

Dorchester-on-Thames Parish Council

The Annual Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 10th June 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, Mark Stevenson and Mark Williams with G Russell in attendance. Also present for part of the meeting was County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale.

1 Chairman's Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed the newly-elected County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale to her first meeting of the Parish Council and congratulated her on her election. Cllr Bryan also congratulated Cllr Mark Stevenson for his County Council election campaign in which he had brought The Green Party into second place.

2 Declarations of Interest

None

3 Minutes of the Meeting held 13th May 2009

The minutes as circulated were approved and signed as a true record

4 Matters Arising from the Minutes

The Clerk reported that the correspondence concerning the installation of parking barrier posts on the bank by St Birinus RC Church is ongoing. The Parish Council has been asked if it would make a contribution towards the cost of these but this was declined. The Clerk was asked to contact County Highways to make sure that they have no objection with the proposed scheme.

Plans for organising the Newcomers' Evening would be carried forward to the July meeting. Only one resident has so far expressed an interest in taking part in a 'Village Tidy up'.

5. Election of Parish Council Chairman 2009/10

Cllr Ken Bryan was nominated by Cllr Margot Metcalfe and seconded by Cllr Jenny Nudds. There were no other nominations and Cllr Bryan was declared elected.

6. Election of Parish Council Vice-Chairman 2009/10

Cllr Margot Metcalfe was nominated by Cllr Ken Bryan and seconded by Cllr Mark Stevenson. There were no other nominations and Cllr Metcalfe was declared elected.

7 County Councillor's Report

County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale said that she would be attending the first meeting of the newly-elected County Council tomorrow and would then know upon which committees she will be sitting.

She will arrange for a meeting with the motorcyclists who gather on Monday evenings as soon as possible and said that she would follow up the situation regarding the footpath at Overy Mill. She will check on the status of the plan to move the newly-installed bike-rack near the by-pass bus stop and try to ensure that it is not moved.

The final figure for the cost of the new drainage scheme to relieve Queen Street has been confirmed as £86,000.

The Environment Agency has confirmed that in the matter of the application for an energy from waste incinerator at Sutton Courtenay there are still many factors that it wishes to consider.

Councillors asked if County Highways could be encouraged to repair the surface of Drayton Road, especially since it is the route to the by-pass bus-stops and look to see if flooding problems elsewhere in the village can be resolved, especially at the corner of Tenpenny and Watling Lane.

The footway between Meadside and Dorchester Bridge has been 'sided-out'.

8 Finance:

Balance on NatWest Current Account at 26th May	£19,999.35
Balance on Reserve Account (no change)	£39,732.35

The following accounts were approved for payment:

Berinsfield Community Business (grass cutting April)	£690.52
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Total Pest Control June/July/August	£172.50
Allan Smith (plaques, bench repair, & pavilion painting)	£510.00
Cathy Pepper (war memorial flowers)	£20.47
GGD Russell – Clerk's salary	£450.11
GGD Russell Admin – two months	£88.40
Geoff Willis Handyman – 4 weeks - (May £272.50)	£297.50

The Parish Council reviewed its responsibility for making a contribution to the Abbey PCC for the Rose Garden, which in some years has been assessed at £200. The Council decided in future not to allocate a specific annual payment for the Rose Garden. The Council has a general responsibility for the care of the closed churchyard which includes the trees and the boundary walls. In some years this work can be expensive so the Council would prefer to allocate its payments towards whatever current work is required.

The Clerk reported that the Co-op Bank is currently offering 3% interest rate for 6 months deposit with a minimum amount invested of £25,000. It was agreed that the Council should open an account and the Clerk will prepare the application.

The Council reviewed the rate of pay to the Village Handyman. This was last set as £7.50 per hour with effect from 1st June 2007 but in November 2008 the council agreed that the Handyman should have his pay increased on 1st April 2009 by the increase in RPI since his previous award. The RPI now is 211.5 compared with 207.3 in June 2007, which is an increase of 2.02%. It was proposed by Cllr Hill and seconded by Cllr Metcalfe that the hourly rate should be increased to £7.65 per hour, an increase of 15p with effect from 1st April and this was approved.

