

# PARISH OF MARSH GIBBON

## Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2019 at 8pm in the Village Hall

**PRESENT:** Cllrs A Lambourne (Chair), I Metherell (IM), P Evershed (PE), D Leonard (DL), and J Smith (JS), C Jackman (Parish Clerk); Louise Metherell

**APOLOGIES:** Cllr R Cross  
Cllr E Taylor  
CC Angela Macpherson  
PCSO

The meeting commenced at 8.02pm

**1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2018**

The minutes of the meeting were agreed and signed as a true record by the Chairman.

**2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

There were no matters arising.

**3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Chair welcomed those present to the meeting and then presented his report at **Attachment 1**.

**4. MARSH GIBBON CHARITIES REPORT**

The report from the Charities Correspondent was not available.

**5. REPORT FROM THAMES VALLEY POLICE (TVP)**

PCSO had sent his report and is at **Attachment 2**.

**6. REPORT FROM DISTRICT & COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

CC Angela Macpherson had sent her report and is at **Attachment 3**

**7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**Station Road Public Footpath:** A request had been made to install a 'kissing gate' at the entrance to the public footpath on Station Road.

**Action:** Clerk to add this to the agenda for the Parish Council meeting on 11 June meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.25.

**Marsh Gibbon Annual Parish Meeting**

**Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2019**

**Parish Council Chairman's Report**

This is our opportunity to report publicly on the activities of your Council over the past 12 months and to thank all who gave their time for the benefit of our community.

This was the fourth year of this Council and its membership was unchanged.

**Overview of Life Around us**

The Government has decided to scrap our system of two tier local government by bringing in a unitary council to be called Buckinghamshire Council. This will take over all the roles of Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) and Bucks County Council (BCC) across the county. This, as yet is to receive parliamentary approval so will be delayed until it has received the necessary legislation.

The AVDC Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) has yet to be finalised and awaits the inspector's final approval.

There have been no further announcements with regards to the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway. Although East West Rail continues at pace. HS2 staggers along awaiting the government's approval of construction contracts.

**Planning**

At last we can confirm the Site A (Swan Farm) has been sold to W E Black Ltd for the construction of 22 new homes.

Site C (Leopold Farm) has also been sold but we await final written confirmation.

Site B (School / Shop) still has not been sold but we await further news later in the year.

Approval has also been given to 2 new dwellings at Box Farm and one in Townsend Lane as well as other extensions / alterations.

**Activities**

We have been able to continue to provide skateboarding sessions for 32 weeks during the past year. This will be financed during the current year by grants from Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust of £2,000 and Tesco's Bags of Help of £1,000. Attendance has continued to be good at all sessions.

The speed watch team was out during the summer of 2018 and a number of drivers received letters warning them that they had exceeded the speed limit. A further session is planned for the year ahead. Thank you to all the volunteers who assisted and organised the project.

We are making progress to set up an HGV survey to monitor the number of lorries that use the village as a through route. We are not trying to hinder local businesses with legitimate reasons to pass through.

It was been a routine year of normal activities for the Council and Clerk. Potholes, street lights, planning applications, managing cemetery and village grass cutting.

Once again, the Christmas Tree was a great success with more lights than ever and a big thank you to everyone who helped erect and take down the tree without whom it would not happen, including Cllr Evershed and myself.

We have decided to continue with our current devolved services contract for one more year, until completion of the Unity Authority.

We are once again grateful to Cllr Taylor for organising the working parties to tidy up the village, cleaning signs, bus shelters and general maintenance.

Thanks also to Cllr Metherell for sending out our monthly news bulletin and keeping 120 household fully informed of village matters. Something that I have already been asked if it would continue, which I assured them it will.

Our County and District Councillor, Angela Macpherson, has given us huge support and spoken for us at many levels, and is a regular attendee at our meetings and we thank her for this.

### **Finances**

We are again in a very sound position financially. Our income in 2018-19 was £34,092 and our expenditure was £32,539.

Earmarked reserves as at 31 March 2019 was £30,175 and the community account stood at £15,072.

Our budget for the coming year shows an income of £34,437 and expenditure of £37,059.

We have agreed to increase the precept by just 2% to £24,500 and have appointed as our new internal auditor Melanie Rose who will work on our 2018-19 accounts soon. Many thanks to Justin Kelly for filling this role for the previous number of years.

We will still continue to seek out savings as well as maintaining village amenities. We have changed electricity supplier recently, saving 28%.

We were able to donate £750 to the Old Folks Fund to assist with their Christmas Lunch of OAP's.

In 2019-20 we are hoping to renew the pathway and entrance at the cemetery, provided that we are successful in receiving grant aid.

We are hopeful that the work of Cllrs Taylor and Evershed proves fruitful.

