

## Dorchester-on-Thames Parish Council

The Monthly Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2010 commencing at 7.30 p.m. The Chairman, Cllr Margot Metcalfe, presided; present were Cllrs. Maurice Day, Stuart Gibbons, Chris Hill, Jenny Nudds and Mark Stevenson with G Russell in attendance.

### 1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were accepted from Cllr Ken Bryan, who is on holiday, and Cllr Mark Williams, who had another commitment. County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale and District Cllr John Cotton were attending a meeting in Long Wittenham to discuss the possibility of campaigning against the proposed northern expansion of Didcot.

### 2 Declarations of Interest

None

### 3 Minutes of the Meeting held 11<sup>th</sup> August 2010

The Minutes of the Meeting as circulated were approved and signed as a true record.

### 4 Matters Arising from the Minutes

- i. Operation of Council owned strimmer; The Council noted that when using the strimmer Neil Willis does wear ear defenders, goggles, work gloves and boots. He is willing to join the Council's payroll, receiving his remuneration direct rather than through his father, Geoff Willis. The Council agreed that Neil should therefore be allowed to use the Council's strimmer and that it would pay for any training course that might be necessary to ensure that Neil has the correct certificate(s).
- ii. Anti dog fouling signs are available from SODC as required and it was agreed to obtain four, with at least some of them to be placed in Watling Lane.
- iii. Highways and footpaths; The Council has been in touch with Bill Major – the new point of contact with the County's Highways team. Letters have been written and copied to Lorraine concerning repairs in Bridge End, Drayton Road, Cheney Lane and granite sets in the High Street. Mr Major expects to be visiting Dorchester within the next few days. Cllr Mark Stevenson said that he may be able to use the School Travel Plan as another reason for the work to be done urgently.
- iv. Proposals for new litter bins have been submitted to Fred Thompson Brown of SODC. Decisions are awaited but it was agreed that a dog waste bin should be ordered for the lay-by near Meadside.

### 5. Finance:

NatWest Current account at 27 <sup>th</sup> August	£22,987.12
Nat West Reserve Account at 30 <sup>th</sup> June	£27,751.97 (no change)
The following cheques were approved for payment:	
Berinsfield Community Business (grass-cutting July)	£806.08
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Total Pest Control (mole control)	£176.25
GGD Russell – Clerk's salary	£470.82

GGD Russell – admin August/September	£74.85
Geoff Willis Handyman – (August £221.85) 4 weeks	£321.30

An appeal for funds had been received from Didcot Citizens Advice Bureau and it was agreed to make a donation of £50.

The Clerk issued a statement which showed all the payments made by the Council in the first six months of 2010/2011 against which the annual budgets were noted for comparison purposes. It was noted that although expenditure in the Burial Ground, Closed Abbey Churchyard and Recreation Ground was well below 50% of the year's budget there is a lot of tree maintenance to do that will be invoiced in the second half of the year.

The Clerk reported that Douglas Jupp has completed the Council's Internal Audit and that the completed Annual Return has been sent to BDO, the external auditor. Mr Jupp has indicated that he will be available to audit the accounts again in 2011.

## 6 Correspondence and Other Business:

### a. Sports Club Pavilion & Playground;

A quote from Trevor Greenaway had been received for the repainting of the pavilion and tractor shed for the sum of £1,000. This included re-staining the wood at the back of the pavilion and repairing broken gutters. It was agreed to accept this quotation and to ask that while on site Trevor boxes in the guttering to give it extra protection.

The missing lead has been reported to the Police non-emergency number and to the PCSOs.

A catalogue of outdoor fitness equipment suitable for older children and adults will be circulated. Cllr Gibbons said that he had been approached by a parent asking if the Council would consider providing a 'half-pipe' for skateboarders.

The Chairman and Cllr Gibbons will attend the final meeting of TOE in Dorchester Village Hall tomorrow. It is hoped that they will be given information about new ways of obtaining grants.

There have been some maintenance problems to do with electricians and one of the shutter locks and further comment about the damage to the playing field being done by rabbits. Cllrs Gibbons and Hill had recently attended a meeting of the Sports Club at which they learned that the Club had generated income by hosting a private function – a family event organised by one of the Club members which involved a barbecue and activities on the nearby field. Cllr Hill wondered if the permission of the Council should have been obtained in advance of this function taking place and whether there might be a problem with insurance cover. He also pointed out that since the Parish Council pays all the pavilion's maintenance bills it would perhaps be appropriate if any revenue to the Sports Club arising out of hosting private events is shared with the Parish Council.

