

Parish Meeting – 7<sup>th</sup> May 2004

May I, as Chairman of the Parish Council, welcome you all to the Annual Parish Meeting, and thank you for coming. The format for tonight will be a short report from me on the Council activities over the last year. After this we will open the meeting for any subject you may wish to raise

At the end of this David Fisher from Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (ORCC) will give us an insight into Village Plans

This evening is an opportunity for members of the Public to ask questions and to make comments and suggestions, however, may I remind everybody that no decisions can be made at this meeting, but relevant items can/will be discussed at our next Council meeting, where decisions on appropriate action could be taken.

We have a full council and the members are Councillors (*Introduce*) Angus Alton, Maureen Cox, Martin Ellis, Jim Flux, Kate Harvey, Rick Haslam, David Rollason, Helen Spencer, Martin Squires Pat Swash, & Geoff Todd, Steve Westley, Johnathan Watts and Brian Wood.. Our Vice Chairman is Martin Squires, who took over when Kate Harvey stepped down for personal reasons.

Our District Councillor is Paul O'Sullivan,

Ray Jelf is our County Councillor.

Our Parish Clerk is Graham Pitts. Graham is still hoping to move into the area even after nearly two years of searching. I know I speak on behalf of all the Councillors in thanking Graham for an excellent job

Last but by no means least we have Sue Gibbs who has the difficult task of Minutes Secretary –our grateful thanks to Sue.

Once the minutes are approved they are posted on the Village web-site thanks to DOL, and of course on the main notice boards in the three villages. People will have noticed that our new Notice Boards, 7 in all, have not all fared well in the weather, and we are having some of them replaced by the supplier.

PC Clive Middleton our Beat Bobby was hoping to be with us tonight but has not been able to make it He did come along to speak to the Council together with Sgt Neville Clayton at our last meeting.

Deddington is potentially a key role model of good rural local policing, which could rolled out across the country

Other people have also address the council.

Linda Davies, who was elected 3 years ago to represent the PC on the Primary School's Board of Governors continues to fill this role even although she is no longer a Councillor She made a detailed report to the Council in February. The Composition of the School's Governing body will be changing in the near future so the PC wrote to the school asking that the Council continues to sponsor one of the Governors. No decision has yet been made on this.

Mary Robinson, a Trustee of the Windmill Community Centre Ltd gave a clear and helpful review of the way the centre is organised and operated together with an explanation of the relationship with the Parish Council. This write up is now available on line. The Windmill Committee decided to change their status to a Company with Limited Guarantee This has been approved and the new company has charitable status. The Parish Council has transferred the 99 year lease to the changed organisation.

Now for a brief report on the highlights of the year.

This last year we have held 11 council meetings all well attended by Councillors, but with a small number of the public on most occasions, but overflowing when the Travellers were an issue.

The Council learned of the plans to have a transit camp on the triangle of land by the OCC Storage site on the Milton Road. There had been no consultation so the PC wrote to The County complaining. We then arranged an open meeting at the Windmill in September. This was attended by Representatives of the County Council and over 300 Parishioners and interested parties.

The County gave a presentation (but it appeared to be poorly prepared and rather unsatisfactory) and then the floor was opened. Many good points were raised and very few answers received.

OCC did, however, produce answers to all the questions at a later date. The meeting gave the County a lot to think about. The Council also made a detailed submission to the County

outlining our position. This was an excellent paper prepared by Martin Squires & the working group and approved by the PC

The outcome of the need for transit sites was that the County went back to the drawing board and the issue is still under review.

The open forum to allow up to 10 minutes for the parishioners to address the Council without prior notice has been taken up on several occasions, with Travellers, Parking and proposed changes at the Royal British Legion Club being key items

In line with good practice the Council has continued the practice of a standard agenda item to allow Councillors to record any declaration of interests at the start of each meeting. The Council has also introduced a freedom of information policy, which we will soon be adding to the Deddington Website. The Council also voted against introducing any allowances for Councillors except for authorised travel and agreed out of pocket expenses

Working groups handle most of the work of the Council: Planning, Environmental & Recreation, Finance & General Purpose, and Highways. These groups review the items in their areas and bring to Council a report and proposals for debate and for Council approval as appropriate. I would like to publicly thank all the Councillors and the Chairs of these groups for their work and support over the year.

We did not win the BKV this last year, but we have entered again this year. As some of you will know we held a clean-up day recently to kick start the programme organised by Martin Squires and other Councillors. Our Thanks to all who helped and may I urge everybody in the parish to help keep things clean and tidy in the coming months.

The footpath from Clifton to Deddington is still on OCC's list and we continue to hope that progress will be made this year. OCC has also agreed to fund the installation of a footpath within the 30MPH limits for Clifton. The Council asked all the resident in Clifton for their views on the alternate solutions and have forwarded our position to OCC Highways, but we

still await progress . Work on a footpath through the gap at Hempton was completed last year but there is still a need to improve the markings and signage.

