

Minutes of the Combe Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 10th May 2017– Approved

Present:

Council Members: - Elena Softley (Chairman), Michael Green (Vice Chairman), Simon Oliver, Rachel Whitehead, Alan Revell, Deborah Phillips. Ian Hudspeth (County Council), Richard Bishop (District Council) Julia Sharpe (Clerk)

PC Rob Webb (Police), Colin Pratley (School), Roger Pursell (Reading Room), Ian Windsor (VH&RG), Michael Green (Combe Charities), Andrew Hobson (Church and Combe Community Hub), Sally Pursell (Pre-school) and 6 members of the public.

No	Item	Report
1/17	Apologies	Charlie Marshall (Head teacher),
2/17	2016 Report	Copies were circulated and available on the web-site
3/17	Dominic Hare Chief Executive Blenheim	<p>Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to speak here tonight. As you may have noticed, I am not John. I lack a number of crucial attributes, not least height. For those of you who are unaware, John left us at the end of last year to join Bidwells, based in Oxford, to lead their national rural property business. Over nearly 14 extraordinary years he has rebuilt Blenheim from a struggling estate into a powerful institution and he leaves, not just on a high, but actually with a great deal of good still to come. Many of the successes which we will see over the next few years will, in reality, be due to him. John has passed on to Roger, Heather and the team an estate which is winning everywhere – record visitor numbers, record mineral water sales, record amounts of housing and office space being built, record levels of restoration....you get the gist! Suffice to say, John has been remarkable for this estate and, frankly, I wish he had been a bit less successful. It's a pain in the rear following him....</p> <p>I want to quickly steer you through what you might expect to see happening at Blenheim in 2017 before talking with you about our perspectives on the future relationship between Blenheim and the surrounding communities like Combe.</p> <p>First, you may have noticed that we opened the Palace right through the winter for the first time. The response was staggering and I know that was felt through the area. The effect on us is more than financial, it also gives us the ability to employ more people year round, retaining great staff who generally don't want to go. This is the likely pattern going forward. For those of you who also hold Annual Passes – not just walking passes – this is a very interesting time of year to see the State Rooms, both less busy than normal but also with care and cleaning under way.</p> <p>From the Spring programme, I would pick out the Spring Bank holiday Food Festival – this should be bigger than ever and give a massive showcase for local food. I'm pretty sure your walking permits get you there.</p> <p>The Triathlon now raises over £400k every year for Bloodwise – a truly staggering event with which we are proud to be associated. It is a stunning landscape for triathlon – for those of you who walk the park each day, looking longingly at the lake, this is your chance to jump right in!</p> <p>Gifford's Circus returns in June and is followed by our music festival – 4 nights including (and I am practically shaking with excitement here) KOOL AND THE GANG supporting some band called the Jacksons.</p> <p>Around that time, we expect to start on site in Long Hanborough, where we will be building about 170 sorely needed homes.</p> <p>In August we have (deep breath) the return of BBC Countryfile Live. I</p>

know a huge number of you came last year – overwhelmingly the response to the content of the show was that it was wonderful. BUT... we also know how frustrated you were with the traffic on the Thursday and the Sunday. We, the authorities and the organisers are determined that we will pull out all the stops to ensure that this does not happen in the same way again. I have to say, at this stage, I am very impressed with the resources being put into managing the traffic and reception to the show. Numbers of comp tickets are to be very carefully limited this time as will show numbers overall. These events are hugely beneficial to the local area but we recognise that, executed poorly, the negative impact can be just as significant.

Towards the end of the year, I think the vast majority of you will be pleased to know that Christmas at Blenheim will return, even better than last year. We relished this show and we know just how many local people loved it too. We had around 100k visits but, road-wise, hopefully you barely noticed.

We also will be opening our doors more and more to the local community – I am pleased to give you first warning of Tai Chi in the Great Courtyard (3 May at 8am – bring loose clothing – all welcome) and Yoga – dates to be announced but watch our website and we will keep in touch with the Town Hall (but 18 July at 7:30 is a definite). We were arranging this for staff but we then thought that it would be wonderful to have you all along.

In among all of that, you will see the return of other shows, including the Lit Fest, Living Crafts at Christmas, the Flower Show, another stalwart fundraiser in the Half Marathon. And it doesn't take the sharpest eyes to notice that we are doing a huge amount of restoration, significantly more than ever before – we expect to spend around £2.5m on restoration this year. But I am pleased to say that we are making great forward progress with this – it is not just a question of keeping the building and grounds upright. This year we will also be doing major works to the Bladon Bridge (New Bridge) as well as finishing the North Front Steps, re-gilding all the gates, etc.

