

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of
BARRINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
held on Monday 23 March 2015 at 7.00 p.m.
in the Reading Room, Little Barrington**

Present: Cllr James Bainbridge – Vice Chairman
Cllr Mrs Philippa de Haldevang
Cllr Jim Lazenby
Cllr Paul O’Higgins

Officer: Mrs Tan Marchant, Parish Clerk

In attendance: Mr Ray Theodolou, Gloucestershire County Council
Cllr Mrs C Topple, Cotswold District Council

Apologies: Cllr Paul Porter

Members of the Public: 3 members of the public were in attendance

1 WELCOME FROM PARISH CHAIRMAN

The Chairman was unable to attend. Cllr Bainbridge, Vice-Chairman, welcomed Councillors, Guest Speakers and Residents to the meeting.

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL MEETING

The Minutes of Annual Meeting held on 17 March 2014 were approved and signed by the Vice-Chairman.

3 CHAIRMAN’S REPORT

Cllr Bainbridge presented the Chairman’s report on behalf of Cllr Porter. A copy of the Report is attached to these Minutes.

4 GUEST SPEAKER – RAY THEODOULOU

Mr Theodoulou introduced himself as Deputy Leader of Gloucestershire County Council and Cabinet Member responsible for Finance, the Budget, procurement for large projects, property assets, and domestic issues such as IT, computers, HR and archives. He explained that GCC is a waste disposal authority and therefore has to find a home for what cannot be recycled.

He said that the GCC budget for 2015/16 is £8m lower than 2014/15 due to reductions in grants from Government. The County Council has also had to make £23m in savings to balance the books. A further £50m of savings will be required in the following 2 years. The main items in the budget are £145 million for adult services and £95 million for young and vulnerable people. An aging population is continuing to be a drain on resources.

He went on to say that a major project he will be responsible for is a new incinerator which is proposed to be sited next to the M5 motorway. Local authorities are penalised by the Government for dumping waste into the ground, so an incinerator is a necessity to cope with all of Gloucestershire’s non-recyclable waste. The cost of this over 25 years will be £500 million. The plant will also produce enough electricity for 26,000 homes, heat for industrial or domestic purposes and will reduce their carbon footprint by 25,000 tonnes a year. The project

has been put through Planning and the Secretary of State has decided that it will go ahead. He confirmed that the plant will in no way be injurious to health.

Cllr Lazenby asked what would happen to the ash generated by the incinerator. Mr Theodoulou responded that the ash will be gathered and re-processed into grey blocks. Any rubble produced will go for hard-core for road building and metal will be re-processed.

Mr Robin Mills commented on the poor state of the roads and said that patching is not an effective solution. Ray responded that limited funds mean that they have to decide on priorities. But he said if Mr Mills is referring to particular problems, then he is happy to be contacted and will arrange for someone to come out to have a look. He also said he has £20,000 to spend on County Council highway matters at his own discretion.

Mr Theodoulou was thanked for his presentation and for making his contact details available to anyone who might have a problem.

5 REPORT OF DISTRICT COUNCILLOR – CLLR MRS CAROLE TOPPLE

Cllr Mrs Carole Topple is the Cabinet Member responsible for Leisure and Health at Cotswold District Council. She said it had been a very busy year. Their budget is now set for next year at £11.25 million. They have reduced Council Tax bills by 5%, achieving a 13% total reduction in the last 10 years. The District Council work in partnership with other authorities to cut costs and share their Chief Executive, Directors etc with West Oxfordshire District Council. Cllr Mrs Topple reported that a lot of time had been spent on the District Council's Local Plan and the consultation period is now closed. The Plan includes 17 settlements for new houses, particularly Cirencester.

Mr Mills commented that certain jobs could be passed down to residents but others cannot. For instance, local residents could take over the running of a library if it was threatened with closure, but they cannot tackle something such as tree works. Cllr Mrs Topple said if he is experiencing a problem with trees, she will forward to him by email details of the local Tree Warden.

Cllr Mrs Topple was thanked for her report and also for her support of the Parish Council over the last twenty years. The Clerk presented her with flowers and a card as a show of appreciation.

6 ANNUAL VILLAGE CLEAN UP

It was confirmed that the Village Clean Up this year will be held on Saturday 11th April commencing at 10.00 a.m. Volunteers to meet in the Reading Room, where equipment will be supplied. Refreshments will be available at the end of the event.

7. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Mrs Costello said that the local police constable, Brian Stagg, had sent his apologies by email. He said that police numbers are down, and that if anyone sees anything unusual, they should phone 101 to report it.

Cllr Mrs de Haldevang said that the Swinbrook bus from Cheltenham to Oxford no longer stops at Barrington and asked if anything could be done to reinstate it. It was suggested that this concern be reported as part of the current bus service survey.

Mr Mills asked why the County Council has agricultural land, amounting to 8,500 acres. Mr Theodoulou responded that this land had been made available to soldiers returning from the

First and the Second World Wars. There are currently about 120 tenants on the land, some with long tenancies. But there is a programme for selling off some of the County Council's valuable assets, meaning that £4.5 million has been put back into services as a result of £45 million of sales.

There was some further discussion about local petty theft, after which the meeting came to a close.

The meeting ended at 8.05 p.m.

Refreshments were served

Chairman