

## **Minutes of Fritwell Parish Council Annual General Meeting held on Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> May 2017 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall**

**Present:** Councillors Ultsch, Foster, Rooth, Stillgoe, Barlow. District Councillor Kerford Byrnes, County Councillor Arash Fatemian and the Clerk.

**Residents:** Jenny Paviour, Mike Dockrey, Helen Metcalfe, Rachel Clark, Mike Buffham, Beryl Ozog, David and Gail Barnhill, Anthea Unsworth.

**1. Apologies:** Councillor Reeves

### **2. Minutes of AGM held on Monday, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2016**

These were read, agreed and signed by the Chair as a true record. Proposed by Councillor Foster, seconded by Councillor Rooth.

There were no Matters Arising from these minutes.

### **3. Financial Report and Matters**

- The **End of Year accounts** were circulated. The Clerk explained the changes in responsibilities and role titles resulting from a training course, attended by herself and Councillor Barlow in January of this year. Councillor Barlow will now be known as the Finance Councillor and Councillor Rooth as the Audit Councillor. The Clerk will now become the RFO and is in the process of updating the Financial Regulations, for further discussion at the next ordinary meeting in July. Councillor Rooth will no longer be a signatory as the Audit Councillor must not hold this role.
- It was **resolved that the accounts for 2016-17 be approved.**
- **Audit: The Annual Governance Statement and the Accounting Statement, both relating to 2016-17 were approved** in readiness for the Annual Audit (proposed by Councillor Barlow / seconded by Councillor Foster). The documents were duly signed by the Chair, Responsible Financial Officer / Clerk as required.
- The **Risk Assessment for Financial Control** was reviewed and updated in line with the new roles and job titles outlined above.
- The **Asset List** was also updated as the strimmer and Christmas lights have been disposed of and the Honours Board is the property of the Church.
- An application for the Clerk / RFO to hold a **debit card** on behalf of the Parish Council was approved and signed by the councillors present. This is necessitated by updates to the Financial Regulations which stipulate that the RFO should not use a personal credit or debit card to make purchases on behalf of the Parish Council.

### **4. Chairman's Report**

#### **Report from the Chair 15<sup>th</sup> May 2017**

I believe that this past year has seen progress but there have been some disappointments; however, let's focus on the positive to begin with.

After about 15 years since initial planning approval the Covert Farm site development is now well under way. This will tidy up a very unsightly area of the village and give us 8 new homes, four 3 bedroom and four 2 bedroom dwellings. Savvy Construction have liaised with the Parish Council from the outset and kept us fully informed of their actions.

The Parish Civil Cemetery has caused a number of difficulties over the past months all due to the need to increase the space between plots. However, thanks to Jason and Gill this has been resolved and to keep all in order for the future a new layout map is being produced.

Fritwell now has a weekly bus service to Bicester which is privately run by Heyfordian Coaches. Thanks to extremely careful monitoring of numbers we know that this service is well used. We now need to try to establish a return bus service to Banbury, although it is proving quite difficult to get support or indeed interest in this from providers; nevertheless we will keep trying.

Thanks to Robin England who diligently maintains the speed indicator devices, Gill was able to send some very impressive data to the Roads Policing Department in Bicester. The highest recorded speed was 50+ mph with very few vehicles adhering to the 30 mph limit. It further showed that most speeding and the highest concentration of vehicles occurred at either end of the day, which is when people are using Fritwell as a short cut to get to and from work! We did get an acknowledgement of our data and what was the solution – put a ‘Police Operation in Progress’ notice on the Fewcott Road. We will continue to keep plugging away with the Speedwatch Group but we do need more volunteers. I hope that some traffic calming measures may evolve from the NP as one of the main focuses is traffic – I personally would like to see chicanes at the entrances to the village.

The Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan work continues apace. A complete set of NP policies has now gone through the first stage of a ‘health check’. This threw up quite a list of actions which the Executive Committee have been working on, redrafting policies, etc to conform with existing legislation. We will find out more about this and other actions at the next NP forum meeting which is on Wednesday. It is hoped to submit a Neighbourhood Plan to CDC in the autumn, before that though all parishioners will be given the opportunity to view the final plan. If all goes well every Parish will then be asked to approve the plan – via the ballot box – in 2018. It must be remembered that the NP, if approved, will be an added layer of protection for the village from speculative developers

The Parish Council made two grants this year to Village organisations - £500 to the Forget Me Not Club to help with the cost of trips and £500 to Fritwell Playing Field Management Committee to repair and renew cradle seats to the swings and new seats for the whirligig. This nicely leads on to finances and as you have heard our financial position is positive. I know that Gill with Jason and Jo’s assistance spends a great deal of time ensuring that all is well with finances. We do have some larger bills on the horizon – sorting out the trees in cemetery drive will cost us over £1000 and although the mower is running at the moment (thanks to maintenance by Alistair Lowdon) it is likely that it will not last another season.

Unfortunately the proposed footpath between Ardley and Fritwell seems to have fallen by the wayside. In monetary terms this project was estimated at over £100,000. It was hoped to obtain funding from Virador but when the tip closed they no longer had a statutory duty to plough money back into the community.

The former George and Dragon site seems to be in limbo at the moment after the developer said that it was not viable to erect a village hall and four houses on the site. A planning application for 8 houses on the site has just been withdrawn – we now await further developments. I believe that the village hall committee are looking into all options regarding a new village hall.

The proposed development of land off the Fewcott Road by Cala Homes has caused huge amounts of work all to no avail as Cala did not take on board any of the requests/suggestions that the Parish Council made. The Parish Council could not support this plan, nor indeed could Cherwell District Council. We now await publication of the results of Cherwell’s call for sites (made last year) to see if there are any further sites included for Fritwell. Having said that the date for publication of this information is constantly being extended and we have no idea when we will see it.

I would personally like to thank the Parish Councillors for their support throughout the year – it has not been easy. I know that the Council runs as smoothly as it does because of the efficient way that Gill works whether it is getting to grips with finances or sorting out complaints!

It is now time for someone to take on the role as Chair as I am not seeking re-election. Of course I will give my full support to whoever takes on the role.

Sheila Ultsch

## **5. Election of Officers**

Councillor Foster was elected as **Chair** – proposed by Councillor Stillgoe and seconded by Councillor Rooth.

She then suggested that Councillor Ultsch be elected **Vice-Chair** as her experience and expertise would be invaluable support to the Parish Council as a whole. This was proposed by Councillor Foster and seconded by Councillor Barlow.

**Finance Councillor:** Councillor Barlow, proposed by Councillor Rooth and seconded by Councillor Ultsch.

**Audit Councillor:** Councillor Rooth, proposed by Councillor Barlow, seconded by Councillor Stillgoe.

*(Cheque signatories are Councillors Ultsch, Foster and Barlow.)*

**Village Hall Committee Representative:** Councillor Stillgoe, proposed by Councillor Ultsch and seconded by Councillor Barlow.

*(Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan Representatives remain: Councillors Ultsch and Foster.)*

## **6. AOB: None**

**9. Date of Next Meeting:** to be determined following the Annual Parish Meeting