We are also paving the way to a massive project to dredge the lake and restore Grand Bridge. This is an epic (and epicly expensive) project which may well take place in the Summer 2019. It will be disruptive for Blenheim. But it is vitally needed. Who knows what we will find down there?

Now so far, all this I imagine you expected to hear from us. Now, some things you might not expect:

A pledge to triple our economic contribution to this area over the next ten years.

A promise to train more than 100 local people in a vast range of apprenticeships and related qualifications in ten years.

A commitment to build the first of what we expect to be more than 300 inspirationally good affordable homes in the area over ten years.

And seven more big promises, all of which we will make publicly, for all of which we will set annual milestones, for all of which we will account to you. Why would we do that?

Well, with Blenheim in better shape thanks in no small part to your support, the Duke, the trustees and the team here have taken the opportunity to think very hard about the point of a landed estate, about its relevance in the world today. We have debated this with a lot of people in the area and listened carefully to their views.

Two things seems very clear:

1. There is no future vision of a successful and prosperous Blenheim

		<p>which does not crucially depend on the success and prosperity of the communities around us. And, conversely, there is no future vision for successful and flourishing communities around us which does not critically depend on a successful and prosperous Blenheim</p> <p>2. There is a clear, positive and unique role that a landed estate can play in the community which other bodies just cannot play</p> <p>We have to set out what positive role we can play in the lives of our wider community – why people should want to live by a landed estate and why they should support our growth and champion our cause.</p> <p>We believe that our core purpose – the point of this place existing today – is to be the lifeblood of the West Oxfordshire economy, to enhance the lives of the people of Oxfordshire and to share this magnificent place. And we will do this not just by generating a bigger economic contribution to the area through the success of the Palace, Park and Gardens and supporting a huge number of employees but with bigger goals too – targets to give young people growing up in the area the realistic aspiration of being able to afford to live in this area, targets to share through training the skills we practice here, targets to give them the support to start their own businesses, targets to protect the environment they will live in.. And more besides.</p> <p>The goals I mentioned are not about Blenheim becoming a charity. They are about Blenheim choosing to make its profits in ways that very explicitly benefit the people and communities around us. Because that is the right thing to do, because it enables our future success, because the people of Blenheim are also the people of this community....and vice versa</p> <p>We are massive optimists about the future of our communities. It is an amazing place, with wonderful and talented people who care deeply.</p> <p>This is not an overnight thing – it is a journey to undertake together. We share the concerns we hear from you all, but we intend to deliver our reply mostly through our actions.</p> <p>If we fail to treble our already massive contribution to the local economy, if we fail to provide housing or training, if the design and quality of what we build falls short – we all lose.</p> <p>That will not happen.</p>
4/17	Parish Council Report	<p>Elena Softley, Chairman of the Parish Council presented the following report:</p> <p>This is a summary of the major developments and achievements during the last year: We had a well-supported Combe Feast with even more stalls and rides, the Parish Council organised the celebration for the Queen's 90th birthday in June at the reading Room with help of course from a loyal band of volunteers, and we organised a second very well-attended Automated External Defibrillator (AED) training session. The success of last year's spring clean spurred us on to hold another one this year. Despite a rainy day, it was even more well-attended than last year and we'd like to thank the many villagers who came out on Saturday 4th March and helped clear and tidy the paths, verges, green spaces, road signs and noticeboards.</p> <p>Following Colin Pratley's retirement after over 20 years, several willing volunteers stepped in to organise another very successful Combe Bonfire and Fireworks. Thanks to Bill Oddy, Bob Days and John Hunt, helped by Martin Seacole and all their helpers. We are very pleased that this team has agreed to organise this year's bonfire and firework display and we'd like to thank Colin Pratley for all the excellent Bonfire and Firework displays he and Martin put on over the years</p>

