

Minutes of the Steeple Aston Annual Parish Meeting held on 14th May 2012 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall Committee Room

Present: Mrs. Mason, Mr. Preston, Mr Kewley, Mr. Coley, Mrs McKinley, Mrs Trinder, Mr Ferguson, Mrs Whybrew, Cllr Macnamara, Cllr Kerford-Byrnes, Mrs. Hallam, Mr. Latchford, Mrs McCready

In attendance: Cathy Fleet (Clerk)

No apologies were received

No Declarations of Interest were made

There was no public participation

The minutes of the meeting held on 16th May 2011 were signed and it was RESOLVED to accept them as a true record of the meeting and they were signed by the Chair.

Chairman's Report

Another year has gone by and ground has still not been broken at the site of the second Affordable Housing scheme on Fenway. The good news however is that, despite financial uncertainty due to governmental policies during the year, it seems that the funding is now secure, the site agreed with the vendor and the plans for 12 houses appear to find favour not only with SACP but also OCC and CDC, so far. Planning permission has still to be applied for and that will be the acid test. We can, I think, be optimistic that we will see a start on building at least before the year end.

The agreement on the lease for the Allotments with the Diocese has taken even longer. We have been working towards it since October 2009 and it has been an uphill struggle as what appeared to be a fairly simple agreement became entangled between the Diocese, their land agent, their solicitor and ourselves. There has been an unreasonable amount of delay and prevarication, we thought we were in sight of the end at last year's AGM, but, as of this weekend, we have the lease ready to sign and will do so at the Parish Council AGM following this meeting. Our thanks go to Jenny Hallam who has put so much work into the Allotments during the negotiations and Nigel Gudgeon who has supported the PC through the lease discussions and who has been invaluable in securing a sensible agreement. Now we can get on with the fencing of the area and the SACAA can get to work managing their allotments knowing that they are secure for the next 25 years at least.

The Millennium Park and Play area continues to be a huge success, drawing children and parents from miles around. It is very well cared for, and our thanks to Julia and Ryan, who has recently taken over the park maintenance for this, but it also remains a considerable expense to the parish and we need to continue to persuade CDC that we are providing a district wide facility and that some financial support would not come amiss. However, it is marvellous to see what pleasure it brings to everyone who visits, we are continually told it is the best play area in the district. The BMX track, until now rather a 'white elephant' has been transformed by the efforts of a group of teenagers working towards their Duke of Edinburgh's Awards. They have done an excellent job and it is evident now that it is a worthwhile element of the park.

The re-roofing and insulation of the Sport and Recreation building is the ongoing project. We were not lucky enough to secure a grant from Energyshare, though we did get into the second round. We now know that we can re-roof, without needing Planning Permission, using the existing tiles and Richard Preston, our grants wizard, has put together bids which we hope will make it possible to carry out the work in the Autumn, bats permitting! A project to provide extra space in the Village Hall for more storage and for SAVA to extend its facilities is under discussion at present. We should know the outcome of this during the next year.

Mobile reception and Broadband in the village are still unsatisfactory and Clare Mckinley continues to work on the various 'powers that be' to try to get an improvement, it is proving quite a struggle.

The Website Committee continue to provide the village with an excellent and vibrant website, our thanks to them for all their hard work on this.

The day to day work of the SAPC carries on. There was a certain humour in the OCC preparations for last winter which resulted in the councillors delivering salt to helpful volunteers to keep the roadside bins topped up. Thankfully the winter was not as severe as 2011 but we still are grateful to Tim Taylor for his help keeping the village moving when the snow falls.

Planning applications normally are reasonably uncontroversial for the councillors to consider and comment on but this year we did have considerable controversy in the village over a proposal for a sizable dwelling on the site of Wincote in Cow Lane. Petitions and debates followed and resulted in the application being withdrawn. No more has been heard, so far.....

This year the village sadly has lost The White Lion pub, after some difficult times for its publicans. New bus stops have been installed, attracting both approval and criticism. Puddles and potholes increase as the rain falls and new ones appear as fast as we can persuade OCC to deal with them. The Village Hall continues to be excellently cared for by its hard working committee and will get an exterior coat of paint as soon as the rain stops.

The Queen's 60th. Jubilee preparations are progressing and it looks as if this will be a memorable day in the village, as the Whit Races 50th anniversary, the Valentines' 60th. will be celebrated together on 5th. June. A fine day would be appreciated for this!

The AGM report is always an opportunity to thank people, all the hardworking committee members, VH, S&R, Website and this year the Jubilee Committee. Thanks too to our SAL reporter who faithfully attends our meetings and manages to make her reports informative and amusing at the same time, our Clerk, Cathy Fleet, who I think now is quite at home with the village and the PC and all of you who, have a real commitment to the village and give so much time and hard work to make this a Parish Council which I think achieves a great deal.

Margaret Mason
May 2012

Date of Next meeting : 20th May 2013
The meeting closed at 7.34pm