

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Ludgershall Parish Council  
held on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2016 in the Memorial Hall, Ludgershall**

**Present:** Cllr. Paul Thomas – (Chaired meeting)  
Cllr. H. Cox  
Cllr. R. Jones  
Cllr. T Chettle  
Cllr S Lawson  
Jenny Caprio – Parish Clerk  
Parish residents  
County Councillor Angela Macpherson  
District Councillor Cameron Branston

**1. Welcome and Introduction**

Councillor Thomas welcomed everyone to the meeting and agreed to Chair the meeting. Councillor Thomas expressed his sadness at the passing of John Cartwright and passed his condolences to his family.

**2. Apologies for Absence**

Those present noted apologies from Cllrs M Themis and PCSO Denise Grayburn

**3. Minutes**

Those present **RESOLVED** to confirm the minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

**4. Report from Chairman Ludgershall Parish Council**

Councillor Paul Thomas, Chairman of Ludgershall PC advised the following in his report:

- Confirmation that Play Around The Parishes was funded by the Parish Council
- Litter pick was organised and 20 black sacks were collected from Bicester Road.
- Devolution 2 – The Parish Council will now be responsible for mowing within the 30mph limits
- Best Kept Village 2015 – highly commended.
- Advised there was a tool marking event organised by Thames Valley Police in October 2015
- In September 2015 there was a bulk waste container which was outside the Village Hall and funded by the Parish Council.
- The play area had a ROSPA inspection.
- Jubilee Tree was replanted
- 200 Club had received a lot of new members which was helping to raise money towards the play area.
- Audit was completed which was satisfactory.
- Confirmation that the Parish Council were continuing to pay £1000 per year to cover historic legal fees.
- £1879.50 had been donated towards the play area by the Bike Night Committee.
- Account Balances at year end confirmed.

- Advised the precept was increased by the Parish Council which accounted to approximately £10 per household.
- Advised that the Clerk had resigned and a new Clerk had been appointed.
- Correspondence with Highways in relation to pot holes and the High Street had improved.
- The jetter had been out to clear the drains in October.
- The Parish Council had organised for ditches to be cleared and brambles to be cleared back.
- Fishing Swims had been replaced – the Parish Council had noted that they were not to everyone’s taste but need to be complaint with Health and Safety requirements.
- Applied for and received the grant for the MVAS. Once ground screws are in place it can be installed.
- Ron Jones now supporting with mowing of the Village Green. Thank you to Ron Jones and Jack Fisher for their continued support.
- Notice Board refurbished
- Gigaclear Broad band installed.
- 4g installation expected next month
- Damage caused by Gigaclear awaiting repair.
- Long term neighbourhood plan can cost up to £30,000
- Option for an informal plan could be considered. The village could consider another meeting to discuss this.
- PA system for meetings considered but concerns about the costs.
- Erosion to the village green concerning – Cost of kerbing is very high.
- Dog bins are now in place and dog mess has reduced.
- Transparency Code – the Parish Council needs its own website which we hope will be in place this coming year.
- EU referendum – make sure you are registered to vote.

**5. Report from Thames Valley Police – PCSO Denise Grayburn was unable to attend the meeting however prepared the following report.**

NHPT priorities for the next 12 months will be:

1. Protecting Vulnerable People and Locations
2. Tackling ASB
3. Taking active measures to reduce demand on the Police Service
4. Mental Health

Impact of Austerity on Police Service locally, Station closures, Restructure:

A number of Police Stations in Thames Valley, including Aylesbury Vale are due to close. This is part of wider savings across the Force to improve efficiency.

Waddesdon Police Station will remain operational for now, but may be considered in future rounds of closures.

The restructure of Aylesbury Vale’s Neighbourhood Policing Teams, has been put on hold for now by Headquarters. As a result, the Local Neighbourhood Team will remain as it is.

The overall crime figures and trends for the LPA and LPA Crime Operations:

The wider Local Policing Area (LPA) had a recent increase of thefts for work type vans and tools stolen. As a result OP Abscind was created. This was a high profile operation targeting those responsible. A number of arrests were made and a property in another force area was searched, resulting in the recovery of a number of stolen items, We are unable to give any other detailed information regarding this, due to the ongoing cross border investigation involving a number of forces.