		<p>Your Parish Council through its excellent clerk, Julia Sharpe, contacted the relevant authorities to get overhanging trees cut back, white lines repainted, road signs reinstated and localised flooding investigated. Thank you to Geoff Miles for making a beautiful replacement Pound Gate at cost.</p> <p>Grants The Parish Council supports several village organisations with annual grants: the Parochial Church Council, The Village Hall and Recreation Ground Committee, The Combe Community Hub, the Combe Cricket Club as well the Villager Bus Service.</p> <p>Local Plan Apart from commenting on domestic planning applications, the Council also discussed and commented on the West Oxfordshire Local Plan. While we recognise the pressure on WODC to meet its massively increased housing target so that its local plan is accepted by the Planning Inspector, we are concerned that the previous requirement for sustainable development has been replaced by central government imposed targets which take no account of infrastructure, transport, schools, surgeries, shops, etc., resulting in unsuitable development which will forever change the character of our beautiful rural district. We all recognise the need for more affordable housing but the development taking place around us does not necessarily meet that need with new house prices in this area at a premium.</p> <p>Traffic And we all notice the increase in volume and speed of traffic through the village. This has been another area of action for the Council. We have asked Oxfordshire Highways to carry out a detailed speed survey and depending on the results of that we will be pursuing the installation of 20 mph through the village. We will also be asking for volunteers to take part in a speedwatch campaign later in the year.</p> <p>Unitary authority The Parish Council has also discussed and debated the Oxfordshire County Council's proposal for a unitary authority and reached a consensus view that the interests of Combe are best served by being part of the highly efficient West Oxfordshire District and very much hope that WODC will continue.</p> <p>Parish councillors In September, we were very fortunate to co-opt Deborah Phillips as a new councillor. Deborah replaces Anne-Marie Ferret, who although no longer on the Council, still does the weekly Play Ground inspection on our behalf. Deborah joins us with a wealth of experience in housing and social policy. She was chair of a local residents' association in Leeds for over 10 years, has experience work with community groups, local government as well as organising and participating in public consultations. Combe Parish Council is fortunate to have dedicated councillors who are prepared to work on behalf of the village—and I would like to publicly thank them all for their commitment and hard work. The village is also exceedingly fortunate to have such an incredibly dedicated and wonderfully efficient Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, Julia Sharpe. Finally, the Council would like to thank all Combe organisations for their hard work and commitment which helps make Combe such a great place in which to live.</p>
5/17	County Councillor's Report	<p>Cllr Ian Hudspeth presented the following report: County Council Elections:- I was re-elected as the County Councillor for the Woodstock Division on 4th May, I'd like to thank residents who voted</p>

for me and assure all residents that I will work hard for you everybody in the division.

Despite the Conservatives gaining 3 divisions we also lost 3 divisions

County Budget:- The County Council set its budget for 2017/18 on Tuesday 14th February. Ahead of the meeting, it was announced the Council had £1,957,000 extra, over and above the position reported to the Cabinet in January, as a result of better than expected business rate collections, council tax collection fund surpluses and a higher than expected grant. The Council voted to hold £926,000 of this until the 2018/19 financial year, to deal with future pressures. The rest of the money was allocated in the following ways:

- £170,000 to be spent on additional grass-cutting work on highway verges. This is an area of spend that has been reduced in recent years.
- £250,000 one-off funding initially for a pilot Communities Fund for parishes and towns to bid for matched funding schemes following changes/reductions for funding for services.
- £600,000 additional funding for children's social care – a part of the council that has been exempted from cuts since 2010 but has continued to experience significant rising demand on services in common with children's social care departments across England.
- £11,000 increase on the Council's Flood Defence Levy.

The additional funding for Adult Social care announced in the recent budget is welcome news however we are waiting for guidance as to what and where the funds can be spent. It is thought that the funds have to be spent on new projects for further integration with Health care rather than replacing services.

