

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of
BARRINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
held on Monday 21 March 2016 at 7.00 p.m.
in The Reading Room, Little Barrington**

Present: Cllr Paul Porter - Chairman
Cllr James Bainbridge - Vice Chairman

Cllr Jan de Haldevang
Cllr Sebastian Gorst
Cllr Robin Stow

Officer: Mrs Tan Marchant, Parish Clerk

In attendance: Mr Ray Theodolou, Gloucestershire County Council
Cllr Chris Hancock, Cotswold District Council

Public: Philippa de Haldevang, Rosella Mathew, Roy Norman and Sue Cleal.

1 WELCOME FROM PARISH CHAIRMAN

The Chairman welcomed Councillors, Guest Speakers and Residents to the meeting.

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL MEETING

The Minutes of Annual Meeting held on 23 March 2015 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

3 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Cllr Porter presented the Chairman's Report. A copy of the Report is attached to these Minutes.

4 CHARITY REPORT

Cllr Bainbridge gave a report on the Barrington Charity over the last year. He said that Michael Wood had retired both as Trustee and Chairman after very many years of service to the Charity. He gave thanks to Mike for all the hard work and leadership he had offered during his tenure and said that Mike had already received a gift to show their gratitude.

Mike has been replaced as Trustee by the Vicar, Nick Fisher, Mrs Philippa de Haldevang has taken over as Chairman, and changes had occurred with other trustees.

The accounts for 2015 have been examined and approved and are now available to the public. The Charity is in a sound financial position. The Charity gives support to local community events and to maintenance and upkeep of the Church. Cllr Bainbridge said that the Charity is happy to consider applications from any community groups and individuals for funding.

On the property side, the Charity will be looking at a programme of works to protect the Charity's property assets and will, for instance, be securing the fabric of this building amongst others.

The Clerk asked if Cllr Bainbridge could supply details of how to apply for Charity funding, so that this information could be publicised.

Cllr Bainbridge was thanked for his report.

5 GLOUCESTERSHIRE POLICY AUTHORITY

Gloucestershire Police had given their apologies for the meeting but had submitted a Crime Report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

6 GUEST SPEAKER – RAY THEODOULOU

Mr Theodoulou is the 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 said that the Conservatives are in a minority at the County Council at the present time. Conservatives are three short of a majority, which results in a lot more consultation. Lib Dems are second in line, then Labour, with three UKIP and one Green Party member. The Budget when he first joined the County Council was £900 million, which included schools. But the Council has lost responsibility for schools due to the formation of Academies. The budget last year was £420 million because of this. The largest part of the budget is care for the elderly and infirm, at a cost of £140 million. If this care continues to grow, by 2020 the County will be spending 80% on that one heading. So something needs to change, and one change is greater partnership with the NHS.

This year there was a special levy of 2% on Council Tax to increase funds. The County had to make £27 million of savings, hence the increase in Council Tax this year for general council services. The other major part of the budget is for Children's services (£96 million).

There is currently a great deal of discussion about Devolution: gathering authorities together in larger groupings, making more local decisions. This District will work more closely with West Oxfordshire, but there will be a public consultation before anything is decided.

Mr Theodoulou said that he currently has a small budget of £3,000 for highways repairs, to be shared amongst the five parishes that he oversees. He was asked about the problem of funding for the elderly and responded that it is a national problem and there needs to be a national approach for dealing with it.

Mr Theodoulou was thanked for his presentation.

7 GUEST SPEAKER – CLLR CHRIS HANCOCK

Cllr Hancock reported that the District's Council Tax will not be increased this year after a number of years of cuts. The Council has reduced budget costs by £5.5 million by joint working with other authorities. The District Council has embarked on a 2020 Vision Programme with other local councils which should save Cotswold taxpayers £8.2 million over a ten year period. Joint working will involve four authorities – Cherwell, Cotswold, West Oxfordshire and Forest of Dean – saving costs and sharing resources. Many services will be shared and it is hoped that £30 million will be saved over a number of years.

Cllr Hancock said that several hundred thousand pounds will be invested in parking in Cirencester as there is a need to materially increase parking capacity in the town. Charging for parking benefits other services.

As far as broadband is concerned, the District has put £500,000 into a budget to speed up the delivery of broadband.

Cllr Hancock said he has a small budget of £2,000 which will be shared among five villages. A number of questions were raised, including the poor performance of BT, with internet speeds in the villages of 0.4MB when they should be at least 2MB. Mr Theodoulou offered to investigate what is happening and report back to the Clerk.

Cllr Hancock was thanked for his report.

8 COMMUNITY EVENTS

a. Village Clean-up - It was confirmed that the Village Clean Up this year will be held on Saturday 16th April commencing at 10.00 a.m. Volunteers to meet at The Fox Inn, Great Barrington, where equipment will be supplied and bacon butties will be available to early arrivals. Refreshments will be available at the end of the event, which is expected to finish at about midday. The Clerk was asked to supply details to Ann in the Barrington Estate Office.

b. Lighting HRH The Queen's Birthday Beacon – Details of the lighting of the beacon have been discussed with Richard Wingfield and it will take place at some point on the Trig point on Thursday 21st April. Timing is not yet decided.

c. Inter-Barrington Sports Day – Cllr Gorst said this event would include a rounder's match – and it would be good if it could be Little Barrington versus Great Barrington as was the intention last year. It is hoped that the event will include a BBQ and an across the river tug-of-war. Cllrs Gorst and de Haldevang will take the lead on this.

d. Windrush Valley Fete – this event will take place on Saturday 23rd July and will include a flower show. It will be held in the Village Hall.,

9. LOCAL ISSUES

a. Property Security – Mrs de Haldevang asked if the local Neighbourhood Watch Scheme was still in operation. The Clerk responded that she had made enquiries with the previous co-ordinator, Lynn Costello, with the Great Barrington co-ordinator Venetia Crosbie Dawson and with the local police, but it didn't appear that the Scheme was now being actively managed. She said she would make further enquiries.

Mrs de Haldevang said that there is a problem with hare coursers and break-ins, and gave several examples. She stressed that a NHW volunteer is needed to replace Lynn so that the word on these incidents can be passed on. She also explained the problem of dogs worrying sheep and suggested that a letter be sent to all householders about the dangers of this and also the dangers of dog faeces, the maximum fine for not picking up, etc. She also pointed out that it is a criminal offence for dogs to worry sheep. She said she would supply the Clerk with details to include on a leaflet and Roy Norman said he would assist in any way he could.

The meeting ended at 8.30 p.m.

Chairman