

FILKINS & BROUGHTON POGGS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of the Parish Council on 5th May 2021 at
7.30 pm at Filkins Village Hall

	<p><u>PRESENT</u> Cllr Ford, Cllr Walsh, Cllr Robbins, Cllr Tridgell, Cllr Jones, Members of the Public Nick Leverton, Richard Martin, Mary Bohm, Sam McIntyre, Robert Higham, Jude Oliver Jones, Andy Hoad</p>	<p><u>ACTION</u></p>
1	<p><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> Cllr Irwin-Singer, Teresa Smallbone</p>	
2	<p><u>ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL PARISH MEETING ON 14th MAY 2019</u> All agreed</p>	
3	<p><u>CHAIRMANS REPORT</u> As attached. Richard Martin asked with reference to 2019 minutes signage – this was erected where PC is intending to do projects in the village that will change the look of the village more consultation should be undertaken. If more consultation was taken the signage may be different. The Council is doing good things but no one knows about it – resume is put in newsletter but we are not consulted. As precept has increased – approx. £40 per head- more discussion would be a good idea. More consultation and communication is needed by email if possible. Communication is improving – issues with the signage have been covered – article was put in the Newsletter and views were received. Were residents happy. Yes – the feedback we received on the change in signage was positive. This was documented in the Parish Council minutes. Communicating with residents is an important meeting. Where do we stand with the precept in West Oxfordshire. Just above midway. Precept only increased by £500. 44% of our precept is spent on grasscutting and keeping the village tidy. Richard Martin asked that it is minuted that the village thanks Chris Maunder for his works over the years.</p>	
4	<p><u>TREASURER'S REPORT</u> As attached. Accounts were accepted by the meeting.</p>	
5	<p><u>COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT</u> No report presented</p>	
6	<p><u>DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORT</u> No report was presented.</p>	
7	<p><u>TO TAKE VIEWS FROM THOSE PRESENT AT THE APM</u> We have put two items on the agenda for discussion as we would ask that members have a thoughts. Neighbourhood Watch – raised by Lorraine Chitty. Due to the spate of crime in the village this may be a topic the village may like to look at. We do get updates but we have not signed up to this. It does need to be led across the community and not driven by the Parish Council. Does anyone have any thoughts. Mary Bohm stated that, she is not sure that this works in Broughton Poggs. None of the houses look onto the road and most people are at work all day so it would not be easy to see if there is any unusually activity. We cannot report every car which does not belong to the village and it is not practical. From what we gathered we do think that this has been suggested before and not a project the village wanted to embrace. We will put out towards a broader audience via the CLP. Second item is the playground – we are very aware that it is now in a condition that it is brought up to date and improved. There is no particular group in the CLP who think it is a priority but the Parish Council think it is at the centre of our village it needs to be addressed. We will be applying for Lottery funding and we will put it out to the village via the CLP or in the</p>	

	<p>newsletter. Sam McIntyre the playground has not looked great for a while and would be happy to help. Jude Oliver Jones – we do not know how many youngsters are in the village and it may be time to look at exercise equipment for older people. We are very lucky to have quite a large area which could accommodate more equipment. This will be opened up if anyone wants to be involved.</p> <p>Cllr Robbins did leaflet drop every house in the village last year for a meeting and the only response was 2 grand parents who came – it is hard work getting people interested. He is happy to push forward but some input would be welcomed. We will move to create awareness. We are looking at funding to start with to kick start the project.</p> <p>Richard Martin asked about the Village Hall- it is opening tomorrow and then properly on May 17th. £27k has been received in Covid Grants and the Committee are going to ask what residents want for the next 10 years. It is likely that the use of the hall will change. Any ideas please get in touch with Richard. In the next few months some plans will come forward.</p> <p>What is the state of the village orchard in Hardcastle’s field as it will come to fruit. Andy Hoad replied there is not much to report – all the trees planted have survived and flourished. In the next 2-3 years they will mature enough. If people enjoy what is there we could plant more or leave as is. It is up to the village how it wants to move forward. The CLP are touching on this under the Environment and we can liaise with them on this. One thing that was considered is that the current gate will need to be replaced soon and it may be a thought to set the gate back off the layby and install a pedestrian gate on one side. The field would be secured against vehicle access but residents would be able to access the fruit. The gate does have a limited life so it would be a good idea to consider this.</p> <p>No other items were forthcoming so the meeting was closed.</p>	
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Filkins & Broughton Poggs Parish Council

Chairman's Annual Report 20201

The past year has certainly been an unusual one for us all, the Parish Council is aware of the effects COVID-19 has had on individuals and businesses in our community but I, like I suspect most of you have done, cannot remember how many times we have said to each other how blessed we are to live where we do and on behalf of all of the Parish Councillors would like to thank all those in our community who make it so.

The most obvious impact of Gov UK COVID-19 guidelines for the Parish Council has been the remit to hold meetings virtually, Zoom meetings have had their challenges, but we're not alone in that. However, a particular benefit has been that it has enabled our busy District Councillor, Suzi Coul, to join our meetings on a regular basis.

