

PARISH OF ORTON WATERVILLE

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting
held at the Village Hall, Glebe Avenue, Orton Waterville, on
Wednesday, 19 March 2008 at 7.00 pm

Present: Mrs G A Thornley (Chairman and Chairman of the Parish Council) 6 electors and the Parish Clerk

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Cllr Allen, Mr Smith and Mr Chambers.
2. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 21 MARCH 2007 were taken as read. Mr Long proposed and Mrs Harkness seconded that they be signed as a true and correct record. This was carried.
3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – The Chairman gave her report, a copy of which is attached.
4. LOCAL MATTERS RAISED BY PARISH ELECTORS – There were none.
5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS – There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.15 pm.

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT – MARCH 2008

The year 2007/8 started with only nine Councillors no one having come forward following our notification of an election. In April a new Councillor was co-opted for Goldhay West ward. During the year, three Councillors resigned and four were co-opted. This left one vacancy until this May when the whole council is up for election.

Policing Matters

PCSOs continue to attend Council meetings, when this is possible, to report on local issues. Youths congregating outside the shops on Church Drive is still a problem. The City Council has increased the lumen of the lights with the objective of deterring anti-social behaviour. Stones thrown at windows has been a problem and police patrols have been strengthened in the area affected. Ticketing illegally parked vehicles has helped prevent the obstruction of footpaths. The issuance of a license for the store on Church Drive was subject to certain conditions that were accepted by the licensee. A drinking ban outside the Church Drive shops was discussed but not taken up by the City Council. Monthly crime reports issued by the Community Safety Manager reveal fluctuations month by month with improvements during June and August.

Planning

The number of Planning Applications examined remains similar to last year – seventy. There were four refusals and one withdrawal. There were objections to a house to be built in a garden. In light of the time available, it became necessary to convene a Special Planning Meeting to handle the objections, which was attended by a resident affected by the proposed house. Council turned down the proposal and the application was withdrawn.

Burial Ground

Following extensive correspondence with DEFRA and various departments of the City Council real progress has been made towards construction of the site. City Council has approved the plans and tenders for construction have been issued. A green palisade fence between the site and the adjacent Windmill property has been erected.

Village Hall

A tree in the grounds with a branch overhanging the hall caused concern and was reported to the City Council. City Council has agreed to lop the offending branch. A request to help finance enlarging the car park is currently being considered. Graffiti is a continuing costly problem.

Web Site

A Council Website has been established as part of the Orton Community Website. The site contains minutes of meetings, council vacancies, election announcements and other notices. My thanks to Malcolm Smith for his work in this connection.

Orton Centre

Construction of the Centre is at last making good progress although car parking has been difficult during the construction phases.

Parking Restrictions

Council eventually achieved agreement with City Council not to have parking limited to twenty minutes outside the Church Drive shops but to have parking restrictions at

the north end of Cherry Orton Road. Council also persuaded City Council not to have the excessive number of double yellow lines in the village area. The south end of Cherry Orton Road has major problems with heavy lorries parked in the road.

Allotments

All the allotments are let at this time and there is a waiting list. When construction of the Burial Ground is completed there will again be allotments at the adjacent site and water will be accessible. The roads and parking areas at the Gostwick site have been cleared of weeds and new gates installed. Some of the larger plots have been split to form two allotments. A report that there were rats in Cherry Orton Road allotments was investigated and proven to be inaccurate by the City Rodent Officer.

Inspection/Walkabouts

Councillors, Cross Keys staff and police carried out a “walk about” through the Goldhay area in June. Some improvements carried out since the previous walkabout were noted. Drainpipes had been encased in aluminium and there were fewer open gas and electric meter boxes. Excessive litter and graffiti were apparent but the garden containing rubbish had been cleared and refenced. Rubbish bins were being misused and, therefore, not emptied. I joined a group of City Councillors, Cross Keys and Council representatives on a further walkabout in the same area, in August. Many of the “problem properties” were identified as having private landlords and, it was agreed, these were to be contacted. It was noticeable that refuse bins that had been left full, had been removed.

Grants

Grants of £500 were made to Victim Support and Orton Counselling Service for Young People.

Courses and Meetings

Councillors attended various training courses and meetings with appointed bodies during the year.

Code of Conduct

Accepting the recommendation from CALC, Council adopted the Parish and Town Council’s Model Code of Conduct with some Light Touches, from September 2007. Thanks go to the subcommittee for their work on this project.

Environment

Mr Russell has continued to do valuable work concerned with ponds, trees and litter collection. Mr Jim Daley, City Conservation Officer, has twice discussed the new conservation report with Council.

In conclusion I wish to thank all the Councillors, my Vice Chairman and the Clerk for their diligence and support during the year. As we all stand down for the May election, I am sorry that some will not be seeking re-election and take the opportunity to thank you all and particularly Ted Howlett for his many years of service. He will be greatly missed. His experience, wisdom and great strength over matters financial have always been of great value.

Ann Thornley
Chairman of the Parish Council
March 2008