

LONGNEY AND EPNEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING MONDAY 19 MAY 2014

THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF LONGNEY AND EPNEY PARISH COUNCIL was held on Monday 19 May 2014, at 7.30p.m. at Longney School

PRESENT: Cllrs. Finzi, Godwin, Harvie, and Wingrove; District Cllr. Littleton; PCSO's Manja Tunney and Matthew Addinall; and ten residents

APOLOGIES: Cllr. Janice Williams; County Cllr Blackburn, John Chamberlayne, Keith Rog, and David Scriven

THE MINUTES of the Meeting of 8 May 2013 were agreed and signed

MATTERS ARISING: None

POLICE REPORT: PCSO's Tunney and Addinall from Quedgeley Police Station, reported that the Parish had been relatively quiet as far as reported crime is concerned between 18 February and 18 May 2014. There had been one burglary from a shed and a large fire which got out of control though there were no suspicious circumstances. There had been an increase in burglaries in the Gloucester area, mainly through windows being left unlocked. The meeting was reminded to lock and secure all windows and doors particularly at night. A resident mentioned a burglary which had taken place in Epney. Unfortunately, this being in the Dursley Police area, no information was available for the meeting. Some residents had been aware of a suspicious silver van in the area on recent days with an Irish driver offering items for sale. The registration which had been recorded on CCTV will be reported to Police. The Chairman thanked PCSO's Tunney and Addinall for attending the meeting and giving their report

FUTURE FUNDING FOR FLOOD MAINTENANCE: Richard Bentley, Asset Performance Manager from the Environment Agency was introduced as the person who had provided the information circulated to residents at the time of the flood tides between January and March. He is responsible for flood defences where there is risk to life and property along large watercourses in the region. In early 2013, funding for maintenance was reduced by 60%, while capital funding (of new defences) was increasing. After the major flood threat and some overtopping of flood defences in early 2014, it has been agreed to raise funding to the same level as in the previous year, and probably the following year. Offloading of responsibility of flood defence to individual landowners will not happen, and funding available will be used in the most efficient way. It is agreed that little and often pays dividends where maintenance is concerned, including the maintenance of outfall flaps. Approximately £60 million is the annual maintenance budget for the whole country, while the capital budget is £300 million. Major works are planned for the Epney wall and Lapperditch outfall. The Chairman thanked Richard Bentley for a very comprehensive talk. A means of contact with Mr Bentley is available from Cllr Godwin if any resident wishes to ask questions concerning flood defences in the Parish

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: Cllr Godwin reported that the Flood Risk Management Strategy will not be finalized in 2014. He warned residents that significantly high tides are due again in August and September, but hopefully low pressure and a large volume of fresh water will not be involved at this time. The emergency warning system in use at the time of previous flood tides will be used again if necessary. Cllrs Finzi and Wingrove have been the Parish Council contacts with the County Council Highways department over the past year, and have reported that cutting of the verges will possibly only take place once this year, and that grass cutting will commence on 19 June. A request has been made for replacement of the marker posts on the road edges where they are damaged or missing, and Daniel Tiffany (GCC) will undertake an audit of those in the Parish in the near future. A request has been made for 'road liable to icing' signs in Castle Lane, on the approach to the canal. Improvement of drainage near Downend Barn has been requested to prevent flooding there. Missing manhole covers in the verges have been reported, and a request was made for any others to be notified to the Parish Council. Cllr. Harvie has carried out an anti-litter campaign, and with help from employees from McDonalds, 40 bags of litter were collected in January. McDonalds will provide help three times per year to collect litter in the Parish, have provided posters, and will fund another poster campaign. Gloucestershire County Council will be holding a meeting proposing to improve provision of fibre-optic broadband by 2015.

Further news on this is awaited. As there were only three candidates proposed for election to the Parish Council in May 2014, there are two vacancies for Councillors which will be filled by co-option. Possible candidates will be discussed at the Annual Parish Council Meeting on 9 June. A volunteer administrator has been found for the proposed oil purchase scheme, and a meeting will be called for those who have expressed an interest in being part of the scheme. A volunteer has been found to run the Parish Council Website. A new Parish Council Clerk has also been found. Thanks were expressed to retiring Councillors, Cllr Finzi for all her work including the Village Plan, Village Design Statement, and Emergency Plan over the past eight years, and Cllr Williams for her work over twelve years. Thanks were also expressed to Terry Cripps for setting up and running the Website since 2009. Colin Squire is retiring and was thanked for his work as Clerk to the Parish Council from 1995 to 2014

FINANCIAL STATEMENT: The financial statement was circulated which showed an excess of expenditure of £334 during 2013/2014 and was accepted without question by the Meeting

PARISH CHARITY REPORT: Details were not available at the meeting but the sum of money has been distributed to the eleven retired residents over 70 years of age who have lived in Longney for more than five years. Details will be presented to the Parish Council and filed

OTHER MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION:

HIGHWAYS: A request was made for the footpath adjacent to the road north of the church to be cleared where the verge has grown over it, and the overhanging hedge also needs attention. This will be brought to the attention of the Highways Department

NEWSLETTER: It is proposed that the Newsletter which is produced by the Church and sponsored by the Parish Council should be circulated by e-mail to as many households as possible. It will be possible to opt-in to receive it by e-mail, but will continue to be delivered by hand to all others, although it is hoped that the majority will receive it by e-mail

THE CHAIRMAN thanked residents for attending the Meeting and reminded them that the Annual Parish Council Meeting

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.10 p.m.