### b. Footpaths;

Mark Sumner, the County Footpaths Officer, is on leave at the moment but matters relating to footpaths will be raised with him when he is back. The Clerk said that Keith and Maxine Russell have booked a contractor to cut back their trees and the hedge along the boundary with the High Street. The granite sets by the bus stop outside the Morrisons are definitely lower than average but they are not really a 'drop-kerb' and may still be

high enough to cause a problem for push chairs and mobility scooter riders etc. This will be mentioned to the Highways representative.

c. Cemetery/Abbey Closed Churchyard;

Paul Jenks is to be asked to start work on the tree maintenance.

d. Allotments;

A skip is to be ordered for week commencing 20<sup>th</sup> September. The Allotment Society AGM is being held on 23<sup>rd</sup> September. Cllr Chris Hill will attend and emphasise the importance of name marking on all the allotment gardens. The regulations regarding bonfires will also be drawn to the attention of the meeting.

e. Other letters to Chairman and Clerk

i. RAF Benson helicopters; Cllr Hill supplied a copy of the reply that he received from Flying Officer Naomi Goodrum, the Media and Communications Officer at REF Benson. The Clerk will summarise her reply for Dorchester News

ii. The Oxfordshire Spending Cuts - The Big Debate. The Chairman and Cllr Mark Stevenson said that they would try to attend the public meeting being held in Abingdon on 30<sup>th</sup> September. Participation is also possible through the County's website

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/bigdebate](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/bigdebate)

iii The Council has been invited to attend the ORCC Special 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday AGM and Conference on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> October but no-one is able to attend.

iv. The Council noted the Clerk's response to Philip Collings's complaint about some posters which had appeared on village notice boards advertising a meeting about climate change that would be held in the Abbey on 22<sup>nd</sup> September.

## 7 Planning

a. Applications

P10/W1243 80 High Street

Demolition of existing dwelling and associated garage and outbuildings and erection of replacement dwelling and attached double garage (As amplified by Archaeological Evaluation August 2010 received 2 September 2010).

By a majority the Council decided to recommend approval. The site is appropriate for a large dwelling and the proposed structure is not a problem for the neighbours. The development should be built to conform with the highest building standards.

P10/W1277 6 Bridge End

Erection of a conservatory to rear of the dwelling.

The Council had no strong views on this application.

P10/W1156/RLB Candlemas Cottage 42 High Street; Replacement of non-functioning front ground and first floor windows and frames. Replacement of non-functioning front door and frame

The Council decided to recommend approval.

b. Other Planning matters

The Council noted the following decisions:

P10/W0569/RLB, 5b Queen Street; Retention of metal spiral staircase to 'Hallidays Office' in place of approved timber staircase.

Listed Building consent granted 1<sup>st</sup> September – no conditions

P10/W0570/RLB, Unit 4 20 High Street; Relocation of approved staircase in Unit 4.

Listed Building consent granted 1<sup>st</sup> September – no conditions

P10/W1047 7 Bridge End; Two storey extension to form first floor en-suite shower & WC facility and ground floor study/store.

Planning permission granted 3<sup>rd</sup> September – a few conditions

#### 8 Car Parking Developments

Sue Dixon has thanked the Council for allowing parking on Abbey View Meadow for the Traditional Skills weekend. During this three day event the car parking had been supervised by local Scouts as marshalls. The Scouts had taken a collection for their Jamboree funds and the whole thing seemed to have gone very well. The Council is now in direct contact with the leader to arrange marshalling for future events.

The Clerk has prepared a detailed Parking Diary for known future use across the coming year. Use of the Recreation Ground will still be needed and is indeed probably to be preferred whenever an event has organised a 'Park'n Ride' service.

Close attention over coming months will be given to whether the Meadow gets too soft for use. The provision of a gate for pedestrian access will be costed and there will be a sign to advertise the time at which the gates will be closed as well as a notice limiting the Council's responsibility for vehicle damage and personal injury.

It may be possible to have white lines upon the road to discourage parking close to junctions etc. The experience of Benson Parish Council is helpful in this matter. The presence of a white line is useful when a PSCSO considers that a parking offence has been committed and is a useful deterrent to most drivers.

#### 9 Dorchester Disaster Contingency Plan

Chris Hill has prepared a document and emailed a copy to all councillors. A few comments have been received and suggestions will be used in the final draft.

#### 10 Plans for the expansion of Didcot

Cllrs Bryan and Hill had been to a relatively poorly attended campaign meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> August. An eight week programme of activity has been prepared in order to oppose any further expansion of Didcot to the north. The reasons are the lack of any infrastructure in this area and that such a development is bound to have an impact upon traffic through Appleford on Thames, Sutton Courtenay, Long Wittenham and the river crossings at Clifton Hampden and Culham.

It was agreed that although Dorchester Parish Council is sympathetic to this campaign the Council would not be able to make a financial contribution.

Cllr Hill said that he hoped to attend the next campaign meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> September and it is anticipated that Cllrs Lindsay-Gale and Cotton will have some comments at the Council's October meeting.

#### 11 Consultation on new executive arrangements for SODC.

The choice is between a 'Strong Leader' and a 'Separately elected Mayor' and, on balance, the Council preferred the first option since it would avoid the expense of a separate mayoral election.

#### 12 Any Other Urgent Business

The Chairman will be away from 14<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> September and the Vice-Chairman, Cllr Chris Hill, will therefore attend the next meeting of PAGE.

Meeting closed at 9.55 p.m.