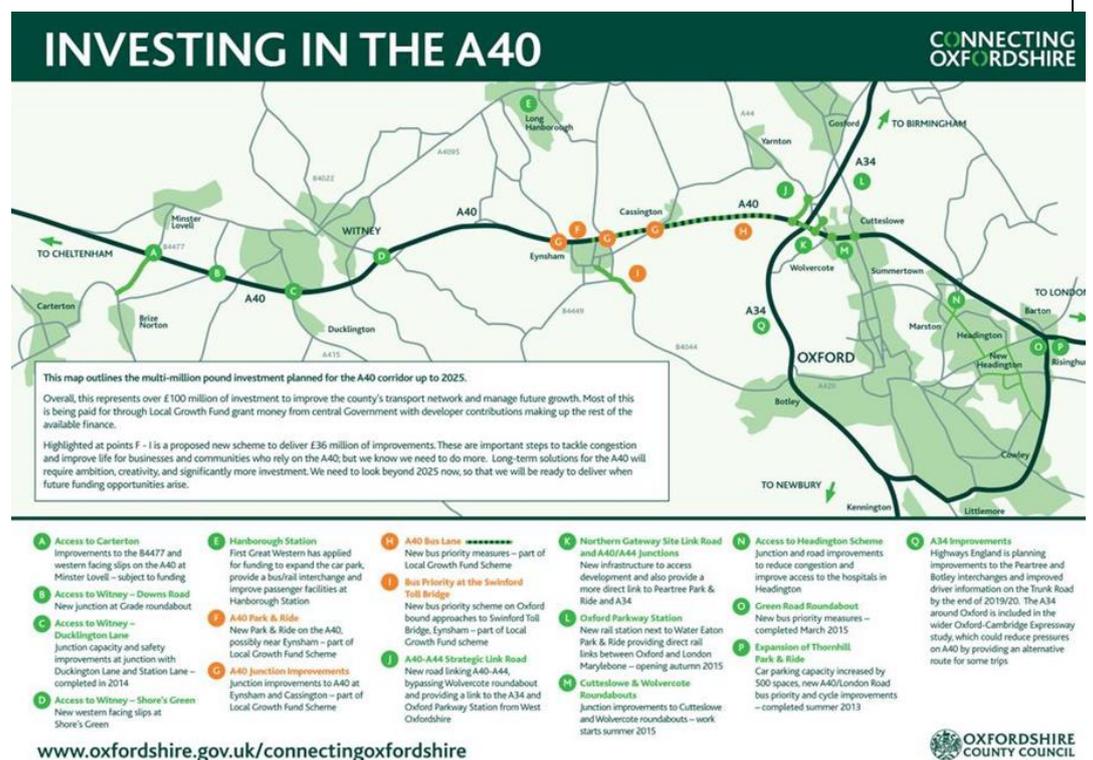
Unitary Local Government:- Along with South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse, the County council have submitted a proposal to central government for a new single authority in Oxfordshire. Throughout the process we have kept all other councils, including WODC informed; there is an open invitation to join us to discuss the issues that matter to their residents. One council would be responsible for all the environmental services such as street cleaning and road maintenance. Joining up social services, housing and benefits improves support for people who need extra help. One website, one phone number, one contact for all your council services; no duplication one council costs less to run than six, with fewer councillors and senior managers. One council saves at least £20m each year, which can be used to deliver better services and protect them from future cuts.

Open Access Children's services to continue at 34 Locations: - Start-up funding for 12 more community schemes to run open access services at children's centres has been approved by OCC. The proposals, which will receive a total of £305,883, are among the latest to be considered as part of the transition from council-funded to community-led services at children's centre locations. Community services will complement the council's new service for 0-19 year-olds, which will meet the needs and aspirations of children at risk of abuse and neglect in Oxfordshire, and ensure that families who need extra help are identified at an early stage. When added to previously considered applications, the approval of these 12 schemes means funded plans are now in place for services such as 'stay and play' to continue at 18 children's centres, with business cases at a further six centres supported in principle but deferred to the final round of the Transition Fund for more work. Added to this, open access sessions will also continue at the eight Children and Family Centres and two

satellite centres at the heart of the council's new Children's Service. In total, it means a combination of council-funded and community-led solutions for open access services are now confirmed or supported in principle at 34 locations across the county – with more to come when applications for the final round of transition funding are considered.

Fix My Street:- If you notice a problem or defect on the road you can report it easily on line 24 hours a day. Recently OCC has been working hard to make Fix My Street work more effective with the launch of a new service. It will improve the quality and consistency of public reports, as well as OCC internal processes for closing down reports, making it easier to reliably see what's going on in a given area. Members of the public who consistently give good information can be rewarded with 'trusted reporter' status, meaning OCC will fast track future reports to the contractor, resulting in quicker resolution for the resident and reduced effort for the inspectors.

Transport:- The work on the Cutteslowe and Wolvercote roundabouts has been completed and traffic flow has improved for both the A44 and the A40. The County Council has set aside £3 million for the next phase of development for the A40 which should see work starting in 2018. These improvements to the A40 will have a beneficial effect on the A44 as it will reduce drivers 'cutting through' on the A4095.



The new station at Oxford Parkway is now linked to both Oxford and London attracting more customers. The new bus services to Woodstock are welcome although there is concern about the 500 turning in the centre of the town and the 7 turning in Old Woodstock. I have arranged meetings with the Managing Directors of both companies to try to resolve the situation. I am continuing to press for better bus connections to Hanborough station and improved rail services.