A message to pass back to the local residents: Please ensure that vehicles are locked. We are seeing that a large number of vehicles broken into, were in fact unlocked at the time.

If anyone would like crime prevention advice, the Team will happily provide the necessary information.

What the overall crime figures and trends for the LAF area are - any crime operations:

Incidents / Arrests of note / Operations / Property marking schemes etc.

There was a spike in crime relating to theft from vehicles and burglary non-dwelling, such as sheds etc., in the Waddesdon Area.

A local male, aged 33 years was arrested in relation to these offences, and as a result of the investigation was convicted with 12 offences, and received a custodial sentence.

Ludgershall is still a very safe place to live, and we are pleased to say that ASB levels are still very low. We are taking part in a number of events in the local area, including the Young Farmers' Event, and the Emergency Services Day at Waddesdon Manor.

Personal Changes:

Sgt. Bryn Scott has now retired from Thames Valley Police and he has been replaced by Sgt. Nick Perks.

Sgt. Perks has responsibility of Waddesdon Area as well as Haddenham, Long Crendon, Wendover and Winslow. Sgt Perks has previously worked in Custody, Patrol and Roads Policing - in a number of Police Areas across Thames Valley.

At the end of March, following 8 years' of Service in Waddesdon, PCSO Antony Hurd is leaving for pastures new with Bedfordshire Police. He will be greatly missed but we wish him well as he takes on his new role. His replacement: Kevin Hyland, will start his training in June, and should be with us by late August.

## **6. Report from County Councillor Angela Macpherson – BCC**

Introduction:

In this brief annual report to Parish Councils I have attempted to cover some of the big issues facing both the County and District Councils this year and looking ahead.

My County Council division is geographically large and rural stretching from the Claydons and surrounding villages in the north through Grendon Underwood and south to Brill Oakley and Boarstall, twenty parishes in all.

My District division includes Marsh Gibbon, Twyford, Calvert Green, Charndon Poundon and Preston Bissett.

Listening to and representing residents' concerns is my priority and these are many and varied although there are some consistent issues as you can imagine. In addition to attending as many parish council meetings as is possible, I hold a drop in surgery with district councillor colleagues and circulate my contact details online and in local publications so that residents know my contact details. I am always on the end of an email or phone!

In addition to local work I chair the Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee at the County Council which scrutinises the NHS and social care providers across the County.

At the District Council I hold a Cabinet position for Communities, Leisure and Civic Amenities.

Buckinghamshire County Council:

As many of you will know the future funding settlement for local government from the centre has been reducing year on year and the future is no different. The County Council has faced a 40% cut in its funding and needs to continue to make severe budget reductions over the next 4 years to balance the books.

In light of this the County Council has submitted a request to the DCLG for a 'Four Year Financial Settlement'. The Chancellor's recent statements about additional cuts to public expenditure in the budget and with the relatively gloomy outlook for the world economy it now seems to be prudent to try to 'lock in' the current Settlement if at all possible to provide some certainty (councils have until October 2016 to submit bids). As a result of these pressures the County Council voted to increase council tax by 1.99% and to agree to the additional 1.99% proposed by central government to offset some of the pressures from a growing need for adult social care.

The main pressures on County Council budgets are found in the increasing demand for adult social care with an aging population with more complex needs. Additionally children's services are seeing more vulnerable children and have recently been tackling the scourge of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and sadly there have been a number of high profile cases locally.

Another major change on the horizon will be the government's ambition to make all schools into Academies which will mean they are largely without local authority control.

All this has resulted in other services being squeezed and less money available for areas such as highways, rights of way improvement and maintenance, libraries, public transport, in fact many of the subjects that are frequently raised at Parish Council meetings.

Highways: The issues with the roads, particularly potholes, flooding onto the highway and the quality of repairs features large on every local agenda. There have been a number of resurfacing schemes completed in the last 12 months, namely the A41 in the Kingswood area, and also some smaller local roads around Charndon, Twyford and the Claydons. Blocked gullies and culverts have been tackled, for example one longstanding issue near Brill. There is however, a longlist of repair works to be carried out and I work hard with Transport for Bucks to ensure these are delivered.