### **Finally**

I would like to thank Cllr Ian Metherell for all the work he has put into the council not just in the past year, but in the many years that he has been Chairman. I am sure you will agree that he has brought an enormous amount of professional expertise and knowledge and has applied this to the benefit of the village. We wish him a full and speedy recovery from his illness and expect him to contribute for many years to come.

I would also like to thank my fellow councillors, Penny Evershed, Liz Taylor, June Smith, Richard Cross and Derek Leonard for all the time and assistance in running the council.

Finally, to our parish clerk, Carole Jackman, who keeps us organised as an efficient team. Thank you for all you contribute to the village.

Adrian Lambourne (Chair, MGPC)  
21 May 2019

**Report from PCSO, Thames Valley Police**

Our neighbourhood priority for crime reduction activity is to reduce burglary and other acquisitive crime.

**Crime stats for Marsh Gibbon (as at 7 April 2019)**

- 2 assault
- 1 burglary (including dwellings / sheds et)
- 1 criminal damage
- And 3 theft

Others are various offences or incidents are not for this forum. Over the same period the year before there were 34 reports including 2 burglaries and various other offences. We are aware that many offences are not reported. Please do report offences, you can do so online at TVP website as well as on 101.

**Crime stats for Aylesbury Vale LPA**

- Overall victim based crim is up 1% across Aylesbury Vale in the last 12 months.
- Across Waddesdon NH it is down 13% and remains the lowest crime neighbourhood across Aylesbury .Vale
- There have been 7 residential burglaries across Waddesdon NH in the last 12 months (an increase of 2 on the previous year), and 11 non dwelling burglaries (sheds etc) a decrease of 27% on the previous year.
- Theft from motor vehicles are down 33%, a decrease of 10 crimes

**Team News**

PCSO Danny FAHY joined us in September 2018 having been working in Aylesbury for many years before that. His predecessor, Kevin Hyland, has completed his training to be a warranted PC and now work on response at Amersham Police Station.

Aylesbury Vale LPA Commander Tim Metcalf will shortly be leaving us to take up a job at Milton Keynes. He will be replaced by Superintendent Michael Loebenberg.

**Councillor's report**

**Angela Macpherson**

**County Councillor Grendon Underwood division**

**(Including the parishes of Brill, Boarstall, Botolph and East Claydon, Calvert Green, Charndon, Chilton, Dorton, Edgcott, Grendon Underwood, Kingswood, Ludgershall, Marsh Gibbon, Middle Claydon, Oakley, Poundon, Steeple Claydon, Twyford, Wotton Underwood, Woodham) District Councillor Marsh Gibbon (including Calvert Green, Charndon, Marsh Gibbon, Poundon, Preston Bissett and Twyford)**

This report provides a flavour of recent activity at both Aylesbury Vale District Council and Buckinghamshire County Council.

**Unitary**

Following the approval of a single council for Buckinghamshire in November 2018, the Leaders of the county and district councils received a letter from government in January, setting out the plans for the transition to the new council, and how the new council will be formed in April 2020, including:

The new council will replace the current five councils – Aylesbury Vale District Council, Buckinghamshire County Council, Chiltern District Council, South Bucks District Council and Wycombe District Council. These councils will cease to exist after 31 March 2020.

The name of the new council will be 'Buckinghamshire Council'.

It will have 147 elected members – three per current county ward.

Elections for the new council will take place in May 2020, then in May 2025 and every four years after.

A temporary 'shadow' authority will be formed, with all current county and district councillors (236 seats and 203 individual councillors, allowing for 34 twin hatters); the shadow authority will set the 2020/21 council tax and budget.

Leadership to oversee the transition to the new council will be through a Shadow Executive comprising of eight district councillors and eight county councillors plus the Leader of the County Council as its chairman. I will sit on the Shadow Executive representing the district council.

An implementation team will be established to manage the smooth transfer of services and staff to the new Council. This will be led by the County Council Chief Executive with a district Chief Executive as deputy.

Orders have already been made by government to defer the local district and parish council elections which had been due to take place in May 2019. Instead, town and parish council elections will take place in May 2020 alongside elections to the new Buckinghamshire Council.

Working with partners, including town and parish councils, will be key to the creation of the new council. Both district and county council colleagues are working closely together to plan the

transition to the new council including how we engage with town and parish councils and other local groups and organisations.

## 1. County council matters

### Children's Services

It is encouraging that following an inadequate assessment from Ofsted we are seeing progress in improvements in the delivery of Children's Services for our most vulnerable children and families in the county. Progress has not been as swift as we would have liked but following significant investment and scrutiny improvements have been made. A focus on prevention and help in early years services will see the repurposing of some children's centres with others strengthening their service provision for families most in need in their locality.

### Changes at household recycling centres

A series of changes to the county's household recycling centre service was agreed this year.

The recommendations for change were prepared following a recent public consultation and a detailed analysis of how the recycling centre service currently operates, including patterns of demand at each of the sites, and survey information on how people actually use their own local site.

