

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Drayton Parslow Parish held in the Sports & Social Club  
on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2018 at 7:00 p.m.**

**Present:** Cllr. D. Perry, Chairman  
Cllr. J. Bruce, Vice-Chairman  
Cllr. A. Batley  
Cllr. S. Colborne-Baber  
Cllr. H. Harvey

**Also present:** Deborah O'Brien, Minute-taker; County Cllr J. Blake, District Cllr N. Blake. Mr R. Wemyss; B. Norman; PCSO T. Hobson (Cllrs Blake, Mr Wemyss, Mr Norman and PCSO Hobson all left after giving their respective reports)

1. **Receive Apologies:** Cllr S. Spavins, Mrs K. Foley (DPSSC), Mr Mrs Preston (Greenacre Hall & PCC)
2. **To confirm the minutes** of the last meeting - The minutes of the last meeting held on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2017 were confirmed as a true record. (with the correction of the date shown – 2017 not 2016)
3. **Chairman Cllr David Perry welcomed those in attendance. To facilitate personal schedules, reports were received as follows:**
4. **County Cllr Janet Blake:**

Minerals and Waste: A 20-year forward plan for the future of mineral prospecting and waste in Bucks has been devised for submission to DCLG to ensure a steady and adequate supply of aggregates, and forecast future waste management needs. The plan proposes using significant amounts of employment land (50ha) for new waste facilities, and includes Hydellane Farm near Buckingham, Tingewick Road, Buckingham, Rabans Lane, Aylesbury, Stocklake Industrial area, Aylesbury, and the Woodlands/ARLA site, Aylesbury. It's intended to review the plan every five years.

Active Bucks: Two new programmes will be set up over the next 18 months as part of this initiative, one to target older adults aged 65-plus and another to focus on engaging men and the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities, cost between £2-£4 per session. Information can be found on the Active Bucks website.

Modern Slavery victim support pilot: This six-month project, started in March, was set up by the County Council's Community Safety Team and will raise awareness, offer support and help those affected by exploitation, or thought to be at risk, to regain control of their lives.

County Council Budget: A revenue budget for day-to-day spending of £336m and capital spending of £122.6m has been agreed for this financial year. This includes a £26.7m investment in highways infrastructure and £36.6m on provision of school places. There is now no government revenue support grant for BCC. A 2.99% increase in standard council tax, along with a 3% Social Care precept, will also apply this year and equates to approximately £1.40 per week for a Band D property. In addition to the County Council budget, BCC receives £430m from government, £310m of which is passed on to schools and the remainder funds early years and high needs.

Children's Services: An OFSTED report published earlier this year again found children's services remain 'inadequate'. Work is ongoing regarding improvement. The proposals consulted on last year for the Early Help Service for Families were not as specific as residents would have liked, so more detailed proposals will be put forward and a revised consultation will follow soon. Therefore, BCC will not be implementing the Cabinet decision on 8<sup>th</sup> January in relation to moving to the new service.

Mobile Libraries: An official report on the future of this service is due to be published shortly.

Transport for Bucks: A £2.78m programme to repair the county's worst pothole 'farms' is to be launched. £1.78m has been received from the Department of Transport repair grants for a plane and patch scheme to resurface stretches of road with multiple defects and will target the county's worst hit roads. Additionally, plans to seek approval for the release of £1m from the Council's reserves will provide more than double the amount of money normally spent on potholes. TfB will continue with the £2m programme to repair potholes and jet patching will be deployed.

A new 'Fix My Street' reporting tool is now available online that's easier to use and more comprehensive for residents.

Oxford-Cambridge arc corridor: Three options have been identified by government: A – southern, Thame past Aylesbury and out to the Stoke Hammond bypass via the A418, B – central, following the route of east-west rail and northern – C – that follows the A421. BCC's Cabinet's preference is for A. An expressway is proposed within the ultimately selected corridor.

Modernising local government: The Secretary of State for local communities has issued a 'minded-to' decision for a single unitary authority in Buckinghamshire. The four district councils in the county believe establishing two unitary authorities, one in the south of Bucks and the other in the north, would serve residents better. Further representations on the matter have been invited by the SoS, now James Brokenshire, before any definitive decision is made.

## **5. District Cllr Neil Blake:**

During the last year we've seen the successful completion of the staff culture change programme. Briefly, every member of staff – with the exception of the three directors – has gone through an assessment process to make sure that we've got the right staff in the right jobs. This has resulted in the loss of about 10% of our staff, mainly because digital technology and artificial intelligence are now being used to provide up to date information to residents rather than the reliance on person to person contact to answer queries.