6/17

District Council Report

Cllr Richard Bishop presented the following report:
As I have endeavoured to give full accounts of the work of the District Council each month in the Parish magazines, I shall keep this report short. My work has inevitably centred around the planning policies of the District and the way in which these have been affected by the lack of a currently

		<p>accepted Local Plan. Stonesfield has been particularly targeted with developments either in construction or planned well in excess of the ability of the village to absorb the numbers involved. The fear at this moment is that the village could see as many as 180 new properties by the end of the decade. The infrastructure and amenities of Stonesfield will be put under almost impossible strain and, consequently, the very nature of the village will change - probably for the worst. Combe, on the other hand has escaped so far relatively unscathed. Whether this will be maintained remains to be seen. Our villages are not alone. Similar fears are being realized throughout the District as the Government dictum "there must be a presumption to accept" affects us all. Speculative land owners and builders are only too willing to offer land and to develop that land. It is hoped that the emerging Local Plan will be found acceptable later this summer.</p> <p>My other main responsibility is concerned with the environmental concerns in West Oxfordshire. A new contractor has been appointed for the area. It is a conglomerate of the District Councils in partnership with WODC in the 20/20 initiative. This arrangement will save the constituent councils a large amount - greater than that envisaged by the County in its ill-conceived plan for a unitary authority for the whole of Oxfordshire. Publica as it is called will take over many of the services offered by the consortium - it has already started with the green waste collections.</p> <p>Latterly, Council has been exercised with concerted attempts to counter the County proposals for a unitary authority. We fear that should this be forced upon West Oxfordshire, it will result in greatly increased levels of Council Tax and a noticeable reduction in the high level of services available to our residents. West Oxfordshire has considerable reserves and productive investments, while OCC has a considerable 'black hole'. Overall, it has been a very busy year but one which has been fulfilling my attempts to serve the residents of the Stonesfield and Tackley Ward. My promise to all residents is that I will do my utmost to continue to serve you and take up any concerns you may have.</p>
7/17	Reading Room Report	<p>Roger Pursell presented the following report:</p> <p>I am pleased to report that the Reading Room had another very satisfactory year in 2016. This is in no small measure as a result of the brilliant support it gets from the village and the institutions therein. Our fundraising has continued apace with our usual sources of revenue all producing as well as ever. The summer cream tea programme not only helps us but also many other organisations in the village including the church and the various educational establishments. We would be nowhere without our monthly coffee mornings which, of course, provide funds for maintenance and improvement but also add significantly to the social cohesion of our community. What seems to be on the increase is room hire for ad hoc events. In many cases these are private functions but can also be for business meetings with our offer enhanced by the provision of Wi-Fi. We are also proud to be the venue for so many additional charitable fund raising events, for example Cancer Research, Combe Charities and the Children's Society.</p> <p>Our main project this past year has been the refurbishment of the lavatories. We are extremely pleased with the work done by our chosen contractor both in terms of its timeliness and value for money. Undoubtedly this improvement has hugely increased the attractiveness of our offer, eliciting nothing but positive comments from all users. In 2017 we will be further improving the storage area in the long room. Opening up the area in-between the storage and the loos whilst at the</p>

		<p>same time improving access to them. Whilst this is going on we hope to refurbish the back garden path in keeping with the paved area of the barn. It is also hoped that as a part of this project the old privy will be adapted to provide additional storage facilities.</p> <p>I say it every year but it is a true as ever that our success is due to the indefatigable team that are your Trustees. Their commitment and professionalism shines through every time we organise an event with the proof of the pudding being in our financial health. I would like to extend my thanks and those of all our village to them, to all who so kindly help out when called upon and to our wonderful caretaker Sue Golder without whom not only would the Reading Room be a much poorer place but the job of the trustees would be so much harder.</p>
8/17	Village Hall & Recreation Ground Report	<p>Ian Windsor presented the following report:</p> <p>In an optimistic start to the year the Committee grew to 12 members, and meetings have been well attended, giving a new impetus to improve the facility that has been a centrepiece of Combe life for generations.</p> <p>We are a part of the village which supports most other village organisations in their fundraising efforts, whether they use the field, the village hall/pavilion, or just the car park, whilst also needing to raise funds ourselves.</p> <p>Following the resignation of the treasurer in early 2017 the post has been filled by an existing member of the committee. Funds currently stand at £15,422. No Chairperson or Vice Chairperson was elected at last year's AGM, instead we have been rotating the Chair at each meeting with beneficial results: it gets every committee member more involved, the Chair does not get burdened with excessive actions or responsibilities, and individual contributions from members have increased.</p> <p>The committee have set 3 main goals for this year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Refurbishing the kitchen to add food heating facilities in the form of an oven/cooker. This will allow a greater use by village organisations and others who enquire about hiring the hall, which will increase income potential. - Designing and obtaining funding for a building extension on the football pitch side, to increase changing room capacity and to meet current OCA and FA standards. - Repairs and improvements to the car park. Funding is being investigated to enable improvements to the car park, bearing in mind the expected increase in traffic. <p>The main entrance to the car park is suffering from excessive wear from the number of vehicles using the car park, and that is only likely to increase once the Hub is operational. An estimate of £3,500 was obtained for repairing the entrance but considered too high and rejected. The intention is to solicit contributions from all organisations and hirers of the facilities who use the car park to eventually fund repairs and improvements.</p> <p>April the first was a very successful clean up session. Initiated by the Cricket club the hall was cleaned and painted, as was the bar area, and the toilets and changing rooms were deep cleaned, mould removed and repainted all in the space of a day.</p> <p>The field had a good trim around the edges, the mower was cleaned thoroughly, and hedges cut back and tidied. A good turnout among the cricketers and VH&RG committee made the day enjoyable and spread the workload</p> <p>We have been successful recently collaborating with other village organisations to raise funds - A wine tasting event, run jointly with FOCS</p>

