

## THE PARISH OF BERRICK SALOME

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 12th May 2016 at the Berrick Salome Village Hall at 8.00 p.m.

### 1. Apologies for absence

Ann Ross, Susan Radice and David Langston.

### 2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 14th May 2015 were summarised by John Radice. The minutes were signed by Ian Glyn.

### 3. The Annual Report of Parish Council

This was presented by the chairman, Ian Glyn.

My first duty, and pleasure, is to offer sincere thanks to those who served so well and diligently in the last Council; most particularly to Derek Shaw who seems to have clocked up around 30 years of service and, as you'll hear later, he's still at it.

We set out to introduce youth, a balance of the sexes and a geographical spread in the new Council. We achieved two of those aims but not the geographical spread which left Roke sadly unrepresented. Luckily Ellie Cross agreed to represent the interests of the residents of Roke on an informal basis rather than as a Councillor. We will strive to address that issue as the Council matures over time.

At the end of the last Council activity centred around 4 activities:

- 1) The installation of the Defibrillator now on the external wall of the Village Hall. It's secured by a numerical code on the recommendation of the Ambulance Service who give you the code if and when you call them out so that you can send someone to collect the machine to use it pending the arrival of the Ambulance. For various reasons this is the favoured and recommended procedure.
- 2) The creation of "footpath wardens" to look after and protect the footpaths and bridleways in our Parish
- 3) Repairs to the structure of the Playground equipment.
- 4) Repairs to the verges throughout the Parish. We were grateful to Grundons for supplying FOC a lorry load of topsoil. I have to say that we're dispirited by the continuing degradation of the verges since this initiative. Maybe we're pushing water uphill given the size of the trucks now coming through the villages.

Those whose builders damage the verges outside their houses will continue to be nagged by me to get them replaced after the work is completed. I'm grateful to those that I have spoken to up to now for obliging so readily.

During this Council we have and we are:

- We are working to improve the mobile phone reception in the villages. We're grateful to David Turner for his support in this quest, but it's not an easy task and I'm not sure we can report any great progress.
- We have made a strong representation on your behalf that the Oakley Wood recycling centre should not be closed. Here I'm pleased to report complete success. It's staying open for the foreseeable future.
- We have regularised the position regarding the Allotments in the Parish. They are now run as an independent facility for the benefit of Parishioners and they will report in to this meeting on their activities like similar independent Parish organisations.

- Organised an archive of historical Parish documents in a filing cabinet in this village hall. The Parish Chairman and the Treasurer has the key to this filing cabinet and anyone wanting to look through the archives is welcome so to do. David Langston has indexed them.
- We continue to push for better Broadband connection to those parts of the Parish who do not have it. Like the mobile phone situation, I suspect that we are a small voice in a sea of dissatisfaction but Hannah, who has taken on the task, is pursuing some innovative ideas to help out.
- We continue to liaise with RAF Benson in a very positive way while we await for the arrival of the remaining Chinooks. We have established two seemingly cooperative contacts at the Base and it seems to me that there is currently no major issue with unnecessary noise.
- We are in contact with the Highways Department re small improvements to safety on the Rokemarsh bend. Not much can be done here but certain existing road furniture can be renewed and a particularly malign pothole can be filled in.
- We continue to push Thames Water for resolution of the unacceptable situation at the bottom of the Roke Road and in Rokemarsh when the water table rises. We are now on a list of 31 Parishes in the Thames Water area where things are agreed to be unacceptable. Consequently we're part of a 3 stage process that seems to be more about identifying the issue and prioritising its solution than about "fixing it".

It looks likely that the process will come to a climax on November 17th when stage 3 will, hopefully, be implemented.

What those Stage 3 works are will depend on a survey to be conducted this summer by Thames Water amongst our residents. I urge you to take this survey seriously as the replies to it will affect the priority given to the work.

It seems to us that the issue is created by the inadequate size of the pipe out of the pumping station in Rokemarsh but that position has not been fully accepted by Thames Water who claim that the system is properly balanced "until something goes wrong".

