

**Minutes of the meeting of the Annual Parish Meeting of Lower Heyford Parish Council
held on**

Thursday 14th May 2015 at 7.00 pm in the Church

Present: - Mr Macnamara (JJ) (Chair), Mrs. Ball (DB) (Vice Chair), Mr Mortimore (CM), Mr Dare (DD) , Mr. Eggeling (BE) , Mrs Turner (PT)

Members of the public : Roger Bowen, Alan Humberstone, Eric Ball, Willy Shepherd, Alastair Watson,

In attendance: Cathy Fleet (Clerk)

Apologies: Apologies had been received from Mr Leigh Thompson

Declarations of Interest : there were no declarations of interest

Minutes of the last meeting held on 24th April 2014 were read and it was RESOLVED to accept these as a true record of the meeting and they were signed by the Chair.

Chairman's Report

As Chairman of the Parish Council for the past year, it's my duty to account to you for both our activities over that time and the money we spent on your behalf, after which there will be time for questions and comments. As we are all unpaid volunteers doing our best for our community, I hope your comments will be positive, either to encourage us to greater things or to offer your help to do better.

Almost everything we achieve is through the hard work of our Learned Clerk, Cathy Fleet, the PC's sole, part time, officer, to whom the Parish owes a great debt of thanks. In addition to the matters I will report, we must not forget all the vital but invisible work she does behind the scenes that keeps us legal, solvent, audited and law-compliant, with up to date Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Code of Conduct to comply with best practice.

In all this, the parish should again thank Denise Ball for serving as Deputy Chairman and Petra Turner, David Dare, Carl Mortimore, Bruce Eggeling and Leigh Thompson for serving as councillors throughout the year. We are most grateful for the vote of confidence you have just given us in returning us all, unopposed, for a further four-year stretch.

Highway safety remains a priority. The second SID has been purchased and will be installed, though some desirable locations cannot be used due to safety or ownership constraints. We are investigating reduced speed limits with OCC - 30 instead of 40mph along Station Road and 20mph within the village.

An additional street light has been requested for Freehold Street, opposite no.72, and is supported by neighbours. There is a call for another in Station Road, for which neighbour opinion needs to be canvassed. Costs will be high and they will be unsightly unless we can use existing electricity poles, about which we are pursuing the owner. Meanwhile, we would like to gauge support for:

- the principle of new lights in the parish, given the cost
- support for each proposed location from users
- opposition to each location (if any) from neighbours

Highway maintenance issues never seem to end. However, David Dare's unceasing campaign over many years has at last resolved the flooding in Station Road opposite the boat yard, the Rifle Plank Bridge had been rebuilt and many potholes filled in, with many more now marked for repair.

We are still campaigning for observance of routing agreements that keep lorries out of Station Road and for the enforcement of speed limits for those that use it. We are assured that the damaged road signs at Kingdom Hall will shortly be replaced and the pine trees,

one of which fell across the road last year, will be made safe. The flooding at Port Way and in Church Lane continues to be pursued.

Defibrillators are a new community safety concern, following a campaign by our Ambulance Service, and we intend to install public access AED's in Lower Heyford and Caulcott (thanks to the generosity of our pubs) so any parishioner with a heart attack is only minutes from lifesaving help, subject to grant applications to both our village funds – LHRINC and the Village Hall trust – and external bodies.

Play area is a triumphant example of how all those funders were brought together by a team ably led by Emma Mortimore and including parish councillor Petra Turner, to renew equipment which was looking tired when my children enjoyed it 20 years ago. The PC was delighted to be able to help with the recovery of VAT, admin and accounting and will continue support with insurance.

Friends of Lower Heyford Station also continue to greatly enhance our environment – particularly the all important first impression on arrival by train. We encourage them to apply for support again this year.

Recycling bins were moved from Kingdom Hall, whose appearance has been much improved as a result, to the Caulcott layby. With David Dare's continuing kind provision of a recycling site at the boatyard, both halves of the parish are now served.

Winter was too mild to see our snow plough called out but we shouldn't forget to thank David Dare for storing our tons of salt and, with others, for filling our grit bins. A few degrees colder and we would have been very much in need of this.

Planning provided a number of major issues:

- **Cherwell's Local Plan** had its housing totals suddenly increased, resulting in an extra 1,600 house being pencilled in for Upper Heyford, which will clearly impact our parish.
- **Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan** is therefore designed to protect us and nine other parishes from unwanted speculative development. It has at last jumped the first hurdle of having its boundary approved so the process of writing the plan is under way. Lower Heyford will contribute particularly to the workstreams on Housing and Transport.
- **Caulcott's Gypsy Site** application aroused strong opposition, due to neighbour impact and the total unsuitability of the old quarry for human habitation. We are most grateful to Richard Bennett for contributing his nationally recognised expertise to both Cherwell's Planning Committee, who refused it, and the appeal Inspector, whose judgement we await.