		<p>raised £800 which was shared between us. And we are pursuing a partnership with the Cricket Club to run a series of BBQ's after matches and social events.</p> <p>The Cricket club themselves have asked that we thank the Parish Council and others for their donation towards the new covers. The cost of £4,600 was fully funded by grants and donations and the covers will help them fulfill all home fixtures which is a big step forward for the club. Initiatives like this are helping to keep cricket going in Combe, where cricket is struggling with the number of teams reduced from 6 in recent years to 2 for this year; a senior team and a junior U15 team.</p> <p>The Football club is having a busy and successful time. They are fielding 2 men's teams, one in the local Premier division who finished 6th in the league, and a reserve team in Division 4 who finished 3rd. They are running 7 junior teams; Under 6, U7's, U8's, U9's, U10's, U12's and U14's. All had good seasons, with the U8's not losing a game all season and the U14's winning their league.</p> <p>The Exercise classes, run by Michelle Eeley, are a regular booking for the Hall and represent a substantial part of the income for the facility, We are to hold an AGM on 4th July 2017.</p> <p>We would like to end this report by thanking the Parish Council for their continued and increased support.</p>
9/17	Combe Charities Report	<p>Celia Adamson presented the following report:</p> <p>We have made four donations since the last Annual Parish Meeting. They have been for very different reasons and across the age range, for the young or not so young.</p> <p>The most recent donation was to contribute towards the cost of adding a name and restoring a headstone in the church yard. Esme Clemons, a much loved resident of Combe, died some fifteen years ago but had no surviving relative to ensure her name was added to her husband's. The extra cost was met by donations from friends.</p> <p>To boost our funds we had a tea in the Reading Room on 17th March and raised £750. Another £45 came as donations so that in total £795 was banked, which was a splendid amount. I should like to thank everyone once again who supported us, made cakes, served tea, washed up and gave so generously.</p> <p>In the year we have received donations of £100 from individuals and £142.95 from The Open Air Service at Combe Feast. The Community Account as of 5th May was £3,703.74 and the Business Saver Account as of 7th December was £286.60</p> <p>The Long Common or Waste Land Charity is invested and has made interest of £7.27 and £12.47 in 2016. The Investment Value is £1,181.71</p> <p>Another small charity, Combe Relief In Need, stands at £919.33 and interest paid out was £10.21 and £7.94 earlier this year.</p> <p>As most people are aware the Charity is historical with references to a bequest to the fund in 1636. The interest from the fund was historically distributed by the church wardens to buy bread and coal (Victoria County History).</p> <p>We are no longer regulated by the Charity Commission as our annual income is less than £5,000. In the event of the Charity reaching this amount we would have to apply to re-register. For this reason donations to the Charity cannot be gift-aided.</p> <p>We urge people to apply, in confidence, when in any sort of financial need to any one of us. The donation is small but readily given when appropriate.</p>
10/17	Church of England	<p>Andrew Hobson presented the following report:</p> <p>St Laurence church continues to survive. The congregation is stable, but</p>

