

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Kingham Parish
Held on Wednesday 21 March 2018, 7.40 pm**

201803APM

Present: Cllrs K Hartley, J Harvey, J Dewar, R Sale, B Hughes, M Dare, J Warne

Clerk: Anne Ogilvie

Also present: Cllr Colston, Cllr Hibbert-Biles, five members of the public.

1 Apologies – Cllr Beaney

2 Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved and signed.

3 Parish Council Chairman's Report

The Chairman, Cllr Hartley, gave his report.

Finance – the budget for the coming year has been set, a precept figure of £20,085 was agreed, to take into account inflation and the rise in costs, for example the mowing cost will rise by 3.5% this year.

Planning – in the past year, there have been many planning applications, some of which have caused problems and disruptions. The Chairman regretted that the selection of Kingham as England's favourite village seems to have been followed by a large number of planning applications and second home/holiday let creation.

The low cost project at Bury Close has been completed, but the Council were disappointed that the selection criteria did not appear to favour local people as far as they had been given to believe when they approved the project.

The sixteen house development in Church Street has caused problems with traffic. The groundwork contractor going into liquidation has slowed the works, so the Church Street road closure is on hold for the short term.

The proposed change of the Mill House Hotel to a care community was not popular. WODC have not yet made a decision on this proposal.

The construction on Cozens Lane has not caused many problems.

The application for an HMO in Thresher's Yard was refused. An application has now been made to convert the offices into houses. The Council were concerned that this change would reduce the employment opportunities in Kingham.

The application for 4 houses at Greenacres, Churchill Road, near the school, has been amended to 3 houses. This development may cause problems for traffic during the construction phase, and will add the current construction traffic in Kingham.

Lengthsman – the Council have employed a Lengthsman to undertake small maintenance tasks to keep Kingham tidy. This has been a successful venture, and the Chairman thanked the Lengthsman for their work.

Village Car Park – the car park has been resurfaced in stone.

Superfast broadband – superfast broadband is now available in the remainder of the village.

Play area resurfacing – the play area will be resurfaced in the summer with a resin mix.

Defibrillator – the Events Committee will be purchasing a new defibrillator.

Village Projects – projects which had been raised during the Neighbourhood Plan/Village Plan discussions included upgrading the Daylesford Track, the creation of a village website (the Council is currently concentrating on creating a new Council site), and changing the parish boundary to include Kingham Station and surrounding houses.

National Park status – there has been discussion regarding changing the Cotswold AONB to National Park Status. This would be a long term project, and is being promoted by the Cotswold Conservation Board.

Unitary authority – the idea of creating a unitary authority in Oxfordshire is currently on hold.

Signed

(Chairman)

Date

Financial Report – unaudited Parish Council accounts 2017/18 to date

Receipts **£26,411.56**

Payments **£27,019.19**

Receipt details

Precept	£19,500.00
WODC grant	£274.00
OALC transparency grant	£527.48
OCC grass cutting grant	£707.25
Kingham Church – mowing	£180.00
100 Club receipts	£1,436.00
Heyden Field rent	£840.00
Kingham Events	£150.00
VAT refund	£2,393.58
PAYE refund	£403.25

Payment details

Clerk salary	£7,055.71
Employer NI	£65.62
Rents	£140.00
Grass cutting and vegetation maintenance	£4,679.95
Parish maintenance	£4,437.59
Utilities	£60.83
100 Club prizes	£960.00
2016 election charge	£99.16
Council insurance	£653.96
Village Hall donations	£4,372.02
Subscriptions	£321.02
Donations	£650.00
Training	£234.00
Website costs	£107.10
Council administration	£1,280.38
Miscellaneous	£175.00
VAT element	£1,726.85

4 County Councillor Report – Cllr Hilary Hibbert-Biles

The last year has been difficult for the Council given the government reductions in funding. Since 2010 the Council has saved £360 million. This has been set against a backdrop of the number adult care packages we provide doubling since 2010 and the number of looked after children increasing by 60%. Most of that money has been reinvested in our child and adult services. With these sorts of budget pressures we have to target our resources to provide vital services to those vulnerable adults and children who need them most. Because of difficult decisions that have been taken in the last two years, the Council unlike Northamptonshire, has produced a balanced budget which focuses on Adult Social Care and Children's Social Care. Our financial position is extremely tight and we are working to deliver the savings in the medium term financial plan.

Signed

(Chairman)

Date

People are rightly concerned about the impact of savings on services and especially on the voluntary services supporting our communities.

It is interesting that since the revamp of Children's Centres, 30 community groups have stepped in to provide stay and play for families with small children. That includes St Mary's School in Chipping Norton.

We have provided financial help but it is those community groups that make it happen.

These are some of the services we deliver:

- Assessing the care needs of over 10,000 vulnerable people and rising
- Providing long term social care for 6,500 adults
- Organising a million hours a year of support as well as assisting thousands of informal carers
- Assessing almost 4,000 children, including over 1,500 child protection issues
- Supporting currently 700 looked-after children and 600 on a child protection plan
- Working to turn around 550 families with real problems so they can thrive
- Registering 20,000 births, deaths and marriages
- Maintaining over 3,000 miles of road
- Issuing or renewing over 40,000 concessionary bus passes in a year
- Disposing of 300,000 tonnes of waste
- Responding to over 5,000 fire and rescue incidents
- Responsibility for the Public Health of all the residents in Oxfordshire (including School Health Nurses, Health Visitors, Sexual Health Services, smoking cessation services, drug and alcohol services)
- Responsibility for the attainment of pupils in all schools even those in academies
- Responsibility for the placement of pupils

The Government has recognised the pressures by allowing the Council to raise Council Tax by 3% to pay for social care as part of the Council Tax, and this year the government enabled us to raise Council Tax by a further 1% in recognition of pressures on all social services (children). This means that the Council Tax will be raised by the maximum allowed without triggering a referendum to 5.99%.

