

FULBROOK PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF FULBROOK ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Date: 19TH May 2022
7.00pm

Venue Fulbrook Church

Present: Councillors Mr Peter Burns (Chairman) PB
Mr Malcolm Taylor MT
Mr Robert Warner RW
Mrs Filipa Ferrera

Parish Clerk Mrs Sarah Ebeling

Parishioners attending: 7 electors attended

OCC Councillor Mr N Field-Johnson
WODC Councillor Hugo Ashton

For convenience the following abbreviations may be used in some instances in these Minutes.

FPC	Fulbrook Parish Council
OCC	Oxfordshire County Council
POF	Parishioners Open Forum
WODC	West Oxfordshire District Council
OALC	Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils
NALC	National Association of Local Councils
CHA	Cottsway Housing Association
TVP	Thames Valley Police

1 **Apologies**

Councillor Heather Cameron

2 **Minutes of the meeting 4th May 2021**

Minutes signed by Peter Burns (Chairman).

3 **Financial Statement**

A financial statement has been handed out to everyone at the meeting. There were no questions with regards to the financial statement however PB explained that the Council currently have a high reserve due to the fact that it is being kept for improvements to the playpark.

4 **County and District Councillors annual reports**

District Councillor – Hugo Ashton introduced himself as the newly elected District Councillor for Burford who has taken over from Derek Cotterill. Hugo gave thanks Derek for his 16 years of service and wished him a happy retirement.

Hugo explained that the district now has a Liberal-Labour-Green alliance which has taken over from the previous Conservative Administration. The district council will soon be meeting to elect a new leadership team and to appoint its committees.

County Councillor – NF-J has submitted a report which is attached to these minutes.

5 **Annual Parish Report**

The annual report is attached to the end of these minutes, and they will be put on the website and in the two village notice boards.

6 **Reports from Fulbrook Societies**

Fulbrook News: Laurance Balbes discussed that Fulbrook News is a quarterly magazine with 24 pages of A5 which is delivered free of charge to everyone in Fulbrook as well as some postal copies which are charged at £5 per year. There are 6 people on the Committee; Laurence Balbes, Lynn Bibbings-Burns, Lesley Beveridge, Diana Brown, David Foster and Jenny Jones. The newsletter is funded by adverts and last year further donations were needed due to a drop in revenue. Laurance wanted to remind everyone that the newsletter is for all of us so if there is ever anything you would like to be included then please get in touch with them at Fulbrooknews@gmail.com.

Amenities Group: MT discussed the idea of having someone take over the running of the amenities group or as an alternative if people were happy to plan certain events then this could be done instead of running the group. MT printed forms out for people to fill in their details if they had an interest in being part of the committee.

Clerk to also send this information out to people through her email newsletters.

Fulbrook Nature Group

Lucy Stavelly discussed the new Nature group that is now up and running to enhance the nature in Fulbrook. She discussed about making some of the roadside verges wild by planting wild flowers and leaving them to grow. MT and Lucy will speak to Steve McCracken about not mowing certain areas for this to happen.

Secondly Lucy discussed that the Burford Environmental Group are hosting their first annual Burford UnGardening (BUG) Award!

Are you in Burford or the surrounding villages? Have you made changes (no matter how small!) to your garden to make it more wildlife-friendly? Let your grass grow longer, planted wildflowers, given up pesticides? We want to hear about it!

Please send a short explanation of the changes you've made and up to three photographs to burfordbeagles@gmail.com by Sunday 19 June. The judging panel will pay a very brief visit to the finalist(s) so they can admire your work, and the winner will be announced in the August edition of The Bridge magazine.

They will be giving away a beautiful dewdrop bug hotel kindly donated by the Burford Garden Co. to the winner.

7 Any other business

No other business was brought up in this meeting.

8 Closure and provisional date for the next meeting

Provisional date for next years meeting is the 9th May 2023.

ANNUAL REPORT – April 2022

OCC REPORT - FROM CLLR NICHOLAS FIELD-JOHNSON

A YEAR OF TURBULENCE.

