

## Dorchester-on-Thames Parish Council

The Monthly Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September 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 seven residents.

### 1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were accepted from Cllr Mark Williams and District Cllr John Cotton.

### 2 Public Participation

David Joseph asked the Parish Council to reconsider its decision in the matter of the shape and size of the memorial stone for the grave of his late father, Bill Joseph. He showed the Council a drawing of the proposed wedge tablet stone along with dimensions and a plan showing where in the grave it would be set. He said that the information originally supplied by the stonemasons had not provided sufficient detail. Malcolm Corry followed up his email to the Clerk dated 6<sup>th</sup> September. This concerned the importance of residents removing wheelie bins from the street as soon as possible after they had been emptied lest they are used for various anti-social activities. It was agreed to place a note on this matter in 'Dorchester News'. Mr Corry also told the Council of two vehicles that regularly drive along the High Street at 11 pm. at speeds in excess of 40-50 mph. These vehicles had not yet been identified. Ken Jones told the Council that he had been disappointed that the Council had not been able to arrange for a mirror to assist drivers turning right out of Bridge End and over the Bridge. Although the build-out of the pavement on the High Street and the new line markings had helped to improve the safety of the junction there is still a problem, although Mr Jones agreed that this is mainly due to the excessive speed of some drivers coming from the Village centre towards the Bridge.

Residents present at the meeting had mixed views about the merits of introducing a 20 mph speed limit in the centre of the Village with some in favour and some against. Upon the other matter about which the Parish Council had requested views Richard Winslet said that he was not in favour of a widespread extinguishing of village street lights between midnight and 5.30 am.

Sarah Pickford again asked for the Parish Council to support her objections to the proposed two-storey side extension to 4 Monks Close, the adjoining property. There had been amendments to the original plans but these had not met her objections. She had been invited by the Planning Officer to submit her comments by 9<sup>th</sup> September and she had done so in a letter dated 7<sup>th</sup> September, a copy of which was given to the Council.

The Clerk, however, told Sarah Pickford that he had been notified that the planning permission for the plans as amended was granted on 8<sup>th</sup> September. This Planning Application and the way in which it had apparently been determined would be discussed later in the meeting.

### 3 Declarations of Interest

The Chairman and Cllr Maurice Day re Agenda item 13, Village Hall Central Heating Fund, as they are both members of the Village Hall Committee; Cllr Maurice Day re

P09/W0679 4 Monks Close, as he is a close neighbour; and Cllrs Mark Stevenson and Jenny Nudds re P09/W0758 & P09/W0759/LB 28 High Street, as they are, respectively, the applicant and the mother of the applicant's partner.

#### 4 Minutes of the Meeting held 12<sup>th</sup> August 2009

After correcting the statement that Cllr Mrs Metcalfe had declared an interest in P09/W0679 4 Monks Close, the minutes were approved and signed as correct.

#### 5 Matters Arising from the Minutes

- a. Following complaints made to SODC after the August Council meeting, the routine collection of litter in blue bags from roadside bins now seems to be more regular although it is clear that from time to time domestic rubbish continues to be placed in these bins and in the dog refuse bins. The wheeled bins at the top of Oxford Road have been removed – it is not known yet whether they are to be replaced with a larger, vandal-proof unit.
- b. The Council has not received a quote from Enterprise concerning the placing of posts on the bank by St Birinus RC Church and so OCC has been asked to nominate another contractor.
- c. Following their letter of complaint, counter-signed by several residents, Mr and Mrs Arthurs have been told by Brian Purcell-Smith that part of the Drayton Road surface has been assessed with a high enough score to warrant priority repairs. He hopes that funds will be available next year.
- d. After last weekend's nine hours or so of motor biking there has been much complaint from Abingdon Road residents about the activities at Allens Pit. Letters have gone from residents to both the District Council and the Police.
- e. The Clerk has copied the information from Chinnor Parish Council about creating a Village Flu Pandemic Plan. The notes are in the file for circulation
- f. A list of Village Societies and Groups invited to participate in the Newcomers Evening on 24<sup>th</sup> September was given to each councillor for information.
- g. The Clerk confirmed that the Cricket Club has been invited to submit plans for improving facilities at the Recreation Ground and pavilion.

#### 6. District Councillor's Report

Through the Clerk, District Cllr John Cotton said that he had asked SODC officers to look urgently at the problem of the noise from Allens Pit, off Abingdon Road and that he is waiting for their response.

