

# HERMITAGE PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly of Hermitage held on Thursday 19 April 2007 at 8.00pm in the Village Hall

**Present:** Mr N Pearson (Chair), Mrs S Gore, Mr K Gover, Mrs P Knightley, Dr J Lawler, Mrs K Willis, Mrs L Riordan (Clerk), Mr G Pask (District Councillor), Mr Q Webb (District Councillor) and 44 members of the public.

1. **Apologies:** All members were present.

2. **Opening Address** - Mr Pearson welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Mr Paul Jackson, Development Control Manager at West Berkshire Council who was in attendance to make a presentation on the following topic:

### 'Planning in a Village Environment'

*Urban Sprawl – the impact of major development on rural villages*

*Village In-fill - back garden development and demolition of single properties to make way for multiple dwellings*

3. **Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on Thursday 20 April 2006** were agreed and signed as a correct record.

#### 4. **Reports**

Reports were presented as below:

The Chairman of the Parish Council – *Mr N Pearson*

District Councillors – *Cllrs G Pask & Q Webb*

Hermitage Village Hall – *Dr J Lawler*

Hermitage & Curridge Youth Club – *Ms J Percy*

1<sup>st</sup> Hermitage Cubs – *Mr R Axten*

Hermitage School Governing Body – *Mrs C Desert*

Hermitage Pre-school Playgroup – *Mr M Ashdown*

6. **Parish Walk** – 2.00pm Monday 27<sup>th</sup> August 2007.

#### 7. **Villagers' Open Forum**

*Please confirm how many nominations have been received for the forthcoming Parish Council elections.*

NP - Two nominations were received and subsequently withdrawn. This means that after the forthcoming elections Hermitage Parish Council will not exist. West Berkshire Council will restart the election process in the hope of attracting new members, but in the mean time administration of the Council will be undertaken by West Berkshire Council officers.

All existing members of the Council have chosen not to extend their current term of office for valid and personal reasons. There are no sinister undercurrents or concerns. As the electoral roll is now approaching 1,000 residents there really should no problem recruiting the minimum of four members required.

*The road safety improvements at Marlston Road bridge do not seem to be working very well, in particular the priority scheme is causing angst.*

QW – Further refinement is possible and I will investigate the situation.

*The gateways installed on the Yattendon Road by Chapel Lane have been removed, will they be returned?*

GP – I think they will be returned, sometimes experimentation is necessary as part of Highway schemes.

*The new footway from Deacons Lane to Chapel Lane has made the road even worse, can anything be done?*

QW – work to the footway has indeed been detrimental to the road surface and I have asked for the planned resurfacing works to be brought forward.

*Why does the Parish Council make a grant to the Primary School, it is not a charity and should be funded by the education authority surely?*

LR – a Parish Council has various powers and duties set down by legislation. Whilst it is not obliged to make any grants/donations, it has the power to financially assist schools if it so wishes.

*Does West Berkshire Council spend its money wisely? It took a week for Highways to deal with a tree fallen across the Hamstead Norreys Road, but it was just chopped up and left on the footway.*

QW – Highways are responsible for clearing the road, but the debris remains in the ownership of the custodian of the tree. ie the tree owner must remove the debris.

GP – I will investigate the ownership of the tree and follow through as appropriate.

*The open space area at Hermitage Green is to be turned into a children's play area. Equipment is to be installed and the 'green' will be entirely removed, dominating the development and leaving nowhere for ball games. Some residents do not want this to happen and would not have bought their homes had they known – can this scheme be stopped?*

A legal agreement stipulates that play equipment is required and this should in fact have been installed before the homes were occupied. The developer should have made it quite clear to potential purchasers and if they did not then redress should be sought through them.

The original open space allocated at this development was reduced by the developer who wanted to squeeze in extra homes – if they had not done this then there would have been sufficient space for both a play area and a games area. Again redress should be sought through Banner Homes.

*Cars parking on pavements at the end of Briants Piece block the pavements and force pedestrians into the road. What can be done?*

NP - Unfortunately, the only way for this practice to be stopped is by police enforcement. In reality, this doesn't happen.