- We continue to support PAGE in its efforts to persuade that there is no need for Gravel extraction in the area and that , if there was , the proposed pit near Benson is a flawed location. Rob Marsh will be reporting on this later.
- We are considering the invitation from the Local Councils to join their "Oxfordshire Together" programme. This acknowledges that , in times of austerity District and County Councils will not have the financial resource to fulfil all the tasks that they have done hitherto and invites Parish Councils to take on some of the work themselves with an inducement of a cash contribution to help.

Our position is to broadly welcome this initiative but not to involve ourselves at the outset until we see how it develops and on which ( larger) neighbouring Parish Council we can " piggy back".

- We are also revisiting the concept of a Neighbourhood Plan. This is an initiative that was proposed some time ago and , at that time, we decided not to become involved.

But the concept and importance of a Neighbourhood Plan has grown and it is appropriate for us now to revisit that decision. Derek has kindly agreed to head a steering group to look at this and he will talk to you about it later this evening.

- We also watch with a certain amount of dismay the developing conversations between Central, County and District Government about the future of local Government and we expect to be canvassed about this in the future.
- During the year we have been asked to comment on 11 Planning Application ranging from minor works--small extensions to existing buildings --through demolitions of existing houses and rebuilds -- to a completely new house on a new plot.

One or two have been mildly controversial and I hope we have navigated that controversy properly.

Our policy is to respect house owner's rights to want to improve / alter their properties, --to canvass locally to pick up any concerns in the immediate area of the Application and to recommend accordingly mindful of the constraints implicit in physical issues ( the sewage

system, relationship with roads footpaths etc.) and mindful of our role to keep the Parish as a Country Village with all that that entails.

- We have set the precept for this year at a level equivalent to previous years subject only to an inflationary increase. We did so mindful of the expectation that continuing austerity will prevail for the foreseeable future and that having a modest financial resource available to spend locally gives us the ability to undertake tasks that would not normally have fallen to us to do.

I am grateful to my fellow Councillors for their care, wisdom and effort; and particularly to Sarah White who was our clerk till November and to Chris Cussens our clerk since then.

We circulate minutes by email to all on our email list. We hope you find that helpful. If you're not getting the minutes then please let Chris know.

And finally: I've been on the Parish Council for many many years and I agreed to stay on last year to hand over to the new Councillors. I feel that task is now accomplished and I feel that new blood around this table would be a good thing. Accordingly if there is anyone who would like to join the Parish Council going forward I'd be pleased to hear from them. None of my current Colleagues relish the opportunity to chair the Council so the opportunity to give this review next year is open!

I'd be happy to continue in the absence of anyone else, but I believe a fresh face would be a good thing.

#### **4. To receive the observations of the County and District Councillors**

Stephen Harrod reported on behalf of OCC:

##### The year of a thousand cuts

The austerity drive from central government has made itself felt this past year with counties facing severe reductions in local government grants whilst being hamstrung from increasing their own taxes to counteract this. Oxfordshire has been no exception and each monthly report-back has added more and more bad news. The drivers behind these cuts can be summarised as follows:

- This is now our *sixth straight financial year* of having to make savings (since 2010/11).
- We are already in the process of saving £290m from 2010 to 2018.
- We will have to make significant savings on top of that from 2016-2020 as a result of a new round of cuts from Central Government.
- We currently spend around 50 per cent of our budget on children's and adults social care (2 per cent of the population). We believe that by 2020 this will be 75 per cent.
- We've cut our senior management by more than 40 per cent. We are sharing finance/HR services with Hampshire. The quick win savings have been made.

##### Subsidised transport

Following lengthy consultation and debate it was decided there was no alternative to cutting subsidies for bus services. This will have a marked effect on rural areas especially, and no doubt the future will hold many unintended consequences, yet to be revealed. Subsidies will cease at the end of the current school year on 20 July 2016. The bus service providers are co-operating with local parish councils in trying to draw up alternative timetables to provide at least a skeleton service following this.