	Report	<p>the brunt of running the church falls on a hard core of 25 -30 people, who form the regular congregation, many of whom are on the senior side life. We have been running for time with a single Churchwarden, but following the recent Parish AGM we now have a second Churchwarden in Julian Freeland.</p> <p>Finances are robust thanks in great measure to The Emden legacy dedicated to care of the Church fabric. We cover our annual costs via fundraising, which is not the case with all parishes.</p>
11/17	Combe Community Hub Report	<p>Andrew Hobson presented the following report:</p> <p>It has been a much longer haul to get through the process of the acquisition of the chapel than I had imagined in my report a year ago. It took the Methodists until October to produce a draft contract, which was completely unacceptable. Thereafter negotiations dragged on to stalemate until Richard Sherrott took up the reins on our behalf and pushed onto an acceptable contract.</p> <p>We are now on the cusp of exchange, which is set for 12 May 2017 with completion intended for 31 May 2017. We have applied for further protection under the Localism Act and the protected period runs until 21 August 2017.</p> <p>Finances are looking good. Most of our pledges are collected. We have been awarded a grant by WODC for 20% of project cost up to £50,000. We will be signing a mortgage with a member of the village to finance the balance of the purchase price before the end of the month and once exchange takes place we will make our first drawing on the grant, which will ultimately release to about £26,545 when completion takes place. However this only really marks the beginning of the project. Years of neglect means that work has to be done to bring the building up to scratch and, subject to funds, we are planning in the future to make alterations that will facilitate simultaneous use of the chapel itself and the back area for different purposes.</p> <p>As ever we are enormously grateful for all the hard work that has been put in by the many volunteers to the project and to the generous donors whose contributions large and small have brought us to the cusp of this momentous moment.</p>
12/17	School Report	<p>Charlie Marshall, Head Teacher</p> <p>Context:- We have four classes and 4 teachers. We have appointed a fifth teacher for September who will job share. There are 5 TA's, 1 office manager, 1 head teacher and 2 cleaners. We have parent volunteers as well as members of the community.</p> <p>Combe school continues to be at full capacity and has a continued waiting list at county. A family with siblings at the school were not given a place in September for their youngest, the school's hands are tied due to statutory legislation about class sizes.</p> <p>Successes:- Our results this year were outstanding being the 5th in the country and the top in Oxfordshire. Year 2 results and foundation were also outstanding.</p> <p>We were recently successful in our application to become a strategic partner school for the Oxfordshire Teaching Schools Alliance.</p> <p>Focuses:- We are in the process of creating another learning area within school for the children to use by converting a storage room. The FOCS have been funding this for us. The children are also working towards an eco-award. One of our teachers is starting training to move us towards being a Global partner school. Our outdoor grounds are having a wild flower area created and we are creating a new pond in our quiet garden that is more accessible to the children, with a future view to moving the</p>

		<p>fish and newts from the current pond into it under guidance.</p> <p>Community News: - There is a new wooden fence at the end of the playground that means the children are now safe from the public footpath. There have been a few schools that have been inspected by Ofsted that have failed their safeguarding responsibilities because the fencing around the site was not secure enough. This could mean us investigating our own perimeters in due course.</p> <p>We will be holding another working party day this term for families to join us for a picnic and tidy up day, skills needed are: painters, cleaners, diggers, planters, sweepers and sandwich makers! Please let the school know if you can help in any way. Date soon...</p> <p>Our weekly newsletter is available on the school website with pictures and news of everything we do.</p> <p>www.combeprimary.co.uk</p>
13/17	Pre-School Report	<p>Sally Purssell presented the following report:</p> <p>I am pleased to be here making my first report as Chair of Combe Preschool and ASC, and to report that it has been a successful year for us, but one with some significant changes too:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the management side: our co-chairs, Charlie Birkett and Vicky Rushton along with many of the committee resigned at the end of the last school year after three years hard work and commitment, steering the preschool through some challenging times. The new committee is now in place, working with energy and enthusiasm, as we get to grips with all that is required now of a voluntary preschool management committee. The new members bring a wide range of skills to the committee and are working hard to provide the support and management needed to ensure the smooth running of Preschool and ASC. • On the staff side: whilst we have been fortunate to have a stable staff team over many years, there have been some significant changes, with Fay Dyer(preschool assistant) and Rachel Bourne (administrator) leaving to pursue other things. We have welcomed Annemarie Ferrett as a permanent member of staff, as well as Megan O'Neill as ASC playworker, and Helen Davies as administrator. <p>So, now these changes have bedded –in, we have a strong committee and an experienced staff team which sees us in good shape to face the changes of the coming year as we introduce the 30 hour free entitlement to 3 and 4 year old children of working families.</p> <p>Numbers are good at the moment with 27 children on role at Preschool, and 55 children registered for ASC (though many are only ad hoc users)</p> <p>Most sessions at Preschool have 14 – 16 children attending (max 16), and there are between 6 – 10 children attending ASC each day. 14 preschool children will be leaving in July to start Primary school – which is very much in line with normal patterns, and we have children ready to start with us in September.</p> <p>Staff have attended a range of Early Years training covering essential qualifications such as paediatric first aid and safeguarding, as well as some really inspiring training with, for example, Anna Ephgrave and Julie Fisher who are eminent Early Years writers and trainers. We have recently come together with local settings to establish a network of early years providers with the aim of sharing training, good practice and experiences. Professional development is a high priority for us at the moment as we strive to offer the very best early years' experience for our children and families, and to maintain and improve our good Ofsted grading.</p>