Financially, we have again reduced the precept, this year by 3% to £42 for a Band D property. Our main outlays are staff costs and insurance, as you'd expect when we operate principally by volunteer labour and by getting larger authorities to do what the parish wants. Full details have been minuted and all our expenditure is audited and publicly available to everyone.

Communications: those minutes are summarised in Valley News and posted on village notice boards. We continue to be most grateful to Graham Wilson for maintaining the parish website, where they can be seen by the wider world, and encourage all local organisations and businesses to use it. We continue to support Valley News and would like to hear from residents to what extent they feel their precept should be used for this. While on communication, we'd also like to hear what people feel about a revived "welcome pack" of information for new residents.

In summary, we continue to make progress in many fields, thanks to the unsung efforts of many residents. I've mentioned a lot of areas where work continues and we'd like to hear from residents what they would like to happen - and where they could help to achieve it.

Matters arising

Discussion took place regarding **street lighting** . It has been agreed to provide an additional streetlight in Freehold Street, subject to cost, and in response to a request for additional lights in Station Road, DD had spoken to immediate neighbours and prepared and circulated a paper. After discussion and taking into consideration DDs findings, it appeared that there was 80% opposition to additional street lighting in the village which will be taken as a steer for a decision to be taken at the next parish council meeting.

The Welcome Pack for new residents was prepared some years ago and is now outdated and cumbersome. The meeting was asked if there is a need for a Welcome pack, who would take ownership of it and how to identify newcomers to the village. After some discussion it was agreed that it is a useful document but no real solutions offered to it will be discussed at the next parish council meeting.

The Treasurer of **Valley News** had requested early payment of the grant from LHLPC as they were suffering financial difficulties. They are also in need of an editor and treasurer due to retirement and ill health of the present incumbents. Discussion was invited regarding the value of the publication in its present form, whether it should be self funding through advertising and whether with the increase in housing at Upper Heyford it should be made available for purchase in Upper Heyford rather than freely distributed. A suggestion was made that it could be an online publication and that paper copies may be an unnecessary expense. As the grant for 2015/16 has been made it was decided to wait and see what decision is made by the Editor and Treasurer before making a decision regarding future grants.

Precept

The precept granted by Cherwell District Council was set in January and this year was reduced by 3% resulting in £42 for a Band D property on Council Tax. The Accounts are a public document and are available from the clerk on request.

Church matters - Willy Shepherd reported that the new development of the church is almost complete and is proving very successful with more flexible seating and improved facilities by way of the kitchen and toilet. Regular services are well attended with over 200 people attending at Christmas and Easter. There have been 5 weddings, 3 funerals and 5 weddings. Weekly coffee mornings were arranged throughout Lent and were so successful they have continued and may develop into a mother and toddler group. The clock will be fixed and Willy thanked the PC for continued financial support for this.

Reports from Village Organisations

The **Village Hall Trust** had been approached by the Playground Committee for £50K for the playground refurbishment, but due to a grant from Viridor being granted only needed to provide approx £9K. The PC have requested funding for defibrillators in the village which has been agreed in principle subject to additional quotes being provided. Roger Bowen reported that there is in the region of £100K in the fund and that further applications are encouraged.

LHRINC had provided an Annual Report and Accounts which is appended to these minutes. There have been 4 meetings of the charity through the year. Emma Read has retired and Sue Watson has taken over as chair and Sarah Edwards has been appointed as a new trustee. 4 grants have been made to young people between 16-25 for further education and every household has been leafleted to raise awareness of the charity and its function.

The **Events Committee** is still in need of more people. RB reported that the fireworks event last year made a small loss largely due to bad weather and that the May Fete was 8% down on takings but still showed a profit of £900.

The **FoLHS** continue to work tirelessly to maintain the planting at the station and have successfully cleared the end of Platform 1.

The **Bowls Club** is still in need of members as it only has 19 ; 12 are needed for a team but as most members are novices fixtures cannot be played so games are limited to friendlies only.