##### Children's centres

- Savings are required as a result of government funding reductions and the need to respond to the rising demand for children's social care services
- The new service for 0-19 year olds (25 where child has special educational needs) and their families will provide a co-ordinated service that targets resources on protecting the most vulnerable families and works hand in hand with schools and settings, health partners, Thames Valley Police and voluntary sector partners
- The County Council is working with local communities to support the continuation of open access sessions such as stay and play and youth group sessions where the council can no longer provide funding for these services

*a. Background on recent council budget decisions*

- A series of decisions has been made recently by the council regarding children's services.
- A £6m saving agreed in 2014/15 on early intervention hubs and children's centres will still have to be implemented.
- Consultation on the new model included an additional potential saving of £2m increasing the total saving required to £8m overall.
- On 16 February the council agreed new budget arrangements for Oxfordshire. This included an agreement that £2m of savings relating to early intervention hubs and children's centres will not, after all, be required.
- No decisions have been made yet on how this £2m will be spent.
- On 23 February the council approved the proposals for new arrangements for an integrated children's' social care and early intervention service to support children and families in Oxfordshire.

*b. Eight Children and Family Centres*

- The new service includes creating eight Children and Family Centres across Oxfordshire working with children and families aged 0-19 (25 where child has special educational needs) utilising existing buildings.
- The eight Children and Family Centres will support children and their families who need help and will integrate the current work of the children's centres, the early intervention hubs and children's social care.
- The centres will provide targeted support to prevent needs escalating and open access sessions will be available.
- An outreach service will be provided to all parts of Oxfordshire which will help those families who most need intensive support.
- Under the new service structure the Locality and Community Support Service will become the first point of contact for professionals who have concerns about a child, except where there are immediate safeguarding concerns.
- Timings for the start date of the new service will be finalised following a staff consultation.

Early indications of the buildings we think will be retained for the new service are listed here - however this may change based on capacity and as other suggestions are put forward.

- Banbury Early Intervention Hub
- Bicester Early Intervention Hub
- West Oxfordshire Early Intervention Hub
- The Roundabout Centre, Barton
- Rose Hill and Littlemore Children's Centre
- Blackbird Leys Children's Centre
- Abingdon Early Intervention Hub
- Didcot Early Intervention Hub

In addition to the eight centres above, support will be provided to a further 11 centres that provide childcare on site - these are:

- East Street Centre, Calder Close, Banbury
- Sunshine Centre, Edmunds Road, Banbury
- North Banbury Centre, Hardwick School, Banbury
- Britannia Road Centre, Grove Street, Banbury
- The Ace Centre, Burford Road, Chipping Norton

- Slade Children's Centre, Titup Hall Drive, Oxford
- East Oxford Children's Centre, Collins Street, Oxford
- Grandpont Children's Centre, Whitehouse Road, Oxford
- Rosehill Littlemore Children's Centre, Ashurst Way, Rose Hill
- Elms Road Children's Centre, Elms Road, Botley
- Stephen Freeman Centre, Freeman Road, Didcot

It is proposed to continue supporting these child care settings until April 2017 with a view to them being financially self-sufficient to deliver child care from April 2017. Supporting these settings will provide a base for the council's outreach work that will be delivered in those communities. The council will also work with these settings and communities to support the delivery of some open access sessions from these buildings

As well as the eight Children and Family Centres, a mobile bus service will deliver services to rural communities and the traveller community.

### *c. Communities Initiative*

- We are keen to work with communities to see that, wherever possible, open access sessions such as stay and play and youth group sessions continue without council funding.
- Communities are invited under the council's Oxfordshire Together programme, to put forward proposals to run open access sessions.
- Proposals can be put forward to run a range of services as long as they include some children's services.
- Email [localities@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:localities@oxfordshire.gov.uk) for more information or to start discussions on proposals.

### Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs)

A proposal was put forward to reduce the number of HWRCs as part of our cost saving efforts. This met with considerable antipathy following a public consultation. Finally some good news emerged when it was announced late in 2015 that these centres would remain open for the foreseeable future. The Leader of the Council has written to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government asking for a change in the rules which prevent local councils from charging for the use of HWRCs, as this would enable us to more than cover the cost of maintaining the service.

### Oxfordshire Together – community-led services

The continuing financial pressure on local government means Oxfordshire County Council still has to save more money. We have already announced savings that will have a big impact on local communities, such as children's centres and subsidised transport. Over time, we hope more responsibilities will be taken on by communities. People know what is important for their area, and local communities are often able to provide services themselves. So although there is no point pretending that there is no financial motive for thinking about services could be run by local communities, there are real opportunities.