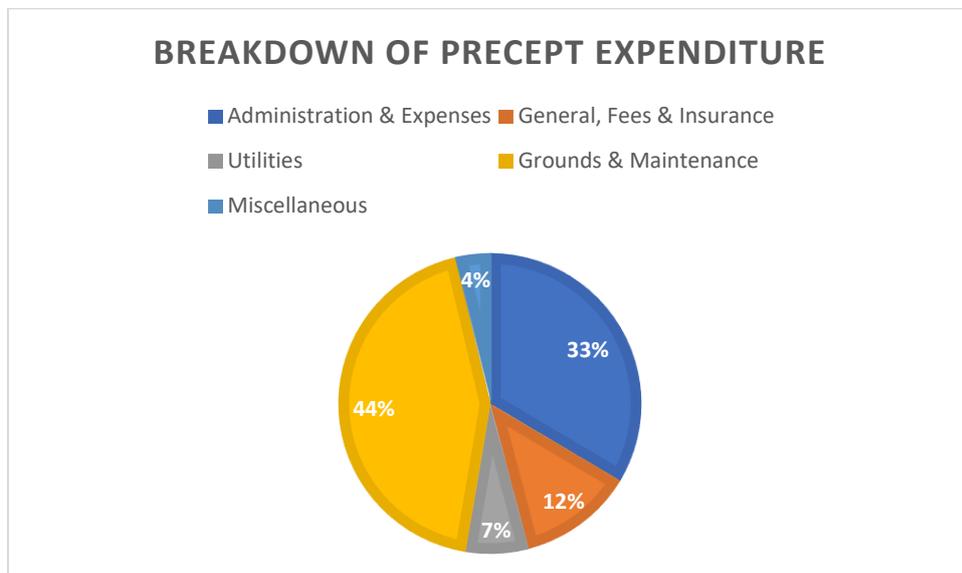
There is still some debate as to how Parish Councils should hold meetings going forward and indeed this meeting was brought forward, as many councils have done so, due to change in law on 7th May and the uncertainties of holding a physical meeting whilst under current COVID-19 restrictions.

Whilst on the topic of meetings, one of the small changes the PC has made this year is to move meetings to a more regular schedule of the 2nd Wednesday of the month.

Before going onto give a review of our activities, and the RFO presenting her report, I wanted to highlight in a more easily digested form just how we spend the precept monies we receive.

Firstly, what is the precept? This is the money the PC receives from WODC which forms part of your Council Tax Bill, in 2020 this was £17,711 and as you will have seen on your recently received bill for 2021 this has increased to £18,000. But where does this go?

The following chart shows the breakdown for 2020 to meet the required administration cost of the PC, along with such things as insurance, subscriptions to Council bodies, audit fees, and safety inspections. Keeping the village in good order is a hefty proportion of the spend but covers our groundsman, taking care of the cemetery and war memorial, maintenance of Hardcastles Field and Vale Wood, and of course dog waste bins which we spent almost 3% of the precept on last year.



Generally the business of the PC has been able to carry on relatively normally during the past year although, understandably, at a rather more protracted pace in some areas.

Planning & Cemetery

- There were 12 planning applications in the Parish this year most of which are inline with our Planning Policy others were not, and we comment accordingly as Planning Consultees.
- Planning notices are now only displayed on the boundaries of the properties they apply to but the PC is considering how to increase awareness of applications within the village e.g notification in St Filica newsletter
- There are plans underway to improve the paths, trim trees and generally improve appearance of the cemetery after a lengthy process to obtain quotes.

Village Matters

- Progress on the Community Led plan has been one of the areas that has been most hampered by COVID-19 this year but there is now a focus on a range of topics the Steering Committee under the Chairmanship of Teresa Smallbone will be moving forward on this year and the PC will liaise and support.
- Keeping the grass around the village under control is a major task in the summer months, now undertaken very ably by our groundsman Les Goward. Persistent intervention and some detailed map work by the Clerk has resulted in Cottsway taking responsibility for cutting the Gassons on a regular basis potentially 16 times this year
- We have nearly finished the program to replace the old sodium streetlights with more efficient LED ones so saving on maintenance and running costs.
- We adopted the village telephone box which will be made watertight and tidied up so that it can be handed over to a community group for on-going use.
- The bund continues to perform well and a recent inspection confirms that maintenance mostly undertaken by Cllr Robbins is keeping it in good order.
- We have meet with the Ernest Cook Trust to keep them up-to-date with PC activities and request made regarding maintenance of the borrowing pond willows and possibility of extending the kick about field.
- Other village issues such as repair of white bridge and village signage have been instigated.