The savings made have enabled us to develop a balanced budget for the next four years without cutting services.

The culture change programme, together with our digital solutions, has attracted the interest of other local authorities across the country who are similarly suffering from cuts to the Government Grant and we're now selling our ideas to them – generating over £150,000 of income for AVDC in the last year alone.

I won't go into the details of our digital programme but, in a nutshell, we're using technology to analyse and answer emails automatically, broaden the amount of information and services available to residents via "My Account" 24/7, using webchat to answer specific questions and developing a "skill" for Alexa that will enable disadvantaged residents to remain in their homes and enjoy a better quality of life.

2017 saw the second anniversary of the Vale Lottery and Tony Hadley, of Spandau Ballet, came along to help celebrate the occasion – along with many of the organisations who've benefitted from the scheme. We've now got about 160 organisations signed up and are selling the lottery to other local authorities.

The New Homes Bonus scheme has continued to allow us to pass on some of the funds received from Government to local communities (£5.8m allocated so far). AVDC continues to be one of only a handful of LAs who pass on NHB to communities – the rest use these funds to shore up their revenue budgets.

The regeneration of Aylesbury Town Centre continues apace with the construction of four restaurants and a couple of retail units on the ground floor of a new development with 47 residential units above. AVDC will retain ownership of the ground floor units, generating rental income for the Council. The project is more or less on schedule and is due for completion later this year. The topping out ceremony took place a couple of weeks ago.

The master plan for the rest of the town centre is being updated to include properties that aren't currently in the Council's ownership. Details will be made public as soon as possible.

The Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan has now been submitted to the Government Inspector. It includes nearly 29,000 new homes across The Vale, 9,000 of which are in respect of the unmet needs of authorities in the south of the county. We're obliged to review the plan within two years because Government has announced even higher housing numbers for most authorities in the south-east and these will need to be accommodated. East-West rail will become a reality and this, together with an Oxford-Cambridge Expressway, will open up new housing growth areas that will help to facilitate the increased housing numbers I've just mentioned. There are three corridors within which the expressway will run – the southern one that takes a route from Thame past Aylesbury and out to the Stoke Hammond by-pass via the A418, a central one that follows the route of east-

west rail and a northern one that follows the A421. AVDC's cabinet is recommending a hybrid of the southern and central corridors and has asked Government for a meeting to discuss our proposals – given that 70% of any route would pass through Aylesbury Vale.

Unitary. The secretary of state has issued a “minded-to” decision to support a single unitary in Bucks (excluding Milton Keynes). This will do away with the four Districts and create a new authority based on the geography of Bucks County Council. Needless to say, we're not happy with that “minded to” decision because we honestly believe that local communities are best served by two smaller unitaries – north and south of the county - and that view has been strongly supported by Parish Councils across the County. Two recent Parishes events showed support of 81% and 80% for the two unitary solution and BCC's own survey showed 29% more support for two unitaries than for a single. I'm grateful to all Parishes who've made written representations. We've asked the Secretary of State to explain the rationale behind his minded to decision but, as yet, we haven't received a response.

Since that request was made there's been a change to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government – Sajid Javid moving to the Home Office with James Brokenshire taking his place. We've written to James asking for an early meeting to discuss reorganisation in Bucks.

6. **PCSO Tina Hobson** reported the crime figures in Drayton Parslow for the past year which were: 1 Burglary other than a dwelling; 2 other thefts; 6 criminal damage and 2 thefts from a vehicle. A tool marking event will be held 12<sup>th</sup> May at The Boot, Soulbury 2pm. Residents are recommended to have their equipment marked/made identifiable as it is the necessary to retrieve it if recovered after theft.
7. **Mr Barrie Norman spoke on behalf of the Cricket Club:** He thanked the Parish Council for its support with mowing equipment and servicing. He hopes that some of the flooding issues may be reduced once the ditching clearance has been achieved. It is necessary for the access ground to be drier before this can be performed. He also requested that the CC is allowed to install a temporary boundary fence during the playing season to prevent ball loss. Mr Norman & Mr Colby are to re-visit the levelling/drainage issue to update costings to see if a long term solution to the flooding from the lower rec can be achieved. Mr Norman also recommended taking guidance from the outdoor gym manufacturer regarding required groundworks to avoid drainage issues prior to its installation.
8. **Mr Richard Wemyss spoke on behalf of the Greenacre Hall Committee:** The Hall is financially sound with a small surplus. Thanks to S106 funding agreed by the PC they have been able to install electronic blinds making more activities possible. Short Mat Bowls has been a successful addition. They do have some free periods for hire including Monday evenings. Further committee members would be very welcome. It was suggested that the PC should pay £25/year for storage of a filing cabinet on the premises. A request was also made to inspect a roll of matting stored in the garage to see if it relates to the MUGA.
9. **Mr Wemyss also spoke on behalf of the Parochial Church Council (PCC):** He thanked the Parish Council for its continued support of £750 towards maintenance of the Churchyard. He also thanked the PC for its support of the recent planning application for bathroom facilities/annex to the Church.
10. **Cllr Perry submitted the Chairman's report via e-mail:**