Oxfordshire County Council is looking at alternative ways in which we can deliver a number of different public services, across a wide range of areas. We have already been working with local communities in a number of areas to deliver services such as grass cutting, youth provision and libraries. Enabling local communities to deliver services has meant that they can shape, design and tailor the services to meet their local needs.

This proposal highlights the potential for the county council to work more closely with all town and parish councils, and seeks to identify further opportunities to enable us to reshape the way that public services are delivered in the future. There is an assumption that 'one size does not fit all' and therefore there will be a differentiated approach in each community.

Work is continuing in identifying which services will be taken on by which parishes and this will be implemented during the current year. View or download the communities' initiative framework, access FAQs and other information on [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/oxfordshiretogether](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/oxfordshiretogether)

### Proposals for Unitary Council

On Thursday 25th February a surprise announcement was made by Oxfordshire's District Councils and Oxford City Council. It called for the abolition of the County Council and the establishment of four district quasi-unitary councils, to include parts of Gloucestershire and Northamptonshire. (A unitary council combines the functions of a county council and a district council into one body.) In addition, the announcement called for the creation of an unelected quango to be known as a 'Combined Authority' to take on difficult areas of responsibility currently with the County Council, such as social care and major road projects. So, this would mean four councils spread across three counties, plus an over-arching unelected quango.

The Districts have commissioned management consultants to produce a report to evaluate their proposals. Initially their brief to consultants stated: "The District Councils' view is that a single county-wide unitary authority is not the right solution for Oxfordshire". It went on to say that any finding suggesting a single county-wide unitary is best would not be approved.

The Oxfordshire County Council view was that a single county-wide unitary authority was an option that should be considered (along with the Districts' proposal and other options for two or three unitary councils), and had thus been forced to begin the process of commissioning a separate management consultant's report.

As a result of County and public pressure, District Council leaders have now agreed to commission a report covering all the options, although it still states that the objective is "to test the proposal for four Unitary Councils with a Combined Authority" and suggests that two alternative proposals for a dual- and single-unitary authority be used as a benchmark, rather than as real, viable options. It would appear that council-tax payers might now have to fund two separate reports, in order to obtain an open-minded, unbiased and transparent view of all the options open to the residents of the county.

### Motions tabled by your Councillor

During this past year I have tabled two motions to full Council on your behalf. The first was to ask for the ability to charge for the use of HWRCs, which received good support and resulted in a letter from the Leader to the Secretary of State, as mentioned earlier. The second dealt with issue of sportive cycling events and the dangers caused to rural communities, calling on the Council to instruct its officers to draw up regulations to be applied to all sportive and triathlon events, or any event of a similar nature where participants are timed, in order to provide a greater degree of safety to our residents. Unfortunately this did not gain the support of officers, who are limited on what regulatory proposals they can include, as all cyclists have the right to use the roads and the nature of Sportives means they do not need traffic management, and so officers often can be unsighted to such events. They are therefore working with the local cycle clubs to see how we can encourage use of routes that are most suited to such events.

David Turner reported on behalf of SODC:

### General Comments

The Council has recovered very well from the effects of the fire at the Crowmarsh building in the early part of 2015. So well has this gone that the officer who was in charge of the SODC Business Recovery Strategy has been invited to lecture at Brookes University and a number of other County & District Councils.

### Premises

The District Council still operates from its temporary premises in Milton Park. However due to the current unsuitability of the building our public facing meetings are held in three external venues which are Howbery Park (for Full Council meetings) & Didcot Civic Centre and Howbery Park for Planning Committee meetings. The smaller Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees meet in Milton Park.

## Committees

For the last year I have been a member of the main Scrutiny Committee. Unfortunately in my opinion the ruling group decided to break with tradition and chair the main scrutiny committee themselves. I am also a member of the Planning Committee and the Constitution Review Committee. The Opposition Forum continues to have regular meetings with the Chief Executive and other Strategic Directors when we discuss strategic issues which will be decided at the Cabinet meetings which I also attend to ask questions. We have continued the system which the late Ann Ducker and I set up whereby most Cabinet reports go to Scrutiny first which has proved to be very successful. During the last twelve months despite having only three members we have provided the constructive opposition that any council needs. The relationships between all the political groups are very constructive.

