

# **GORING PARISH COUNCIL**

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*We aim to serve in the best interests of our community*

## **Minutes of the Parish Annual Meeting, held on Wednesday 16th April 2014 at 7:30pm at Bellême Room, Goring Village Hall.**

### **Present**

Cllr Alan Strong, Chairman of the meeting, and Parish Councillors, Emrhys Barrell, Mathew Brown, Kevin Bulmer (vice Chairman and County Councillor), Mary Bulmer, Catherine Hall, Laurie Reavill, John Wills, also District Councillors Ann Ducker and P Slatter, and 21 members of the public and the press.

Peter Clegg, Clerk

### **1. Chairman's welcome**

The Chairman welcomed all present and said that this would possibly be the last Annual meeting of Goring Parish Council as the SODC were shortly expected to approve the Parish name change to Goring-on-Thames.

### **2. Minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2013.**

The minutes, having been displayed on the Parish Council website, and distributed immediately before the meeting were approved as presented.

### **3. Matters arising from those minutes**

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

### **4. Annual report – Appendix A**

The Chairman presented his report and highlighted the following: He was pleased to see that the number of Councillors had now increased to 9 with the recent addition of Emrhys Barrell and there were now also two ladies on the Council, Catherine Hall and Mary Bulmer.

Tesco's being a permitted development did not need planning permission but the Council had raised concerns relating to increased traffic and pedestrian access, and the loss of footfall in the centre of Goring. Tesco's highways consultant was looking at the traffic related issues. The Council at a meeting with Tesco's had stated they expected minimum changes to the external fabric of the building and would oppose an ATM as this would undoubtedly reduce footfall on the High Street.

Goring's allocation of 105 new homes under SODC's Core Strategy to 2027 had now been reduced to 86 as the 19 affordable homes at Iccine Close had been included within this target figure.

The Precept had again been held at the same level for the 5<sup>th</sup> year - £87,800 resulting in a 1.5% reduction in the Council tax for 2014-15

The Chairman commended the annual report which had been displayed on the parish council's noticeboards and website.

There were no questions from the Public.

## **5. District Councillor's report -Appendix B**

District Councillor Ann Ducker summarised her report as it had been distributed in full with the Agenda and would appear on the Council's website.

She highlighted the savings achieved by the SODC and Vale of White Horse District Councils working jointly which had resulted in a reduction in SODC's council tax for the third year of 2.5%. The SODC still had funds to give as grants for improvements to public facilities. The SODC were in a strong position re housing development as they were one of the few Councils to have prepared a plan and Didcot would be taking most of the required housing thus reducing the impact on the surrounding villages. The SODC had not received any new requests from Tesco although the current boarding was on Highways Land for which a license is required and the SODC were pressing this matter.

Mr Richard Roberts asked what did the SODC give grants for.

District Cllr Ann Ducker replied that it was for a wide variety of items but any request should show a real business case and that the organisation had the financial means to maintain the facility.

Cllr Strong advised the meeting that Goring had benefited in the past when Sheepcot Pavilion had been refurbished and would again be applying for a grant when the plans for Gardiner Pavilion had been finalised.

Mr. Norman Radley asked if it was likely that the SODC and The Vale of Whitehorse would amalgamate. Cllr Ducker replied that the Government had not commenced any discussions on unity of Councils.

## **6. County Councillors report - Appendix C.**

County Councillor Kevin Bulmer summarised his report as a full copy had been distributed with the Agenda and would also be available on the Parish Council's website.

This being his first year of office it had proved to have been a steep learning curve. Locally he had financed the dropping of kerbstones to make movement for those using motorised wheelchairs easier at The Birches and Maple Court.

Reading Council had resurrected its request for a new bridge across the Thames which neither OCC nor SODC were in favour of but the two Councils would insist that a proper survey is carried out taking into account the effect on surrounding roads and villages. This venture is a long way off and given the projected cost of £150m it will need to be planned carefully.

Mrs Stephanie Bridle advised the meeting she had come by wheelchair and thought more kerbs needed to be dropped to give a safe and easy route. Cllr Bulmer agreed to look into this.

Mrs Dawn Roberts was concerned that Goring School was full and some parents who lived in Goring had failed to obtain a place for their children at the School. Cllr Bulmer agreed this was disappointing but OCC did not always have the power to do a lot as many schools were faith schools and had their own budgets.

Alan Strong thanked District Councillor Ann Ducker and County Councillor Kevin Bulmer for their efforts on behalf of Goring during the year.

## 7. Reports from Local Organisations

None

## 8. Any other business

Mr Smith asked what the costs were relating to the changing the name of Goring to Goring-on-Thames.

The Chairman replied that as nothing had happened yet he had no details.

Mr Tom Worthington wanted to know what benefit the name change would have for Goring.

Mr Bernard Clucas also wanted to know the benefit to Goring and what the costs would be.

The Chairman said firstly as most people already referred to Goring as Goring-on-Thames it seemed common sense to have the name confirmed. He also thought it would clearly differentiate the village from Goring-by-Sea. Finally he thought it would help the tourist trade and by attracting more people to Goring. The Chairman pointed out that the suggestion to change the name of the Parish Council had been advertised on the Parish Council Agenda and the decision of the Council appeared in the Minutes. No adverse comments had been received.

Cllr Hall said some of her post had gone to Goring-by-Sea and no doubt other peoples also and for this reason she supported the name change.

Mrs Stephanie Bridle asked how much the FOI requests the Council had received were costing the Council.

The Chairman replied that he did not have the costs available but it was an electors right to make such requests.

Mrs Dawn Roberts thanked District Councillor Ann Ducker for arranging for the new signs advertising the car park and the free hour. This had helped the local shops.

9. There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.12pm

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Alan Strong (Chairman):.....Date: .....

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