Village centre

- Sadly, after many avenues had been explored, the retirement of our Postmistress also meant the closure of the Post Office at the village centre. However, discussions are still continuing to try and establish a regular mobile service of some description. In recognition of Ena Constables 30+ years' service to the village the PC gave her a small token of thanks.
- The first phase of the toilet refurbishment has now been completed and will be open permanently from 30th May. The final stage will hopefully be completed for the opening of the swimming pool in June and all will comply with COVID-19 protocols.
The PC would again like to recognise and thank Charlie Payne for the time and effort taken to secure the additional funding required to enable us to undertake this much needed work.
- A more formal opening will be planned once restrictions are eased.
- The PC is evaluating a proposal from the Swinford Museum to create a storage facility within the curtilage of the Village Centre.
- The next major project at the village centre will be the playground, we are currently investigating funding possibilities and plan to work alongside the CLP to ensure we have a

playground that is fit for purpose and we can be proud of. Our thanks to Jim Cover for the offer of materials to replace/repair the failing wooden edging.

- After an application to WODC in the first round of COVID-19 grants failed we subsequently applied for the second round and were awarded £9,900 which will be placed in our reserves account for use towards Village Centre projects.

External Matters

- The autumn RAF Brize Norton meeting was as expected a zoom meeting which was reported at the time, however subsequently two new updates have been received from them regarding the siting of a new radio tower and approach and landing patterns, links for which will be put on St Filica website.
- Witney Oxford Transport Group is a community group set up to look at West Oxfordshire transports needs; however it is specifically looking at establishing a rail link between Carterton and Oxford. The current proposals have had a very mixed reception and its viability questionable. We are liaising with local community and Council representatives and our CLP group to keep abreast and involved on this matter and plan to invite WOT to a village meeting.

Finance

- Other than the overview I have already given and the detailed report our RFO is about to give, the only other matter to report is as of the 2021 financial year we are moving our accounts from manual excel spreadsheets to Scribe, a cloud-based accounting system specifically designed for Parish Councils. This will improve the ease of reporting, reduce possibility of human error and time/cost required from accountants and auditors.

As my first year as Chair it has had its challenges and I am grateful for the support I have received, but look forward to 2021 being something more normal. Finally I would like to thank my fellow Councillors for all their time, effort and in particular this year willingness to embrace technology and our Clerk and RFO Cris Hoad who juggles her role between PC and Village Centre.

APPENDIX

RFO (Responsible Financial Officer) – Report on Accounts 2020/21

The Parish Council has asked me to present the account to you as RFO to the Council.

I will screen share the summary for you so you can follow.

Income - is showing much the same compared to 2019/20. The main differences being a slight increase in the precept and a reduction in revenue from the cemetery. The grants listed are from Hayes Palmer requests that have been sent onto recipients, grant from WODC which annually makes up the precept and donations made from Village Shop and residents towards playground refurbishment.

Expenditure-This shows an increase on last year mainly due to the 1st payment made for the refurbishment on the village centre toilets which was paid from the John Cambridge Legacy left to the Parish Council. The groundsman wages have increased – and I know residents are very pleased with how tidy our village is looking. Payroll charges looks high but last years bill was submitted late so this shows 2 years payment also with the dog waste bins the last invoice of the year is 31st March so some years show 3 invoices instead of 2. Administration charges have risen slightly but we have upgraded the laptop to Microsoft 365. With regards to street lights the maintenance contract increased slightly but there has been a good reduction in non contract maintenance and unmetered electricity due to our rolling program of replacing street lights. We replaced a further three lights this year and we plan to replace another 4 in the coming financial year which will see a drop in electricity usage again. The increase in allotment rent at The Gassons is due to a change in timing of sending invoices. WODC lost the lease for this piece of ground and were late in sending the rent invoice through but then changed to August payment for the new lease. We have managed to secure the lease for a further 25 years. We did incur charges for cutting the grass area at The Gassons last year due to Cottessway housing not cutting it but as the Chair mentioned after many months of battling they have now told us they will cut it 16 times during the summer.

The year ending 2019/20 shows a working capital of £4994.80 this is due to an underspend on proposed street light refurbishment, cemetery works which will be carried out in 2020/21 and the decrease in street light electricity. This will be allocated to our specific reserves with projects for 2021/22.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Gill Pagett for agreeing to carry out the Internal Audit again this year.

With regards to the Village Centre Trust.

Receipts – The allotment rent is showing as double as rents for last year were not banked before 31st March 2020. Post Office rent is down due to the closure but we are still pursuing a service for the village. Obviously there was no swimming pool receipts, the annual fee for the management of the village centre was brought up to date and we received anonymous donations towards the village centre maintenance.

Expenditure –

There was an increase in the water charges – this is due to Castle water not reading meters and the cover to the meter being broken – this will be rectified when they resume visits. We did take on payment of the electricity from the Post Office rooms when the room was unused for £44.53. The electricity on the swimming pool is just to keep the pool moving so is very small this year and the charge for chemicals is for keeping the water going through the summer even tho it was closed. maintenance charge is for Sleemans to carry out these works and change the sand in the filters.

With the brought forward balance and receipts and payments it gives a balance of £25,101.00. £3134 is owed to the swimming club, £6000 is being held towards the refurbishments, and £675 is held as a donation towards the playground. This leaves a balance of £15,292.00.

I would like to thank Mary Bohm for agreeing to audit the Village Centre accounts this year.