## Housing

Consultations for the new Local Plan on the numbers of new homes for South Oxfordshire have been and still are taking place. The details on options should be published in June for more public consultation and will finally be tested at a public enquiry the result of which is expected late 2017. A worrying feature is that it is unclear whether the District Council still has the required Five Year Housing Land Supply. If it were proven we do not then developers may start putting in plans for approval on which a Planning Inspector could overrule District Council intentions.

## Didcot Garden Town

SODC has been encouraged by Government to apply for Garden Town status for Didcot. Whilst it is a bit late to design green lungs into the town there are many ways Didcot can be improved to the benefit of its residents. If successful this will bring large amounts of Government investment to Didcot. Given that Didcot is taking a large proportion of future housing growth in South Oxfordshire we must do all possible to gain the investment in its infrastructure.

## Joint Working between SODC & VoWH District Councils

This work still continues and is saving both councils approximately £6M each. The Council is going through a process of externalising more of its various departments which aims to save approximately £1M per year for each council. More savings are needed as the Government revenue support grants will soon be reduced to zero.

## Chief Executive David Buckle's replacement

Interviews are taking place in the next couple of weeks and his successor will be announced at the Annual meeting of the Council on May 12<sup>th</sup>. There will be an overlap period to enable continuity the length of which is still to be decided upon.

## Budget

The budget for 2016/17 was set with a zero increase in Council Tax but this did involve like last year another big dip into reserves to achieve. Whilst the Council has substantial reserves you cannot do this for ever so more savings will need to be made. The section 151 officer who is required to legally sign off a budget drew attention to longer term financial issues unless more savings are made. This is not going to be easy.

## Leisure

The Council's leisure centres continue to be well used although it is still difficult for residents without their own transport to access them. Programmes for fitness and health for the over 60's are starting to be set up across the District with some being planned and already operating in neighbouring Chalgrove.

## Waste Management & Recycling

SODC is still the top recycling Local Authority in the UK, something we should all be proud of.

## Grants

South Oxfordshire District Council offers capital grants to community projects in South Oxfordshire together with some revenue grants through its Community Investment Fund (CIF). The fund was established from the sale of housing stock in July 1997. Approximately £1,000,000 per year is distributed in grants. To date, the fund has distributed approximately £16M million. Full details of how and when to apply are on the SODC website. You can apply to SODC for a minimum of £1,000 and up to 50 per cent of the cost of a project if, you are a non-profit organisation or you have a capital project in mind that is going to benefit your residents and you are planning to complete the project in the next 12-18 months (although work shouldn't already have started). We have a guide to help you figure out if your project is capital or not, but as a general rule if it's to improve, completely replace or create a new facility it's probably capital. The only exception is vehicle purchases, which we do not fund. We also do not fund projects that fall to other public sector bodies to provide, like roads, footpaths, health services and schools, academies or free schools. If you need to ask for more than 50 per cent of the cost or your project that already started please give us a call, as we may still be able to help. The next round starts on May 1<sup>st</sup> and ends on July 1<sup>st</sup> for decisions in October 2016. Future funding rounds start on 1<sup>st</sup> August ending on 30<sup>th</sup> September and 31<sup>st</sup> October ending on 23<sup>rd</sup> December. For further information call 01235 540525 or send an email to [grants@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:grants@southandvale.gov.uk)

## Unitary Councils

These are much in the melting pot at present as one way of saving money and avoiding cuts to services. The District Councils and the County Council are at loggerheads at present. Whatever transpires and I guess it will be several years hence the most important thing will be good quality services delivered efficiently. This could well delay decisions on a new Head Quarters for the District Council.

## Mobile Phone Coverage

As you will recall March 31<sup>st</sup> was my deadline for receiving responses from the other three mobile phone providers (we already had a response from Three (Hutchinson 3G). I have now received a response from EE but no response from O2 or Vodafone. I have taken the following actions:

1. I have furnished your clerk with the responses from Three (Hutchinson 3G) and EE. You will have seen that Data Protection laws prevent me being involved with individuals who the providers explain have to contact them directly. I would like to be advised how this process is going.
2. I have now provided copies of correspondence to our MP John Howell and asked him to intervene on our behalf by discussing it with Ed Vasey MP who is the Minister for Communications and urge the responses from O2 and Vodafone which we are looking for.

