

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING  
OF THE PARISH OF WRAYSBURY  
HELD IN WRAYSBURY VILLAGE HALL  
ON 24<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2015**

**1. Present**

Councillor Mrs Lenton, Chairman of the Parish Council, in the Chair. The Clerk and twenty four Registered Electors of the Parish.

(Cllr John Lenton, Paul Hewson, Henry Perez, Karin Dobson, Phil Townend, Steve Barton, Cllr Andrew Davies, Phil Jackson, Cllr Diana Hughes, Cllr Sinclair, Dawn Funnell, Zenat Oberoi, Tarun Singh, Carolyn Humphries, Phillip Hampshire, Robin Unwin, Fred Parsons, Heather Parsons, Lora Andrew, Cllr Andy Moran, Dave Francis, Ollie Francis, Cllr Mike Williams and Glyn Larcombe).

Ewan Larcombe from the Parish of Datchet also attended.

**2. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Martin, M. Smith and P. Lord.

**3. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2014 were circulated at the meeting. They were agreed as a correct record, and signed accordingly.

**4. Lower Thames Scheme – A Presentation by the Environment Agency**

The Chairman welcomed Mr David Murphy and Mr Scott Salmon to the meeting.

In their opening remarks, the EA Officers thanked the chairman for the invite to the meeting, and reflected on the events of the last twelve months. They praised residents for their resilience and stoicism.

Mr Salmon explained that one of his roles would be community engagement. He would be hosting roadshow drop-ins at local places, including the container library. Liaison with the Police and landowners had already commenced, as had soil and ground surveys.

During his presentation, Mr Murphy made the following comments:

- Datchet, Horton and Wraysbury were all areas at high risk of flooding.
- A new emergency response plan would be developed in 2015. This would include consideration of any emergency temporary defences.
- Between Datchet and Shepperton three new flood channels would be constructed.
- Three weirs on the Thames would also be enhanced.
- More work would be done with communities to raise flood awareness and support them in flood preparedness, response and recovery. Property level protection would continue to be offered and promoted.
- As well as homes and businesses, key infrastructure would also be protected.
- There would be habitat creation and improved recreation facilities.
- Comments from local communities would be sought and welcomed.

- Funding remained a significant issue, but it was noted that very good progress had been made. This included proposed contributions from local councils, such as the Royal Borough. Around £46million, of a total of £302million, was still sought. But the funding already gained meant that the first five years of the project could now proceed.
- Funding could be sought from utilities companies, in particular the water companies.

At the conclusion of the presentation, the Chairman permitted questions from registered electors of the Parish. During the session, the following comments and responses were made:

- The £302million was based on slightly old figures, but it did include a high level of contingency. As the project developed, cost projections would become more accurate and could come down. Additionally, Government grant funding could be increased over time.
- A resident expressed concern that the new proposals would not be built for at least ten years, and that the residents of Wraysbury required assistance now. Mr Murphy explained that he could never appreciate what residents went through but he stressed the importance of the future scheme. He also explained that shorter term measures such as the major flood response plans and the promotion of property level protection products would help residents in the near future.
- It was confirmed that the other local Councils had agreed to support the scheme and signed the memorandum of understanding.
- Concern was expressed that the proposed flood protection measures that had been announced for Oxford would send yet more water into Wraysbury. The EA recognised the need to share information with Wraysbury residents. The river modelling would hopefully demonstrate that there would be no impact on downstream communities. Comments would be welcomed during this phase of the consultation as local knowledge would be used to enhance the scheme.
- A resident expressed concern about his property level protection arrangements. Mr Murphy agreed to discuss the matter outside of the meeting.
- A resident described the causes of the 1947 floods. He added that since then many of the gravel pits had been in-filled, and that the M25 caused a major flow blockage. A resident added that the M25 should have had water channels build underneath it.
- Negotiations with landowners would commence. Compulsory purchase would only be used as a last resort.
- The proposals would be discussed with Heathrow airport after the decisions of the Davies Commission were announced.
- A resident expressed concern that trees were down along the length of the river. The EA explained that they would continue to pursue landowners with enforcement. Their main priority was the maintenance of the navigable channel.
- A resident expressed concern about the use of single frequency hydrographic surveys. He explained the need for dual frequency equipment. Mr Murphy agreed to discuss the matter outside of the meeting.

- A lot of the dredging which had taken place since the 2014 floods had arisen from additional government funding. Depth and profile surveys were ongoing, and it appeared that silting and erosion of silt could both happen quite quickly.
- There could be a need for the EA to meet with interested parties in the future, to discuss the more technical aspect of the proposals.

