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**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
HELD ON 24TH MAY 2012**

Present: Cllr Winney (Mayor), Cllr Mumford (Deputy Mayor), Cllr Harwood, Cllr S Jones, Cllr Wardle, County Cllr. Theodoulou, PC Shane Jupp, Sqdrn. Ldr. William Still (RAF Commander), Margaret Bishop (FCC Ltd), Sue Crowley (Palmer Hall Committee), Ian Westlake (Fairford Tree Preservation Society), 15 members of the public.

In attendance: Vanessa Lawrence (Town Clerk), Roz Capps (Assistant Town Clerk)

Absent: Cllr S Roberts, Cllr Sanford

Cllr Winney introduced himself and began by saying that he was a little disappointed with the low turnout. However, he thanked all those that were present.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr C Roberts, Cllr Boulton and Cllr Hing and Cllr M Jones.

2. Minutes of Annual Town Meeting 2011

Mrs S Basley said that her name had been misspelt in the minutes. The Clerk corrected this. Mrs K Price said that she was disappointed that this meeting was being held in the Keble Room, which does not lend itself to people with hearing problems. The Mayor apologized and explained that due the other rooms already being booked and the time limitations we have to abide by to hold this meeting, this was the only room available. He said that we would try to ensure that this does not occur in the future. The Clerk corrected this. It was agreed to accept the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting 2011 as a true and accurate of the proceedings. Proposed Cllr Harwood, seconded Cllr S Jones – all in favour. The Mayor signed the Minutes. **ACTION: Clerk to book Farmor Room well in advance for next years meeting.**

3. Matters Arising

None

4. Report from the Mayor of Fairford

Cllr Winney said he had not prepared a report as he felt that he did not want to preempt reports from the Chairs of the Committees. He commended Cllrs to the public and said that he felt that Cllrs were very effective in what they did. He said that we try to publicise all important activities wherever possible. He said that Cllrs. work very hard and that all Committees do a really good job and that they try very hard to carry out the duties for which they were elected. He asked the Committee Chairs to introduce themselves and he introduced the Clerk and the new Assistant Clerk to residents. He also went on to commend Mrs Penny Ibbotson, the former Assistant Clerk for all her hard work over the past 10 years. Penny left the Council in February, to enjoy some well deserved time with her family and doing all the jobs that she has put on hold whilst working. The Council wish her all the best.

5. Reports from Committees

a) Planning

Cllr S Jones (Chair of Planning) read her report, which will be available in the Annual Report.

Q: Mrs S Basley asked whether affordable homes in Fairford would be allocated to locals.

A: Cllr S Jones said that this was CDC policy and asked Cllr Wardle to confirm this. He said that this was true and that priority is given to local people, but that if local people do not come forward, then these homes will be offered to others outside the area.

Q: Mrs M Bishop said that the problems relating to sewage in any development needs to be dealt with .

A: Cllr Wardle explained that whilst all our concerns had been put forward and taken on board, ultimately it was Thames Water who are required to ensure that this is dealt with accordingly. He stressed that our concerns had been heard.

b) Facilities

Cllr Harwood (Chair of Facilities) read his report, which will be available in the Annual Report

c) Finance

Cllr Wardle (Chair of Finance) read his report, which will be available in the Annual Report.

d) Highways

Cllr Mumford read the report from Cllr Boulton (Chair of Highways Committee) in his absence. The report will be available in the Annual Report.

Mrs Basley said that she felt that the problem with parking restrictions, was the increase in signage for this. It was pointed out that any change to what is currently in place (1 hour restriction), would incur a substantial outlay – approx. £5k. If the 1 hour restriction is left in place, then there would only be a maximum of 6 signs along the road and this is the cheaper option.

Cllr Winney thanked Albert Alder for all his hard work in the maintaining the tidy appearance of the highway and all other areas in Fairford, such as the Walnut Tree Field, Churchyard, car park etc.

6. Report from County Councillor

County Cllr. Ray Theodoulou gave a verbal report.