		<p>We are so grateful, and offer our thanks, to the school and the wider community for their continued support and generosity towards Preschool. The Primary school have continued to offer support through the school lunch provision, Afterschool club and support with behavioural issues, as well as joint fund raising ventures such as the Christmas Fayre. The wider community, through the donation of equipment (computers, laptops, toys etc), their skills and time (DIY, ICT, etc), and through support for fundraising events, help us enormously both financially and practically. And last but not least, the Combe Community Hub for working tirelessly to secure the Methodist Church as an asset for the whole community, which will not only allow Preschool to continue to offer excellent early years provision for local families, as it has done for 47 years, but also provide a venue for many interesting and innovative activities for the community. If you'd like to find out more about Preschool and ASC please feel free to ask one of the committee or come along to our AGM on 7th June 2017, 8.00 at the Preschool.</p>
14/17	Police Report	<p>PCSO Phil Workman sent the following report: There have been 11 reported incidents in the Parish of Combe over the period 7th May 2016 – 7th May 2017. These have been broken down as follows: 1x assault without injury (incident in Witney to a resident from Combe) 1 x burglary non-dwelling 1 x theft from motor vehicle 1 x harassment 3 x domestic incidents 2 x other theft 9 (1 incident in Witney to a resident from Combe) 1x dangerous dog incident (incident in Oxford to a resident from Combe) 1 x nuisance message</p> <p>Now that the weather is brightening up it is all too tempting to be complacent when it comes to home security. The most common cases of opportunist summer burglary involve offenders that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter an insecure front door whilst residents are in the back garden • Enter doors that are closed but unlocked at night whilst residents are asleep • Reach through open windows to take valuable items <p>In around 25% of break-ins that take place in the spring and summer months, entry is gained through insecure windows and doors, especially at the rear of the property.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that windows and doors are close and locked when you are out. Don't leave small windows open believing them to be safe. • If you want to leave windows open while you sleep, fit window restrictors so that they cannot be fully opened, or make sure they are not large enough to allow access to a burglar. • When out in the garden ensure that windows and doors to the front of your house are secure. It only takes a second for someone to get into your home and take things without you noticing. • Do not leave valuables on display in front of windows or in reach of open doors or windows. • Ensure that all barbecue and garden equipment and tools are securely locked up in a shed and out of sight. Tools can be used by the potential offender to break into your home. • Consider fitting outside security lighting or a visible alarm to help deter burglars. Even using pea shingle or gravel on a driveway and spiky plants in garden beds can help.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't leave keys near entry points where they can be 'fished' or 'hooked' out through the window, letter box or cat flap. • Ensure all internal handle operated locks on UPVC door are fully secured with the key. <p>Sheds – Easy pickings? Offenders see sheds as easy pickings because they are unprotected and lack basic security measures. The buildings often contain property that can be sold on or implements that can be used to force entry into the owner's home.</p> <p>Many sheds whilst being of good construction fall short of basic security.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is easy to unscrew the ironmongery, steal contents and in some cases replace the screw to make it look as if the shed has not been tampered with. • By using tamper proof screws or coach bolts together with good quality pad bar or hasp and a stable and close shackled padlock, the shed owner will make it harder for the wood-be thief. • It is also a good idea to bond any glass windows in, with mastic to prevent easy removal. • Ensure all equipment and tools are locked away when not in use. • High quality locks should be used on all doors. Windows can be fitted with a grille or, as a cheaper alternative, chicken wire to slow a thief down. • A shed alarm can also be installed. • Post-coding or indelibly marking all property such as lawnmowers, bikes and tools using ultra-violet pens, forensic marking such as Selecta DNA or Smartwater or engravers. • Installing security lighting as a deterrent, and plants such as thorny shrubs to act as a barrier at potential access points. • If building a shed, putting it where it is most noticeable to you and your neighbours. <p>Going on holiday?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make your home look occupied. • If you're out or going away, ask a trusted neighbour to open and close your curtains for you. • Ask a neighbour if they don't mind parking their car on your driveway and trimming your garden to make it look occupied. • Cut the front and back lawns before you go away and trim any plants that burglars could hide behind. • Cancel milk and newspaper deliveries. • Before your holiday, don't advertise that you are going away on Facebook, Twitter etc. • Register for the <u>Royal Mail 'Keepsafe' Service</u> (please google underlined). • Leave important documents and valuable personal items with other family members or the bank. • Double-check that you've locked all outside windows and doors. • Set your burglar alarm. <p>All crime prevention advice has been taken from the Thames Valley Police website www.thamesvalley.police.uk.</p>
15/17	Any Other Business	A request for the post box by the Old Post Office in Park Road to be emptied twice daily was made – Clerk to make enquiries with the Post Office.