The Energy from Waste (EfW) facility near Calvert is now complete and starting to burn waste. This facility will over the next 30 years save tax payers £150m as a result of not taking waste to landfill. There are regular community liaison meetings with FCC which I attend, as does the Environment Agency representative, to discuss residents' concerns and ensure the operators engage with the public and provide answers to their questions.

HS2 has occupied a significant amount of time for many residents and parish councils in my division and across the county. Both County and District Councils have put up a valiant fight, petitioned and supported our communities as best we can within fairly limited resources. It looks extremely unlikely that this scheme will be cancelled so the focus now is about achieving the best mitigation we possibly can. The Commons Select Committee have agreed to some mitigation around the IMD area and it is pleasing that the parishes of Twyford, Charndon, Calvert Green and Steeple Claydon will have a mitigation fund of £1million specifically for mitigation projects affecting these parishes. However both county and district councils will petition again in the House of Lords to ensure we obtain the best deal possible for the local area. At the time of writing one area that is very unclear is the amount of traffic movements and their potential impact near the construction sites (particularly around the villages of Calvert Steeple Claydon Charndon Twyford and Edgcott near the maintenance depot)

We aim to provide more clarity on this in the upcoming months. Assuming the Bill gains royal Assent at the end of this year, construction work will commence in the Spring of 2017.

East West Rail. The western section between Bedford and Oxford is progressing and will when completed, open up better local and regional rail connections plus provide improved freight opportunities. East West Rail ran some public consultation events at the end of last year outlining the route, details about construction, changes to railway crossings, impact on rights of way, new footbridges and new stations. Initially no station was planned at Steeple Claydon but there is an aspiration from the local community and the Councils that a station is built on EW to support transport links serving the HS2 maintenance depot. Network Rail has made passive provision for a station but unfortunately the Commons Select committee did not support this. This petition will go before the House of Lords imminently. The completion date of the western section has been delayed and a start-up date is not certain although 2019 is still the target. The good news is that East West and HS2 are finally meeting and talking to each other about co-ordinating their work around the Calvert area where the lines cross.

Community transport for villages has been the focus of several of the Local Area Forums which are run by the County Council and provide an opportunity for parishes to work together. They are a forum for hearing from a range of partner organisations such as the police, fire authority, councils and health. The County Council is currently undertaking a review of community transport as recently we have seen the closure of some local bus services which has disadvantaged local people who may be at risk of becoming isolated. Along with my County Council colleague for Waddesdon division we are working to find a solution to community transport issues with the possibility of running a community bus and starting up taxi schemes.

Community Leader's Fund All County Councillors are allocated a small fund each year that can be used for local projects. I have contributed funds towards defibrillators in two villages, assistance for Community First Responders, a local tea dance, support for a youth theatre group and salt bins. I'm always keen to hear from Parish Councils with suggestions for how I can use my limited funds to help in the community.

The Unitary question. Having now read this report you will note that in Buckinghamshire we have what is called a 'two-tier' system of local government i.e. a County and District council who provide different services and have differing statutory duties. There have been calls to move forward with proposals to scrap the current system and have one or perhaps two councils for the county. I am totally in agreement that we have to act on this and stagnation is not an option. From a residents' perspective it makes absolute sense to have one port of call for all your services rather than the confused situation at present.

## **7. Report from District Councillor Cameron Branston - AVDC**

Aylesbury Vale District Council has continued to make significant savings to fill the funding gap created by annual reductions of Government Grants. The figure for the last six years stands at £14 million. That savings figure is comprised of cost reductions through increased efficiency plus additional income from commercial activities and asset rental.

The work is ongoing because we anticipate that a further £6 million is required over the next three years until Government Grant disappears altogether.

Cost savings cannot be generated merely by cutting out layers of management - that is only a race to the bottom and service provision will fail. Essentially, we are creating a completely new organisational structure with just two main departments - Community Fulfilment and Customer Fulfilment.

The same range of services will be provided, and additional ones determined by our customers, but the myriad of departments will disappear. This commercial approach to running a local authority is ground breaking, but essential to ensure that AVDC survives. Many other authorities across the country have buried their heads in the sand for too long - reluctant to implement changes and hoping that grants will return. They will not and those councils run a serious risk of going broke in the very near future.