## South Oxfordshire is best for rural dwellers

South Oxfordshire has topped a list of the best places to live in the UK countryside. According to a survey produced by the Halifax Company South Oxfordshire has the highest living standards with happy residents, high levels of satisfaction and low levels of anxiety. We also scored highly for health and employment with 97% of adults saying that they were in good health and 81% in jobs.

It is a privilege and I have enjoyed working as your District Councillor during the last year and in particular the positive relationship enjoyed in this role with local residents and the Parish Council.



5. **Statement of the Parish Council's accounts for the year ending 31 March 2016 and observations**

Craig Tribe tabled the accounts as follows:

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**SUMMARY OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENT ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31/03/2016**

<b>2014/2015</b>	<b>RECEIPTS</b>	<b>2015/2016</b>
<b>£6,000.00</b>	Precept	<b>£6,240.00</b>
<b>£75.00</b>	Grants	<b>£50.00</b>
	Donations	
<b>£1,044.90</b>	Verge post receipts	<b>£282.60</b>
<b>£4.90</b>	Interest	<b>£4.36</b>
<b>£226.45</b>	VAT recovered	<b>£1,265.55</b>
<b>£7,351.25</b>	<b>TOTAL Receipts</b>	<b>£7,842.51</b>
	 <b>PAYMENTS</b>	
	Capital purchases	<b>£1,461.75</b>
<b>£50.00</b>	Christmas tree + decorations	<b>£44.16</b>
<b>£117.54</b>	Dog bin collections	<b>£209.30</b>
	Donations – Village Hall	
<b>£500.00</b>	Donations s.137	<b>£500.00</b>
	Elections fees	<b>£85.00</b>
	Fees	<b>£15.00</b>
<b>£1,200.00</b>	Grass cutting	<b>£1,375.00</b>
<b>£549.20</b>	Insurance	<b>£565.68</b>
<b>£50.00</b>	Internal examiner's fee	<b>£50.00</b>
<b>£65.00</b>	Playground expenses	<b>£3,432.50</b>
<b>£58.00</b>	Printing	
<b>£147.05</b>	Repairs + Maintenance	<b>£770.00</b>
	Staff training	<b>£65.00</b>
<b>£221.78</b>	Subscriptions	<b>£110.89</b>
	Tree removal	
<b>£1,587.68</b>	Village improvements	<b>£935.43</b>
<b>£178.32</b>	Website costs	<b>£133.74</b>
<b>£215.81</b>	VAT paid	<b>£1,302.65</b>
<b>£4,940.38</b>	<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>	<b>£11,056.10</b>

Craig Tribe reported in summary as follows:

Receipts for the year totalled £7,843 and consisted primarily of the council precept of £6,240 and input VAT recovered of £1,266. In 2014-15 receipts were £7,351. This mainly consisted of the precept of £6,000 and wooden verge post receipts of £1,045.

Total payments for the year were £11,056 compared with £4,940 previously. Exceptional expenditure this period included the defibrillator for £1,382, playground maintenance of £3,370, overflow car park resurfacing £500 and the related input VAT paid and subsequently reclaimed of £1,303.

The net deficit of income over expenditure for the year was £3,213. This was expected and allowed for in reserves maintained by the council.

Total reserves carried forward to 2016-17 are £8,013. A reserves summary is shown at the foot of the accounts.

For 2016-17 the Parish Council increased the Band D precept by 1.99%. This provides us with a total precept of £6,380. The council believe it is important to maintain the reserve level as it is likely that the County Council will be expecting parish councils to perform some of their functions in the near future.

I would like to draw parishioners attention to the village website on which are published, amongst other things, financial information in accordance with the transparency code for smaller authorities.

## **6. To receive the report of the Berrick Salome Quarry Charity**

Guy Slocombe, Trustee and Chairman, reported as follows:

### Charity Overview

The Quarry Charity earns a rental income of £2000 per annum from the old quarry on the B4009 presently let to Wilkinson's Wood Yard. The Charity exists to administer these funds for projects or equipment which benefit the community of Berrick Salome Parish (Berrick Prior, Berrick Salome, Roke and Rokemarsh). Anyone can apply for funding on behalf of an organisation or village project. The Trustees, a small group of villagers, elected annually at the Village Meeting, administer these funds on behalf of the village.