9 Correspondence and Other Business:

i). Sports Club Pavilion & Playground;

Cllr Gibbons reported on the successful conclusion of the fund raising for the new play area equipment. This has now been ordered and installation is expected in July. In addition to funding from the Parish Council of £6,000, grants have been promised by SODC (£3,250), TOE (£4,000) and WREN (£5,000). Fund-raising activities have raised nearly £3,000 and volunteers have carried out some work which has reduced the amount payable to the contractor.

An inspector from Wicksteed will be making a report on the safety and maintenance needs of the existing play equipment.

BCB has been asked to quote for maintenance of the edges around the field. The Sports Club will be asked to spread grass cuttings rather than leaving them in a heap
ii). Footpaths;

The new sign indicating the Permissive Path via the underpass at Dorchester Bridge has been found and BCB will cut the full width of the path to encourage more use. The short path from Bridge End to Wittenham Lane needs strimming. Councillors wish the wooden barrier on this path to be retained as a safety measure – the Clerk will inform the Footpaths Officer who had indicated he wished it to be removed.

iii). Cemetery;

The bank of earth removed from recently dug graves is to be strimmed prior to it being used to build up levels in the play area and in a hole which has appeared near the sports pavilion.

The Council approved the application for a headstone shaped liked a teddy bear as the memorial for the grave of a small child.

iv). Allotments

The archaeologists return for the month of July and have expressed the wish to come back for at least two more years. The Clerk will ask Mark Townson about the latest availability of allotments.

v). Other letters to Chairman and Clerk

- a. Cllrs Metcalfe and Stevenson with the Clerk will attend the launch of the South Oxfordshire LEADER funding programme at Denman College on 16th June.
- b. There have been some recently announced changes to the bus time table but comments on the County Council's review of the 105 service are still required.
- c. The Council noted that the work to remove the trip hazard behind the High Street bus shelter, promised in earlier correspondence, was now underway.

10 Planning

a. Applications

P09/W0423

28, Abingdon Road; Proposed Orangery

The Council agreed that it had no strong views about this application.

P09/W0450

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

The Council agreed that it had no strong views about this application.

P09/W0348/LB

Willow Tree Cottage, 2 Rotten Row, amended; Proposed dining room and ground floor wc.

The Council thought that the amendment was an improvement and should be approved.

OCC Planning

Upper Farm, Thame Road Warborough; Anaerobic digestion biogas plant amended

The Council thought that the amendment should be approved. It is understood that Warborough Parish Council is in favour of the scheme.

b. Other Planning matters

The Clerk reported on an introductory course to 'Paperless planning' that he had attended at Crowmarsh. It was understood that grants might be obtainable for Councils wishing to acquire lap top computers and/or projectors and the Clerk will investigate further.

11 NERC Declaration

This is not thought to be a legal requirement but advice from OALC will be requested.

12 Abbey View Meadow

Further maintenance work is required and there needs to be a build-up of earth between the two gates and to the left of the access. The Chairman is in contact with the landowner about the rental payment in kind (a rose tree).

13 Part-night street lighting

The Clerk will ask the County officer if he is able to give advice about which lights are in locations which make them suitable for turning off during the night and also whether a scheme can be tested for a trial period.

It was agreed that before any scheme is implemented the details should appear in Dorchester News so that residents have the opportunity to express their views.

14 Any Other Business

- a. The Clerk said that Tim Fisher had told him that he will have another go at Watling Lane potholes within the coming month.
- b. There is a planning application before Berinsfield Parish Council for the property on Queenford Lake. Are there any planning grounds on which it can be opposed? Cllr Williams will ask Berinsfield PC.
- c. There are loose kerbstones in Queen Street and the gate at 'Blue Bridge' (over the River Thames) has a badly fitted latch mechanism.
- d. Outside The Chequers there is a damaged Thames Water manhole cover that needs to be repaired.
- e. The roadside litter bin in Manor Farm Road urgently needs the attention of the cleansing squad from SODC.

Meeting closed at 9.40 p.m.