#### **General**

The village road was resurfaced in the summer bringing relief from the potholes that plagued us. We still have issues with drainage from the upper and lower recreation fields. These have been particularly obvious with the recent wet weather, with the entrance to the lower rec in particular being very boggy. If we manage to progress levelling the upper rec we may be able to add some drainage to mitigate the effects.

We held an extraordinary meeting to discuss right of way issues raised when the Norths closed a field previously used by dog walkers. This was in no large part due to the inconsiderate behaviour of the dog walkers including non-collection of dog faeces and the worrying of livestock. People with horses were reminded that they could purchase a license to hack on the North's land.

The developer that had secured planning permission for a solar farm has withdrawn, but a renewables partnership is investigating the possibility of completing it, subject to the ability to sell the green electricity.

Alan Burden is now covering the whole village for devolved services; the quality of cutting has markedly improved on the lower part of the village as a result.

### **Planning**

The year has been dominated by the application for 24 homes by the Guinness partnership on land owned by Carington. This was socialised by the developer at a public exhibition in April 2017 attended by John Bercow and after considerable delay was refused by AVDC in March 2018, much to the relief of the village. The developer of course has 6 months to appeal, and we may be wary because the development of 5 houses in Chapel Lane was allowed on appeal, with the inspector showing little regard or knowledge of the circumstances of the village in his decision, including school bus services as evidence of good commuting transport links.

The Chapel Lane development is nevertheless going ahead after some adjustment down from executive homes and with some stipulations from the planners on their access and other matters.

We still have unresolved issues with a mobile home on Dorcas lane and the eyesore that is the mobile advertisement for the Hounslow Estate off road experience.

Meanwhile, the Village Neighbourhood Planning group has made good progress, with village survey results collated and presented to the village at several public consultation events, and the initial draft of the plan nearing completion.

After what seemed an eternity and serial solicitors we finally normalised the sliver of land that was never registered with land registry which sits at the front of the sports and social club.

### **Broadband**

The efforts by AVB to deliver fibre to the curb side in the village finally failed after considerable delays and assurances, the assets being purchased by Gigaclear. We see evidence of a much wider (though still not universal for the parish) service build out by Gigaclear and there is greater confidence that we will at some point in 2018 see lit fibre to the curb.

### **Traffic**

Traffic continues to grow through the village. We have been able to secure £80K in new homes bonus money to undertake a number of the mitigation measures that were identified in the survey by Ringway Jacobs (as TFB), we are grateful to the LAF for supporting the cost of this initial survey.

Parking during school drop off and pickup continues to be an issue with periodic appeals being made to parents to be more considerate.

### **Financial**

The Council has approval to use its remaining \$106 monies from Fox Lane for blinds for the Greenacre hall. Additional funds have been allocated for a petanque court and we are investigating the possibility of fitness equipment on the upper rec.

Short mat bowls is now available in the hall.

We have replaced some of the elements of the play equipment in the lower rec and David Wise has kindly undertaken some repairs for us. Thanks to Sue Spavins for keeping an inspection diary of the lower rec play equipment.

We have agreed a request for a Precept for 2018/9 to be set at £32,620, this is an increase of 5.7% over 2017/8 which does not completely cover our anticipated increased costs but which we believe to be fair.

Thanks to Peter Moore and Michael Thum for their time on the PC having both resigned during the year.

### **11. Mrs Kirsty Foley submitted the following report on behalf of Drayton Parslow Sports & Social Club (DPSSC) via e-mail:**

Overall the club is continuing to thrive. We have come back from the brink of financial ruin and are now running at a healthy profit and have even brought our "savings" up to a better level to help buffer us for any unforeseen issues that may arise in the future. Profits are largely due to the support of Abbey Smith and her

Bridge club, whose regular bookings provide significant hall hire income for the club, but is also helped by an increase usage of the clubhouse overall (see below).