Some authorities have recognised that what we have done at AVDC is worthy of a closer look and 117 delegates attended a conference in February where we gave them an insight into how we have achieved such large savings. That was a free event but at a follow-up event a month later delegates paid to hear more details. We are now working with ten of those authorities who will be engaging us on a consultancy basis to help them implement some of our ideas.

We have moved completely to the cloud, using Amazon Cloud Services to store our data. You will not see PCs on desks and we no longer have servers in our offices thus reducing our maintenance costs dramatically. We were the first local authority in the country to go along this route.

We have introduced My Account. This facility enables customers to interrogate our systems, and their personal information, whenever they want. They can set up direct debits to pay for their

services, claim discounts on council tax, apply for licences and benefits, report problems with their bin collections - and that list will grow. It means that we can deploy the staff that used to handle these matters on more productive work.

The Vale Lottery was introduced last November - again, we were the first local authority to set one up - and it is already raising £60,000 a year for good causes across The Vale. To date, 111 community groups have signed up and people who enter can choose from that list where they would like their money to go. 58 pence in the pound goes to good causes.

We are continuing to invest in commercial property and we have now spent £100 million improving Aylesbury Town Centre by way of building the theatre, Waitrose, Travelodge and the new University. Not only will this investment make Aylesbury a better place to visit, improving the local economy, but also it will generate rental income for the Council. The next phase is to build four new restaurants with residential units above. We have just exchanged contracts with our developer partner and we are pressing on with the submission of a detailed planning application.

Aylesbury Vale Broadband was set up last year to provide superfast broadband in rural parts of The Vale. The pilot project in North Marston was successful so we are now pushing on to Granborough and looking for other areas to cover. Over 50 communities have registered an interest, which makes choosing very difficult. We intended to provide superfast broadband but we are now offering ultrafast broadband - speeds of 300Mbps. BT has been extremely unhelpful and is trying to thwart our plans - a sure sign that we're doing things right and stepping on their toes - but we're adamant that we'll push on with our programme.

We have formed two other new companies to further our commercial aspirations. One will seek to provide additional services and products to residents and the other to commercial organisations. I cannot tell you what those services and products will be yet because we will be asking our customers what they want, rather than providing products that we think they want. We will be sending out regular newsletters to those who have registered an interest to build up a customer relationship and generate ideas. Initially, we are targeting customers who have signed up to our brown bin service because they are already paying for an extra service and the response has been very encouraging.

Council Tax was increased by 1.99% this year - that amounts to £2.70 a year for the average household. Our longer-term plan is to do away with a council tax charge altogether, but that will depend on the success of our commercial activities.

Moreover, whilst this has all been going on there's been the small matter of preparing our Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan. This will determine the location of housing and economic growth for the next 20 years, with its associated infrastructure. At present, we are looking to accommodate around 31,000 new homes - 21,000 for our own requirements and 10,000 for the unmet needs of other authorities. We are insisting that detailed green belt and brownfield site reviews are undertaken by those other authorities to ensure that we are not being asked to take on housing that could be provided locally.

## **8. Report from Councillor Paul Irwin – AVDC and BCC. Chairman of the LAF**

Councillor Irwin advised the Parish of the work of the LAF:

- £20,000 budget
- Active Bucks - £500 grant
- Public Transport – Purchasing a community bus and looking for volunteer drivers

**9. Report from the Village Hall Committee by Jim Goss**

- Hire charges cover the costs but any improvements require fund raising
- Jumble Sale took place on Easter Monday
- Village walk 6pm – 8pm 2<sup>nd</sup> July
- 4/7/16 – Bike Night

**10. Report from Mr. A. Harris – Charities**

No record of report for minutes

**11. Report from the Fishing Club – Ken Tiffin**

Lots of work has taken place at the pond this year. There is a big pile of timber which anyone is welcome to for fire wood.

**12. Comments/questions from villagers:**

- Concerns raised in relation to new fishing swims at the pond
- Draining concerns discussed around the village
- Village plan – meeting to be organised to discuss whether a plan should be considered.
- Discussed what the £28,000 in the village green account could be used for.

**13. Accepted by:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Chairman \_\_\_\_\_ Date