WI It was reported that there are currently only 9 members of the WI in Lower Heyford. They meet every 3rd Wednesday of the month in the reading room at Upper Heyford. This is their 80th anniversary year and have already many events this year, including walks, coffee mornings, various speakers and fundraising events. New members are always welcome

Bellringers Eric Ball reported that there are no enough ringers to form a band and that when bells are rung in the church, e.g. for weddings outsiders have to be brought in. He said that people seem keen to begin with and spend time being trained and then disappear, so he is keen to recruit people who will commit to ringing regularly.

Other matters

Alan Humberstone thanked the PC for organizing the litter pick and suggested that next year it should be earlier in the year. DD reported that the equipment supplied by CDC had been delivered to the boatyard, but only 3 people had collected equipment and he suggested that despite information on the website and posters around the village it could be better publicized next year.

The meeting closed at 8pm

Date of next meeting : TBC

Signed Mr J J Macnamara Date

Lower Heyford Relief in Need Charity

Lower Heyford Relief in Need Charity (LHRNC) is a long established charity in the Parish. It derives its income from the rent of property and agricultural land in the Parish. This income is used to assist persons in times of **genuine need or financial hardship** as well as supporting **projects which benefit people living in Lower Heyford and Caulcott.**

A good example is the recent introduction of **Educational Grants for Young Persons.** These are aimed at young people aged **between 16 and 25 from Lower Heyford or Caulcott** who are planning to continue their education through College or University or through other forms of Training or an Apprenticeship.

The Charity's principal aim remains providing financial help to residents of the villages **who can demonstrate a real and unavoidable need.** The need may be You, Your Friend, or Your Neighbour. If you're suffering from financial hardship and if you have to meet an unexpected expense then the Trustees of LHRNC may be able to make a contribution towards the cost.

Here are some examples of things which would be considered:

- Special payments to meet **sudden distress.**
- Payment of **travelling expenses** for visiting people in hospitals and the like.
- Grants of money towards the cost of **essential** household equipment or furniture.
- **Pendant alarms** for housebound or vulnerable persons.
- Providing **medical and nursing aids** such as wheelchairs for disabled, handicapped or infirm people.
- Providing **services** in the home for disabled, handicapped or infirm people (including gardening).
- Grants towards **school uniforms.**
- Enabling **school trips.**
- Helping a **victim of crime.**
- Assistance following **fire or other damage** to a home.
- Supporting a **non-commercial** village organisation.

All enquiries and assistance will have **complete confidentiality** and considered on individual merit, but the following guidelines will apply.

- *The process will be as unobtrusive as possible but will require an application form to be completed.*
- *Grants will be normally awarded to individuals only but in some cases appropriate village organisations may qualify.*
- *Grants will not normally be made in the form of cash, but a payment made directly by the Charity to the goods or services supplier.*
- *Applications will require to be accompanied by estimates or quotations for the requested items or assistance.*
- *No grants are given for the relief of debt, rates or taxes.*
- *If you are already receiving statutory benefits you may get additional help from LHRNC if you need it. Help cannot be given unless you have obtained all the relevant statutory benefits to which you are entitled*
- *Medical aids and appliances and services in the home should be requested from health and social services in the first instance*
- *Repeat grants within 2 years of a previous award are only considered at the trustees' discretion.*
- *Applicants must have been resident in the Parish for a minimum of 2 years immediately prior to the application*

Please get in touch with any of the Trustees below if you feel we could help in any way – they all live in Lower Heyford.

Dr Tom Clayton	01869 347081
Mr Leigh Thompson	01869 347042
Dr Susan Watson	01869 347251
Mr Alan Humberstone	01869 340596

LHRNC GRANTS – FEB 15/TC

**LOWER HEYFORD RELIEF IN NEED CHARITY
ANNUAL ACCOUNTS - APRIL 2014 - MARCH 2015**

Charity Commission Deposit Account

BROUGHT FORWARD (CCLA)

427.22

OUTGOINGS

AMOUNT

INCOME

AMOUNT

Deposit 8000
Interest 6.16

8000
6.16

8433.38

Barclays Current Account

BROUGHT FORWARD (BARCLAYS)

1794.52

OUTGOINGS

AMOUNT

INCOME

AMOUNT

Tom Clayton (Bicester Print) 15
MCFP 25.12
Parish Council 1
Educational Grant 800
Norman Brock 325
COIF Deposit A/C
APV Boiler Services
Valley News
NFU Mutual (Insurance)

Poor's Land Rent 5817
SSE Wayleave 34.19
Reading Room Rent 9075
War Bond Redemption 400
Interest 23.78

8000

106.2

100

490.11

TOTAL OUTGOINGS

9862.43

TOTAL INCOME

15349.97

15349.97

BROUGHT FORWARD (BARCLAYS)

1794.52