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|  | Great Horwood Parish Council |
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| Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting conducted as a virtual meeting via Zoom held on 12th April 2021 at 7.30pm |

Present: Cllr John Gilbey (JWG) Chairman, Cllr Caroline Cousin (CC) Vice Chairman, Cllr Angela Mayne (AM), Cllr Jackie Goss (JG), Cllr David Taylor (DT), Cllr Robert Davies (RD), Sue Brazier (SB Clerk), Buckinghamshire Councillors Sir Beville Stanier Bt and John Chilver, Winslow and Villages Community Board Coordinator Leone Dale, Monica Gilbey, David Saunders, Sarah Biswell, Ian Lamberton, David Brazier, Yvonne Taylor, Paul Ketteridge, Lynne King, Paula Shaw, Vyv Rudd, John Nicholls, Farokh Khorooshi and Sharon Taylor

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|  | **To receive apologies for absence**  Cllr Julia Day and Cllr Gavin Laird |
|  | **Confirmation of the Minutes of the 2019 Annual Parish Meeting held on 15th April 2019**  The minutes of the previous meeting were approved without amendment |
|  | **Chairman’s Report**  Cllr Gilbey mentioned that the last Annual Parish Meeting was two years ago due to the Coronavirus pandemic and since last May all Parish Council meetings have been conducted via Zoom.  He wished to thank the following:  **Mandy Cliffe**, who was the previous Clerk for over four years and stepped down in September 2019.  **Robert Deuchar**, who looks after the footpaths throughout the parish and who will continue to do so for another year.  **Mick and Gill Wood** for looking after the MVAS, downloading and publishing the data and moving the MVAS to various locations in the village.  **Graeme Thompson** for mowing The Green for several years.  **Jane Holland** who plants the troughs at the entrances to the village.  **All Parish Councillors**, in particular Cllr Angela Mayne who has served on the PC for 10 years and Cllr Caroline Cousin for her wide-ranging skills and knowledge and attention to detail.  **Sue Brazier** who was a former Clerk, stepped down in 2007 and took up the position of Clerk again in July 2019.  **Neighbourhood Plan**  Cllr Gilbey gave a short summary on what has happened in the village over the last two years:  The PC are beginning to see fruition of the Neighbourhood Plan – the first site is Land South of Little Horwood Road, known as the Croudace site where there are thirty new houses including ten affordable housing, all occupied. The second site is Land North of Little Horwood Road known as the High Street Homes site which will include fifteen homes including affordable housing, a new playpark with play equipment and a small football pitch. It is hoped that this site is finished in this financial year. The third site in Nash Road has some issues with planning detail and acceptable arrangements. The PC are liaising with the local Planning Authority regarding this matter.  After five years, it was necessary to review the Neighbourhood Plan which was carried out in the early part of 2019. It was agreed that it was going as planned and there was no need to make any revisions.  **Planning**  The PC has a large number of planning applications and at the current time they are taking a long time to be determined by Buckinghamshire Council. The Planning Department at BC has had a number of Planning Officers leave the authority and this has added to the delay.  **Footpaths**  Many of the footpath stiles have been replaced with metal gates, some of which have been donated by local residents which has added to the enjoyment of walking in the local countryside.  **Funding**  The PC has been successful in obtaining funding. The former AVDC offered the opportunity to apply for a New Homes Bonus grant and the PC were successful in obtaining £35,000 for the Village Hall which was used for the roof and the fully accessible new front entrance. During the pandemic the Government has been generous in donating grants to organisations that have a rateable value, namely the Village Hall and Cricket Club.  **Buckinghamshire Council**  The new Buckinghamshire Council came into existence on 1st April 2020 replacing Bucks County Council and Aylesbury Vale District Council. Community Boards have been set up, sixteen throughout the County. Great Horwood is part of the Winslow and Villages Community Board with twenty-two villages. Cllrs Gilbey and Cousin have been taking an active part in attendance at Community Board meetings and have been successful in gaining a grant of £10350 to partly fund the new rubber chippings at Horwode Pece.  **Community Board Action Groups**  Transport Sub-Committee – Cllr Gilbey arranged for a public transport survey to be sent out in Focus. It is hoped this will gather evidence to help make improvements in the bus service through Great Horwood.  Roads and Highways Action Group – a petition of 53 people was submitted to the Community Board for reducing the speed limit of Nash Road to 30mph up to the roundabout. Whilst this was supported by Bucks Councillors and our local MP Greg Smith, BC Highways turned the matter down as it did not fit in with the current regulations. Cllrs Gilbey and Cousin have written a two-page report in Focus outlining what can and can’t be done regarding traffic calming measures with a hope that residents of Great Horwood will understand the limitations of the PC.  **Cycle Way**  The PC together with the Community Board are looking into the possibility of a cycle way linking Great Horwood and Winslow. The Clerk has written to the landowners and is waiting for a response.  **The Swan**  As The Swan is the only public house in the village, the PC have registered The Swan as an asset of community value. This means that if there was any threat to change of use of the building, there would be an opportunity for the community to raise funds to keep it operating as a public house.  **Welcome Pack**  Cllr Gilbey, together with Mrs Monica Gilbey and Mr David Saunders have updated the Welcome Pack which was started about ten years ago. This useful pack has been delivered to new residents at the Croudace site and anywhere else in the village where there has been a change of ownership. An article is written in the Parish Pump each month so new residents will know how to obtain one.  **LED Lighting**  The street lamps have recently been replaced with LED lighting. This was paid partly by an interest free loan and funds in the PC’s reserves account. It will create a saving in maintenance charges and help preserve the environment too.  **Worthy Causes**  The PC continues to invite village organisations to apply for the Worthy Causes funding. Organisations that have benefitted over the last few years include Great Horwood School, the Scout and Guides, Football Club, WI, Silver Band, Cricket Club and Winslow Bus.  **Solar Farm**  There have been discussions with a company called Low Carbon about installing a solar farm, the entrance of which will be on the A413 between Winslow and Padbury.  **Proper Coffee**  The PC have allowed the Proper Coffee van to use The Green on a Tuesday and in lieu of rent, a donation is paid to the Village Hall. The event started as lockdown eased at the beginning of March and has proved very popular.  **Looking Forward**  Other projects include:  Plans to tidy up and update The Green  Refurbish the inside of the Village Hall  Taking over the new play park on the High Street Homes development once built  Community Speed Watch – this enables a group of trained volunteers to record speeding vehicles. The data which will include number plates will be sent to Thames Valley Police who will issue warning letters in the first instance and also fines and points. This opportunity was suspended during lockdown and it is hoped that once there are trained staff at Winslow Police Office the equipment can be used again  Long term plan for a cycle way  **New Parish Council**  There was an uncontested Election of seven Councillors. The only change was that Julia Day has stepped down and Gavin Laird who was previously a Parish Councillor has taken on the role again.  The next event is the Litter Pick to be held on Sunday 9th May from 10am, meeting on The Green |
|  | **Report from Buckinghamshire Councillor, John Chilver**  Cllr Chilver said that it had been an honour to represent Great Horwood and would like to thank the PC for their kind welcome to Council meetings and their support over the last year.  A number of issues he has been involved in have related to roads and footpaths. He was glad to see the resurfacing of part of Pilch Lane and said that included in this year’s capital maintenance programme were the resurfacing of Spring Lane and four roads to the south of Little Horwood Road. He has submitted a bid for Little Horwood Road in this year’s plane and patch scheme.  There has been an impact of construction traffic through the village although Great Horwood has not suffered as badly as other villages. There are now mobile illuminated signs at both ends of the B4033 saying that no East West Rail HGV’s should be going through the Horwoods.  He went on to say that he had called in planning applications when requested to do so by the PC, so that they would be considered by the Planning Committee. This included The Crown public house and the proposed container storage facility at Pilch Farm. He has also been following up on the issues around the planning conditions for the development site off Nash Road.  The Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan, which will provide a stronger framework for future planning decisions is now in its final stages. The adoption of the VALP will take place as soon as possible after receipt of the Inspector’s report.  The new Winslow Community Board was launched a year ago, chaired by Cllr Sue Renshell. He said he was happy to support the funding application for new rubber chippings for Horwode Pece. He also supports the longer term plans for a new cycle path between Winslow and Great Horwood. He said that he chairs the Community Board Sub Group on East West Rail and HS2 which gives parishes the opportunity to raise issues of concern.  Cllr Chilver said that it was an honour to attend the Remembrance Day service and lay a wreath on behalf of Buckinghamshire Council. He is always happy to hear from residents and his contact details are on the BC website. |
