

East Hagbourne Parish Council Meeting – 13th January, 2011.

A meeting of the East Hagbourne Parish Council was held at the Village Hall on Thursday, 13th January, 2011 when the following members were present :-

Mr D Rickeard (Chairman).

Mr C Alberry

Mr R Dawson

Mr I Duff

Mr D Harding

Mr R Parsley (Clerk)

Mr R Rendell resigned with effect from 6th January, 2011, having moved away from the village.

Thirteen members of the public also attended. Mr P Greene, District and County Councillor attended the first part of the meeting.

1. Apologies.

Apologies were received from Mr R Emery on vacation and Mr Button on compassionate leave.

2. Minutes.

The minutes of the Parish meeting held on 18th November, 2010 were confirmed as a correct record subject to correction of the reported date of the October meeting on Page 1, and signed by the Chairman.

3. Action and Matters Arising.

See Action List and the appropriate agenda items for full details.

2009-10-02. Registration of the Recreation Ground, Car Park and the Hopfields with the Land Registry is in hand with the solicitors.

2010-9-14. The survey of the Upper Cross is in hand, and awaiting the attention of the mason.

2010-10-13. Overhanging hedge, Wilcher Close is in hand - SOHA will action.

2010-11-08. Investigate man hole covers (2) in Great Mead – in hand: ownership of the covers is not yet established.

2010-11 09. Progress update of car park lights – in hand, and expected to start in the next few days.

2010-11-10. Investigate car park drainage system – to be done

4. District and County Councillor.

Mr Greene presented a report on County Council activities (Attachment 2)

The Council now has been advised of the Provisional Local Government Financial Settlement and it is very close to what was expected. This means cuts of £58 million to plan for in 2011/12 and a similar sum again spread over the next three years. The Council has exempted the fire & rescue service and child protection from major cuts. Almost all of the Council's other services

are facing major spending reductions, including sensitive issues like libraries and youth services.

The Council is responsible for 2,500 miles of roads and it is impossible both logistically and financially to try to clear all of them in severe weather. The target is to keep 43% of our roads open during heavy snow and the Council met this target throughout the recent cold spell.

Turning to SODC activities, the leader of SODC had reported that any cuts in finance for 2011/12 would be covered by the District Council's reserves, and there would be no increase in Council Tax this year.

The rubbish collections had been rearranged due to the inclement weather, and were now getting back to normal schedule.

Finally, Mr Greene complimented the Parish Council on the new allotments that he had viewed from the Sustrans track and the efforts of the volunteer group in clearing and replanting the woodland area.

In response to question from the floor, Mr Greene said that no new information on the Localism Bill was yet available.

5.Items for Decision.

(a).Parish Council Meetings 2011. It was agreed to book the Village Hall for Parish Council meetings for the remainder of the year. The provisional dates will be Thursdays June 9th, July 21st, September 1st, October 15th and November 17th. However, Thursday meetings have proved problematic for some councillors, and these dates will be reviewed by the new incoming Council at the May meeting

Action – R.Parsley.

(b).Parish Council Vacancies. From the floor, Mr B Dakin-Norris confirmed his intention to apply. Mr Rickeard encourage him and other sinterested to attend council meetings to become familiar with activities. The clerk will contact him prior to the May elections.

Action - R.Parsley.

(c).The Journal for Local Planning. It was unanimously agreed not to subscribe to the Journal.

(d).Donation – Hagbourne School Swimming Pool Changing Rooms. In response to a request at the previous meeting, Mr Vaughan had informed the Parish Council of twelve groups/clubs from the local community that made use of the pool in addition to the school.

The overall cost had increased to £63000.00. At present the School and PTA had raised approximately £10000.00. No help was forthcoming from SODC and OCC but they were exploring other avenues. Mr Rickeard considered that a general community benefit for the facility had been demonstrated, and that the Council should make a contribution, drawinf on the reserves held for community sporting activities. He proposed a donation of £5000.00, seconded by Mr Alberry and agreed unanimously. This grant to be paid once the work is under way, and conditional on the balance of funds being sourced, so that we are sure the project will be completed.

Action – D Rickeard, R.Parsley.

(e).Donation to the Brian Tumour Research. It was unanimously agreed not to donate as this is not a Parish Council issue.

(f).Donation to St Andrews Church (Electrification of the winding mechanism of the clock). Mr Duff proposed a donation of £400.00, seconded by Mr Harding and agreed unanimously.

Action – R.Parsley.

(g).Closer Working with Didcot Town Council. It was unanimously agreed to accept Didcot Town Council's offer to join the 'Closer Working ' meeting with other local parishes to maintain a close working relationship.

Action – D.Rickeard.

(h).Allotments.