The County Council has moved on the traffic calming and put down the 30mph marking at the entrances to all three villages, but despite promises we still await the rest of the work. It is now promised for this fiscal year

Speeding continues to cause concern especially on the Hempton road. The Traffic police are frequent visitors handing out tickets to our speeding friends. There are now plans for a crossing to be install near the entrance to the Windmill, which it is felt will slow traffic and improve safety, but again this is taking a long time, despite badgering by the Highway group and the Clerk.

A number of Grants have been made in the last year

5 students for books, Youth Club, Books for the Library. Deddington Market group who received an interest free loan repayable over five years to purchase equipment etc Deddington Map Group have now repaid their loan. Thanks and well done for all the Group's work.

As well, we made contributions to Charities including Katharine House, The Carers Centre, McMillan Nurses.

Funds: At the end of April 2003 the Council had funds of £552K, and at the same time this year we had £552K. In light of falling interest rates the council confirmed its policy of maintaining a level of reserves of at least £450K and slowly raise the Precept to ensure we have a balanced budget. To this end the Precept was raised by a small amount again this year. The Council feel it is right to maintain a level of Capital which will support ongoing projects such as the Village Stewards, grass cutting etc. It has been our practice to be prudent with our funds to ensure some is available for the future.

It should be noted that the precept for Deddington is below our neighbours and way below that of Banbury Bicester and Kidlington

There is still concern over continued future development in the village in light of the Governments plans for additional housing in the South East. Our position will continue to be no more large developments. The PC will continue to monitor the situation and respond as appropriate. Our planning group monitor all planning applications and recommend action as

required. Needless to say there have been several difficult situations. The PC can only comment on application making their thoughts known to CDC. These points should always be based on planning regulations

The Council is still exploring the changes needed in light of the new access law to allow us to continue meeting in the Town Hall. Discussion are in train with the Feoffees on this subject. The Council has also review its meeting dates and time. The result is a decision to stay with the third Wednesday in the Month but starting at 7.45pm

Over the last year other items of note include:

- Inline with new regulation we have appointed an Internal Auditor Pamela Ward
- The installation of a BMX track and Teenage shelter near the all weather court has been completed, our thanks go to Helen Spencer and Pat Swash Richard Spencer and others for their help with this
- The Town Hall has been redecorated as needed.
- Meetings with CDC in various areas. Both CDC and OCC continue to improve their relationships and communications with the Parishes.
- The PC has asked the Windmill Committee to managed the all weather Court. They are currently working on a project to upgrade the pitch to a Tufted sand surface which will increase the usage of this facility
- Meetings and a close co-operation with our local Beat Bobby Clive Middleton
- A ROSPA approved inspector gave us a clean report on the play equipment situated around the parish
- Extra litter bins have been installed. More are planned for this year including an extra dog bins .
- Stonepits in Hempton is a going concern as allotments, but the legal situation with the land registry is still not resolved, but we are hopeful this will soon be received and we will then pay for a water connection to the site.
- The Council continues working with the Colts and the Windmill to try and increase the number of pitches to meet the needs of the various ages and pitch sizes, as the success of the colts grows.

-The future of the British Legion Club and the use of the premises is still ongoing as we wait the deliberations of Solicitors, the Charity Commissioners and others. To remind you if the Royal British Legion Branch folds the use of the premises must first be offered by the Trustees to the Parish Council.

- BAPTIE have started the Bus Connection scheme and the information board has been installed in the under-croft of the Town hall. There is also new lighting.

-new contracts have been awarded for grass cutting around the village, at the Windmill the various play areas and the castle grounds, but in order to keep costs under control the number and areas of cut will be monitored carefully

-the play area in Wimborn Close is now in operation and the sum of money for upkeep costs has been received just recently

-We have arranged weed treatment for all the roadside curbs in Deddington, Clifton and Hempton

-Speed signs will continue to be used during key holiday periods.

-Parking is an on going a problem but we seem to be surviving, despite the loss of a number of places due to building work in the Market Place (I counted 19 work vehicles around the Co-op a day last week.) The work is due to finish next week and the Co-op to reopen, which will ease the parking a little. The scaffolding in the Bullring will be with us for six or so weeks, this is also using several parking spots.

The Council has in the past reviewed a number of possibilities to ease the situation but found no easy solution. The possibility of moving some of the long term parking away from the Market Place is an urgent consideration. The Highways group is again reviewing several options and will report later.

The Co-op has shown a high commitment to the Village and is currently upgrading its premises when complete the Post Office will move to the new shop. We are fortunate to have this facility in our village

-The Millennium Yew Tree which has been nurtured by Cllr Cox for the last 4years has been planted in a permanent location within the Cemetery

-Vandalism is a recurring problem around the Windmill. The Police included the area in their night patrols especially when there are 'certain' events at the centre. This last weekend proved a problem with considerable damage being done to the Cricket Pavilion

A few words of thanks to

The Councillors for their work and support.

Dennis Freeman and Gary Rose who continue to do a lot around the Parish to keep it tidy

Mark Graham Pitts whose work as Clerk is unseen but vital to the village

Joyce Minnear for her work at the Windmill

Norman Stone and the Deddington News for their reporting of events and support.

All who work to keep the Flower troughs looking good at the entrance to the villages

And all the unsung people who do so much to make the Parish of

Deddington/Clifton/Hempton a great place to live.