

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH OF CHARLTON,  
HELD ON THURSDAY, 15<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2010 IN THE OLD SCHOOL ROOM,  
CHARLTON**

**PRESENT** 4Parish councillors  
15 parish residents  
County Cllr Liz Eyre  
Roger Gurney, Clerk to Charlton Parish Council

**OPENING REMARKS**

The Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr B B Browne, chaired the meeting. He welcomed those present and introduced County Cllr Liz Eyre and Roger Gurney, who, today, is the Clerk to the Parish Meeting and will take the minutes of this meeting. The Chairman explained that the Annual Meeting of the Parish is required to be held and the Parish Council Chairman must chair the meeting if he is in attendance. It is an opportunity to hear the views of residents and a report will be made to the next Parish Council meeting for any action on matters raised to be discussed and/or acted upon.

**APOLOGIES**

These were received from Cllr Tom McDonald, Clive Bostle (Parish Footpath Warden), PC Stuart Toms and CSO Simon Hall, Howard Heath and Helen Fowler.

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH MEETING HELD ON 16<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2009**

Copies of the Minutes were circulated before the meeting and the Chairman read out a precis of the topics discussed during the Open Forum, and commented that the major issue raised, namely flood alleviation, had been on-going during the year.

**PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2009/10**

The Chairman's report was circulated before the meeting and Cllr Browne reported on the main issues considered by the Parish Council during the previous year. These were:

- Flood alleviation measures, which included meetings with the Environment Agency (EA) and supporting the ponding scheme upstream of the village. At the January 2010 meeting has provisionally included Charlton in the programme for 2011/2012, subject to funding being available. The PC has committed a contribution of £2,500, WDC has pledged £5,000, WCC has pledged £40,000, and the PC is holding donations of £270 with a further £50 pledged.
- WCC has been asked to investigate the flooding problems in Ryden Lane and Brook Lane.
- The initiation of a housing need scheme
- Grants had been given for the church clock maintenance and £2,000 is being held for the Crothorne and Charlton Village Hall refurbishment
- The Parish Plan Group has re-formed under the leadership of Elaine Hawley and it progressing well
- The PC decided against handing over the street lighting maintenance to the County Council. The concrete street lighting column in Cherry Orchard is due to be replaced
- At the Green new planters have been obtained; a replacement bus shelter *has been deferred* due to cost and WDC has taken over the ownership of the telephone kiosk
- Leaning headstones in the Cemetery are to be re-set
- Clive Bostle, the Parish Paths Warden, is co-operating with WCC to produce a leaflet guide to local, footpaths
- The Police have held 2 PACT surgeries to Charlton. More Neighbourhood Watch groups are needed.

- The precept for 2010/11 has been increased by £500, as reserve for the flood alleviation scheme. This will mean a rise of £4.97% on Band D properties
- There is increasing usage of the Parish Council's web site

The Chairman thanked those who had helped the PC during the past year, Roger Gurney, Clerk to the Parish Council; County, District and Parish councillors; Charles Tooby, the Internal Auditor; Steve Gwilliam, the Parish Lengthsman; and Clive Bostle the Parish Footpaths Warden, together with the Flood Action Group and Parish Plan Group.

#### **FINANCIAL REPORT FOR 2009/10**

The Parish Council Clerk circulated a report of the financial position of the Parish Council. He explained that provisional Receipts had increased by some £548, due to the increased revenue from the cemetery and in spite of very low interest rates. Payments had decreased, due mainly to a reduction in grass cutting costs at the Green and the Cemetery. The PC is still holding a £2,000 commitment to Cropthorne and Charlton Village Hall and £2,050 for flood relief and it is likely that some £16,600 will be carried forward, a satisfactory amount which includes existing commitments and possible contingencies.

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#### **REPORTS FROM GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS/OPEN FORUM**

**County Cllr Liz Eyre.** She explained the County Council budget and reported that there is a need to reduce staffing levels; there is a focus on areas of need and trading services. The aim is to reduce the budget by some £45 million in 3 years.

**Flood Action Group.** Roger Davies reported that the EA has appointed a Project Manager for the Charlton scheme and he will start work during this year. Some landowners in the area have not yet been approached to see if their land is affected.

**Parish Plan.** Elaine Hawley reported that the Group is about half way through the issues and there should be a consultation with the residents later this year. There is a need for more volunteers, as there needs to be a 10% response from residents. Progress can be followed on the web site.

**Cropthorne and Charlton Village Hall.** Jacqui King reported that, with the lottery grant, the refurbishment scheme is now fully funded and work will start on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2010. Their own fund raising reached £3,600 last year. A newsletter is to be prepared to inform of the progress; completion is scheduled for 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2010. The AGM is on 20<sup>th</sup> April.

**WI.** Diane Barlow explained that membership remained steady, but hopes that younger members will join.

**Police.** PC Toms had informed the Chairman that there were only 7 reported crimes in the Parish.

**District Cllr Tom McDonald** had forwarded his report to the Chairman. Cllr McDonald explained that he has been working with the Pc with the flooding issues, the gypsy site, as well as fuel poverty social housing issues. WDCs Council Tax will increase by only 1.94% and the drive for greater efficiency continues. WDC is working to improve rural play initiatives, the Neighbourhood Wardens and the Arts.

**Gypsy site, Canada Bank.** Brenda Bowley enquired about the progress of the planning appeals and was informed that representations are now due and there will be a hearing on a date to be confirmed.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.52 pm.