

The Annual Meeting of the Town Council was held at the Memorial Hall, Lechlade on Monday, 12th May 2008 starting at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr Jones  
Cllr Cawsey  
Cllr Coakley  
Cllr Dover  
Cllr Gould  
Cllr Lambert  
Cllr Mannall  
Cllr Maskell  
Cllr Roberts  
Cllr Mrs Seale  
Cllr Sullivan  
Cllr Whistler

GCC Cllr Theodoulou  
CDC Cllr Mrs Carter

6 members of the public

1. Apologies for absence  
Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs Wilson.
2. Election of officers  
The Clerk reported that he had received a written nomination for Cllr Jones to be elected Chairman for the forthcoming year. The proposer and seconder for Cllr Jones were Cllr Dover and Cllr Mrs Wilson. Cllr Cawsey nominated Cllr Whistler for Chairman, but Cllr Whistler declined. As there were no other nominations, Cllr Jones was duly elected Chairman.  
  
Cllr Jones took the chair and welcomed Cllr Susan Coakley to the Council.  
  
The Clerk reported that he had received a written nomination for Cllr Dover to be elected Vice-Chairman for the forthcoming year. The proposer and seconder for Cllr Dover were Cllr Jones and Cllr Mrs Wilson. As there were no other nominations, Cllr Dover was duly elected Vice-Chairman.
3. Declarations of interest  
No declarations of interest had been received.
4. Approval of minutes of meeting held on 7th April 2008  
The Clerk explained the method of selection for his successor. The post would be advertised through GRCC, GMTF and the local newspaper. The Finance Committee as the body responsible for personnel matters would make a recommendation to the full Council and request authority to appoint. The

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Date.....

Clerk also clarified that £400 was available for updating the website this year, however the £400 should be taken into account in next year's precept. The minutes were then approved and signed.

5. Matters arising from minutes of meeting held on 7th April 2008
- a) Cemetery  
The Clerk had received a letter from New College stating that they wished to retain access to the southern end of the cemetery. However, this access is currently for pedestrians only and over land in the ownership of the Council. The Clerk had therefore asked the Council's solicitor to obtain clarification from New College. Plans for the extension were still awaited from the landscape designer.
- b) Children's play area at recreation ground  
The Clerk reported that Playground Services would be removing the equipment within the next ten days. The clearing-up of the surrounding area would be let on a separate contract and would be carried out shortly. In response to a question, the Clerk said that there was little point in putting up notices stating that the playground was closed as they would almost certainly be removed. He was aware of the concerns expressed by members of the public that children were still using the playground, but it inevitably took time to go out to tender and then for the work to be completed.
- c) New road signs  
The Clerk said that he had received only a black-and-white drawing of the design and was unable to obtain quotes for the signs until a colour drawing was available. He reported that a letter had been received from the Heritage Trust withdrawing their offer to pay for one of the signs as they had received no response from the Council. Councillors requested that the required artwork should be chased up.
- d) Tourist information  
The Chairman said that a small tourist information area might be a possible additional use of the library building. It was hoped to organise a trial period using volunteers over the summer during library opening hours with a view to extending this to times when the library was closed. The Chairman asked for a councillor to volunteer to move this forward. Another possibility might be to move the Town Council office to the upper room of the library building, although there would be no direct access for people with disabilities.
6. Meetings attended  
Cllrs Jones and Cawsey had circulated lists of meetings they had attended. Cllr Jones reported that he had also met with GCC Highways representatives and Mr Clifton-Brown with the Clerk to discuss various matters including St

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Date.....

John's Bridge. A pavement was not possible due to the bridge structure, but Highways had suggested creating margins on either side for pedestrians. As there was two-way traffic on the bridge it was felt that this would misleadingly imply safe passage for pedestrians. Owing to the fact that there had not been any accidents on the bridge during the past eight years, neither Gloucestershire nor Oxfordshire were prepared to undertake the expense of traffic lights.

It was requested that Wiltshire should be approached about moving the 30 mph sign to the other side of Ha'penny Bridge. Cllr Jones reported that Highways were considering the extension of the 40 mph speed limit on the A417 to west of Bryworth Lane. They were also looking into the provision of lighting along the A417 towards St John's Priory Park. This had a low priority due to the number of residents involved. However, if the Town Council and "Safer Cotswolds" would be prepared to contribute to the cost, Highways agreed that this could raise the priority. Highways had suggested that the Council refer the matter of HGVs parking overnight at Butler's Court to the Vehicle Operating Centre in Bristol. Cllr Jones said that the resurfacing of the Market Place had been raised but Highways were not willing to do more than fill in potholes until an overall plan had been agreed. There were ongoing problems with the phasing of the traffic lights at the Thames Street junction.

Cllr Lambert reported that the first meeting of the playground committee had taken place on 17 April and the intention was to obtain quotes for a simple scheme in the first instance. The committee would submit proposals for a new location. Cllr Mrs Seale had attended the RAF Fairford liaison group on 29 April and the 2008 RIAT would take place on 11-13 July. Cllr Sullivan had attended a meeting at the Cotswold Water Park and Cllr Jones confirmed that a letter responding to the consultation had been sent.

7. GCC Councillor

Cllr Theodoulou reported that the £110 million originally allocated for flood relief throughout the country had been reduced to £31 million, and County anticipated receiving £1-2 million. He confirmed that utility companies are able to excavate roads without asking permission, but should restore them to the same condition afterwards. Areas that needed restoring should be reported to him and Highways should be asked to carry out inspections. The problem of litter and vandalism on summer weekends and evenings was raised. The area is not adequately policed and visitors are being deterred. Cllr Theodoulou undertook to talk to the police. Hopefully things would improve when the Water Park took over the riverside area

8. CDC Councillor

Cllr Mrs Carter said that there would be an opportunity for Councillors to visit Coln Park on 3rd June. She confirmed that the Water Park received funding annually from both District and County. CDC would be running a Lottery-funded event for children of 11+ called Summer Fantastic. The Conservation

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Date.....

Officer had met with the owner of 8/9 High Street. In answer to a query, Cllr Carter undertook to find out whether “Adventuress” was licensed for alcohol. The tattoo parlour is now licensed by CDC and is apparently very well kept. Problems of people congregating outside should be referred to Cllr Carter. Business signs in inappropriate locations should be reported to Highways, but if one sign is moved then all other signs must also be moved. The Clerk said that he would be meeting soon with the Highways inspector, Paul Swift, and would raise this matter.

The ongoing problems with the Seven Stiles footpath was raised with Cllr Carter as the muddy surface was deterring walkers and visitors. Cllr Carter said that the surface was the responsibility of Highways. In answer to a question, she stated that the line of the path had not been changed. There was significant public annoyance that the late arrival of waste collection licences had meant that some green bins had not been emptied.

9. Planning applications and decision notices.  
These had been circulated. It was noted that the applications for Beechcroft, Gassons Road and Butler’s Court Barn had been refused.
10. Correspondence  
Confirmation of the award of a resilience grant of £8,600 had been received. The Chairman said that replies would be sent to residents who had written about the Market Place.
11. Committee structure  
A draft structure had been circulated. Committees are responsible for managing their areas of interest, organise meetings and report back to the full Council. Committees should circulate reports at least one week before Council meetings. Consistent with Standing Orders, any letters that needed to be written on behalf of the Council should only be sent by the Clerk. Committee chairmen should be councillors, but it was possible to co-opt. It was suggested that the structure should be put on the website and the office should be notified of dates of meetings. It was proposed by Cllr Mannall and seconded by Cllr Cawsey that the committee structure should be adopted. This was agreed nem con.
12. Chartered Council  
This had previously been raised by Cllrs Sullivan and Roberts. The Clerk said that Chartered status should give the Council more direct and faster access to County and he recommended this as an improved means of communication. There was general agreement that the matter should be pursued.
13. Audit  
The Clerk explained the procedure involved and confirmed that the papers had been approved by the Finance Committee. He asked for the Council’s approval to send the papers off. It was proposed by Cllr Cawsey and

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Date.....

seconded by Cllr Dover that this should be done. All agreed.

14. **Market Place signpost**  
 The base of the signpost was cracked, possibly caused by a reversing lorry. Repairs were necessary and also a protective kerb around the post. Permission would be needed from Highways for the kerb and the Clerk said he would raise this with Paul Swift. It was generally agreed that this matter should be taken forward. The Clerk suggested that bollards could be placed instead of a kerb. Access round the corner particularly for buses must not be restricted.
15. **Tree pruning**  
 The Clerk had received a quotation for reducing the height of the leylandii on the boundary of Sherborne House as they were likely to fall and damage the drystone wall. As the sum involved was in excess of £500, the Clerk requested permission to go ahead and accept the tender. The quotation also contained information regarding other work required. Some members felt that the quotations were expensive, but the Clerk pointed out that the tree surgeon was fully qualified and was used by County. There were sufficient funds in the precept. Cllr Cawsey proposed and Cllr Dover seconded that the quotation should be accepted and this was agreed. It was suggested that the handyman might be requested to carry out limited pruning work. The Clerk said that he would discuss this and any training that might be required.
16. **Matters outstanding**  
 The signs on both sets of cemetery gates were very shabby and needed replacing. The timing of information for the newsletter needed to be looked into as there had been no mention of the annual parish meeting. It was suggested that there should be arrows in the Market Place to indicate that traffic should move in a clockwise direction and to prevent people driving out at the St John's Street end. The Clerk said that this had been raised with Highways on several occasions but it was not possible to paint arrows on the road surface because of the potholes. He would raise the matter again at his next meeting with Paul Swift. Bookings for the Memorial Hall should now be made through the Town Council office and keys could be collected during office hours. In answer to a query the Clerk said that Highways and CDC were liaising over the resiting of the recycling bins and he would raise the matter again with Paul Swift. It was intended that the current recycling area would be tidied up and extended to provide parking spaces and suitable traffic-slowing measures put in place.

The Market Place sign on Apsley House had now fallen down and the Clerk confirmed that it was on Highways list for action. The Clerk would attend the next Safer Cotswolds liaison meeting. CDC and West Oxfordshire were applying for European money for the Cotswold Joint Character area and the allocation of any funding granted would be discussed by their officers and proposals submitted to their district councillors. The Clerk confirmed that he

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Date.....

had suggested to the organisers of the Country Market that they contact CDC about a regular stall outside the bank as they might need a street trading licence.

- 17. Date and time of next meeting  
Monday 2nd June 2008 at 7.30pm.

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