by £1,986 representing payments from sports clubs for use of the rec ground and income from fundraising to purchase the cricket net.

Expenditure for the year has been close to plan with the major items being the remuneration of the clerk (according to local government approved scales) with administration expenses of £4,774 and the upkeep of the recreation ground and village mowing which came to £2,310 and £2,885 respectively. A significant expenditure was the replacement of a streetlight at £1,468 and other lighting and energy related costs of £908. Total expenditure of £13,497 has given a carry forward to this budget year of £1,144 reflecting a lower use of the contingency budget.

The budget for 2007/8 is £15,070, which includes a 5% increase to the precept and additional income from sports clubs and carry forward from the previous year. The Parish Council feels this is an appropriate and prudent budget to allow for inflation and have sufficient funds for ongoing improvements and replacement of failed fixtures and fittings. Both internal auditors and external local government auditors have verified and signed off as accurate our previous year's accounts and will be asked to do so for the 2006/7 year."

Issues Raised by Villages

A villager queried the possibility of replacing the posts which had worn around the green. Cllr McGinn advised that this was already being investigated.

There did not appear to be any consistency in speed restrictions throughout the village, in some places 30 mph and others 40 mph. Cllr McGinn advised that it would be brought to the Council for review.

The New Road sign was in need of refurbishment.

Cllr McGinn to contact Paul Bowen and the issue would be brought to the Council for discussion

The condition of footpaths (especially around Stoneview and Church Lane) were a concern. The Clerk reported that a survey had been undertaken a year ago and Cllr McGinn advised that the issue would be brought to the Council for review.

Overhanging hedges was raised.

Cllr McGinn to cover the issue in the next newsletter asking residents to maintain hedges belonging to their property.

Item 3 – Update of proposals for new Pavilion – Ambrose McGinn

“Pavilion development

Following last year's public meeting and widespread discussion on this subject a period of further consultation took place as individuals approached the council with pro and con views with regard to the pavilion improvement project.

Having taken these points on board and discussed the approach further within the parish council it was agreed to give the opportunity to all those in the village above 10 years old the chance to submit a formal survey response.

The survey was constructed according to professional guidelines and produced a great response from 165 people in the village with an overwhelming majority of 82% broadly in favour of a new pavilion. The full results have been distributed to the village via the newsletter and are also available on the web at www.oving.org.

Having considered the survey responses and additional feedback the Parish Council has agreed unanimously to support the pavilion development plan and to provide the support and guidance to make this a reality.

Next steps.

A considerable number of people offered their help and assistance in getting the project off the drawing board and into a reality.

The PC has discussed the most appropriate way to manage this going forward and agreed the following:

Two working groups will focus on 1. Fundraising and 2. Design and location specification. A steering group chaired by Ambrose McGinn Chair of the Parish Council will coordinate these activities and ensure they are in keeping with the OPC strategy for the recreation ground. The Fundraising Committee will be chaired by Roger Ball and the Design and Location Committee will be chaired by Jack Peeters.

Following the annual village meeting we will be contacting those people who offered to take part and guide them to the various groups to either manage or deliver activities in their respective areas. It is envisaged that this will be a great way for many people to take part with a commitment that suits their circumstances and takes advantage of their skills.

The PC has already applied for a WREN grant (fund monies available from the Landfill tax available to projects within a certain distance from a landfill site.) which had a deadline of end March and has identified a number of charitable bodies that look very promising for our cause. The availability of our £9,500 seed corn funds allows us to get going with money in the bank!

A RoSPA inspection has recently been made of the children's playground and we expect that this will result in some interim expenditure to keep the facility in reasonable condition prior to its proposed resiting. Clearly any expenditure will be carefully monitored in order that equipment can be moved to any new location.

Many people have remarked that the prospect of fundraising gives the village the chance to come together over a common cause and bring villagers together in a way that has been lacking in recent times."

Issues Raised by Villagers

Villagers were generally in favour of a new Pavilion. However their main area of concern was location. Other concerns were cost to build, size, design, usage, increased traffic, litter, vandalism, graffiti, running costs and who would be responsible for the upkeep and maintenance.

One of the proposed locations was where the current play area was and there was concern that if the play area was moved, children would be out of sight.

There was concern about the questions on the survey which had been circulated to villagers and some claimed not to have received one at all. There was also concern that 10 year olds were invited to complete the survey when they have no financial responsibility for funding such a project.

A villager requested that comparative costings be made available on the possible locations of the Pavilion.

A villager queried why the Methodist Hall had not been considered. Cllr McGinn advised that it had been considered but not thought suitable.

The proposal had been for a timber building and there was concern that youths would set fire to it. The cost of building in brick was queried.

A villager proposed that under the 1972 LG Act the village be polled on the location of the Pavilion. The proposer was seconded and a majority vote recorded.

Cllr McGinn agreed that a balanced questionnaire would be produced for villagers to complete and return.

Villagers were invited to join the working groups.

Cllr McGinn thanked villagers for their concerns and assured them that the working groups would continue to consult them on the project.

Item 4 – Open Forum for issues not previously covered - All

There were no further issues.

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm.