

Yattendon Parish Council

MINUTES of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Held on **Thursday 16th April 2018 at 7:30pm** in Yattendon Primary School.

Councillors present: Gordon Robertson (Chair), Chris Turner and Philip Bickford Smith.

In attendance: Sarah Marshman (Clerk), Virginia von Celsing - District Councillor, Aynsley Fry – Gecko Fitness, David Perry – Create Yattendon.

The meeting started at 7.30pm.

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Anne Harris and Wendy Mole.

2 Introduction by the Council Chairman

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending.

3 To approve the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 27th April 2017

It was resolved that the minutes be accepted as a true record and they were then signed by the Chairman.

4 Presentations from/by:

Aynsley Fry – Gecko Fitness Ltd

Gecko Fitness is a small local company based at Frilsham Home Farm. Aynsley started on his own in 1999 and the business has gradually expanded to include a clinic with individuals such as rehabilitation specialists, specialising in post-operative recovery, and nutritionists. The company is suitable for people of all ranges of fitness.

Virginia von Celsing – District Councillor

Virginia gave a report on her activities as District Councillor over the past year, which is at Attachment 1.

David Perry - Create Yattendon

Create Yattendon was recently created and is a small business providing meeting and training rooms, video and photography studio space and co-working desks in a shared office space. The business has video production expertise, helping business to use video content to help with media and social media.

Velospeed

Velospeed were unable to attend the meeting but instead provided the report which is at Attachment 2.

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Chairman

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Date

David Slack, Managing Director, Yattendon Estates

David gave a brief update on the activities of Yattendon Estates over the past year. The refurbishment of the Royal Oak is now taking place. The estate has purchased the Pot Kiln and has carried out some refurbishments. New businesses have moved into Frilsham Home Farm.

5 Parish Council Reports

Chairman's Report

Gordon thanked the Parish Council for their work throughout the year. He highlighted the importance of the number of successful businesses in Yattendon. The speed limit changes had already been covered by the District Councillor.

The bench in The Square has had to be replaced during the year as it was damaged by a vehicle. Apart from the excess, the cost of this was covered by the Parish Council's insurance company.

Clerk's Finance Report

We started the 2017/18 financial year with a balance of £4,415. The precept was set at £6,500, a reduction of £500, to cover the expected expenditure on the budget. In addition to the precept, a small VAT refund of £39 was received. The Parish Council also received the settlement for an insurance claim for the bench in The Square that was damaged by a vehicle. After the excess of £250 was deducted, the Parish Council received £8,340. The repairs are now complete and so these funds will be paid out in the 2018/19 financial year.

During the financial year, in addition to the necessary running costs for the Parish Council which include staff costs for the Clerk and a litter picker, insurance costs and training costs, other expenditures include £2,500 which is paid annually to Yattendon Parochial Church Council to help with the upkeep of the churchyard, £181 to reprint the footpaths leaflet and £366 to purchase a new salt bin.

Due to currently holding the funds to cover the repairs to the bench, the Parish Council has ended the 2017/18 financial year with a balance of £12,189.

6 Questions from members of the public

There were none.

Meeting closed 8:32pm.

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Chairman

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Date

Attachment 1:

Report from Virginia von Celsing, Ward Member, Compton on West Berkshire Council

I would like to give you a brief update of my activities and those of the the council during the past year.

BUDGET

I with my fellow members have been busy this year dealing with a diminished budget, making difficult decisions that affect us all. West Berkshire Council passed its 2018/19 budget at its full council meeting on 1 March 2018. This year's budget sees investment in a number of areas including highways, education and infrastructure as well a Council Tax increase of 2.99% from West Berkshire Council, with a 3% Adult Social Care precept. The Council Tax increase will raise £2.7m and the precept will raise a further £2.7m, which will be ring-fenced to meet growing the demand for adult social care.

Graham Jones, Leader of West Berkshire Council, said: "To put this budget into context, over the past five years we have faced increasing demands on our core services, coupled with reduced funding. In 13/14 our grant from central government was almost £24m. That grant is now virtually zero. Taking inflation into account there has been a real terms reduction in our spending of £10.5m each year compared to 2013/14.

"Our budgets are particularly under strain as a result of the spiralling cost of adult social care, which represents almost 40% of the council's budget. It is estimated that within 20 years there will be two adults of working age for every one retired. We must address this as caring for our most vulnerable is the most important thing we do as a council."

Our MP Richard Benyon has been working hard over some years to enable West Berkshire to retain our business rates. He has at last been successful which means this year we can retain a further £2million. However this sum is already used up in the current budget.

