

**MOULSFORD PARISH COUNCIL**  
**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF ELECTORS**  
**HELD AT 7:00pm ON THURSDAY 26<sup>th</sup> MAY 2022**  
**AT THE PAVILION, MOULSFORD**

PRESENT: Cllr Elvy (Chair) Cllr Baker (Vice Chair) Cllr Powell  
Cllr Simpson (SODC) Mr. Baker (MEC) Mr. Mansford (PMC)  
29 members of the public Mr. Twibell (Parish clerk)

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Cllr Eagle, Cllr Partridge

2. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Copies of minutes from the APM held on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May, 2019, were distributed and comments were invited. All present accepted the minutes as a true and accurate record. Signing was proposed by Cllr Baker, seconded by Cllr Elvy. The clerk confirmed that copies of all accompanying reports given at the meeting (where available) would be held in the minutes file.

3. **Chairman's Report**

Cllr Elvy shared the Chair's report with the meeting. This detailed the work of the council, village committees and voluntary groups during the pandemic, including resisting planning applications from FoTE and Cranford school, continuing the refresh of the recreation ground, tree planting, and the completion of the sewage plant upgrade. 2021 also brought the resignation of councillors Bernie Sachse and Andy Bryan, both valued for their efforts on behalf of the village, followed by the co-option of Martin Eagle and Sue Powell to keep the council up to strength.

MEC and Moultsford School warranted special mention for the pre-Christmas gala, while the village's outdoor walks and scenery helped many through the restrictions of Covid, as did Zoom conferencing allowing distanced meetings. The council's communications with the village are set for improvement in 2022, and a new planning process for small communities will see Moultsford involved in a nationwide pilot scheme. She paid tribute to former council chair Miles Powell, who passed in 2020. Lastly there were thanks for the many volunteers who give their time to make the village a better place. A copy of the full report is on the council's Web site.

4. **Clerk And Responsible Financial Officer's Report**

Having presented a full financial report for the year 2021/22 at the parish council meeting in April, the clerk/RFO concentrated instead on the council's financial and governance track record which included: the council's precept, currently £51 per household, per year, compared to an average family weekly shop of £151 per week. What facilities and services parishioners receive for their £51 per year. The precept remaining unchanged for three years contrasted with a spiralling cost of living. The fact that no councillors had ever sought the allowances or minor expenses they are entitled to. Finally the internal and external audit and control processes that ensure correct oversight, governance and financial probity are maintained. Copies of the financial report, audit results and controls are available on the council's Web site.

5. **Reports from Village Organisations**

a) **Well Barn Estate**

Mr. Curry, land agent, spoke of the extensive farming and conservation activities being undertaken on the estate, and underscored the owner's commitment to continuing this important work. He also said there would be no game shooting taking place this year as a result of the bird flu epidemic and its impact on the bird population.

b) **Greenlands Farm**

Mr. Atkinson, farm manager, outlined the area encompassed by the farm and detailed the various planted, grassed and hedgerow areas

designed to encourage wild life and birds. Species include English Partridge, Skylarks, Kites, White Throats, Hawfinch and Swallows. Deer, Hares and Badgers are also seen on the farm. He closed by saying conservation areas were always under review, in line with Government incentive schemes while uncontrolled dogs, walkers off footpaths and parked vehicles remain a challenge for wild creatures. A copy of the report is available on the village Web site.

**c) Pavilion Management Committee (PMC)**

Mr Mansford, Chair, presented a report on the running of the pavilion, its finances, and maintenance work. This included more than 300 events in a typical year, 7,000 visitors a year (village and external). However, efforts to make it a desirable, clean and safe venue, together with the additional work required and depressed bookings due to Covid, led to a loss of £808 for 2021/22. He thanked all the members of the committee for their continuing work. A copy of the report is available on the village Web site.

**d) Moulsoford Events Committee (MEC)**

Mr Baker, chair, described the role of the events committee, highlighted recent events, revealed some of the behind-the-scenes and encouraged further residents' involvement. He reminded the meeting that MEC is a sub-committee of the parish council with two primary aims: to organise and hold events for the community and raise funds towards parish council projects. He cited the 2021 Christmas gala which had realised £900 towards the ongoing recreation ground project. The recent donation to MEC of two restaurant grade wine cabinets, plus the adoption of refillable, chilled beer kegs had improved the storage and quality. He encouraged support for a family camping night on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> July, and urged residents to get involved in wider events by helping out on bar, proposing new ideas and joining the committee. A copy of the report is available on the village Web site.

