

**Minutes of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING of Stanford in the Vale held on Wednesday  
28<sup>th</sup> April 2010 in the Millennium Hall Stanford in the Vale**

**Present:**      **P.G.McMorrow(Chair)**      **P.Gill**      **G.Hughes**      **S.Bambury Mrs G. McMorrow**  
                  **M.Isaacs**      **M.Tilley**      **R.Sharp**      **M.Dew**      **1 Parishioner PCSO Stokes**

**1. Apologies**

Nil

**2. Report of Thames Valley Police**

There had been 22 offences, 10 burglary, 11 criminal damage 1 theft. And 9 detections (40%) compared to the previous year of 32 offences 6 burglary, 16 criminal damage 9 theft and 1 theft of vehicle with 3 detections (9.5%) Compared to other villages Stanford was good. G.Hughes thanked the officer for the report and work throughout the year. There were questions about drug abuse which for class A was not evident in the village. There followed a discussion regarding drink/drugs and anti-social behaviour on Millennium Green including broken glass. The parishioner from Church Path who had written to the Parish Council regarding the problem also contributed to the discussion. PCSO Stokes stated that the police should always be informed as soon as the problem became apparent. Various suggestions were discussed including locking the gates, alcohol free zones (not an option due to costs etc.) and requesting that the co-op be asked not to sell beer in bottles. It was decided that various persons present would make regular visits to the green to observe and discuss the problem with these youths and attempt to reason with them to move to the youth shelter on the recreation field. S.Bambury asked about reporting crimes to the Police Station. PCSO Stokes said that it was better if it was phoned in as all stations were now manned by civilian officers who had to pass information on to an accredited police officer. Once again the thanks of the village were given to PCSO Stokes.

**3. Report of County Councillor Cllr.M.Tilley**

There were problems trying to make budget savings. £1.3 million had been spent repairing potholes after the winter weather. The Government had attempted to introduce new care home requirements but would not fund the plans. County councils had been unable to fund the project and the Government had stepped back from the proposals. Free bus passes had also to be funded by local authorities and it was estimated that District Councils in Oxfordshire were £4 over budget because of this. Pre-school playgroup had received planning permission and the final decision of the £250,000 grant is due to be made in June

**4. Report of District Councillor Cllr.R.Sharp**

Also faced budget restraints. There had been 38 redundancies and in total 45 staff had left. Was questioned by M.Isaacs as to how many of staff made redundant had returned as consultants. Cllr.Sharp was unsure but thought that at least one. Confirmed that the mistakes regarding polling cards would be paid for by the printers although he considered that this remained to be seen

**5. Finance**

Clerk produced figures for 2009/2010 pointing out reduction in salaries, cleaning, bank interest and misc grants. Precept had once again been reduced. The coming year would see the complete loss of a street cleaning grant and the recurring loss of bank interest. On the credit side there will be a slight increase in mowing grant and lease rental from the pre-school playgroup

## 6. Report of Parish Council Chairman

A very big thank-you to my fellow Councillors who waive attendance allowance, legitimate expenses and absorb costs of telephone, postage and travel themselves. This voluntary investment in our community is in sharp contrast to behaviour elsewhere

Our annual accounts show that for the eleventh year in succession we have reduced the local government tax (rates/community charge) yet continue to invest more than twice that income. In November, the Parish Council again voted to reduce village taxation and to once more absorb inflation for the year 2010-2011. The acquisition of more efficient grass cutting machinery has reduced our running costs. Such measures improve our efficiency and we continue to look for similar savings. We will lose our "Street Cleaning" additional grant for the coming year from the District Council as a result of their cost-cutting measures. Projects have included improvements to fencing, equipment storage, and the planning and agreeing more updating of Play Equipment that will take place shortly. The Conservation Officer for the County Council (now retired) Mr. Craig Blackwell deserves a special mention in respect of our new Community Woodland. We met, he and I, some seventeen years ago, to discuss such a project. He is clear about the year since that Woodland proposal (part only of a major plan) was his first project in his newly appointed job. It transpired that it was also his last prior to retirement but he didn't forget us. We wish him well.