A great deal has happened since the Elections last May in 2021.

A new Liberal-Labour-Green Alliance took over from the previous Conservative administration and have made several significant policy decisions which have affected the residents of Burford. They revoked the Burford HGV ban which had proven to work successfully in Burford and had showed no increase in the outlying villages as HGVs tend to use the A40, A34 and M40. It was revoked as the Lib Dem-Labour administration believed Burford had selfishly financed the ban which then adversely effected outlying areas and the new administration wanted to outline a County wide policy and felt that the Burford decision had been too unilateral. Although I and Burford Town Council have supplied ample evidence that the Burford ban not only worked but also benefitted the surrounding areas. However, not all is lost, we will now re-file for an 18 ton limit ETRO (rather than the current 7.5 ton limit). We will continue to fight for a ban as we do not want to see long traffic queues re-emerge in Burford, together with further air pollution. We need to protect our historic town. This is not the end of the road – please watch this space.

The Liberal-labour Alliance also implemented a 5% increase in Council tax (compared to the Conservative administration's proposed 3.5%) at a time when everyone's pockets were hit by rising prices and taxes. We have seen significant increases in energy prices: electricity doubling from 14p per kWh to 28.5 per kWh, heating oil increasing from 50p per litre to £1 per litre and petrol prices leaping from £1.30p to £1.60 per litre. This has significantly hit those on a fixed income and has left many people struggling and having to decide between spending money on heating or eating. This was not a time to increase Council tax to 5%.

Furthermore this new Lib Dem-Labour-Green administration wastes so much time on non-County issues. The first motion that was proposed was to change the name of Chairman to Chair or Chairperson. This was followed by a motion advocating that only plant-based food should be served at County Council held functions at a time when our farmers and local producers need every support.

Furthermore, they continue to serve melon, strawberries, grapes and other produce from Morocco, Spain and other far-away countries – hardly supporting local producers. Veganism is a personal choice that should be respected but this attempt to dictate the diet of others is totally unacceptable. Our local Farmers staged a protest at the February Full Council meeting and this gained more coverage from the Media than the OCC Budget. Even Jeremy Clarkson complained.

The last Council meeting was a debate on how to treat binary and non-binary people and to install non-gender lavatories in all 600 Council buildings – including eventually the County schools. This would cost hundreds of thousand pounds placing even more strain on the County's budget.

It is not surprising that the national press have asked: is this (OCC) the daftest Council in Britain..?? It would seem that this administration and its Wokeism is focusing more on woke cultural warfare rather than addressing the needs of its residents.

The other major issue affecting our area, is the state of our rivers and in particular The Windrush.

Thames water continues to discharge raw sewage into The Windrush. In conjunction with WASP (Windrush Against Sewage Pollution), we now have equipment which measures pollution in the river and this was funded partly by Burford residents and OCC funding. We will continue to fight for clean rivers and push for legislation to ban raw sewage being dumped into our rivers.

Not only has this year been difficult economically, but we have also seen a rebound and rise in COVID and the War in the Ukraine which has had a major impact on all of us. COVID has placed a significant pressure on our hospitals and social care. Unfortunately the virus (and its variants) is still with us and may well remain with us over the coming years.

PROPOSALS FOR 20MPH SPEED LIMIT ACROSS OXFORDSHIRE.

Wallingford Central has become the third 20mph pilot scheme to be unveiled in Oxfordshire.

OCC completed the work earlier this month as part of its £8m plans to reduce the speed of the majority of the county's 30mph roads to 20mph where suitable and when supported by local residents. I have asked for clarity about how the success/failure of these pilot schemes will be measured. In particular, I have asked if speed surveys are being undertaken before and after their introduction. It must be remembered that compliance by motorists is effectively voluntary as it will not be enforced by the police. It will be interesting to see how effective it will be without any enforcement.

Burford and Swinbrook already have 20mph limits and Brize Norton and Taynton have also requested to join the pilot scheme.

Cllr Nicholas Field-Johnson

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