**e) Coffee Shop**

Mr. Baker also gave a report on behalf of Mrs. Dixon from the Moulsoford Coffee Shop, a mid-week, monthly social function in the pavilion. The event had restarted post-Covid in July 2021 with just nine attendees, with numbers growing since. Mrs. Dixon paid tribute to the small group of volunteers running the event, to those who contributed cakes and biscuits, and to the PMC which provides a subsidised hire. In turn the PMC was donated £150 in recognition. Residents, visitors and those merely passing through are all made welcome. A modest charge of £1.50 is made for refreshments. A copy of the report is available on the village Web site.

**f) Recreation Ground Project**

Cllr Baker gave an update on the recreation ground area (which she described as the green heart of the village), with particular reference to wild life. Of note are Pyramidal Orchid, together with Stag Beetles, White-Letter Hairstreak butterflies and Striped Lynchis moths (all three priority species), Serotine bats and Kestrels (both listed species). As part of the Queen's Green Canopy jubilee scheme, some 130 trees were planted, including a commemorative avenue of seven Limes, a Woodland Trust pack and community donations. Next on the Rec. agenda is surveying, recruiting conservation volunteers, village outreach, record capturing, and integration with the evolving Local Placemaking Plan. She closed on an historical note: John Stevens Henslow (1796-1861), a friend of Charles Darwin and who instrumented the voyage of The Beagle, was vicar of Moulsoford around the same time. A copy of the report is available on the village Web site.

**g) Web Site and Moulsoford News**

Cllr Powell discussed the council's communications with parishioners across three channels: Facebook, the Moulsoford News and the village Web site. The first is good for immediacy and conciseness, the second for the depth and diversity of information and community involvement, the third for more official, mandatory documents and click-throughs to planning etc. A refresh of the latter is planned with a more visual, interactive purpose, in which Moulsoford School's IT team has agreed to help. A copy of the report is available on the village Web site.

**h) Joint Local Planning**

Cllr Simpson described the agreement between South Oxfordshire and Vale of the White Horse district councils to pool resources and develop a joint local plan in a bid to cut costs and become carbon neutral. Mirroring similar joint plans in other areas, it will cover: planning, new development, types of housing and its energy efficiency and required infrastructure, and aims to better tackle the climate emergency and set better environmental standards. The plan will also benefit Didcot, the town being bisected by the two districts.

**i) Goring Gap Walks**

Mr. Longden outlined the local branch of the Ramblers' walking for health initiative, one of the most successful schemes in the country, for which he is a walk leader. Walks cover a range of abilities, terrains and duration, and are open to all from the local area. All start from the Rectory Garden in Goring. More information, including dates, times and routes, can be found at <https://www.goringgapwalks.co.uk/>.

**j) Church Yard Working Party**

Mr. House described the activities of the church yard working group and the regular work parties it organises in keeping the churchyard smart and tidy.

**k) St. John The Baptist Church**

Mrs. Knowles, churchwarden, summarised a project which aims to create a village tapestry/collage to commemorate the jubilee year. Individuals, schools, organisations and societies in the village have all been invited to contribute sewn illustrative designs representing village activities in 2022. Those contributing are also invited to submit a short description. Completion is due by Spring 2023. A copy of the report is available on the village Web site.

**l) Oxford University Hospitals Trust**

A governor, Mrs Knowles spoke of the trust's recovery following two years of Covid, and described new facilities including a 48-bed ICU, a radiotherapy unit, and MR Linac scanners. In addition, new quality standards have been adopted. Two of these are 'delivering high quality care' and 'reducing violence and aggression towards staff'. She concluded by reiterating the message of taking more responsibility for ones own health through food, drink and exercise. A copy of the report is available on the village Web site.

6. **Questions from The Floor**

None.

8. **Any Other Business**

None.

The meeting closed at 8:36pm.

Signed: ..... Dated: .....