#### 7 County Councillor's Report

County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale said that the County Council's decision to select Viridor, the company with the site at Ardley, near Bicester, as the preferred incinerator bidder did not necessarily mean that there would be no incinerator at Sutton Courtenay. WRG, the Sutton Courtenay site operator, may yet receive planning and environment agency approval to build and operate an efw incinerator, albeit a smaller version of what was originally proposed and so the campaign against the incinerator proposal is continuing.

Cllr Lindsay-Gale said that the County Council is consulting about changes to the speed limits on sections of road just outside the Parish of Dorchester and the views of the Parish Council would be welcome. This will be discussed at the October meeting. On Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> September there is to be a meeting at H Café to discuss road safety awareness with representatives of the regular Monday night motor bike group. The County Council is supporting this initiative, which is intended to be a regular event,

with its mobile road safety unit; the fire brigade, police and advanced motorist groups will also be in attendance. Cllr Lindsay-Gale will herself be present and would welcome someone from the Parish Council to attend as well.

#### 8 Finance:

##### Bank balances & payments

NatWest Current account at 28 <sup>th</sup> August	£3,008.67
Nat West Reserve Account at 28 <sup>th</sup> August	£27,737.30

The following accounts were approved for payment:

Grundon Waste Management (Playground 3 <sup>rd</sup> party funding)	£441.81
Lister Wilder Ltd (trimmer parts)	£27.16
Berinsfield Community Business (grass cutting August)	£702.42
Total Pest Control (wasp nests at pavilion)	£57.50
Total Pest Control (mole control quarterly charge)	£172.50
SODC (dog waste bin service)	£199.61
Thames Water (Recreation Ground)	£46.65
Playsafety Limited (Playground annual inspection)	£93.15
GGD Russell – Clerk’s salary	£450.11
Geoff Willis Handyman – 4 weeks (August £316)	£252.45

Cllr. Stuart Gibbons has been progressing the grants claims in connection with the recently purchased playground equipment and receipts are imminent.

#### 9 Correspondence and Other Business:

##### i). Sports Club Pavilion & Playground;

There has been a good report from the RoSPA Playground Inspector and it was agreed that the comments should be published in Dorchester News. Some minor works are recommended. The inspector’s report will be given to Cllr Stuart Gibbons to read first so that he can comment at the October meeting.

##### ii). Footpaths;

The meeting between David Gauden (Meadside resident) and Mrs Butcher has not yet taken place.

County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale will tell the Footpaths Officer that the Parish Council disagrees with his comments concerning the barrier on the path between Bridge End and Wittenham Lane and takes strong exception to the way in which he has dealt with this matter. A site meeting may be the best way forward.

##### iii). Cemetery/ Abbey Churchyard

The cost of the proposed tree work in the Abbey grounds has been quoted by Jenks as £770 and this was approved.

As part of the three-year tree maintenance plan, one of the horse chestnuts in the Cemetery has been attended to; the other will be dealt with next year.

The Council agreed that it would undertake some restoration work to the surface of Bill Osborn-King’s grave as requested by Mrs Osborn-King.

In view of the comments made at the beginning of this meeting by David Joseph, the Council agreed to approve the application for a cremation style tablet on the grave of Bill Joseph. It will be set higher off the ground than was at first thought and in a place where it is unlikely that anyone would walk.

##### iv). Allotments;

The Council noted that in recent days there have been several attempts to break into the sheds on the Allotments.

##### v). Other letters to Chairman and Clerk.

- a. Dr Peter Pritchard has asked the Council to confirm that it is content that the Hurst Trust should have one trustee who is a councillor. This is the case but the Council continues to take the view that the person concerned should be nominated by the Council and not by the Trust. This is in line with the Council's established practice in every other similar situation – school governor, PCC and other village organisations.
- b. The Council noted that, under The Environmental Protection Act 1990, all Police Community Support Officers now have Fixed Penalty Notices for the offences of dog fouling; graffiti; fly posting; and dropping litter. These are supplied by South Oxfordshire District Council to promote a cleaner neighbourhood. All four are £80 fines or £50 if paid within 10 days. This information will be placed in Dorchester News.
- c. The Clerk has been told by Mrs Slaymaker about youths climbing on the Village Hall flat roof and will pass this information on to the local police team.
- d. Mrs Sheila Hearnden confirms that she has made all necessary arrangements for the removal of the leylandii adjacent to 54 Watling Lane.
- e. The Business Rates team working for SODC has asked if the Parish Council owns the car park at Bridge End. The Clerk will tell them no and suggest that they check with SODC and the County Highways.
- f. Free trees; Cllrs Day and Hill will contact the Clerk about what trees should be ordered.
- g. It was agreed that the Parish Council would contribute towards the costs of the Clerk receiving training from Pear Technology on the use of their mapping software.