## **8. Any Other Business and Close of Meeting**

*There being no further business the chairman closed the meeting at 10.10pm.*



# HERMITAGE PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on Thursday April 17<sup>th</sup> in the Hermitage Village Hall.

Present.

Mr D. Brown.	Chairman.
Mr G. Pask.	District Councillor
Mr Q. Webb	District Councillor.

Fifty nine members of the public.

### 1. Introductions & apologies.

There were apologies from Mrs K. Willis, Mr M. Frost and Mr A. Hayes-Jones.

The Chairman introduced Sarah Orr from the Archaeological Service at West Berkshire Council, who gave a presentation entitled

#### **The Historic Environment of Hermitage.**

This presentation was followed by Sarah Ward, who presented and discussed

#### **The refreshment of the existing Parish plan for Hermitage.**

### 2. Minutes of the last Annual Parish Assembly held on Thursday April 19<sup>th</sup> 2007.

The minutes were circulated to the meeting.

There was a motion from the floor of the meeting that the minutes as circulated should be taken as read. The minutes were then signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

### 3. Reports.

Reports were presented from the following bodies.

The Parish Council	David Brown
District Councillors	Graham Pask and Quentin Webb.
Thames Valley Police	PCSO Kelly Neale
Hermitage & Curridge Youth Club	Jo Percy
1 <sup>st</sup> Hermitage Cubs and Scouts	Martin Brown.
Hermitage Primary School	Neil Pearson.
Hermitage Pre-School Playgroup	Donna Elms.
New Village Hall Committee	John Lawler

4. **Villagers Open Forum.**

*When there is a development in the Village what happens to the money.*

QW. Money raised by S.106 contributions is always used in the locality. WBC Officers assess various priorities such as Education and Open spaces.

*Does the money go to the Parish Council.*

QW The money does not go to the Parish Council unless there is a specific allocation.

GP Some of the S.106 agreements were not tied up as well as they would be today.

*Do we get a say in what the money is spent on.*

GP The Parish Council and the District Councillors will decide where the benefit should be.

*Is the S.106 money normally spent on items which are not in the Parish Plan.*

QW The Officers look at the circumstances and decide priorities.

*Could you clarify the footpath issues which is now referred to the Area Forum.*

QW When a petition is received it automatically is placed on the Forum Agenda. The Forum will then look at the Officer's recommendations and the Forum Members will make a decision. It is possible that the issue might go to a public meeting which would involve the whole of Hermitage.

GP This would be to get an overall consensus for the proposal.

*Has the work on the roundabout at the top of the Village been completed.*

QW We believe so.

*There are lights and signage lights which don't work.*

GP It will be best if we go and have a look.

*The siting of the Hermitage Green play area is causing concern because of contracts which were entered into when we bought our houses, so we need to be informed quickly of any proposal which might try to alter that.*

GP It looks as if there may be a legal question about the play area siting. The developer made the contract with you and that must be kept. The questionnaire completed by residents has been noted.

*The road surface in Yattendon Road has deteriorated and has become even worse.*

GP Roads are inspected by Officers, and if there is a pothole it will be quickly filled temporarily, to be followed up by a permanent repair. WBC have now given priorities to the whole WBC area, and there is much more money allocated than there used to be.

*When engaging with the Parish Council how do we know to whom we should speak.*

DB If a matter is to be discussed it is for the Council as a whole.

*If Councillors had specific roles we could discuss a particular issue.*

DB The Council is working on this. If you speak to an individual it will be as a discussion which does not lead to a decision, because decisions are taken by the Council as a whole.

QW If planning applications are presented it would be possible to discuss these, but the decisions on planning matters are taken by the West Berkshire Council.

RC

*The Parish burial ground is adjoined by space which used to be used as allotments and has now been grassed over. These might be called on again.*

DB We will come back to you about this. The burial ground is almost full and it is going to be necessary to consider the matter as a whole.

*It is a statutory duty to provide allotments.*

DB The Council will look at it.

*At Marlston Road bridge the traffic is awful since the footpath was put in, and please refer to last year's minutes since which it has got worse. It has become a horrible junction at the entrance to the Village.*

DB Do come to a Parish Council meeting with some clear proposals.

**5. Any Other Business.**

There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 21.50hrs.



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Chairman

.....  
Date