Community involvement in the new woodland: the enthusiasm and application shown in tree planting was gratifying. How many parishioners remember where they planted their trees? Piles of compost remain in the woodland site for distribution to the base of each tree. Feel free to have a go but young people should be accompanied by an adult.

Benefactors for the year include The Public Purposes Charity (PPC), Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment (TOE), Agrivert Company, Waste Recycling Environmental (WREN), Cotswold Playgrounds, Vale of White Horse DC, One Stop Co-op Village Shop, Oxfordshire County Council and, of course, the unsung parishioners who clean up after others, cut grass verges and donate time and energy to our sixty seven voluntary organisations.

Since the Millennium year our community has been the recipient of no fewer than thirteen awards from national and county bodies. Our Asset Register for that period to date approaches one million pounds of investment in the village, predominantly from external funding. Such grants would not have been available without the regular input of a "Trigger Grant" from our PPC. Future aspirations deny any complacency on the part of Councillors and volunteers alike.

A big thank-you to all

## 7. Report of Parish Council Recreation & Leisure Committee Chairman

### *Projects-*

- **The higher fence at the Recreation Ground has been completed with appreciative comments from the residents.**
- **Fencing adjacent to the 417 and the football pitch has been mended.**
- **The Lockable steel vault- to house tennis nets, netball posts etc. has been installed. We hope this will improve the accessibility and safety of our equipment.**
- **The Village Woodland and Footpaths have been the major project and it has been most gratifying to see how many villagers helped and supported this project. We will need further community involvement and support over the coming years to care and maintain this woodland.**

**A sincere thank you to all our sponsors but in particular Trustees of the Village Charity (PPC) for their generous financial support for village projects.**

### Maintenance

- All grass cutting / strimming / hedge trimming has been well under control.
- Skate Park Ramps will need repainting.
- Health and Safety checks on our equipment continue as normal.
- The Play Area next to the Village Hall has some repairs to the safety surface and further repairs needed on the green carpeting.

- **The timber climbing blocks are deteriorating and will be replaced as soon as possible. We have purchased some equipment at an excellent price from a London Council who have never used this climbing equipment. Again the PPC have helped with the purchase of this equipment.**

It would be appreciated if dog owners could make sure all dog mess is always collected wherever you are walking- pavements/ grass verges / village footpaths /wayside. It is an offence to leave behind and notices have been placed all around the village by the Dog Warden (Vale District Council). Please don't let it be you who is prosecuted. It seems such a shame that Stanford in the Vale is one of the worst offenders in the Vale.

Finally the application to build a new building for the Preschool Playgroup on part of the Village Hall Play Area has been a difficult issue. The Parish Council have been keen to support this project even though some play area will be lost. We look to work with the Playgroup and Village Hall committees to share and overcome issues and difficulties re access and parking. It has to be an asset for the future for our children and we hope an opportunity with County Council support to increase the amount of recreation land for the Village.

Any ideas you may want to share to improve or extend our leisure facilities will always be welcomed. Thank you to all who do many things to care for our village in ensuring our facilities are well used and looked after.

## **8. Reports from Village Organisations in Attendance**

Nil

## **9. Questions and Comments from Parishioners**

G.Hughes detailed a meeting that he and Mr.McMorrow had attended - a Flood Group meeting where some villages had formed their own flood committees to act on behalf of their village . He detailed projects that had been carried out by these flood committees to alleviate flooding in their areas. He suggested that Stanford in the Vale should form a similar committee. It was decided that a notice be placed in the next newsletter asking for volunteers to serve on such a committee. It was further felt that the Environmental Agency were not meeting their legal requirements when dealing with riparian owners Concern was raised regarding the new houses being built in Faringdon (Folly Hill) and the flooding problems that it could cause for Stanford. The Parish Council have already written to the planning officers stating their reservations and fears but it fell on deaf ears and the construction was deemed necessary to meet Oxfordshire's building quotas.

G.Hughes also spoke about parking on pavements and greens and after calls to the police a person in the village had been fined for parking on the pavement

There being no further business the Chairman thanked those who had attended and the meeting closed at 2145