The Chairman concluded the discussion by thanking Mr Murphy and Mr Salmon and looking forward to more progress being made. (*Further discussion ensued, outside of the meeting*).

## 5. Councillors Presentations

Cllr Williams opened the presentations with a briefing on his work as Lead Member for Greens. Maintenance of green spaces and verges remained the main contract of the Council. Some jobs were one-off, others all year round. The weather had a major impact on how the contracted work operated.

Cllr Moran described the work of properties, which included the play park, in the absence of the Lead Member, Cllr Mike Smith. Improvements to the play-park were ongoing. This included refreshing existing equipment and the installation (in the Spring) of two new pieces of equipment, one of which would be particularly suited to younger children. Lora Cherry was thanked for her work. Funding sources included the Parochial Charities, Section 106 monies, and Parish Council funding. Further works would be funding dependent.

Cllr Mrs Hughes explained that in relation to Planning, the Parish could only recommend, it could not make decisions. The Parish Councillors had to consider Green Belt, terracing, impact on other neighbours, increases in footprint and impact on or from flooding. She advised residents to contact the Borough if they wanted to comment on planning applications near them. Residents could contact their Parish and Ward Councillors for help and advice. She concluded by reminding all present the importance of their involvement in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr Davies advised the meeting that he was Co-Chairman of the Horton and Wraysbury Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group. Horton Parish Councillor Mrs Rayner was the other Co-Chairman. He paid tribute to residents of both Parishes for the high response rate to the first consultation. He thanked Fred Parsons for his secretarial work and all of his other involvements in the work of the Steering Group. He also thanked Cllr Lord for his efforts on the website and social media. It was noted that five potential sites in Horton and Wraysbury identified as possible sites for development, had now been dropped from the Borough's plans. Preparation of the Plan had commenced, further public involvement would be encouraged/expected. It was hoped that Planning Aid would continue to support the work of the Group. After further public consultation there would be a submission to RBWM, then a Government inspector, and finally, a public referendum. In answer to a later 'public question', Mr Davies confirmed that the timetable was quite flexible owing to the complexity of the steps required to reach the finalised Plan. The Steering Group was working towards completion around December 2016, but Mr Davies stressed that this was not a deadline. He also urged residents to visit the website periodically, to see the latest news. [www.hwnp.co.uk](http://www.hwnp.co.uk)

Cllr Sinclair advised the meeting of his work in relation to flooding. He continued to press RBWM to carry out their responsibilities in relation to the Wraysbury Drain. He had suggested the installation of a series of dams.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Lenton, addressed the meeting. She paid tribute to Councillor Collins who had recently resigned, and to Cllr Martin, who had advised he would not stand at the 2015 election. Cllr Martin had served the Parish for well over thirty years.

The Chairman advised that there would be a permanent memorial plaque to past Clerks, and that this would be dedicated to the memory of Mr Roger Marlow who had served as Clerk for over twenty years.

She recalled as a highlight of the municipal year the Arthur Walters Memorial Awards event, which honoured the work of key volunteers in the village, and in particular the Flood Team. She had also laid the Remembrance Sunday wreath on behalf of the Parish, as well as attending village fetes and fairs. She explained how much she enjoyed meeting local residents and noted that a number of parishioners had become 'regulars' at Parish meetings.

She paid tribute to the hard work of her fellow Councillors and thanked them for their continued support, and also gave mention to the Ward Councillors, Colin Rayner and John Lenton.

The Chairman reflected on the ongoing recovery from the floods. She stated that the village continued to fight with great resilience, and at all times refused to be seen as victims.

She explained that preparations for the Magna Carta celebrations continued apace. This would include a souvenir brochure to all households and school children, a flower festival, archery contest, visit by the 'Barons of England', a medieval themed Wraysbury Fair (including Shetland Pony Jousting), Liber Teas, a specially written play by the Wraysbury Players, a flotilla, and Songs of Praise at The Grange hosted Mr G Larcombe. Tribute was paid to the hard work of the members of the organising committee.

The Chairman thanked the Clerk for his work throughout the year and thanked Mr and Mrs Keynes for all of their work, looking after the Village Hall and its customers. She looked forward to an exciting year ahead.

**6. Production of the Annual Accounts of Wraysbury Parish Council 2013/14.**

The audited accounts were made available for inspection by those present.

**7. Questions from the Public**

Recorded elsewhere in these minutes.

**8. Meeting**

The Chairman closed the meeting and thanked all present for their attendance.

..... Chairman ..... Date