I reported last year that we would be contacting the tenant to begin a rent review process. Contact has been made but essential documentation is missing to enable the process to begin. The Charity's solicitor, Hedges Law, has been contacted accordingly.

### Current Funds

The Quarry Charity's bank balance at the end of April 2015 stood at £10,584.66. Income received during the year was £2000.00 along with interest earned of £5.86.

No requests for funds were made.

This leaves the current balance at £12,590.52

### Trustees

Guy Slocombe has held the post of Chair since December 2014.

The current Trustees of the Charity are: Guy Slocombe (Chair), Abigail Clayton (Treasurer), Tim Clayton, Marian Shaw, Neville Gill, Julie Bird and Ian Glynn (as current Chair of the Parish Council).

Tim Clayton and Marian Shaw will be standing down as Trustees. Accordingly I am keen to hear from any villagers who would like to join the committee. However, the committee would like to ensure that the membership provides appropriate geographical representation of the parish. Those interested in applying should contact any of the current committee members. Alternatively please note the following contact details - Guy Slocombe (01865 400931, 07979 603079 [gslocombe@btinternet.com](mailto:gslocombe@btinternet.com)) or Abigail Clayton (07738 319200) [abigail.clayton@getfeedback.net](mailto:abigail.clayton@getfeedback.net).

## **7. Election of Committee of Management of the Berrick Salome Quarry Charity**

The committee comprising Guy Slocombe, Tim Clayton, Marian Shaw, Neville Gill, Julie Bird, Abigail Clayton (treasurer) and the Chairman of the Parish Council was re-elected en bloc.

## 8. The accounts and report of the Berrick Salome Relief in Need Charity

Jane Franklin reported to the Meeting:

The Charity was set up to provide grants of money, provision of items or provision of facilities for persons in need living in the Parish of Berrick Salome, for instance:

- Health needs / medical costs
- Disability
- Relief of poverty
- Housing

Income is received from rent from a parcel of agricultural land and a fixed interest investment plus interest on accumulated income. Chalgrove Charities, who manage the agricultural land for us, started a process of renegotiating the rent; from this, we hope to receive an improved income annually.

Three grants to the total value of £450 have been made over the past year.

The Trustees of the Charity are

The Rev Canon Ian Cohen (ex-officio as The Rector for the time being of St. Helen's Berrick Salome)  
Nominative trustees appointed by the Parish Council of Berrick Salome

Mrs. J. Franklin (Chairman)

Mr. C. Cussens (Treasurer)

Co-optive trustees appointed by special resolution of the Trustees with special knowledge of the Parish

Mrs. S. Clayton

Mr. C. Cussens (Mokes Corner, Berrick Salome Oxon OX10 6JR) acts as administrative officer.

### Financial Statement for the year ended 31st August 2015

#### Receipts and Payments Account

<b>Receipts</b>	<b>y.e. 31.08.15</b>	<b>y.e. 31.08.14</b>
Interest on 195 M&G Charibond shares	<b>12.64</b>	<b>12.64</b>
Rents from Chalgrove charity y.e. 31 December	<b>309.01</b>	<b>309.01</b>
Interest on COIF charities Deposit A/c	<b>53.83</b>	<b>47.75</b>
	<b>375.48</b>	<b>369.40</b>

  

<b>Payments</b>	<b>y.e. 31.08.15</b>	<b>y.e. 31.08.14</b>
Grant for educational expenses		<b>199.00</b>
Grants for special needs, recreational & educational opportunities	<b>450.00</b>	<b>450.00</b>
	<b>450.00</b>	<b>649.00</b>
Excess of Receipts over Payments	<b>-74.52</b>	<b>-279.60</b>
Bank Current & Deposit Accounts at 31/8/12 (31/8/11)	<b>11,928.83</b>	<b>12,208.43</b>
Bank Current & Deposit Accounts at 31/8/13 (31/8/12)	<b>11,854.31</b>	<b>11,928.83</b>

Guy Slocombe suggested that funds available through this Charity could be better publicised.

## 9. Appointments of Representatives to other organisations

In the absence of Ann Ross, there was no report on the Millstream Day Centre, Benson.

It was noted that Ann is soon to leave the village and is stepping down from acting as the village representative.

## 10. To receive a report by PAGE on gravel extraction

The following report was presented by Rob Marsh:

- Fighting on behalf of the local Parishes for over 10 years against the OCC proposals to extract gravel from our area, during which time the OCC has twice withdrawn their proposals.
- Our strategy has been consistently to challenge the extraction volumes and soundness of their proposals.
- The latest 10 year average (2005-2014) extraction volumes is now down to 660,000 tonnes per annum (2014: 639,000 tonnes). OCC still maintain they require over 1million tonnes per annum with no justification. Most other counties are using the 10 year average.
- There remains no requirement for new sites to be identified using the 10 year average. OCC are still pressing ahead with their proposal for higher volumes: Grundons seem to have approval for the Cholsey site (2.5m tonnes and 120 vehicles per day) and Hills are in planning stage for the Fullamoor/Clifton Hampden site – a similar volume.
- Current situation
  - OCC submitted their plan to the Government earlier this year.
  - PAGE submitted their response to their plan to the Inspector.
  - Government Inspector wrote on 22 January a lengthy letter to OCC asking for supporting documentation missing in their submission.
  - OCC posted additional documents on 29 April.
  - We have to reply to these by 10 June.
  - Inspector's response will be issued in July with the hearing due to commence in September.
- Our general strategy is shared by a number of action groups across the County under the banner of OXAGE. We are leading OXAGE and fighting under the twin arguments of volume and soundness.

## 11. Any other business

### 11.1 *Allotments*

Alison Blakey reported as follows:

There are 8 allotments and 8 holders, now comprising an informal group to liaise with the Parish Council.

Two more requests for allotments have been received, which will require more ground to be cleared.

The 'tip' has now largely been cleared, thanks to the efforts of Graham Allum.

The land is being registered, its ownership status hitherto being unknown.

No fees are charged to holders, since no facilities are provided.

## 11.2 *Neighbourhood Plan*

Derek Shaw reported as follows:

### What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

- Outcome of the 2011 Localism act.
- Ends up as a legally binding plan for local development
- Takes about 2~3 years and is very formal (Bureaucratic) in structure that requires all aspects of village development and finally approval in a village wide referendum.

### History

- Initially considered in 2012 but thought to be too expensive and complex at the time.
- Benson and Chalgrove started plans but “gave up” due to effort involved but have now urgently re started.
- Procedure has been clarified and SODC are now much more supportive and have sent us the name of Gayle Wootton who will, if we go ahead our assistant/contact.

### Why do one now?

- It would allow the Parish to have a say in how development in the villages takes place.
- Discourages “speculative developers” who have recently started to target areas without a Neighbourhood Plan. [experiences in Benson]

### Further information:-

- We are a “small” village so currently, unlike “large” villages we don't have an “allocated” number of properties to accommodate e.g. Benson 150, Chalgrove 85. Over the next 10 years we are likely to be required to approve in the order of 5~10 new dwellings.
- We have little infrastructure to consider, no schools, doctors. library etc. to consider

### What would be necessary?

- Set up a team to coordinate the task (~ 4~5 people)
- Define criteria, produce plan in conjunction with SODC, get plan approved....
- The stages would be:-
  1. Decide- Is a Neighbourhood Plan for us?
  - 2 What kind of plan do we what?
  3. Define the area our plan will cover
  4. Carry out a survey of Villages views
  5. Get any funding considered necessary
  6. Prepare our plan
  7. Submit our plan to SODC
  8. Get independent examination
  9. Have a referendum to approve the plan.

### Current status

- Out of about 90 parishes in SODC about 1/3 are developing a Neighbourhood Plan but so far only 2, Thame and Woodcote each have one approved.
- Most of those involved are large villages; the only small village is Pyrton. So it is difficult to get a “precedent” as to what would be involved.
- SODC is now prepared to help with money (£5000) and a champion, whom I have spoken to.

#### Next steps

- Decide whether to go any further?
- If YES then appoint a Chairman and a small committee
  - Meet with SODC and get advice etc. and arrange a special meeting in the village
  - Establish links with Benson and Chalgrove Neighbourhood groups, I have already had brief conversations with people involved with both projects
  - Talk to Pyrton as it is the nearest “model”

There being no other business, the Meeting concluded at 9.24 pm.