## 10 Planning

### a. Applications

(Cllr Maurice Day took no part in the discussion about the following item):

P09/W0679 4 Monks Close – Two amendments

Two storey side extension

The Council agreed to support every one of the points made by Sarah Pickford in her letter to the Planning Officer dated 7<sup>th</sup> September and to enquire, through Cllr John Cotton, why the planning permission for the plans as amended was granted on 8<sup>th</sup> September, one day before the deadline that had been given to the neighbours as the final date for consultation. These letters will be sent by the Clerk tonight, as soon as this meeting is over.

P09/W0799 6 Meadside

Single storey extension and single/two storey rear extension. Entrance canopy to front elevation and solar panels to rear.

The Council confirmed that it held no strong views about this application but that it would ask the planning officer to specify that the finish of the extension should be in keeping with the existing house.

P09/W0758 & P09/W0759/LB 28 High Street

Proposed alterations and extension to existing building to include new shop front and change of use of ground floor showroom (A1 use) to food store and coffee shop (A3). It was agreed that discussion of these plans, which have only just been received, should be held over until the October Council meeting. The SODC planning officer will be informed.

### b. Other Planning matters

P09/W0644 26 Manor Farm Road

Oak framed garage to front of property

There is no design statement but the ridge height is confirmed as 3.5m.

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

#### 11 Village speed limits

As invited through Dorchester News several residents have commented on this matter and there are strong views on both sides of the argument.

County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale said that many villages are asking for their speed limits to be cut to 20 mph but the County Council would not be making a decision about this until after the new limits recently introduced in the centre of Oxford City have been evaluated.

#### 12 Abbey View Meadow groundworks

Gilbert Hobbs has been briefed about the need to bury some remaining debris and rubbish on site and two sources of imported material have been identified. Gilbert will also create a trench where the roses can be planted. A decision about further planting, possibly a wild flowers and 'weeds' mix, will be taken after this work has been done. The use of the area by the Dorchester Angling Society will be discussed at the Newcomers Evening where Mr Marriott, the Society chairman, will be present.

#### 13 Village Hall Central Heating Fund

(The Vice-Chairman, Cllr Mrs Margot Metcalfe, took the chair for this item)

The Council considered a paper prepared by Mark Williams as Treasurer of Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC). (Cllr Williams was absent from this meeting and both the Chairman, Cllr Ken Bryan, and Cllr Maurice Day declared personal interests in the matter as members of the Village Hall Committee).

The Council has been asked to provide a short-term (up to 2 years) loan of £12,000 to the Village Hall Management Committee to allow the project to install gas-fired central heating in the Village Hall to go ahead. The project has been promised some grants but these are payable only in arrears. A further sum of approximately £8,000 still needs to be raised. Efforts to achieve this are on-going and the VHMC is confident that it will succeed during the two year period.

Cllr Chris Hill proposed and Cllr Stuart Gibbons seconded a motion to approve an interest-free loan of £12,000 to be paid when required to the VHMC and to be repaid over a period of two years on the understanding that all grant monies when received by VHMC would be immediately paid to the Parish Council to reduce VHMC's debt. This motion was passed by 4 votes in favour, none against and with one abstention. Cllr Mark Stevenson said that some people in the Village do not fully appreciate that the Village Hall is accessible to all.

#### 14 Part-night street lightning

Very few residents have commented. The Parish Council will review the matter again later in the year when the impact of switching off some lights can be more easily appreciated.

#### 15 Any Other Urgent Business

- a. The handyman will be asked to weed near the Bridge End bike rack and to trim the bridge underpass.
- b. The Clerk will ask Mr Cook of Shillingford Farm about cutting the whole length of hedge on Henley Road opposite Meadside.
- c. Cllr Mark Stevenson asked if the Council would write a letter to the Carbon Group in support of its efforts for the creation of a cycle route from Wallingford to Oxford. This was agreed.

Meeting closed at 10.20 p.m.