

## **CURBRIDGE AND LEW PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly Curbridge Parish Hall Monday 10 May 2023 at 6:25 pm**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs. Glenn Gannon (Chair), Mark Wilson, Patrick Foley, Phil Boddington, Angela Boddington, 2 members of the public, Adrian Walsh (District Cllr.), Howard Higgins - Clerk & RFO.

#### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Ted Fenton (County Cllr), Cllr Jenny O'Sullivan

#### **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the previous Annual Parish Assembly held on 9 May 2022 be confirmed as true and correct and signed by the Chairman.

#### **ANNUAL REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

It would be an understatement to say that Curbridge and Lew Parish Council has had a very challenging year, we have, at long last had the Speed Limit in Lew reduced to 30mph, and I hope that Well Lane is safer at 20mph.

We continue to monitor and improve the Play Area with new fencing although it's a bit of a battle trying to keep the rabbits out!

We have replaced three of our benches around Curbridge, kindly fitted by Tom Richman who has also made a wonderful job of replacing the wood panelling in the Parish Hall.

Extra funding from Oxfordshire County Council has been used to carry out repairs to the roof, the Parish Hall and now also boasts a new lighting and fire alarm system.

Very sadly we lost our fellow Councillor John Courtney, his attention to detail and enthusiasm for the Parish Council will be sorely missed.

We have dealt with several planning issues and applications, some more challenging than others, but with local knowledge and common-sense decisions are based on what is best for the Parish and its residents.

I'm very pleased to welcome our new Parish Councillor Jenny O'Sullivan, and I would like to thank my fellow parish councillors for their help and support throughout the year.

I would also like to thank our County Councillor Ted Fenton who has generously supported Curbridge & Lew Parish Council especially with various financial grants and has also kept us up to date with County and District matters.

Finally, I have to say that I am very grateful to our Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer Howard Higgins who has worked very hard again this year with incredible resolve, accuracy, and integrity.

#### **RFO REPORT AND PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

The accounts of the Council for the previous year were accepted. There has been some difficulty in resolving the S106 funds due to the Parish Council but hopefully the processes at WODC have improved. Annual Governance and Accountability Return to be published on the Parish website.

#### **COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT**

A County Council focus over the year has continued to be on the changes to traffic regulations both in terms of speed restrictions across the County and the access changes in the City of

Oxford. The LTNs (Low Traffic Neighbourhoods) continue to be a source of controversy in parts of the city with protesters resorting to destroying bollards put in place to enforce them. The Council is considering replacing some or all of the bollards with ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) cameras which at a cost of some £336,000.

The provision of traffic filters in Oxford has been delayed until the work on Oxford Railway Station, necessitating the closure of the Botley Road for two extended periods, has been completed. The current plan is that these filters will mean car travel between the zones of the city requires leaving the centre of the city travelling around the ring road and back into the different sector. The aim is to reduce congestion and emissions within the city and improve air quality by encouraging people to use active or public transport for short journeys. The filters will be controlled by ANPR cameras and private cars which pass through them will be fined. Oxford City residents will be able to apply for a pass to allow up to 100 journeys a year and residents of the rest of Oxfordshire will be able to apply for a pass for up to 25 journeys per year.

Across the County a £8 million scheme has been introduced whereby parish councils can apply to have 30mph speed limits reduced to 20mph. This has had a mixed welcome with some people feeling that the blanket approach applied in some areas of reducing all 30mph limits to 20mph is not appropriate. Police will enforce new speed limits to exactly the same extent they enforced the old one but many fixed speed cameras cannot be calibrated to 20mph and will have to be replaced. A few parish councils, of which Curbridge is an excellent example, have used to opportunity to change some but not all speed limits. If this works it will divert traffic away from residential areas.

The increase in potholes is a matter of considerable concern and residents are encouraged to continue to report these on FixMyStreet. The particular weather pattern we experienced this winter has been blamed but some roads are deteriorating very quickly. Planned resurfacing is scheduled for certain areas including Curbridge but contractors are struggling to keep up.

The increase in Council Tax was the maximum possible which the ruling Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green Party coalition decided was necessary despite a more generous grant from central government than was expected. It was decided to reverse some of the savings that had been planned rather than pass on the savings to residents.

It is fair to point out that among all the services that are provided by the County Council social care remains the biggest pressure on resources using over half of the total budget each year.

Works have commenced on construction on the new Park & Ride at Eynsham.

### **DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT**

Adrian advised he look forward to representing the interests of the Parish.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

**CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL**