

## Dorchester-on-Thames Parish Council

The Monthly Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2014 commencing at 7.30 p.m. The Chairman, Cllr Margot Metcalfe, presided; present were Cllrs. Ken Bryan, Maurice Day, Sue Graney, Chris Hill, Mike Hill and Mark Stevenson with G Russell in attendance.

### 1 Apologies for absence

Cllr Mike Kitson, County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale and District Cllr Marc Hiles.

### 2 Declarations of interest

None

### 3 Public Participation

None

### 4 Minutes of the Meeting held 8<sup>th</sup> January 2014

After the word 'had' was inserted into line 3 of the Minute referring to Public Participation the Minutes as circulated were approved and signed as a true record.

### 5. Matters Arising from the Minutes

i. The Parish Council's greetings card to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday of Mary Tame has been delivered. In Mary's honour the Parish Council has agreed to present and plant a tree on The Green at Bridge End. Mary has selected a 'whitebeam' and it was agreed to purchase a specimen which, including delivery and planting, would cost up to £100.

ii. Gravel and Waste Strategy: The Chairman has circulated the link to the County Council's website where, as will be seen, the whole project is 'back to the drawing board'. John Taylor will be invited to attend the next Parish Council meeting so that he can describe the PAGE response to this latest proposal.

iii. Community Payback scheme; it was thought that there is some scope for using the scheme to carry out landscape maintenance tasks around the village. The Clerk will contact the scheme managers to request references from other parish councils.

iv. Cllr Sue Graney confirmed that there is a group of volunteers ready to organise a village fête on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> June, with the opening of the MUGA by Tim Henman as the main attraction. The Clerk will confirm that this date is acceptable to the Cricket Club.

v. The Clerk reported his ongoing correspondence with County Highways and the SODC Planning Officers. The plans for the telephone box need to be costed.

### 6 District Councillor's Report

District Cllr Marc Hiles had sent his apologies

### 7 County Councillor's Report

County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale's report had been circulated and a copy placed in the folder for circulation. Councillors were asked to note in particular the consultation on Rights of Way and the survey about the recent floods.

The Clerk confirmed that County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale had supported the Parish Council's application for a grant of £1,500 towards the cost of new IT equipment to be used in giving IT 'taster' lessons to older residents.

## 8 Finance:

Following the receipt of grants from SODC and WREN in support of the new MUGA, the balance on the NatWest Current Account at 30<sup>th</sup> January was £43,564.21 with the Deposit Account containing £17,800.66 - also at 30<sup>th</sup> January.

It was agreed that £30,000 would be transferred from the Current to the Deposit Account.

The following cheques were approved for payment:

BCB (August grass – replacement cheque)	£966.66
BCB Ground works at MUGA	£666.00
Dorchester on Thames Village Hall (room hire)	£16.00
Total Pest Control (moles and Rabbits Abbey View)	£66.00
NALC (Text Book)	£55.00
Society of Local Council Clerks (Clerk’s annual sub)	£101.00
SODC (dog bins)	£226.04
Tom Cottrell Landscapes	£1,341.60
Southern Electric (Pavilion)	£74.26
Dorchester on Thames Village Hall (telephone & broadband)	£392.64
Tim Fisher (slates on Cemetery gatehouse)	£100.00
Geoff Willis Village Handyman (five weeks)	£391.00
G Russell Administration (including domain name renewal)	£152.80
G Russell salary	<u>£523.00</u>
	£5,072.00

The Council noted that the planned resurfacing of Malthouse Lane has been delayed because of bad weather and is unlikely to be completed in the current financial year.

## 9. Correspondence and Other Business:

### a. Sports Club Pavilion & Playground;

The Council has received the detailed Recreation Ground Tree Survey from Jenks Oxford with its recommendations for a maintenance programme over the next three years. It was agreed that the Council would obtain a second estimate from a firm recommended by Cllr Sue Graney.

It was agreed that Cllrs Ken Bryan and Mike Hill would make a site visit and meet contractors who would provide quotations for improvements to the access via the iron gate in the corner beyond the MUGA and suggest ways in which the gap in the hedge between the MUGA and the Play Area should be filled.

### b. Footpaths;

The Clerk reported that Mark Sumner has said that he is currently unable to commit dates for the County Council’s working party to take on the clearance of the Watling Lane path.

The Council noted that the County advises against putting bark on to footpaths in an attempt to soak up excess moisture. This can make the long-term problem even worse. Dr Pritchard will be told that the Parish Council intends to accept the County’s advice.

The County Council has completed the ‘siding out’ of the path between Dorchester Bridge and Meadside. The surface will now be inspected by the County to see if the repairs can be justified as a priority Highways expense. The Parish Council believes that the path is now wide enough to be used by pedestrians and cyclists.

The Dog Waste bin at the end of Wittenham Lane has been damaged by a vehicle. This bin can be removed when new litter bins are installed later in the year.

Cllr Bryan suggested that the bus company should be asked to move the bus stop opposite Meadside. The field hedge now has a space in it which could be used by people waiting for the bus.

c. Cemetery /Closed Abbey Churchyard;

The Council has received the detailed Cemetery Tree Survey from Jenks Oxford with its recommendations for a maintenance programme over the next three years. It was agreed that the Council would obtain a second estimate from a firm recommended by Cllr Sue Graney. The Clerk will ask BCB to see if the gate into the Cemetery from Drayton Road can be repaired or should be replaced.

A survey of the trees in the Abbey Churchyard is required and will be arranged by Cllr Day.

The Clerk will prepare a schedule of new Cemetery fees for consideration at the Council's March meeting. These have not been increased since April 2012.

d. Allotments;

Cllr Mike Kitson has sent his apologies so the survey of local allotment rents is not yet available. The Clerk will ask Edward Metcalfe for an estimate of how much extra revenue would come if the rents that were broadly accepted by the Allotment Society members last year came into effect during 2014.

e. Letters to Chairman and Clerk

i. The Council has been invited to send a representative to the County Council's 'Flood Forum' on 1<sup>st</sup> March. Cllr Chris Hill will attend. The Council noted that John Howell MP has asked to be sent details of all flood problems in the Parish.

ii. The Council has been invited to attend an Age UK Oxfordshire 'Community Network Partnership' meeting with various dates and locations in March suggested. The Chairman said that she would try to attend Wallingford meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> March.

iii. The Council has received a request for funds from Benson Library which states that it has 33 members from Dorchester. The Clerk will try to find out how many Dorchester residents use the Berinsfield library.

iv. An appeal for funds from Home Start will be circulated.

v. Several councillors and residents have raised their concerns about the landscaping work at 28 Abingdon Road and on the adjoining verge alongside the Highway. The Clerk said that he had drawn the attention of both County and District Councils to this matter, particularly to the apparent filling in of a drainage ditch.

## 10. Planning

a. Applications

P13/S3775/LB & P13/S3734/HH Bull Cottage 59 High Street

Demolition of existing conservatory and construction of garden room extension.

The Parish Council agreed to recommend approval subject to the Council's concerns about the tree being satisfied.

P14/S0125/DIS 57 Abingdon Road

Erection of replacement dwelling Discharge of conditions 7, 9 & 10 on

P13/S1416/FUL

The Parish Council noted this application; it does not wish to comment.

P14/S0197/FUL Queensford Lakes Watersports Centre. Burcot Lane Berinsfield OX10 7PQ Erection of tournament water ski judge's tower, observation balconies, boat lifts and associated facilities.

The Parish Council is concerned about the noise that comes from water ski boats on the lake and this application suggests that there will be even more of this activity in future. The Council would like the planners to instruct the applicant to investigate ways in which the noise could be contained e.g. by tree-planting or embankments. The Council noted that Berinsfield Parish Council has recommended approval.

b. Neighbourhood/Community Planning Report/Bus Users Group

The Clerk reported that SODC's grant cheque has not yet been received. Following a meeting at Didcot to discuss the future provision of bus services to Dorchester, Malcolm Corry has told the Council that he is hopeful about an improved bus service through the village at some point in the future although this may mean that parking restrictions have to be introduced in the narrowest parts of the High Street.

The Education section of the Plan is in urgent need of work. The SODC advisor will be attending the next meeting of the Neighbourhood/Community Planning Group.

#### 11. Future provision of Post Office services

A meeting with the Field Change Advisor from the Post Office, Robert Worley, has been arranged for 27<sup>th</sup> February and will be attended by members of the Parish Council as well as the Village Hall Management Committee

#### 12 Speeding Surveys

Discussion was deferred until the next meeting

#### 13 Pavilion Development

The working group is looking into ways in which female usage of the pavilion can be increased. It was agreed that the Football Club could erect a storage system for its goal posts on the rear wall of the pavilion. The Council noted that two new locks are required for the tractor shed shutters.

#### 14 Annual Parish Meeting 30<sup>th</sup> April

Topics for discussion at the meeting include PAGE, Neighbourhood Planning and the Community Payback Scheme.

#### 15 River Thame Navigation

Discussion was deferred until the next meeting.

#### 16 Contact with Age UK Oxfordshire

The joint meeting is going ahead in the Village Hall on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> February, commencing after Lunch Club.

#### 17. Midsomer Murders Tourism Project

The working party is meeting regularly with the Chairman, Sue Dixon and Emma Robinson and the Clerk and occasional participation from the local hotels. The village initiatives are being well-supported by officers acting for SODC's Economic Development team.

#### 18 Village 'Spring-Clean'

This will be advertised in 'Dorchester News'. It was suggested that participants should be offered incentives to reward their performance.

#### 19. Newcomers' Evening, Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> April

It was agreed that the Parish Council would provide complimentary refreshments. Publicity for the Evening will appear in 'Dorchester News' and all new residents who have been identified through the electoral register will receive a personal invitation delivered to their homes. In addition there will be posters to advertise the event.

#### 20. Any Other Business

a. Cllr Sue Graney asked if a bike rack could be provided outside the Co-Op and it was agreed that the Clerk would ask County Highways about this.

- b. Cllr Graney said that she had it on good authority that a defibrillator should cost well under £1,000.
- c. Cllr Graney said that she would like to raise village awareness of Parish Council activities and to try to create a more favourable profile of the Council and its membership. It was agreed that 'Parish Council Communications' should be a topic for discussion at the next Council meeting.
- d. The Clerk said that he would organise a new photograph of the Council. There have been two changes since the 2011 edition.

The Meeting Closed at 10.25 p.m.