The changes aim to make important cost savings while at the same time ensuring that residents experience as little difference as possible in the way they use their local recycling centre.

Buckinghamshire's household recycling centre service is highly thought of by residents, and the decision to make changes at all was only taken with reluctance.

The main changes being introduced, which it is estimated will make cost savings of £1.25 million, are as follows:

1. Introduce charges at all Buckinghamshire household recycling centres for anything that is classed as non-household waste. This includes waste resulting from the construction, demolition, renovation or alteration of homes and outbuildings, and rubble, soil and treated wood resulting from garden landscaping. However, all green garden waste will continue to be accepted without charge. Charges will be phased in from 1st April 2019.
2. From 1st April 2019, reduce daily opening at the household recycling centres at Rabans Lane (Aylesbury), Chesham and Burnham from seven to five days a week by closing them on Wednesdays and Thursdays.
3. Permanently close the household recycling centre at Bledlow from 1st April 2019.
4. Close the household recycling centre at Burnham permanently from 30th September 2019, subject to a financial review of the effectiveness of the other changes, which could mean that closure is postponed.

The Council recognises the widely-held concern that, despite considerable evidence to the contrary, changes to the household recycling centre service would lead to an increase in fly tipping. To cover such an eventuality, authority was given for the county's waste enforcement service to bring in additional preventative measures if any increase is identified.

The Council have communicated widely to ensure that residents are aware of the changes that will be taking place both to the household recycling centre service as a whole, and especially in respect of their own local site.

## **Consultations**

### **Minerals and Waste consultation**

A recent consultation has addressed how the county council will manage waste and the extraction of minerals in the county.

The management of both of these tasks is extremely important and the county council, like other local authorities, has to produce plans for how it manages waste and the collection of minerals.

The main minerals found in Buckinghamshire are sand and gravel, which are essential for construction. The council has to make sure there are enough sand and gravel sites with planning permission to meet local demand and to contribute to national demand. Waste developments can include landfill, recycling centres and energy from waste plants – and again the county council has to have enough of the right facilities to safely manage the waste produced in Buckinghamshire by households, industry and businesses.

People can read about how the county plans to manage waste and minerals over the next 20 years by going to [www.buckscc.gov.uk/RMWLP](http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/RMWLP)

### **Adult social care, Short Breaks Consultation**

In January a six week consultation started on the modernisation of Buckinghamshire's residential short breaks (respite) service for adults.

Currently the service is located at Seeley's House in Beaconsfield and offers overnight breaks for up to eight vulnerable adults at any one time. The plan, if agreed, is to move to a more suitable location in Aylesbury and commission a new service in partnership with health.

Provision of the new service would mean temporarily closing Aylesbury Opportunities Centre for 12 months while a partial rebuild takes place. Current service users will be supported to find alternative day activities and transition to the new service when it opens in August 2020.

### **Highways / Transport for Bucks (TfB)**

Defect Repairs : Since April 1st 2018 to the end of December TfB have repaired 13,807 defects across the Aylesbury Vale area of Buckinghamshire. This consists of 7,528 conventional repairs and 6,279 which were carried out using the spray injection patching machine. We are continuing to see a year on year increase in the numbers of potholes appearing across the county predominantly on C and Unclassified roads where historically there has been less capital investment. This was amplified

earlier in the year as a result of the particularly cold and prolonged winter we experienced 2017/18 followed by the extreme flooding events in May all of which has had an adverse effect on the stability/ condition of the highway. In addition we continue to see ever increasing numbers of vehicles on our roads. A recent RAC report indicated a 75% increase in delivery vehicles as a direct result of the ever increasing popularity of online shopping which no doubt has contributed to the deterioration of our roads.

Spray injection patching machines were brought in three years ago which are designed to manage defects on our more rural C & Unclassified roads, where the vast majority (approx. 65%) of defects occur.

**Grass Cutting :**The 2018 rural grass-cutting program focused on highway verges around areas that are key to maintaining visibility, such as at junctions, laybys, and the inside of bends. The aim of grass-cutting is to keep the highway safe by maintaining visibility for all road users. We carried out 4 cuts last year consisting of 3 vision splay/ junction cuts and a single swath cut, 1.2m (48") wide from the edge of the carriageway or footway which was completed in October.

**Winter Service :** The winter service started on the 14th October and ran until April 14th 2019. All of the salt domes were replenished during the summer with a total of 10'000 tonnes in stock at the beginning of the season. Salt bins have been refilled however if there are any we have missed or have been damaged / moved please notify us through 'Fix My Street'.

As always please report any defects and local problems through the Fix My Street website

### **Library refurbishment**

The newly refurbished Aylesbury Library is now open. The new library interior includes: better computing facilities, new self-service technology so customers can borrow and return books really quickly and easily, a modernised children's area, new meeting rooms and exhibition area, longer opening hours and much more.