As a result of difficult decisions, it has been decided that green waste bins will be charged for at a rate of £50 per year. This is in fact in line with neighbouring local authorities but I appreciate is not a popular move.

PLANNING

I sit on the Western Area Planning Committee and planning and the environment continue to be key interests to me. I and colleagues are aware of the numerous housing issues within West Berkshire and work with the council and Richard Benyon to facilitate more affordable homes, as well as homelessness. Whilst aware of the conservation issues, and also the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in which we live, we must also keep rural areas vibrant and welcoming to younger generations.

SPEED LIMIT REDUCTION

During the year I attended a Speed Review at which the case for moving the speed reduction to 40mph back out of the village, and introducing a new 30mph area past Yattendon Primary School and into the village was approved. This has to go through various legal hoops but will come into force later this year. It is intended that a 'gateway' be erected also.

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Chairman

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Date

STRONGER COMMUNITIES

I recently attend a seminar at West Berkshire Council on building stronger communities - helping the vulnerable, keeping older people involved in the community, as well as aware-ness of crime and litter. Rural crime has dropped dramatically as the proceeds of this crime have become less attractive. However fly tipping is definitely on the increase and Thames Valley Police officers based in Newbury were at the meeting to explain what they were doing to combat this. Please note that anybody picking up household waste for you must show a license to operate as a waste collector - please always ask to see this.

YATTENDON PARISH COUNCIL

Yattendon continues to have a dedicated parish council to represent its residents. I have much enjoyed with working with them and their clerk, Sarah Marshman, during the year. I thank Gordon Robertson, Chair, and his fellow members for their support.

Virginia von Celsing
Ward Member, Compton
West Berkshire Council

March 2018

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Chairman

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Date

Attachment 2:

Velospeed

Velospeed Electric Bikes was formed in 2009 by John Clark and Nick Williams. After eight years of working out of a converted garage in Aldworth, the company moved to Yattendon in December 2017 when the West Berks. Brewery shop became available.

The electric bike is not a new idea; they have been around for many years but the original models used lead-acid batteries resulting in a bike that looked more like a moped, it was extremely heavy and had a limited range. Today, the lead-acid battery has been replaced by Lithium-ion technology that we are all familiar with in our phones and laptops. With the smaller, lighter Lithium-ion battery it is increasing difficult to tell the difference between a conventional bike and one with assistance. Also with companies such as Yamaha, Panasonic and Bosch producing the motor units and batteries, the electric bike has become an efficient and reliable form of transport.

Electric bikes and the Law.

Provided the power of the motor does not exceed 250Watts and the assistance cuts out at 25kph (approx. 15.5mph) an ebike is regarded as just a push bike. So, no need for a helmet, insurance or road tax. The only restriction is that the rider has to be over 14. In 2016 the Ministry of Transport banned the sale of ebikes with a throttle. So the UK is now in line with the rest of Europe where the motor in an ebike only assists when the rider is pedalling.

The two most popular questions that get asked are: how far will it go and does it recharge when you're cycling. It is difficult to say what the range of a bike will be as it depends on so many factors such as terrain, level of assistance, weight of rider, condition of bike, etc. but a range of 20 – 40 miles is realistic but it could be significantly more. The bikes do not generate power when ridden so the battery has to be recharged using a battery charger which takes 2 – 6 hours for a complete recharge depending on the capacity of the battery.

Velospeed stock a wide range of models from folding bikes, urban cruisers, trekking and touring bikes, mountain bikes and cargo bikes for deliveries and transporting young children. Potential customer are encouraged to visit the showroom and try the ebikes on the Home Farm Estate or on the surrounding lanes. This is one of the advantages of being in a rural location.

To promote the use of electric bikes, Velospeed organise presentations to Local Councils, business parks and to individual companies as well as participating in trade shows and ebike events throughout the UK.

Who buys an electric bike? Most ebikes are sold to people who enjoy cycling but find a conventional bike increasingly difficult to manage especially in hilly areas. People who only have a short journey to work are abandoning the car and using an electric bike. They can also help with a health or fitness regime. The electric mountain bike appeals to a younger age group and this category of ebike is now common place on off-road tracks and bike parks throughout the UK.

Velospeed is open 09.00 – 17.30 Tuesday – Saturday. Appointments are not necessary so you can call in at any time for further information and to try an ebike. They will be at the Newbury Motor Home Show in May and also hope to have a presence at the Yattendon and Frilsham Fete on May 28.

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Chairman

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Date