Several allotment holders attended the meeting and contributed to a thorough discussion of the issues raised at the previous meeting

(i).It was agreed that a second water tank was necessary. It will be sited next to the existing tank. Mr Button to make the necessary arrangements.

Action – D.Button.

(ii).Sheds. Several allotment holders felt that sheds were needed to store tools. Most present did not object in principle to this, but one local resident was concerned about the appearance of the site and thought that their presence could encourage theft. After listening to the views, the Parish Council took no exception to sheds being allowed, provided that the Allotment Committee ensured that they were regulated properly. In particular, sheds should be no larger than a nominal 6ft x 4ft, be of wooden construction, well maintained, and of a colour to blend in with the surroundings and positioned so as not to unduly shadow neighbouring allotments. It was noted that low level storage boxes might in some cases provide a less intrusive option. Because these are temporary structures, no poured concrete bases should be allowed. Good practice should be ensured by the Allotments Committee, perhaps including an annual inspection.

Action – D.Button and Allotments Committee.

(iii).Mrs Napper had requested permission to store wood from the wild area. An area has been identified at the Wilcher Close end of the allotments, inside the fenced area, however this may not be levelled and ready for some weeks yet. Concerns were expressed that the piles should be kept safe both from intruders and for any children who might get into the area. The Parish Council were in favour as long as the stacks were no more than 1m high, and the Allotments committee were asked to decide appropriate arrangements, and to present a proposed design to the next meeting.

Action – D.Button and Allotments Committee.

The question of money raised from the sale of wood was raised. The was agreed that all funds would be held by the Parish Council, and that the Hagbourne environment Group should keep a record of all monies spent and received.

Action - D Rickeard to liaise with Mrs Napper.

(iv).The Allotment committee had requested permission to erect a notice board on the allotment. The Parish Council were in agreement with the proposed central location. Mr Button to design the new board.

Action - D Button

(v).After discussion it was agreed that there was no necessity for vehicle access to the allotments. The new signs are to be positioned to restrict the access by unwanted vehicles as far as possible. The final positions to be agreed by Mr Rickeard and Mr Parsley.

Action - Mr Rickeard, Mr Parsley

6.Planning Applications.

The following planning applications have been received since the last meeting. The Parish Council's comments are indicated.

P10/W1823/RET	23 Blewbury Road	No strong Views
P10/W1581	6 Main Road	- ditto-
P10/W1891	59 New Road	- ditto-
P10/W1927/RET	8 Stonesfield	Under Discussion

7.Parish Plan.

(a).The draft Parish Plan was available for comment on the website and there are copies available for loan at the Village Shop.

(b). The free issue of the Parish Magazine has been delivered to all residents in the parish.

8.Reports.

(a).Monica Lawson Memorial. Mr Duff to progress with West Hagbourne Parish Council. The first design has proved to be too expensive, and the second choice is now under review.

Action - Mr Duff

(b).Flooding. Nothing to report in addition to the information posted in the January Parish Magazine

(c). Didcot Development. A one page summary was included in the Parish Magazine and an extended version is available on the web-site. Mr Emery and Mr Townsend had held a meeting with OCC on transport infrastructure and will maintain these contacts.

Mr Emery had circulated proposed comments to be posted by EHPC in the course of the consultation on the Core Strategy. One clarification had been added by Mr Townsend. There were no further comments and it was agreed unanimously to endorse Mr Emery's comments. Mr Rickeard to submit them through the proper channels.

Action - Mr Rickeard

Mr Townsend noted that although the Core Strategy relieved pressure for building to the south of Didcot, we would need to remain vigilant through the rest of the planning process.

(d).Butts Piece – Progress on the Wild Area. Hagbourne Environment Group under the leadership of Mrs Napper has made excellent progress in clearing some of the overgrown woodland and planting new trees for eventual coppicing.

(e).East Hagbourne Website. Mr Alberry is progressing the new system design to make the upkeep a simpler task, and submitted a written confirmation of the costs, which had been agreed at an earlier meeting.. The Parish Council confirmed its support for this important development.

(f).Standing Orders. Mr Button continues to work on a draft..

9.Correspondence.

The Parish Council have been invited to the official opening of the Village Hall on Saturday, 12th February, 2011 at 2.15pm.

Mr Rickeard volunteered to be the Parish Council's representative on the Village Hall Committee.

10.Finance.