### **Registrars service**

The council's registrars service has spent the last year working hard to perfect its new weddings and civil partnerships offer. The Buckinghamshire Registration Service now offers a new online wedding service which allows couples to research venues and suppliers and even plan their ceremony online 24/7. The service has also been simplified into four special wedding 'packages' which, starting from £210, offering good value for money. The county offers a wealth of venues and couples can choose between grand manor houses, quirky museums, stylish hotels and even atmospheric caves to marry in. Last year the Buckinghamshire Registration Service conducted more than 1800 marriages and civil partnerships.

### **Health and Wellbeing**

In our public health role the County Council has an excellent 'Simply Walk' programme which offers more than 80 guided walks a week on routes in locations right across Buckinghamshire. The walks cater for all fitness levels even for those who might be recovering from illness or injury. You can walk

in very rural routes or some walks take groups round our villages and towns.

[www.buckscc.gov.uk/simply](http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/simply) walk

### **Infrastructure**

East West Rail. The western section of the route from Bicester to Bedford the Public Inquiry into the Transports and Works Act orders opened on 6 February 2019. Whilst in broad support of the scheme, the impact on the local highway network is of key concern for the county council during construction and representations are being made at the Inquiry.

HS2: councils across the county continue to oppose this project which brings zero benefit to our area and communities. Enabling works have now commenced and residents are witnessing at first hand the destruction to the environment and wildlife. We continue to make representations to ministers and our MPs.

Ox/Cam expressway: The consultation on route options will go out to public consultation towards the end of 2019, with the choice of route being made in 2020. The leader of the county council has been clear that the corridor B is not that preferred by the county council, which would have favoured a route that alleviated the congestion in Aylesbury. Leaders have also expressed their ongoing concern at the lack of public engagement from Highways England.

### **District Council matters:**

#### **VALP (Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan)**

Officers are finalising the modifications requested by the Inspector before they are returned to him prior to public consultation this summer. The modifications include site assembly work with additional transport modelling of sites in close proximity to Milton Keynes, flood risk assessment and water cycle studies, habitats regulation and sustainability appraisals. AVDC is currently awaiting transport modelling comments from the county to complete the sustainability appraisal. Following the six week public consultation we hope the Inspector will then issue his report and we can move towards the adoption of the VALP this autumn.

### **Planning and Enforcement**

The current workload in planning and enforcement continues to be very high with unprecedented numbers of applications being processed. Whilst the Government's own targets are easily exceeded at AVDC in terms of determination of a percentage of applications within a certain time scale, we recognise that this is not a bench mark which is welcomed by disappointed parish councils and applicants.

We continue to look at ways to increase the level of liaison between our customer service teams and planning staff managing casework with the aim that we become more responsive to application queries in response to the most frequent complaint we receive that "officers do not respond to application updates" To this end we have seen the introduction of a planning liaison officer Hazrat Hussain, to help parishes with communication about local applications.

[hhussain@aylesburyvaldc.gov.uk](mailto:hhussain@aylesburyvaldc.gov.uk)

It is important to note that AVDC is one of the busiest planning departments in the country but this is absolutely not acceptable for delivering poor customer service and since becoming leader of the council I am insisting that officers work on initiatives to improve the service we provide.

The number of planning and enforcement officers at the council remains a significant challenge. There is a national shortage of professional officers but recent recruitment has been successful and we are nearer to our desired number.

### **Waste and recycling**

We are in the process of transformation in this department. The majority of vehicles have been renewed and there are around 30 in total. The number of new properties in the Vale has increased dramatically and this has resulted in the need to redevelop and expand the depot at Pembroke Road in Aylesbury. Additionally the collection rounds needed to be reviewed at the end of last year. It is a credit to the team that this change went very smoothly with very few missed bins or complaints and considering there are c75000 homes in the Vale this was an excellent result.

### **Homelessness support**

The council has been successful in bidding for central government funding to support some of our most vulnerable residents who are either homeless or are rough sleepers. This funding targets those most in need and involves multi agency working with social care, police, job centres, DWP and addiction support services to provide more security and stability in their lives.

### **Micro grants**

AVDC cabinet took the decision that the microgrants scheme for parishes and local groups should continue for 2019/2020 until the councils merge. This offers a regular opportunity for parishes and community groups, supported by their parish council, to bid for funding up to £1000 for local projects. This has proved popular across the Vale and particularly beneficial for smaller more rural parishes

Finally I have thoroughly enjoyed serving our community for the last year. We are in a time of much challenge and change in our area and I am on hand to meet and listen to your concerns.

Email contact [angmacpherson@bucksc.gov.uk](mailto:angmacpherson@bucksc.gov.uk) and [amacpherson@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk](mailto:amacpherson@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk)