

## Minutes of the Meeting of Great Shefford Parish Council held on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2013 at 740pm

**Present** Cllr S Ackrill (Vice Chairman), Cllr S Benn, Cllr J Winfield, Cllr G Knass, Cllr J Carter and Parish Clerk Sandi Ackrill

Also present 2 members of the Public

Cllr Ackrill was chairing the meeting and welcomed everyone present.

Cllr Ackrill announced that Viv Williams had decided to resign from the council and a letter was read out from Viv. Cllr Ackrill went on to announce there was now a Vacancy on the Council and a noticed would be placed on both notice boards. Closing date for applications is the 5<sup>th</sup> February. **Clerk**

In light of the fact the there were two members of the Public present who wished to discussed the flooding and sewage issues in the Valley Cllr Ackrill proposed to swap agenda items 13 Village Emergency Group with item 7 Allotments. All were in agreement

- 1) **Apologies** – Cllr M Andrews, Cllr Carter explained he had to leave the meeting at about 8.30pm.
- 2) **Declaration of Interest** – The clerk announced that the Council had granted itself dispensation in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 to discuss the Precept.
- 3) **Open Forum** – The concern from residents in Church Street regarding the sewage issues along the Lambourn Valley, the 20 hour days the tankers were running through the village from Eastbury/Lambourn, the speed and the general disruption caused by the tanker drivers parking in the Bus Stop for long periods with engines running and music on day and night. Disposing the sewage and flood water at the Sewage Pumping station along the Newbury Road (how can the Sewage treatment works possibly treat all the additional waste/water correctly). Mainly the fact the Sewer System is below the water table along the Valley, it cannot cope with the pressure being placed on it by the additional water and therefore is leaking sewage into the water and ending up in the River Lambourn. In the winter the Sewage system cannot cope with the extra water in the summer the fluids leak out of the sewer pipes leaving the solid waste in the pipes causing an un acceptable smell leaving the residents unable to open windows or use their gardens.
- 4) **Minutes** of the Meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2012 were proposed for approval by Cllr Winfield and seconded by Cllr Knass the minutes were signed by Cllr Ackrill.

### 5) Finance report

#### a) Cheques to approve written since last meeting

52 Jewson's            £121.82

This was approved by Cllrs Andrews, Benn and Ackrill using Clerks Emergency expenditure to purchase Sand before Jewsons shut for Christmas period following the Ground water flood alert.

These councillors also approved the purchase of 500 sandbags at 11p per bag which have been delivered but not invoice yet £55.00. These are the polypropylene bags and if residents require the hessian ones they should arrange their own or contact us for advice.

**Cheques to agree and sign this evening**

53	Nigel Goldstraw (1 hour remaining from last invoice clerk did not note at the time)	£7.50
54	FCC recycling (Litter Bin) £48.00 (Nov and Dec)	
55	SSE Contracting light repair to light in Station Road	£98.51
56	WBC (Dog Bin Emptying)	£86.38
57	Southern Electric	£75.12
58	Raymac Signs Plaque for Bench	£48.00
59	GS Village Hall	£90.00
60	S & S Ackrill Litter Picking	£45.00

b) **Approval of the Budget** the proposed budget as discussed at the last meeting was reviewed; its approval was proposed by Cllr Ackrill and seconded by Cllr Knass.

c) **Setting of the precept** for Financial Year 2013/14 was discussed the clerk had worked out approximately the figure which would be left in the bank at the end of March 2013, taking into consideration the possible new Bus Shelter and the remaining grant money for the Footpath continuation and the budgeted spend on the day to day matters in the village leaving £3500 in the bank. However these are forecasted figures , the budgeted spend for the forthcoming year was £17,215.00. Therefore it was agreed to keep some in reserve for emergency and keep the precept the same figure at £17,500.00 this was proposed by Cllr Benn and seconded by Cllr Carter.

**Clerk**

d) **Playground Inspection** it was discussed and agreed to ask Digley Associates to carry out the inspection in April. Proposed by Cllr Winfield and seconded by Cllr Knass. **Clerk**

6) **Bus Shelter** – Church Street. Cllr Benn has paid two visits to the residents of Cecil cottages she has spoken to two of the residents who would not object to the proposed wooden structure being placed at the end nearer the Post Box/Willow Tree. Clerk will write to the other two addresses and seek opinions **CLERK**

7) **Village Emergency Team Report** – Discussion was held regarding the issues raised during the Open Forum. Clerk was asked to contact Thames Water and ask the tanker drivers be a little more considerate to residents especially during the night.

Cllr Ackrill had had a conversation with the Team at Eastbury who are also concerned about the Sewage and state of the river. Liz Goodman thought the idea of getting the parishes along the Valley together was excellent it was something which had been suggested previously. Cllr Knass would become involved and represent the Parish Council, Cllr Benn would be involved as Chairman of the Emergency group and Fiona Walsh would join and represent the residents.

#### **Report –**

Cllr Benn gave a summary of the events which had unfolded since the ground water flood alert had been received on the 20<sup>th</sup> December. The cascade system for passing on information was put into place and residents concerned were alerted the same day, posters were placed around the village, in the shop and on the website. Vulnerable residents who had requested help were called on personally. On our request WBC visited those along the river and checked the culvert was being allowed to flow freely through the village.

Residents who had suffered in 2000 were advised to purchase sandbags where required, remove items from sheds and garages, place insurance documents in safe places and to look out for neighbours as well. The

councillors used the clerk emergency expenditure and purchased some sand and 500 polypropylene sand bags through WBC. Although its impossible to know how many will be required if any, hence residents who are able to should be taking their own precautions.

Ground water/culvert water is steadily rising and is appearing in peoples gardens and sheds too close to some homes for comfort in some cases – therefore after discussion WBC have placed a pump at the north end of the village to take some of the water straight into an Environment Agency pipe instead of coming through the Village Culvert. This at the moment is holding the water level it may be necessary to place a second pump in if levels rise again. We apologise to those living at that end of the village but there is no choice at the moment.

*Cllr J Carter made his apologies and left the meeting at this point at 8.30pm*

Cllr Benn and Linda Bowden had visited every property today along the Wantage Road touched by the culvert today to check water levels. A list has been made of those who may require help soon, some residents have purchased pumps and sandbags and these were evident.

Thanks to Linda Bowden, for updating the website every day. Thanks to all those who are reporting the blocked streams and culverts and to Steve Ackrill, Bryan Williams and Rob Hale Power for removing all the debris and keeping the grids around the village clear. Also grateful thanks to everyone who is pulling together to keep the water moving through the village unhindered who we may not have listed here.

Emergency Team Leaders Meeting Monday at Linda Bowden's home.

- 8) **Planning** (there was no planning to discuss)  
One Case Officer Report was read out

**12/02562/HOUSE** – Garage /Store at Northfield Farm – Refused

- 9) **Annual Parish Meeting** – After discussion it was agreed to change the format of the evening this year, all groups will be invited to have a stand to use to display material and literature, no selling was to take place, interest forms etc could be completed though. Invites will be sent out, no charge for stands. PC will supply light refreshments. Date proposed as the 18<sup>th</sup> April clerk was asked to see if Hall was available. This will replace the Parish Council meeting at the beginning of April. **Clerk**

- 10) **Clerks Time** – The clerk is only contracted for 8 hours a week taking into account the meetings, their preparation, minutes and the summary for newsletter , accounts ( VAT, Annual returns , quotes etc), site meetings, paperwork, daily emails, phone calls and post along with related matters from meetings which need following up. The clerk is not expected to spend the village's time revisiting and replying to issues already discussed, minuted and Closed from previous meeting. In order to eradicate ineffective use of the clerks time re addressing issued already closed, along with issues that are not relevant to the Parish Council remit a standard reply from the Chairman will be sent when correspondence of this nature is received. All present were in agreement with this. The clerk was happy not to restrict her working hours to set hours a week, residents also need to be aware of this and that Sunday and late in the evening calls / visits should only be made on urgent matters.

- 11) **Newbury Road Footpath** – clerk has spoken to WBC in the last month – the weather conditions along with the extremely high water level in the Lambourn make the work impossible at the present time.

12) **Country Fayre** - Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2013. The school have kindly agreed to host the Fayre, ice creams have booked already, two the stalls requested. Marquees booked. First meeting Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> January 8pm at Brookside all new members to the Fayre team welcomed.

13) **Allotments** – Currently working on the revision of rules for members in time for the renewal of agreements at the end of March. One 60Sqm plot available. Next meeting 12<sup>th</sup> February.

14) **Cllr Questions** –

Cllr Benn has received an email reporting there is a willow tree on the south side of the river at Maidencourt Farm which is precariously hanging over the river. Clerk asked to report this to Streetcare **CLERK**

Cllr Winfield – Still no fresh salt in the Bins **Clerk**

15) **Correspondence**

**District Parish Conference** – Tuesday 26 March 2013 Cllr Ackrill will attend. Clerk will book in **Clerk**

**Letter from West Berkshire CAB** requesting we consider a contribution – after discussion where it is was noted that residents from our parish used the Outreach service at the Local Surgery – it was agreed to contribute £50.00 clerk was asked to write out the cheque for the next meeting.  
Proposed by Cllr Benn and seconded by Cllr Winfield.

Letter regarding **the localisation of council tax** has been received Cllrs would read the letter and let the clerk know if a reply should be sent. **ALL**

16) **Matters for Future Discussion** –

From the Open forum – the Sewage issues along the Lambourn Valley.

17) **Date of Next Meeting** – Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> February 7.40pm

**Meeting Closed at 9.40pm**