

Dorchester-on-Thames Parish Council

The Monthly Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 12th March 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 Kitson and Mark Stevenson with G Russell in attendance.

1 Apologies for absence

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

2 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None. The Clerk will prepare some notes about the Code of Conduct and the rules about Declarations of Interest for Cllrs Sue Graney and Mike Hill.

3 Public Participation

None

4 Minutes of the Meeting held 12th February 2014

After the words 'white bean' were changed to 'whitebeam' in Minute 5 i. and the words 'Gravel & Waste Strategy' were added to the beginning of Minute 5 ii, the minutes as circulated were approved and signed.

5 Matters Arising from the Minutes

- i.. Presentation to Mary Tame; the tree will be sourced through Jenks. The Council has access to a silver ceremonial spade and this will be used for a formal 'tree-planting' after Mary is home from Rush Court.
 - ii. Midsomer Murders Project; the steering group is preparing 'scripts' to be used on guided tours of the locations in Dorchester and Warborough. The current walking guide needs reprinting; some text changes are required.
 - iii. Community Payback Scheme; the Clerk has asked for references from other Parish Councils with experience of the scheme and will ask Mark Sumner why the County Council has not taken advantage of the services which the Scheme offers.
 - iv. Pavilion Development; various plumbing improvements have been completed. Cllrs Ken Bryan and Chris Hill will inspect the work. It is hoped that the improvements, together with a general tidying of the building's interior, will help to attract more use of the facilities, particularly by female groups.
 - v. Contact with Age UK Oxfordshire; the Chairman reported that the open meeting which had been held after Lunch Club on 26th February was well attended.
 - vi. PAGE; the Chairman said that John Taylor will attend both the April Parish Council meeting and the Annual Parish Meeting on 30th April. She showed the Council a notice that will be displayed upon village notice boards and reprinted in Dorchester News.
 - vii. Landscape work at 28 Abingdon Road; the Clerk said that Monson Engineering have inspected the site on behalf of SODC and are now in touch with the householder. Cllr Bryan said that he thought that in this part of Abingdon Road the highways drain might be piped.
 - viii. Village Spring-clean; unfortunately the notice had been omitted from Dorchester News along with one about clearing up dog mess. These items will appear in next month's edition. It was agreed that there should be more publicity about the health risks associated with dog mess.
- SODC is bringing its 'Big Clean Up' team to the village in the near future. The Council agreed the following priorities: the pedestrian underpass by the public loos by the car park in Bridge End; the pavement along Oxford Road; the area around the lay-

by between Meadside and Dorchester by-pass and the pedestrian walkways leading from the lay-by to the by-pass – including litter-picking the adjacent vegetation; the pavement and grass verge along Abingdon Road towards Burcot

ix. Berinsfield Library estimate that they have well over 50 Dorchester clients. It was therefore agreed that there is not sufficient use being made of Benson Library to justify the Council making a donation to the Friends of Benson Library.

6 District Councillor's Report

District Cllr Marc Hiles had sent his apologies

7 County Councillor's Report

County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale had sent her apologies. A written report had been provided and was circulated.

8 Finance:

Balances at Natwest Bank, Wallingford

Current Account at 28th February £13,872.46

Business Reserve Account at 28th February £47,800.66

The following cheques were approved for payment:

Pipeline Direct (Pavilion showers) £240.00

E Wilkinson Plumbing & Heating Contracts Ltd (Pavilion w.c.'s) £252.54

Total Pest Control (UK) Ltd (moles) £180.00

ERS Environmental Services PROfile (rabbits) £334.80

Town & Country Memorials Ltd (Cemetery plaque) £123.60

Thames Water Utilities (Cemetery Water Rates for year) £101.06

Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils(annual sub) £191.28

Local Councils Update (online and print sub) £100.00

Oxford Green Belt Network (annual sub) £15.00

Geoff Willis (4 weeks) £250.75

G Russell salary £523.00

£2,312.03

The Clerk reported that the County Council's Grant of £1,500 for the purchase of IT equipment has been received. The District Council require an invoice before it will pay the £5,000 grant for Neighbourhood Planning expenses. The Tennis Club expect to make a substantial repayment of the Parish Council's loan before the end of March. 2014/5 Budget:

The proposed increase in Allotments rent is estimated to produce £300 per year. The Society will be asked if there are any problems with rents not being paid on time.

It was agreed that with effect from 1st April Cemetery Fees should rise by approximately 5%. The Clerk produced a detailed schedule which was circulated.

Clerk's Remuneration:

There had been no increase in 2012/3 but a 1% increase was agreed last year between National Association of Local Councils and Society of Local Council Clerks with effect from 1st April 2013. This takes the salary from £6276 to £6339 meaning back-pay of £63 is due. The monthly payment from April will be £528.25 per month. The Council approved this increase.

Handyman's Remuneration:

This is currently £8.50 per hour and has not increased since April 2012. It was suggested that the rate should be increased from 1st April to £8.75 (2.9%) and this was approved.

The Council noted that NALC has just issued a draft of new Finance Regulations. However the Council has no wish to change the present system of making its payments by cheques which have been signed by two approved signatories.

9. Correspondence and Other Business:

a. Sports Club Pavilion & Playground;

A quotation has been received following a site meeting between BCB and Cllrs Ken Bryan and Mike Hill but elements of the specification still need to be finalised and it was agreed that other contractors should also be approached.

Kim Rockall, who has taken on the pitch maintenance work for the Cricket Club, is keen to quote for other work in the village and Cllr Bryan will see if he would be interested in the repair work on the Recreation Ground's boundary with the lane.