(a).Payments since the last meeting :- £

Mrs M Emery	(Plants)	34.80
SODC	(Emptying Dog Bins)	274.02
RBL Poppy Appeal	(Donation)	125.00
Scottish & Vale Carers Centre	(-ditto-)	200.00
R.Rendell	(Land Registry Fee)	28.00
Thames Water	(Water Rates)	21.97
P.W.Hands	(Parish Plan Prizes)	150.00
R.Parsley	(Clerks Salary & Expenses)	1397.68
Hagbourne Village Hall	(Hire & Electricity)	243.10
Linda Benton	(Parish Magazine Cover)	185.00

(b).The receipts were :-

Barclays Bank.	(Interest)	5.97
----------------	------------	------

(c).The account balances are :-

Community A/C.	1900.95
Business Base Rate Tracker A/C	51043.56
Savings Bond	80688.11

(d).East and West Hagbourne Cemetery :-

Community A/C.	165.62
Business Saver A/C.	1339.77

(e).Project balances :-

Play Area	553.87
Butts Piece	13285.77
Butts Piece Wild Area	2000.00
Parish Plan	465.48
Sports Facilities	85140.40

(f)Precept. following the review of expected legal costs for the coming year, requested at the previous meeting, the precept for 2011/12 of was confirmed as. Acceptance moved by Mr Rickeard, seconded by Mr Harding and accepted unanimously.

11.Any Other Business.

(a).The condition of the footbridge on FP16 was discussed. The clerk stated that OCC Countryside Service were in discussion with the landowner to assess whether the bridge requires replacing or if vehicular access is required.

(b).Mr Rickeard proposed a vote of thanks to Mr Rendell following his resignation as he has moved away from the district. The meeting fully endorsed his comments.

(c).Mr Alberry had received an enquiry whether a footpath could be provided between East Hagbourne and Coscote. This will be considered in the context of the Parish Plan.

(d).Mr Duff stated that the footpath on the east side of the village hall was very slippery. It is not a designated footpath so there will be no help from OCC. Mr Rickeard and Mr Parsley to discuss. It was noted that the footpath by the Bowls Club might also need attention.

Action - Mr Parsley, Mr Rickeard to consider appropriate action.

(e).Mr Burgess stated that a van parked on the verge outside 46 New Road, East Hagbourne was obstructing the sight of oncoming traffic. Mr Rickeard commented that parking was an issue in other parts of the village also. Mr Dawson said that vehicles parking on the verges in Harwood Road were causing damage to the grass, and wondered whether a firmer surface could be installed. Mr Dakin-Norris commented on vehicles parked at the entry to Harwood Road at school times.

Action - Mr Parsley, Mr Rickeard to be seek guidance from the local PCSO.

Mr Burgess also queried the planning application for a new dwelling at Manor Farm compared with his application along Great Mead. The Chairman pointed out that his application was outside the curtilage of the village and said that Parish Council comments on both applications had been carefully considered.

(f).Mr Dakin-Norris enquired whether anything could be done to prevent dog fouling around the village. This is an ongoing problem. Dog bins and notices have been placed around the village.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.05pm.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Thursday, 24th February, 2011 at **a venue to be decided**, at 7.30pm.

(The Village Hall will be occupied for a theatre rehearsal on this evening)

Chairman :

Date :

ATTACHMENT 1 – Action List

Action No	Action	Who	Status
2009-10-02	Register Recreation Ground, Car Park and Hopfields with Land Registry	RR/DB	Solicitors being instructed
2010-02-04	Review new model standing order and make a recommendation for EHPC	DB	
2010-09-05	Action signs for Butt's Piece	DR/RP	Agenda item
2010-09-09	Progress plans for updating the web-site	CA	Agenda item
2010-09-14	Arrange survey of Upper Cross	RP	In progress
2010-09-18	<p>Prepare inputs for free Magazine</p> <p>Parish Council input would be extended to 3 or perhaps 4 pages and will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Didcot Development Update <i>Mr Emery</i> – Parish Plan Progress <i>Mr Rickeard</i> – Solicit input for the APM – Our Communications Strategy <i>DR/ID/CA/RR</i> – Flooding summary <i>Mr Rickeard</i> – Call for new councillors (election due in May) <i>Mr Rickeard</i> 		Done: Magazine circulated
2010-09-20	List of volunteers who circulated PP questionnaire	RE	Done
2010-10-03	Ask SODC for information about social housing needs	RE/DR	On hold
2010-10-04	Progress front page for free Parish magazine and publication plans	DR	Done
2010-10-05	Investigate colour printing options	RR	Done
2010-10-06	Clarify how new housing plans would affect our Parish	RE	On hold
2010-10-13	Talk to Windsor Crescent house about overhanging hedge at rear.	RP	SOHA will action
2010-11-01	Circulate the Charities governance Toolkit to Councillors and Charities Secretary	ID	Done
2010-11-02	Advise SODC that Mr Wilkins is no longer a Councillor	RP	Done
2010-11-02	Check previous donations to RBL and make donation as agreed in minute 6(c)	RP	Done
2010-11-03	Reply to Grainger rejecting their proposal	RP	Done