Government Funding was announced last week after the budget papers had gone to press and we have been allocated a further £1.4 million which is welcome news for Oxfordshire.

The government has also provided an extra £916,000 this year for Highways which will be spent on patching in the spring.

The Council wish to take a long term view spending less on pot holes and more on repairs that will last for years.

Last week the Cabinet agreed to sign the Oxfordshire Growth Deal worth £215 million. These are large amounts of funding that will fund infrastructure needed to support predicted growth in jobs in Oxfordshire and ensure our economy thrives.

In addition to the £155 million for planning and delivering improved infrastructure we have been given £60 million to deliver more affordable homes across Oxfordshire. This deal needed all District Councils to sign as well as the County Council. I am pleased that sense prevailed and all Councils agreed that this deal was much needed in Oxfordshire.

The Council have also put another £500,000 into homelessness which is a growing problem. Currently the County Council fund £1 million towards homelessness even though it is the statutory duty of the District Councils. Oxford City put in £137,000 and the other Districts even less.

This year each Councillor will have a budget of £15,000 to spend in their division. For me, I would like, where possible, match funding which means £30,000 spent in the division.

I am still the Cabinet Member for Education and Public Health which is a heavy workload.

Regarding the Unitary Council, after the recent news of Northamptonshire and Bedfordshire, this may not be dead in water.

Cllr Biles took this opportunity to pay tribute to Rodney Rose, who died this weekend.

Signed

(Chairman)

Date

She thanked the Council for their work in the community.

A query was made to the Councillor regarding how OCC could ensure that utility companies filled in holes properly when they have dug up the road, as poorly finished roads are requiring remedial works.

5 District Councillor Report – Cllr Nigel Colston

Myself and Andrew Beaney represent the Kingham, Rollright and Enstone ward of the WODC, a Ward of some 3000 electorate. Andrew tends to look after Enstone and Rollright Parishes matters and I am allocated to Kingham.

The District Council is responsible for:

- Environmental and waste services
- Planning
- Housing
- Leisure
- Electoral services, local democracy and collecting of Council Tax

Environmental Services. A new system of recycling was introduced last October with new Contractors collecting the waste. This has not been without problems, but the service has settled down now. Environment services also covers pest control, care of town centres, fly tipping, litter and dog fouling, and noise issues.

Local planning - The Local Plan is before the Inspector. It went before Inspector in January 2016 and was returned back with recommendations that the target of some 10,000 houses was upped considerably. Signs are more encouraging that it will be passed this year, which may give greater protection for AONB. It has been some years in making and should run until 2031. Oxfordshire is to have 100,000 new homes, with 16,000 in WODC, this includes about 2,750 of Oxford City's unmet requirement.

Both Cllr Beaney and myself are on the Uplands Planning Committee. There is not much choice of Councillors to sit on this Committee. I believe that this provides the communities with better protection, as I am able to listen to comments and take them on board when making decisions.

Housing - Provision of affordable housing and working with the Housing Associations remains a very important part of the council duty.

Leisure - The District Council looks after some park and play areas especially in the larger towns, sports pitches and leisure centres.

Electoral services and local democracy - The District Council are responsible for collecting Council Tax

The Council budget was set 3 weeks ago and it is intended to protect services and maintain grants to the voluntary sector despite a reduction in Central Government funding. The Council achieved a £1m saving by sharing services with Cotswold and Forest of Dean Councils and more recently the formation of Publica will bring estimated savings of 1.5m per annum. Council tax goes up £2.75 to £94.38 for band D property, the second lowest in the country.

Unitary Council - The formation of a Unitary Council was talk of 2016/17. Although in theory it is not entirely dead but with all six Oxfordshire Authorities agreeing to work together on a housing and growth deal it is unlikely to proceed any further at present.

Free Parking/low council tax - Despite pressure on infrastructure West Oxfordshire is a great place to live and work. It is an affluent area and a victim of its own success, with Daylesford, Soho Farmhouse and various national events and fairs bringing pressure on our villages and infrastructure. It has celebrity status, which may or may not be a good thing.

Proposed National Park – Cllr Colston is a representative on the Cotswold Conservation Board. Changing the AONB to a National Park is on their agenda. A decision would have to be made by the Secretary of State. He is aware that some local MPs are interested in progressing this change. A decision about changing may not take as long as the previous NP creations, but may be more complex as the AONB straddles 15 local authorities.

Signed

(Chairman)

Date

6. Thames Valley Police Report – no report had been received.

7. Open meeting

7.1 The issue of parking at the John Radcliffe Hospital was put to Cllr Hibbert-Biles. There are plans which may move patients away from the Radcliffe to medical facilities in the surrounding area, which is hoped will alleviate some of the parking issues.

7.2 It was queried as to who is responsible to reinstate the verges which have been damaged in during building works in Manor Farm Close. Cllr Hibbert-Biles stated that she believed this issue should be covered in the planning conditions as being the responsibility of the owner or contractor. It was suggested that photographs could be taken to prove who caused the damage, and that the Council would then be in a position to request restoration works, or forward to the appropriate authority.

7.3 The WODC green waste licence was raised. The fee is paid for the year, but the terms and conditions allow the Council to cancel collections when they felt it necessary without any recompense to the licence holder. This was felt to be unacceptable. Cllr Colston stated that he would look into this.

8 AOB

8.1 The Council informed the meeting that the Council has a vacancy for a Councillor.

Meeting Closed at 8.50 pm

Signed

(Chairman)

Date