

GORING PARISH COUNCIL

We aim to serve in the best interests of our community

Minutes of the Parish Annual Meeting, held on Wednesday 17th April 2013 at 7:30pm at Storton Lodge, Goring

Present

Cllr Alan Strong, Chairman of the meeting, and Parish Councillors, Kevin Bulmer, Mathew Brown, John Wills, Laurie Reavill, also District Councillor Ann Ducker, and County Councillor Dave Sexon plus 14 members of the public and the press.

Peter Clegg, Clerk

1. Chairman's welcome

The Chairman welcomed all present.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 18th April 2012.

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: Recently residents had highlighted the anti-social behaviour of some dog owners and the council were currently reviewing what could be done to make dog owners more aware and reduce the amount of dog-poo.

In addition to the grants mentioned in the report the Council donated £352 to the Readibus and had agreed to continue supporting it even though OCC had withdrawn support.

The Freedom of Information Commissioner had found that Goring PC had failed to provide requested information within 20 working

days which breached regulation 5(2) of the EIR. He also found the Council had breached regulation 11(5).The Commissioner did not require the Council to take any steps. Two electors questioned the legality of GPC to bestow the "Freedom of Goring", and the £3,000 contribution to Streatley PC to help provide allotments for Goring residents. The external Auditor confirmed GPC had acted within its powers on both occasions.

Goring PC is challenging the allocation of 109 houses for Goring under the SODC's Core strategy to 2027. But any reduction would mean an increase for other larger villages.

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

Mr Ron Bridle wondered if dog owners could be encouraged to keep their dogs on leads which might help to reduce dog poo. Mrs Maureen Witcher was also looking at various ways to encourage dog owners to be more public spirited and was arranging a meeting.

Mr Bernard Clucas said the Chairman's report was misleading as the Information Commissioner's Decision was understated and for this reason he had requested that an item be put on the agenda but this request had been refused. Mr Clucas said the report failed to mention that his request concerning Allotments had initially been refused and was later asked to pay a fee of £125. This had caused him considerable stress and had taken up a lot of his valuable time. He accused the Council of not obeying the law. Mr Clucas said if the report was not received it would show that these matters had been handled badly but no one showed any interest in supporting this statement. The Chairman stated that the FOI office had fully investigated all Mr Clucas's complaints and the FOI Commissioner had stated that "he did not require GPC to take any steps". The Commissioner's decision had been published in the Council Minutes and had also been given wide coverage in the Henley Standard.

5. District Councillor's report -Appendix B

District Councillor Ann Ducker presented the District Councillors report. She also apologised for the absence of District Councillor Pearl Slatter who was chairing the SODC Planning Committee.

Mr David Boyd asked if 109 new houses for Goring was a "static figure". District Councillor Ann Ducker replied that she expected the final allocation to be approximately that number.

Mrs Stephanie Bridle thought houses were not been built in Goring because land was scarce and expensive and the Banks were not providing the finance, also the infrastructure was not keeping pace. The village school was full. Mrs Maureen Witcher also thought more money should be made available to schools.

Mr Ron Bridle was concerned that to provide affordable housing good agricultural land had to be used.

Mrs Jeanette Douglas was concerned that it seemed less trains were stopping at Goring. Ann Ducker confirmed that because of the important establishments in the area such as Harwell, Chilton and Milton trains were on the SODC agenda.

6. County Councillors report - Appendix C.

County Councillor Dave Sexon presented his report.

Mr Charles Cranshaw raised concerns regarding Whitchurch Bridge especially the large lorries coming over the river. Cllr Brown wondered if some of the side roads could be closed temporarily. Mrs Maureen Witcher was concerned about foreign lorries.

Mrs Jeanette Douglas was concerned about the state of the roads especially leading to the Station. The Chairman confirmed that the Parish Clerk regularly reported potholes to the OCC and urged everyone to advise the Clerk so that he could report these to the Highways Department

7.Reports from Local Organisations

None

8. Any other business

Mr Bernard Clucas said that in accordance with new legislation Councillors declaration of interests should be shown on the website. The clerk advised the meeting that the SODC had only just arranged for the necessary link and this would be completed shortly.

Mr Bernard Clucas stated emails to Councillors were not working and this was not the first time he had reported this matter. The clerk confirmed that all emails were working and promised to contact Mr Clucas afterwards in case he had used an incorrect address.

Mr Clucas complained that Confidential Business minutes were not shown on the council website. He also thought that the draft minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting should be made available sooner.

Mrs Maureen Witcher was concerned about the water damage to the grass in Sheepcot where water had flowed over from the Reading Road. The Chairman confirmed that the Council had already requested OCC to clean the drains on the Reading Road and attend to the soak away.

Mr John Boler asked all those present to give a vote of thanks to Councillors for their hard work in the past year. The meeting showed their appreciation by a round of applause.

9. There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.36pm