Money from the Government has been greatly reduced, which has resulted in services being cut, such as the Youth provision. GCC have concentrated their funds into two main areas, Care of the Elderly and Young people at risk. 55% of the total budget has been allocated to these and this is set to rise still further. They have now also had to obtain support from the NHS. The reduction in real terms has been to the tune of £140 million. The cuts have been county wide. Communities have had to step in. He also said

that reports that the Registration Service (registering births and deaths) is still operating in Cirencester, but from the Library on an appointments basis, contrary to the belief that this has been moved to Stroud and Gloucester. He said that GCC cannot do everything but have to focus on essentials and will continue to do so e.g. £151k has gone towards the flood scheme and £2 million to young people to help them obtain a first mortgage. One other downside is the loss of jobs at GCC 1300 people have left their employment with a further 200-300 more to lose their jobs in the coming year. County Cllr. Theodoulou said that many queries are received relating to potholes and a new system has been introduced for pothole filling.

7. Report from District Councillor

District Cllr. Wardle gave a brief verbal report. He said that this is his first year as a District Cllr., and it has been a very interesting learning curve. He said that there have been huge budgetary pressures, cuts and a promise to freeze council tax and no increases in car parking rates. Savings have been made by working with other authorities. Changes have been made in waste services with Ubico taking over from SITA. A new rigid plastic doorstep recycling collection is due to be introduced in Fairford in the Autumn. The Development at Pips Field, which has recently been approved by CDC had conditions attached as a result of pressure from both himself and District Cllr. Theodoulou and Town Cllrs. Cllr Wardle said that he had been very surprised by the lack of information provided in the budgeting process at CDC and as a result of his dissatisfaction with the process, he has put some pressure on CDC to review this, which he was proud to say will be actioned for next year's budget setting process. Cllr Wardle spoke of the Local Development Framework, which he was sorry to say would probably not be finalized until the end of 2013, and following a question from a resident relating to the time taken for its implementation, replied that this was not unique to this area, but was nationwide and was primarily due to the lack of clarity on how this should be instigated. He also explained about the Regional Structure Plan, which is non operational in the main, but some aspects of this document are still in place. He said that this was a very grey area until the LDF comes into effect.

8. Report from RAF Fairford

Sqdrn. Ldr Still gave a verbal report. He said that the Base was still operational, was open for flying and that due to the financial constraints in America, with financial resources being stretched the Americans were drawing down. However, the base was operating on a 48 hour activation basis, for B52 global strike, RIAT and Deployed Ops Training. Due to the long runway, the large stock of aviation fuel, bed spaces and a huge infrastructure in place, the Americans do not want to relinquish control. He said that the base was on 'Warm Status'. There have been a number of ops in April and May and exercises again in October and November, and RIAT will be running the Tattoo in July, and exercises again in October and November. There is an active campaign for the Americans to re-consider and to recommence usage of the Base. RAF families that are occupying houses on base from Brize Norton, due to the lack of housing at Brize, since Lyneham closed are unable to use any of the facilities on base due to UK tax implications.

These families are using facilities in the town.

County Cllr. Theodoulou and Sqdrn. Ldr Still left the meeting.

9. Report from Fairford Community Centre

Mrs Margaret Bishop gave a report on behalf of the Community Centre. This will be available in the Annual Report.

10. Report from the Police

PC Shane Jupp gave a report, which will be available in the Annual Report.

11. Update from FEAG (Fairford Emergency Action Group)

The Clerk read the report from FEAG in Cllr Hing's absence. This will be available in the Annual Report.

12. Report from Youth Services

Cllr Wardle gave a report, which will be available in the Annual Report.

13. Report from the Palmer Hall

Mrs Sue Crowley gave a report on behalf of the Palmer Hall Committee. This will be available in the Annual Report.

14. Report from Fairford Tree Preservation Society

Mr Ian Westlake gave a brief report relating to the activities of the Tree Preservation Society. A report will be available in the Annual Report.

15. Presentation of Awards for 2012

- **Geoff Chick Award (formerly Young Citizen of the Year)**

Only one nomination was received for this category. The nominee was Graeme Wall and the prize of £50 and a town badge was awarded to him by the Mayor.

- **Citizen of the Year**

2 nominations were received for Jeanne Watkins

2 nominations were received for Steve Crowley

4 nominations and 23 signatures in support of the nominations were received for Geoff Hawkes.

At the Full Council meeting in May Cllrs voted and Geoff Hawkes was chosen as the Winner of the Award for this year. Mr Hawkes was presented with his prize by the Mayor.

16. Open Session

No questions

The meeting closed at 9.15pm

.....Town Mayor

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