|  | **Brief reports from village organisations**  **Football Club**  Vyv Rudd introduced himself as Chairman of Great Horwood Football Club. He said that the 2019/20 season couldn’t take place due to Covid restrictions in place at the time. However, the 2020/21 season was a complete turnaround and the 1st Team will be winners of the North Bucks District League if they win their last game next weekend. There are two other men’s teams: a 2nd Team and a Vets Team, but there is a current lack of youth players and therefore only three junior teams taking part in football. It is hoped that with the new housing developments being built, there might be some more families coming forward. The Football Club is a small club that relies on a good number of volunteers and goodwill to keep it functioning. Mr Rudd thanked the PC for the generous grants over the years from the Worthy Causes. Looking forward, since the Castlefields Trust have allowed the FC to use the ground for at least a further ten years, they are now in the position to apply for larger grants to refurbish the interior and exterior of the current clubhouse and work to the pitches. The Football Club are in the early stages of looking into the possibility of combining all sports in the village as the Great Horwood Sports Club. More research needs to be done to decide if this is a viable option.  **Scouts and Guides**  Yvonne Taylor, Group Scout Leader, said that the Scouting Group in Great Horwood were very proactive. The last event they attended was Mission 00 Bucks at Claydon House where 6,000 young people took part. In more recent times, meetings have been conducted via Zoom whilst restrictions have been in place. The Scout Headquarters has been made Covid safe and it is hoped that within the next few weeks, face to face meetings will again be allowed. The school have very kindly offered the Scouts use of the playground adjacent to the Scout Hut and in turn, the Scouts will be tidying the school’s wildlife area. The Scouting Group are very keen to take part in village life and will be helping at the Litter Pick next weekend.  Paul Ketteridge, Chairman, continued by thanking the PC for the Worthy Causes grants over the years. He said that the fence behind the Scout Hut needed replacing and the tree adjacent to the building needed lopping. This work will be taking place in the near future.  **Great Horwood School**  Paula Shaw, Headteacher, said that in her teaching career spanning thirty years, the previous year has been the most challenging. The school has remained open for keyworker’s children/vulnerable children throughout each lockdown. Children attending school and those learning from home have had a mixture of live lessons and recorded lessons each week. Every part of the curriculum has been covered including music, sport and fun weekly assemblies delivered by Rev Mark Nelson. The school was very pleased to receive a Gold Award for Online Learning. As well as challenges with teaching, the staff have been looking after the mental wellbeing of parents who have found the experience overwhelming, trying to juggle home learning, working and family life. Mrs Shaw thanked the PC for the generous Worthy Causes grants that have made a big difference enhancing the outdoor early years curriculum.  **WI**  Angela Mayne, the President of the WI, said that they had been very lucky to have an enjoyable trip to Kew Gardens just before the first lockdown. Since then, meetings have been conducted via Zoom which was a new experience for members, most of which have become far more tech savvy. Meetings included online speakers which didn’t need to be local and there were no travel expenses necessary. This year’s boat trip to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the WI in the village was cancelled which was a huge disappointment. It is hoped that in the Summer some meetings can be held outdoors on Horwode Pece and in the Autumn meetings may resume in the Village Hall.  **Village Hall**  Ian Lamberton, Chair of the Village Hall Committee said the last year had been very quiet as all bookings had been wiped out. The only exception had been the Post Office that most weeks were able to attend. This had proved a very valuable service and saved residents travelling into Winslow or Swanbourne. During this time the Committee had taken the opportunity to update important documentation including Health & Safety risk assessments, fire safety, hiring charges amongst others. When restrictions are eased, it is hoped that social events and activities will resume. Over the past few years, the Village Hall roof has been retiled and there is now a new disabled access and security lighting. It is hoped that the inside will be refurbished in time, once the village have been consulted.  **Winslow and District Community Bus**  Lynne King of the Co-Ordinator of the Winslow Bus said that they locked down completely from last April due to the very strict restrictions at the time. They resumed their first service last August to the Winslow Wednesday Market. In order to do this, they took out most of the seats leaving just six socially distanced seats in place. In order to operate, the bus needs to be deep cleaned regularly and also have an eight-weekly inspection. There has been a huge reduction in earnings and so donations have gone a long way to keeping the Winslow Bus operational. It is hoped that from 16th April the Aylesbury services will resume and maybe some excursions towards the end of the year.  **Focus**  David Brazier, one of the editors, said that the Focus magazine was not published for three months due to the pandemic. It did however resume in June with a few new features including recipes. There were still some village organisations who had yet to start meeting again and so the new features made the publication worthwhile. They would like to thank the PC for their annual contribution that pays for the coloured centre pages each month. Focus is grateful for the advertisements that contribute on a monthly basis so every household in the village can receive a free copy.  **St James’ Church**  David Brazier, Churchwarden, informed the PC that the Clergy of the Winslow Benefice took the decision to close the Churches including St James’ Church at the start of the first lockdown. It could be arranged however, to open the Church for private prayer. The Clergy together with a very techy team of volunteers were able to live stream and then pre-record services which could be accessed on Facebook and You Tube. This method of worship still continues to this day as an alternative to in person worship. Just as the national lockdowns happened, so the Church opened and closed its doors as well following Church of England guidelines. The Village Fete was cancelled last year but the Plant Sale still went ahead raising much needed funds along with a few Cake Sales. Many people who were unable to work, put their time to good use mowing the Churchyard. It hadn’t looked this good for many years. He wished to thank all the mowers in particular Neil Taylor, Robert Davies and Stuart Birrell and the PC for their annual contribution towards mowing costs. St James’ Church still awaits approval of the planning application to replace the church roof. A successful determination is necessary in order to start applying for grants and it is hoped the process can be started soon.  **Horwode Pece**  John Nicholls, Chairman of the Horwode Pece Management Committee, wished to thank his team of volunteers that maintain the equipment to RoSPA standards. He explained that during lockdown, there were many restrictions and the whole of Horwode Pece (play park and adjacent green space) was closed immediately. Orange fencing was erected and notices displayed at the site and on the noticeboard in the High Street. Gradually the Pece reopened, firstly the recreation field in May, followed by the play area/equipment for the school summer holidays, making sure that strict guidelines were always followed. During this time the Committee were unable to hold the Picnic on the Pece, the firework display and their usual working parties. It became apparent that the wood chippings would need to be replaced and it was decided that a more durable material would provide a more permanent cushion fall. The replacement rubber chippings, funded partly by the Parish Council and the remainder from Community Board funding have been ordered and it is hope this will be a good investment.  **Silver Band**  Sharon Taylor, Secretary of the Silver Band, said that they were not able to meet for practises from the start of lockdown and all events were promptly cancelled. They did attempt to play together via Zoom but this didn’t work due to internet speed, so remote meetings were used as a means of keeping in touch. At present they are able to meet in groups of no more than six musicians. It is hoped that a concert on The Green can take place during the summer when guidelines allow. The Silver Band will be running a recruitment campaign in the future to encourage new members to join. She thanked the PC for the generous Worthy Causes grant to purchase individual music stands and other equipment in order that they can return to indoor rehearsals.  **Cricket Club**  John Goodger, Secretary of the Cricket Club had sent a report. In summary, there had been a problem with rabbit infestation over the entire ground. Major work to control the situation was carried out thanks to a number of grants, including a significant sum obtained by Cllr Gilbey on behalf of the Cricket Club. Other repairs included securing the perimeter of the ground and the removal of undergrowth around the fences. During 2019 the First XI won their divisional title and were promoted back to Division 1. The Cricket Club were shocked and saddened regarding the sudden passing of Alan Sirrett who undertook many roles at the club. During lockdown the season was put on hold and eventually abandoned. Much work still needed to be done to keep the ground in order and thanks go to Gary Lee and Jack Trundell for all their efforts whilst the club was closed. The 2021 season will go ahead and they have a full fixture list. The Cricket Club are keen to attract new members to join them, either as players or social members. |
|  | **Open Forum**  **Cllr Angela Mayne** wished to thank Cllr John Gilbey for successfully obtaining grants for the Village Hall and Cricket Club during lockdown which have made a huge difference to both organisations.  **Vyv Rudd** expanded on the idea of a village Sports Club. Cllr Gilbey said that once further research had been undertaken, the Parish Council would be happy to hear their views and be involved where necessary.  **Cllr Dave Taylor** wished to thank the Silver Band for playing around the village at Christmas time and especially on Christmas morning. They are a great asset to the village. |

The meeting closed at 8.50pm

Signed……………………………………………………Date

**Chairman**