We continually strive to make cost savings, to make our finances more efficient. We have recently had to padlock our large bins, so that we are not paying to dispose of other people's rubbish. We are currently still paying for our own Broadband (which is essential for running our Heating via Hive) as the PC-funded broadband that serves Greenacre hall has proved of insufficient strength to also serve the Clubhouse. We are hopeful that when eventually the village gets super-fast broadband, we can then use the one supply which will further save the S&SC money.

We are delighted by the current high usage of the clubhouse, which proves its demand and value as a community amenity. Whilst Bridge is a major user, we are very pleased to also be the regular home of PC meetings, Neighbourhood Plan meetings, the Mobile Post Office (supported with Tea and Coffee by the Church), Whist Drive, Dominoes club, Bingo, as well as numerous ad-hoc bookings for Parties, Wakes, Cricket Umpire Training, Church Sunday bookings..... – all very welcome hires which show how well the clubhouse serves our local community.

We were thrilled to be successful in our bid for S106 funds, and are very much looking forward to being the provider of yet another sporting and social activity (Petanque) within the village, to further increase the options available to our local community.

Membership is up year-on-year, again largely driven by more Bridge players becoming members, with Cricket still to renew their memberships once the Cricket season starts. The S&SC have supported the Cricket Club by purchasing their new Match balls for them (£400). We are hoping they will repay this investment by volunteering to join the bar rota (with Cricket running 1 session every 6wks).

A dearth of volunteer bar staff continues to be an issue for the club – multiple appeals in VN have not produced any more volunteers to join our team. Whilst we are just about coping to open for 2 hours every Sunday lunchtime (in support of the long-standing village dominoes players), the lack of staff is always apparent during village events (e.g. VPA show) when we do not have enough volunteers to adequately run the bar facility. This is something we continually try to address, but thus far are failing on.

Since we stopped running an open bar on Fridays our bar stock levels have decreased to the point where it is not viable (either financially or from a volume/wastage perspective) to order beer keg supplies direct from the brewery. The Three Horseshoes Pub has been our saviours on this, and have stepped into the breach allowing us access their own suppliers. We are incredibly grateful to them for this invaluable support, and are sure that the community as a whole are appreciative of their support and assistance.

We continue to work in a collaborative way with Greenacre Hall – we are very grateful to Richard Wemyss for auditing our accounts, and to Carol Wemyss for organising PAT and Fire testing on behalf of both buildings. The club continue to try to work with Greenacre to minimise the parking disruption caused when their Auction hire is on (at the same time as Bridge in the clubhouse). We know that the auction brings in vehicles from long distances (Daventry, Oxford, Hemel Hempstead, Luton, Hitchin and North London), and we are grateful to Abbey's Bridge players in continuing to be accommodating by leaving the 9 central spaces in the top car-park vacant specifically for the Auction to use. We know that this parking situation is exacerbated during school pick-up times, but are confident that Greenacre "policing" those central 9 spaces to ensure they are kept empty for when an auction vehicle should turn up will mean that their hall hire remains secure. We have shared our club booking diary with Greenacre Hall so, moving forwards, any other booking clashes can hopefully be managed successfully between the 2 buildings.

Following the parking issues that occurred when Greenacre was hired out to the 3 schools (with all Mursley and Drayton parents turning up for pick-up), Abbey has pro-actively arranged for Mr May (Acting Head teacher) to let her know in future when the schools are using the hall for a large event, as her Bridge players are always willing to be flexible and she can delay her start-times to avoid a large clash with school parents in future (at the moment she has shifted her start times earlier to minimise clashes with the official Auction start times).

In terms of Maintenance: Following a demand from Anglian Water after they conducted a Water Survey, we have tapped off the stop-cock that was in the middle of the Rec ground. We have also been very fortunate that David Wise has been helping us with some much overdue Maintenance to the club – including changing the rotten external Cricket door to a new door that also has a fire-escape push bar in case of emergency, and fixing the roof that had some damage from rogue cricket balls (maybe we should have caveated our purchase of new balls for the team that they need to replace the next roof tiles themselves!).

After many years of service Mark Greaves has stepped down from the Committee (as Cricket Representative), and has been replaced by Barrie Norman. We are very grateful to Mark for all of his time spent attending committee meetings, providing sage advice to us all.

Overall, we are hopeful that our current success (both financially and in terms of being heavily used by the local community) continues throughout the coming year.

Thank-you as ever to all our Committee Members and Volunteers who continue to give their time and resources to keeping the Clubhouse running.

CLlr Perry thanked everyone for attending and the Annual Parish Meeting closed. (PC meeting followed)