2010-11-04	Put Parish Plan on web site and make hard copies available at Village Shop.	DR	Done
2010-11-05	Progress free issue of Parish Magazine	ID/DR	Done
2010-11-06	Progress back-up plan for Monica Lawson memorial	ID	Agenda Item
2010-11-07	Follow up on actions for allotments in item 8(d)	DB/RP	Agenda Item
2010-11-08	Investigate man hole covers in Great Mead	RP	In progress
2010-11-09	Progress lights in car park	RP	In progress
2010-11-10	Follow up car park drainage	RP/DR	To be done
2010-11-10	Follow up on manure flowing onto footpath next to Bowls Club	RP	Done
2010-11-11	Clarify expected legal costs for next year	RR	Done
2010-11-12	Send comments on draft precept to Clerk by 15 December	All	Done
2011-01-01	Provisionally book VH for meetings through to December	RP	
2011-01-02	Keep potential new Councillors informed of Council activities.	RP,DR	
2011-01-03	Inform School of grant for changing rooms	DR,RP	
2011-01-04	Make donation to Church clock funds	RP	
2011-01-05	Maintain contacts with Didcot Town Council	DR	
2011-01-06	Implement actions on allotments in conjunction with the Allotments Committee	DB	
2011-01-07	Submit EHPC comments on Core Strategy	DR	
2011-01-08	Discuss record keeping for finances of wild area with Mrs Napper	DR	
2011-01-09	Determine action on muddy footpaths	DR/RP	
2011-01-10	Seek guidance of police on parking problems	RP/DR	

ATTACHMENT 2

County Council issues: Report from Mr P W Greene

Finance

The Council now has been advised of the Provisional Local Government Financial Settlement and it is very close to what was expected. This means cuts of £58 million to plan for in 2011/12 and a similar sum again spread over the next three years.

The Council has exempted two service areas from any major cuts. These are the fire & rescue service and child protection.

Almost all of the Council's other services are facing major spending reductions and this includes sensitive issues like libraries and youth services.

The timeline for budget decisions:-

25/01/11 County Council Cabinet meets at County Hall from 2:00 pm to agree a budget and medium term financial plan for recommendation to the full County Council

15/02/11 County Council meets in County Hall from 10:00 am to agree a budget and medium term financial plan.

In spite of these financial problems, it is planned to give high priority to the highway network, particularly in the capital programme. The Council is well aware of the damage to our road network following the cold weather and it is proposed to allocate as much capital funding as possible to structural maintenance.

Libraries

Due to the Provisional Local government Financial Settlement and it is clear that the Council faces very significant reductions in central government funding over the next four years with the largest single reduction in 2011/12. Over the 4-year period, there will be likely a reduction in central government funding of 28% while demography, other service pressures and un-funded new duties all add to the financial pressure the council faces. Fortunately, the council has been planning for this for 18 months now but it is still quite impossible to exempt front line services from cuts. The county library service currently costs £8 million p/a to run and it is felt that libraries cannot be exempt from cuts because this would simply increase pressures on budgets to be applied to adult social care, child protection, learning disability services or highways. As a result it is proposed to reduce funding to the library service by £2 million over four years. The result of this is a proposal to cease funding 20 out of our 43 libraries. Here, locally Didcot and Wallingford libraries are ones that are proposed to be kept.

Recent adverse weather

The County Council policy for adverse weather conditions such as those from which we are emerging is to give priority to the main routes in the county. The Council is responsible for 2,500 miles of roads and it is impossible both logistically and financially to try to clear all of them. The target is to keep 43% of our roads open during heavy snow and these are the priority routes that enable the economy to continue and

emergency services to respond to emergency calls. The Council met its 43% target throughout the recent cold spell.

The Council received a few letters and e-mails claiming that it had failed to salt/grit priority routes recently. These allegations are untrue but there are some facts that need to be understood:

- i. Rock salt at 20 grams per yard is not visible;
- ii. Below minus 3°C, rock salt is very slow in acting;
- iii. Below minus 7°C there is no action;
- iv. Without a “churning effect” by vehicle wheels, it also has little effect.

These causes led to accusations that roads had not been salted but were untrue.

Both the M40 and the A34 are the responsibility of the Highways Agency and there were some failings here. The Council is considering how to follow these up at a national level.

There is an issue about using farmers to help the Council and this is improving but is still patchy. It is an area that really needs more work to achieve a formal, structured approach. As with previous snow events, the Council has had an ever-growing list of farmers offering assistance. The majority are paid by the hour.

On the supply and filling of salt bins, there were some delays in supplying salt bins where villages had requested them. There was a capacity problem given the number ordered by many parish and town councils.