

OLVESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held at Olveston Parish Hall, Tockington, on Tuesday 30th April 2009 at 7.30 p.m.

Present	Mrs J Lyons (Chairman)	Mr A Clarke	Mr A Cogram	Mr A Heming
	Ms V Hudspeth	Mr J Hughes	Mrs I Reid	Mr J Spratt
	Mrs J Webb			
	Mr M Riddle (District Councillor)		11 Parishioners	

1. Apologies for absence There were no apologies.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, and thanked them for attending.

2. Police report

The Chairman welcomed our local beat officer, PC Roger Hopes, who gave a brief update. He and PCSO Kelly Dimery are now using the room at the Hall as a base whenever they can, depending on other calls on their time. There have been 76 crimes over the last year in our Parish including burglaries, thefts from outbuildings, thefts of cars and thefts from cars and a nasty fraud on an elderly lady. PC Hopes reminded parishioners not to leave keys to cars easily available to thieves, who often break into a house just to get keys to a car, and not to have work done by anyone who is not known to them. Reputable contractors should have telephone land lines, not just mobiles, should give a proper estimate which should be adhered to, and should allow prospective clients a cooling off period. The Police wish to know of anyone going around selling from door to door. The crimes in our Parish account for less than 1% of total crimes in South Gloucestershire. The Police will continue to patrol the Vicarage Lane play area.

PC Hopes was asked if the Police could do something like CCTV in Moor Lane, which is a favourite spot for burnt out cars, but at the moment, there are not enough to make it worth while. He was also asked if many arrests have been made in respect of the burglaries, and there have been several successes, especially in respect of burglaries from farms around Ingst. Other questions were asked about speeding, parking, especially by the School and the shops, and the top of Church Hill. A parishioner suggested that this should be discussed again by the Council

The Chairman thanked PC Hopes for his report.

3. Minutes of the last Annual Parish Assembly

The minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on Thursday 29th April 2008 were circulated, and Mrs Webb proposed that they should be signed by the Chairman as a correct record, seconded by Mr Spratt, all in favour.

4. Matters arising from the minutes

The clerk reported the reply to the Council's letter regarding the motion proposed by the meeting regarding the expenditure on the Haw Lane wall. There were no other matters arising.

5. Chairman's report

The Chairman welcomed everyone and gave the following report

“It was my privilege to report on the year's work of the Parish Council, which has a full complement of Councillors. The newest Councillors have fitted in well. We have also had advice and help from Matthew Riddle, our District Councillor, who attended 9 meetings.

Two parishioners attended our meetings, to discuss problems with the Murco Garage, and the proposed upgrading of facilities at the Woodhouse Down Scout Camp. The Council is keeping a careful watch on the piecemeal planning application coming in to South Gloucestershire Council.

Mr Cabban, our footpaths warden, also attended to update the Council on the footpaths.

The Council has not increased the precept this year. The clerk's hours have been increased to 35 per month. Some things have caused frustration this year: 1) there has been no advance with affordable housing. None of those approached were willing to sell land, all current options are exhausted, the core strategy may well alter policy, and our housing needs survey will have to be updated. 2) Helping our young people: after dangerous vandalism at Vicarage Lane play area, attempts have been made by the Council and Police to have youth activities in the villages. We hope there will be some progress. 3) We have concerns about overflowing ditches and blocked drains, have asked for verges to be cut back and are waiting for help with the play areas but there has been little progress. Other things have elated the Council: the new Scout hut; the refurbished Hall at the School to provide a library and computer suite; the local garage has reopened; the Country park reopened and our telephone boxes are staying in use at present. And Meeting Point magazine has continued its beautiful presentation and interesting information, a credit to those who make it possible. Our local police beat officer, PC Roger Hopes, continues his monthly report on break-ins and advice; especially this year with youth vandalism and rural crime. Thanks to PC Hopes and his colleagues for their diligence over the past year.

Recreation and Leisure Committee: this committee looks after the play areas, including regular weekly safety checks by Councillors and an annual official inspection. The Committee also monitors the grass cutting, and a three year contract has recently been agreed. Leases have been updated for the Tennis Club, the Scouts and the Allotments. Remedial work has been carried out at Old Down on the boundary between the Football club land and the Scouts land, with a new hedge and fence. Thanks to John Hughes for liaising with the Police over the vandalism in Vicarage Lane play area. The Queen Alexandra Memorial Pavilion at Old Down has been broken into three times, the notice board at Old Down vandalised beyond repair, and the new picnic table at Vicarage Lane damaged. We are grateful for the help received from Matthew Riddle, and are hoping to get greater collaboration with various parties within the Parish and outside bodies to meet the needs of the youth of the Parish by making better use of the facilities we have and hopefully getting new ones.

Planning Committee: The role of the committee is to safeguard the environment in which we live. We try to maintain a balance of having a vibrant community of mixed ages including all the services we require, and protecting the environment. We have received 65 planning applications, including house extension, work to trees, change of use from agricultural to residential garages and carports, agricultural building s and new houses. The number of applications is slightly down this year. We are closely monitoring the Scouts complex at Woodhouse Down with their planning application for toilets, a caving complex, and a climbing wall. We have asked for them to be used for scouting facilities only and have concerns regarding commercial use

The Council has also been supporting the Olveston Parish Hall Management Committee in its work to secure the future of the Hall as a central and thriving amenity for the Parish, and are exploring with them the possibility of becoming the holding Trustees.

Sadly in October the death was announced of Rowley Jackson, who having lived most of his life in Olveston, played a major role in the Parish, and became a Parish Councillor in the 70's. He oversaw the extension and then the rebuilding of the QAMP in the 80's and 90's, sourced grants and planned budgets. He later became our District Councillor.

Being Chairman of the Parish Council this year has been a pleasure, due to the dedication of my fellow Councillors and our clerk. Everyone has played an active role in the congenial running of the Council. We have tried as always to provide the Parishioners with the amenities they expect and make our Parish an aesthetically pleasing group of villages in which to live.”

6. Financial report

The proposed accounts for the year ended 31st March 2009 were circulated and the clerk/responsible financial officer advised that the audited accounts for last year and the accounts book were available for inspection. There were no queries on the accounts.

7. Launch of Parish Council booklet

The chairman advised that a booklet was now available giving details of Councillors and the work done by the Parish Council, and copies were given to those attending. This will be available from local shops etc, and from Councillors, and will also be put on the website.

8. Any other business

A parishioner advised that it would be a good idea to keep up the pressure regarding affordable housing.

A parishioner thanked the Recreation and Leisure Committee for their work in keeping the grass cutting done, but asked if it would be possible to cut the verge along Lower Tockington Road from Moor Lane to the sharp turn; a local resident is cutting the verge from his house to Moor Lane, but the rest of it is very untidy, and gives a bad impression as you approach the village from this direction. The Council and Mr Riddle will look into this. Arrangements have already been made for the pavement opposite to be cut back, and Mr Riddle is hopeful that the road will be resurfaced this year. Mr Riddle confirmed that hedges are the responsibility of landowners.

. Mrs Reid thanked the Chairman for all her hard work over the year, and the Assembly showed their appreciation in the usual way.

9. Speaker

Mrs Lyons then introduced Mr Richard Lloyd, who gave a very interesting and informative talk on “Harnessing the power of the Severn” with pictures showing all the possibilities, and their suggested positions on the estuary. Suggestions include three barrages of various lengths, possibly with road or rail links, two lagoon options and also options which have not been tried before, but are theoretically possible.

Mr Riddle thanked Mr Lloyd for his talk, which made the options much clearer.

The meeting was closed and refreshments were served.