The Clerk said that Peter Keable will shortly be cutting the whole perimeter fence as in previous years.

A second quote for tree maintenance work is to be obtained.

b. Footpaths;

SODC has given its approval to the location of some new waste bins and these will now be ordered for installation by the end of May. The Chairman said that a litter bin in the lay-by near Meadside needs replacing.

The Clerk is in contact with County Highways about the inspection of the path from the bridge to Meadside and also clearance of the embankment near 20 Meadside.

c. Cemetery /Closed Abbey Churchyard;

A second quote for tree maintenance work in the Cemetery is to be obtained. The quote for tree maintenance work in the Abbey Churchyard is still awaited.

BCB staff have examined the Drayton Road gate and believe that it needs repair (but not replacement) before the end of the year.

d. Allotments;

Nothing to report.

e. Letters to Chairman and Clerk

i. The Council noted an invitation to participate alongside the Royal British Legion in a vigil on Monday 4th August to mark the outbreak of World War One.

ii. Councillors noted that there will be a 'Have Your Say' meeting with the Police Community Support Officer in Bridge End Car Park at 18.00 on 31st March.

10. Planning

a. Applications

The Parish Council approved a Scheduled Monument Consent application for an Interpretation Board which explains the archaeology discoveries on the allotments. It was noted that a correction is required to the address shown on the form.

A planning application - P14/S0534/FUL Tall Trees, 6 Manor Farm Road – was noted. Pending receipt of the official paperwork from SODC the plans from the applicant's architect will be circulated. It was agreed that if necessary the Clerk would ask for the Consultation Period to be extended so that the Application can be discussed at the April Council meeting.

b. Appeal

P13/S3201/FUL Overy Court, Overy; Change of use of barn from B1 (office) to C3 (dwelling), including external and internal alterations to provide 4 bedroom dwelling, with garden and car parking

Cllr Mark Stevenson will co-ordinate the Council's submission to the Planning Inspectorate. This has to be sent in by 24th March.

c. Neighbourhood/Community Planning Report/Bus Users Group

Tom Rice, planning officer from SODC, had attended the recent Neighbourhood Planning meeting. Cllr Stevenson is preparing a report for Dorchester News. Malcolm Corry has written a report about bus services also for Dorchester News.

11. Future provision of Post Office services

The Village Hall Management Committee will discuss this at a meeting tomorrow.

12 Speeding Surveys and other Highways matters

Highways will need to be asked about the proposed bike rack outside the Co-Op. Cllr Chris Hill said that it must be sited well away from the area where it is hoped the Village Christmas tree can be erected in future years. Cllr Sue Graney said that she would draft a location plan.

13 Flooding Review including River Thames

The County Council's 'Flood Forum' had been attended by Cllr Chris Hill who said that it was a well-supported and wide-ranging meeting. Some areas have set up Flood Action Groups and Cllr Hill suggested this is something that should be considered for Dorchester-on-Thames. He has contacted other villages to obtain more information about these groups.

14 Annual Parish Meeting 30th April

Cllr Stevenson agreed that Neighbourhood Planning should be discussed at this meeting. All village organisations will be told that their attendance at the Annual Meeting is important.

15 PAGE Update

The County Council is re-doing the search for new extraction sites and the area around Dorchester is back under consideration. A new factor in the debate is that the County is committed to spreading the new sites around the county so that all districts have a more or less equal share of the provision. Any resident can study the consultation papers on-line. All responses are required by 5th April.

16 Gilbert Scott Memorial Project

A response from SODC's planners is still awaited but there has been some recent progress with the phone box. The designer, Joyce Christie, has had a site meeting with Adrian Brooks. When her plans have been further refined she will be able to advise what repairs need to be carried out.

17. Village Fête

The Clerk confirmed that the Public Liability risk will be covered by the Parish Council's insurance since the organising committee has agreed that it is acting on behalf of the Council. The Clerk will supply Cllr Graney with a copy of the Risk Assessment that was prepared for the Diamond Jubilee celebrations in 2012. It is important to book First Aid cover as quickly as possible.

18 Parish Council Communication (including Village website)

Cllr Sue Graney has been in touch with Simon Ratliff. She is willing to take on the role of 'webmaster' and liaise with all village groups etc so that each can take responsibility for keeping their own sections up to date. The Council agreed to set aside a budget of £500 to pay for training.

The Clerk will get some quotes for new Village notice boards.

19. Newcomers' Evening, Tuesday 1st April

Almost all invitations have been delivered but there are some extra posters to go up. The response from village societies has been good.

20. Any Other Business

- i. While the Clerk is away (13 – 26 March) Cllrs Chris Hill and Ken Bryan said that they would supervise event parking arrangements and liaise between the Abbey and the Handyman.
- ii. It was provisionally agreed that the new official photo of the Council should be taken during the meeting on 11th June.
- iii. Cllr Mike Kitson reported that there have been some complaints about dogs being tethered outside the village school and then barking loudly enough to cause a nuisance. He will discuss the matter with the Head Teacher.
- iii. Cllr Bryan said that surveyors have been observed working on the site off Abingdon Road known as ‘Allen’s Pit’.
- iv. Cllr Stevenson said that sites for affordable housing are known as ‘rural exception sites’. They are not part of the Neighbourhood Planning process and have to be considered as a separate initiative.
- v. Cllr Chris Hill said that he would circulate the draft parking questionnaire before the next meeting. Flood information leaflets would also be circulated. Cllr Hill said that the latest map showing local high-speed broadband connectivity has been changed; Dorchester is still within the area but there is no information about timing.

Meeting Closed at 11.09 p.m.