

HUGHENDEN PARISH – ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

UNCONFIRMED

The Annual Meeting for the Parish of Hughenden was held in Widmer End Combined School, Estcourt Drive, Widmer End on Tuesday 20th May 2008, commencing at 8pm.

Attendance.

There were, in attendance, 15 members of the Hughenden Parish Council, Cllr Gibbs (District), 8 members of the Public and the Parish Clerk.

The Chairman of Hughenden Parish Council, Cllr John Rogers, opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and asking them to remember to sign the attendance register, for the record.

Apologies for Absence.

Apologies had been received from Cllr Pushman (County & District), who had to attend a County function this evening.

Minutes of the 2007 Annual Parish Meeting.

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 24th May 2007 were proposed by Cllr Gould, seconded by Cllr Jarman, **RESOLVED** by the Meeting and duly signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising.

There were no matters arising.

Chairman's Address.

The Chairman, Cllr John Rogers, gave the Chairman's report for the year.

"Good evening everyone. This has been a year of change, but overall I believe it to have been a good one. We parted company with our warden just over a year ago and have covered his work by using a number of contractors with different skills. This has proved to be a success, both from an economic and a practical point of view. At the end of March, our gardener from the Garden of Rest resigned and we have again covered this work by using contractors, this being for a trial period, which is currently under review.

To combat the anti-social behaviour we have been experiencing, we installed CCTV cameras at the Parish Office, to assist the Police in trying to solve this problem and I believe there has been an improvement, particularly in the area surrounding the office. We are still working with the Police in the hope of reducing this still further.

On a more positive note, we have installed and opened a new play area at Templewood in Walters Ash. Thanks to some hard work by our Clerical Assistant and Councillors, in particular my Vice Chairman, this is very successful and is very much used. We also have an ongoing programme to refurbish the other play areas in the Parish, which we maintain.

I am pleased to report that the Council is once again at full strength, having started the year with vacancies in both Naphill and Hughenden Valley wards. The last vacancy being filled just last month, I would like to welcome all the new Councillors who are attending the Annual Parish Meeting for the first time.

I took the office of Chairman last year intending to serve for one year, but have just been persuaded to carry on for a second (and last) term. I would like to thank all of my fellow Councillors for their support during the last year, which has had its difficulties, and thanks especially to my Vice Chairman, for all her hard work and support. Also, thanks to the Chairmen of all the Committees for their support, in particular Services, which due to the changes, has generated so much more work. My thanks also go to the staff, both Lynne and Emma, who due to the changes have laboured hard to make it all work.

Unfortunately for Lynne, she was taken ill while away on holiday. She was very ill for a while but is now approaching full health again and my best wishes for her good health in the future. We are very fortunate to have Emma working in the office who, at very short notice, was able to step in and coped extremely well. We hope to be able to arrange for her to have some additional training to enable her to be better equipped for future periods of the Clerk's absence, hopefully only annual leave!

Looking to the future, it is hoped that Parish Councils are to play a bigger role in providing services to the community. To this end, we are working towards Quality Council status and the Clerk is making good progress towards her qualifications. The Council is now in a position to meet all the criteria required, so by this time next year we should have achieved our aim. As part of our new role, we shall be attempting to have an even closer contact with our electorate, making sure you know who your ward members are, and helping us achieve this aim by contacting us. Thank you."

Parish Accounts.

Copies of the un-audited Parish Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2008 had been distributed. Cllr Ewart mentioned that the increase in the precept for the year is mostly due to the cost of maintaining the playgrounds within the Parish, particularly the provision of the new play area at Templewood in Walters Ash.

She continued by saying that there had been a considerable decrease in administration costs for the year, which had been due to no longer having staff to maintain the Council's land. This had had an effect on the costs for maintenance of the allotments, burial ground and open spaces, which had increased.

The purchase of assets included £19,000 for the purchase of the new play equipment at Walters Ash and Agency Services included footpath clearance. The CCTV provision had not been budgeted for, which cost £5,600 but had been considered a necessary expense.

Cllr Ewart informed the meeting that although there had been an £11,000 increase in expenditure, there had been £30,000 extra on income. This included more income from the burial ground, which was due to numbers of burials.

Cllr Ewart then thanked the Clerk, Lynne Turner, for the production of these accounts and her continued hard work in this respect.

As there were no questions it was then proposed by Cllr Peggy Ewart of Naphill, seconded by Cllr David Davies of Great Kingshill, and **RESOLVED** that the un-audited accounts for the year ended 31st March 2008 be adopted by the Parish Meeting.

Other Matters.

- a) Cllr McCarthy of Widmer End mentioned that Grange and Widmer Farm in Widmer End had now been confirmed as being in the Green Belt. He informed the meeting that Wimpey's are unlikely to develop Wellesbourne for about two years and asked if the Parish Council would re-consider its position with regard to this land. Cllr Rogers informed Cllr McCarthy that he could ask for this to be place on a subsequent Council agenda, with sufficient information for a decision to be reached.
- b) Mr Williams of Great Kingshill asked if the Parish Meeting could be advertised in the village magazines next year and this was agreed.
- c) Mr Williams of Great Kingshill then asked whether the Paris Council were 'capped' on the amount of precept they request. Cllr Ewart informed him that there was no 'capping' of Parish Councils, although they do have to give details of the breakdown if they request over £100,000 for the year. She continued by confirming that the increase for this year had been kept to £3,500.
- d) Mrs Pushman of Naphill confirmed her husband, Cllr Richard Pushman's apologies as he had to deputise for the Chairman of the County Council at a function. She informed the meeting that Richard has just been confirmed as Vice Chairman for the County Council for the year. The Chairman stated he had been aware of it and would have mentioned it had Cllr Pushman been present and he sent his, and the Council's, congratulations.
- e) Cllr Gould of Great Kingshill asked for a vote of thanks to Cllr Rogers and Cllr Ewart for all their hard work in what had been a difficult year and this was **AGREED**.

As there were no other questions or matters to be raised, the Chairman then invited everyone to share in the refreshments that had been provided and declared the meeting closed at 8.20pm.

Signed:

Date: