

Present	Mr C Broad Dr J A Berry Mr M Urso-Cale	Chair
	Ms H Gascoigne Dr D Dewhurst Cllr J Hanna Cllr R Fletcher Mrs M Launchbury Mrs J E Berry 4 members of the Public	District Councillor District Councillor OCC OCC VHMC Parish Clerk

1. **Apologies for Absence** were received from Dr M Hansard, Mr A Candelent, Mr J King, Mr F Dumbleton and Mr C Clements.

2. **Chairman's Annual Report**

Mr Broad reported that Liz Morris had retired after 35 years and thanked her for her invaluable service. Jacquie Berry had taken over as Parish Clerk in September 2024 with excellent handover and support from Liz Morris.

He noted that the major concerns about running the Village Hall and Community Room had been resolved and there is now a fully staffed Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC). The new VHMC have reviewed and improved processes and procedures and driven the refurbishment of the Village Hall. He thanked them for their voluntary efforts which have ensured the continued and improved operation of the halls.

Mr Broad explained that Planning continues to be an important area of work for the Parish Council and noted that part of the Harwell Campus lies in Chilton. The most significant development has been the Moderna buildings. The Parish Council had raised concerns relating to its proximity to the D-day memorial, the section of original runway and the experimental catapult; the increase in traffic and the new traffic lights at the A34 roundabout; the impressionistic artwork based on the framework of a glider; and most recently the level of lighting and the proposed security fence.

Mr Broad thanked all the councillors for their valuable work during the year to ensure the Parish Council discharged its responsibility in an efficient and effective manner. A full copy of his report was included in the May edition of the Chilton Chronicle.

3. **Minutes of the Last Annual Parish Meeting**

The Clerk read a brief summary of the previous year's meeting.

4. **Matters Arising**

*Cost of grass cutting.* The relative areas of grass in the old village and Chilton Fields have been estimated and their associated contractor costs identified and compared. There appears to be scope for the reduction of costs for Chilton Field and the Chair noted that options are being considered including the retendering of the CF maintenance contract.

*Adoption of Chilton Field roads.* This has still not taken place. The latest update in March 2025 from OCC Highways is that they have provided a letter of support to DWH to enable them to gain title to the 'land gap' (which has been the outstanding issue).

5. **Annual Finance Report**

The Annual Statement of Accounts, subject to audit, was published in the May edition of the Chronicle. During the year, the S106 funds for new Play Equipment, received in 2023/24, was spent with the purchase of the football wall and significant improvements in the Junior area near the Village Hall. Further S106 funds

were secured for the maintenance of the play equipment. Significant cost increases this year were due to increasing the Clerk's working hours, higher insurance costs and the requirement for additional 'tree work'.

**7. County Council Report**

During the year there have been significant Division boundary changes, resulting in Chilton Parish being Divided by the A34 and since the recent elections in May 2025, it now falls under 2 OCC Councillors. Cllr Rebekah Fletcher (Harwell, Western Valley and Blewbury Division) will be responsible for the old village and Cllr Jane Hannah for Chilton Fields and other areas west of the A34. Both Jane and Rebekah attended the meeting, introduced themselves and reassured everyone that they would work closely together for the benefit of the village. They spoke about the different options being considered for the creation of a new unitary council.

As new County Councillors responsible for Chilton Parish, Jane and Rebekah requested the Parish Council provided them with a summary of the major issues that have/are facing the Parish. This will be followed up by the Clerk.

**8. District Council Report**

Prior to the meeting Debra Dewhurst and Hayleigh Gascoigne had provided an annual report. Again, this had been published in the May edition of the Chilton Chronicle. In addition to discussion of the District Council's proposals for the unitary council, the report included an update on the progress of the medical centre on Great Western Park. They noted that a different approach for the commuted sum for healthcare provision was being adopted at Valley Park and how it was used would be the decision of the BOB ICB. It was suggested that a Minor Injuries Unit would be really helpful but Jane Hanna noted that a similar proposal in Wantage had been unsuccessful.

Dr Druce noted concerns that infrastructure was not in place for new developments and that if it wasn't delivered by the Council then it would be difficult to ensure it was built.

**9. Village Hall Management Committee Report**

Mrs Launchbury provided more details about the work of the VHMC and the various changes that Mr Broad had previously summarised. The Annual Village Hall Management report had also been provided in the May edition of the Chronicle. She noted that it had been a busy year with 1,321 individual bookings from their 24 regular weekly or monthly hirers and 144 occasional hirers. She commented that March is often the busiest month and August the quietest. Mrs Launchbury explained how the first job of the new VHMC was to ensure they were running the halls in accordance with current legislation - licences, health and safety etc. They then looked at what needed fixing and improvements that could be made including the refresh of the Village Hall and the installation of broadband to the Community Room. The VHMC are still looking at how to improve access and are exploring the possibility of a digital access system. Mr Broad thanked Mrs Launchbury and the VHMC.

**10. General Discussion**

- (i) It was noted that Harwell invited the Neighbourhood Policing Team to give a talk about their work and it was well received.
- (ii) The frequency of bin emptying, especially for the bins near the Village Hall, was felt to be inadequate with bins often overflowing. The Clerk agreed to take this up with the contractor.
- (iii) It was noted that Chilton Field only has one point of entry for vehicles and how this was felt to be a weakness.

The Chairman closed the Meeting at 9.25pm