

Dorchester-on-Thames Parish Council

The Monthly Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 8th July 2009 commencing at 7.30 p.m. The Chairman, Cllr K Bryan, presided; present were Cllrs. Maurice Day, Stuart Gibbons, Chris Hill, Margot Metcalfe, Jenny Nudds and Mark Stevenson with G Russell in attendance. Also present for part of the meeting were County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale and three residents

1 Apologies for absence

Cllr Mark Williams and District Cllr John Cotton

2 Public Participation

Residents of Page Furlong asked the Council to see if repairs to the surface of Drayton Road could be carried out as a matter of urgency. Mr and Mrs Arthurs and Mrs Janet Smith pointed out that the road, which has no pavement, is the main route for pedestrians using the by-pass bus stops and for everyone using the Play Area in the Recreation Ground. It is not only a poor and potentially damaging surface for wheeled vehicles but a trip hazard for pedestrians who include young children. County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale said that she would take this up with County Council officers.

Mr and Mrs Arthurs also told the Council that horse chestnut trees in the Cemetery appeared to be diseased because leaves from the trees are falling into their garden even during the summer months. The Clerk will ask Paul Jenks, the Council's tree surgeon, to inspect the trees and say whether any work, additional to that contained in the agreed three-year programme, is required.

3 Declarations of Interest

None.

4 Minutes of the Meeting held 10th June 2009

After a correction was made to Minute 9 (i) showing the value of the grant from TOE as £4,000 not £4,500, the Minutes were approved. The Minute Book was with Douglas Jupp who is conducting the Internal Audit for 2008/9 and will be signed at the next meeting.

5 Matters Arising from the Minutes

(i). Posts on bank by St Birinus RC Church; County Highways Department has no objection in principle but insists that the work is done by an approved County Council contractor. A list of approved contractors has been requested.

(ii) Newcomers Evening; the dates suggested to the Rector were 17 and 24 September and 15 October. Thursday 24th September was subsequently selected.

(iii) The [Natural Environment and Rural Communities \(NERC\)](#) Act seems to be something of which OALC was previously unaware. After studying the Powerpoint presentation that Cynth Napper had given to Dorchester PC the OALC advisor could not see any objection if the Council was keen to sign up but the Council will seek additional advice, possibly through the regular publications for Parish Councils.

6. District Councillor's Report

District Cllr John Cotton had sent his apologies for absence from the meeting with the comment that he had nothing to report.

7 County Councillor's Report

County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale said that she has been appointed to the County Planning & Resources and Growth & Infrastructure Committees.

She has made contact with the organisers of the gatherings of motor cyclists at Berinsfield roundabout on Monday evenings and, together with Ian Hudspath from the County Council and Ken Hall from Berinsfield Parish Council, would attend the next organising meeting. She told the Council that three bikers have recently been expelled from the meeting for misconduct. The suggestion of installing average speed cameras on the by-pass is being considered seriously. Cllr Stevenson suggested that publicity should be given to the fund-raising activities of the bikers' group to counter the publicity that they normally receive, which is always bad.

County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale said that the Footpaths Officer is still determined that the bike rack on the path to the by-pass bus stop should be moved but has promised that the pathway surface itself will be improved at the same time.

Overy Mill footpath; the Council regretted the County's lack of action in this matter. It was suggested that support for further action could come from the Dorchester Carbon Project Group. Other matters raised with Cllr Lindsey-Gale included the pavement from Meadside towards Dorchester Bridge which is still in need of repair and the height of the vegetation in the by-pass central reservation which is causing an obstruction to the view of on-coming traffic for drivers wishing to turn out of Henley Road towards Shillingford.

8 Finance:

NatWest Current account at 30th June £15,068.92

Nat West Reserve Account at 30th June £39,737.30

Since the last meeting a 10% deposit had been paid to Playdale Playgrounds Ltd amounting to £2,403.85.

The following accounts were approved for payment:

Information Commissioner (Annual Registration Fee) £35.00

Downend & Benning Partnership (brackets for signs) £25.30

Pear Technology Services (technical support mapping) £57.50

Playdale Playgrounds Ltd (60% of final account) £14,423.07

GGD Russell – Clerk's salary £450.11

Geoff Willis Handyman – 4weeks + back pay- (June £297.50) £307.36

The Clerk reported that the books and financial records for 2008/9 are with Douglas Jupp who hopes to finish the internal audit in the following week.

In expectation of this the Annual Return for 2008/9 was approved and signed by the Chairman and Clerk

9 Correspondence and Other Business:

i). Sports Club Pavilion & Playground;

An inspector from Wicksteed will be examining the existing play area kit and recommending repairs and maintenance routines during a visit to be made on Friday 10th July.

Playdale Playgrounds has commenced installing the new adventure play system.

A resident has complained about the return of a large rabbit population but Total Pest Control has advised the Council that this is not the right time of year to locate burrows.

ii). Footpaths;

The Handyman will be asked to trim the path between Bridge End and Wittenham Lane. The width of the path between the Pritchards and the Pearces has been reduced by vegetation growing from both properties. The Clerk will contact the residents. BCB will be asked to clear the path adjacent to 14 Watling Lane.

County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale said that Mark Sumner, the Footpaths Officer, is receptive to the idea of a cycle way from Berinsfield to Blackbird Leys using the old Roman Road. The Council is keen to see how this could be linked to a cycle way through Dorchester-on-Thames.

iii). Cemetery, including review of regulations

The Clerk reported that he had been approached by Mr M D Berger requesting permission for the ashes of his late wife, Mary Elizabeth Berger, to be buried in a casket that is non-biodegradable. The Cemetery Regulations are not absolutely specific and clear about this point but the Council agreed that it would only agree to application for ashes burial in a wooden casket. The Clerk will inform Mr Berger of this decision and the wording of the Cemetery regulation will be amended next time a review is carried out.

iv). Allotments

It was agreed that since all allotment spaces that are ready for immediate cultivation have now been allocated, applications for new plots will only be accepted from residents of this Parish and from Berinsfield.

It was also agreed that where plots are left uncultivated, which is contrary to the regulations, they should be taken back so that others can make use of them.

v). Other letters to Chairman and Clerk

a. The residents of Samian Way wish to resurface their road and have written asking if the Council will contribute towards the cost. The Parish Council declined. In the case of Watling Lane the reason for the Council's agreement to pay a large share of the cost of repairs was that the Parish Council owns a substantial frontage on the Lane. This is not the case on Samian Way.

b. Allens Pit; a local resident has complained about motor sports being permitted on this land, which is located off Abingdon Road. The assumption is that this is with the permission of the owner but this is not confirmed. The resident told the Clerk that she has also complained to the Police and SODC's Environmental Health Department. These are the appropriate authorities to take action in such matters.

c. The Council is being asked to contribute towards the Consultation on providing accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. The deadline is 1st September and the information will be circulated for discussion at the August meeting.

d. There has been an invitation by ORCC to hear and discuss how Chinnor Parish Council created a Village Flu Pandemic Plan. No-one can attend the meeting on 29 July but the Clerk will obtain and circulate a copy of the briefing notes.

e. Cllr M Stevenson said that he would like to take up the invitation from ORCC and attend the Rural Affordable Housing Information & Training event at Denman College on 17 September.

10 Planning

a. Applications : None have been received.

b. Other Planning matters

A resident has reported new roadside work at 17 Watling Lane as a possible encroachment. The Clerk has asked both County Highways and the District Council's Conservation Officer for their comments.

Air quality testing; the Council agreed with Cllr. Chris Hill's comment that in connection with the planning and environmental approval applications for the EfW incinerator at Sutton Courtenay what had been offered in terms of impact surveys was less than satisfactory. They did not include examination of soil contamination and were not local enough in their study. Further more the recent increase in recycling as a result of methods of kerbside waste collection could mean that the need for incineration was much reduced.

The Council noted the following Planning Decisions:

P09/W0347 and P09/W0348/LB; Willow Tree Cottage, 2 Rotten Row; Proposed dining room and ground floor WC.

Planning and Listed Building approval given 19th June

P09/W0371; 3 Wittenham Lane; First floor extension to existing bedroom

Planning approval given 12th June

P09/W0374LB; Virginia Cottage, 21 High Street; Remove modern porch roof and replace with smaller arrangement. Change canopy over other door. Replace both front doors

Planning approval given 18th June

P09/W0450 9 Watling Lane; Demolition of garage/store and erection of garden room

Planning approval given 29th June

The Council noted that the following application had been withdrawn

P09/W0423; 28, Abingdon Road; Proposed Orangery

11 20 mph limit in Queen Street

Cllr Stevenson has requested that this be placed on the agenda. During the discussion he agreed with other councillors that such a limit should be drafted to cover a much wider area from, say, Martin's Lane to Dorchester Bridge since this would encompass the whole of the Village centre and most of the Dorchester Conservation Area. Cllr Stevenson said that he thought such a proposal would attract a lot of local support. Although it would be difficult to enforce such a measure, a statement of principle is worth making and would be sent to the County Council.

12 South Oxfordshire LEADER

Cllrs Margot Metcalfe and Mark Stevenson attended the launch on 16 June with the Clerk. An information leaflet has been received and will be circulated. More information and periodic updates will be on the LEADER website. Details of the scheme will be described in Dorchester News.

13 Abbey View Meadow

The grass seed has not taken because the weather has not been favourable. The cutting of the existing grass area has taken place but there is still some rubble to be cleared. More soil to build up the entrance will come from work soon to be carried out at Willow Tree Cottage, 2 Rotten Row.

The Chairman will arrange the delivery of the rose bush by way of rental payment.

14 Part-night street lightning

The County Council wants the Parish Councils to make recommendations based upon its local knowledge. The Parish's suggestions will then be discussed with County Highways and the Police. It costs £30 per lamp to put the timers in so, while one or two could be switched back again, OCC is not encouraging trial periods.

The possible savings figures supplied by David Cookson of OCC relate to the lights being off from 12 midnight until around 5.30 a.m.

The savings per year for a small light on a footpath or residential road – 35w lamps - £10 saving in electricity and 50 kg CO² per year and for main street lights – 100 – 150w lamps - £20 or more saving in electricity and 80 kg CO² per year.

It was agreed that these figures should be circulated along with the folder containing the street light locations within the village so that specific lamps could be suggested.

15 Review of new SODC refuse collection system

There were no complaints about the scheme but councillors who had visited the newly-refurbished amenity site at Oakley Wood were less than impressed about the way in which it had been laid out, particularly to use with a trailer.

16 Dorchester News

The Council noted that the finances of the publication have been seriously affected after the cancellation of the advertising campaigns of all three village pubs. Two other advertisers have also pulled out recently.

17 Any Other Urgent Business

- a. The Clerk was asked to look at the ditch behind the houses on Monk's Close where tree debris has recently appeared. A letter should be sent to any resident thought to be the source of this.
- b. The Clerk had brought a list of Councillors' specific responsibilities which had last been settled in mid 2008. It was agreed that there would be no change. It was agreed that the Council should have two representatives on the Sports Club committee. The Clerk will confirm this to the secretary of the Club.
- c. Cllr Hill reported that the Thames Water man-hole cover in Bridge End had still not been repaired.
- d. The next Police Surgery will take place on Monday 27th July.

Meeting closed at 10.05 p.m.