

Dorchester-on-Thames Parish Council

A Special Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 21st April 2015 commencing at 7.30 p.m. The Chairman, Cllr Margot Metcalfe, presided; present were Cllrs. Ken Bryan, Maurice Day, Chris Hill (Vice-Chairman), Mike Hill, Val Howells and Mark Stevenson, with G Russell in attendance. Also present for part of the time were five residents.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were accepted from Cllr. Sue Graney

2. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None

3. Public Participation

With reference to P15/S0968/FUL 25 Bridge End, some residents said that they were opposed to the addition of a dormer window since this would change the character of the area. Kim Langton, however, said that she thought there were several properties already in the area where this type of window was a feature as well as several examples of roof lights. She said that after the planned landscaping had grown she was confident that the new building would 'sit' well on its site. The Chairman commented that as yet the opinion of SODC's Conservation Officer had not been placed on to the website.

Mike Stimpson, the applicant of P15/S0686/FUL 9 Wittenham Lane, said that several neighbours have expressed concern about having cars parked in front of the property, while there are others who do not want the parking to be at the back, where there is room for 5 parking spaces. County Highways has recommended that the application should be turned down because there is not enough room for parking at the front of the property. Mr Stimpson said that he has no objection to all the parking being at the rear and would be willing to amend the Application accordingly.

4. Planning Applications:

P15/S0968/FUL 25 Bridge End; Variation of Condition 2 of planning permission P14/S1635/FUL, to amend the approved plan numbers. Demolition of existing garage/workshop and car port. Erection of new detached dwelling with extension and restoration of existing cottage and creation of new parking areas. P14/S1635/FUL Conditions(s) 2

Cllr Stevenson said that the design of the dormer window has changed and, in his opinion, for the better. He reminded the Council that the Conservation Officer had not liked the design of the window in the first application; it is not yet known what she thinks about the new design. Cllr Day proposed that the application be recommended for approval; he felt that the current application represents the best scheme that the Council is likely to receive. This proposal did not receive a seconder.

Cllr Stevenson said that he did not think that the proposed dwelling was suitable for its location and he proposed that the application be recommended for refusal. This proposal did not receive a seconder.

Cllr Bryan proposed that, in the absence of the Conservation Officer's comments, the Council should state that it was concerned about the proposed dormer window but that it had no strong views either way and agreed that the application should be determined by SODC as it

sees fit. This was seconded by Cllr Chris Hill. There were three votes in favour of the proposal and one against, with three abstentions, and so the proposal was carried.

P15/S0686/FUL 9 Wittenham Lane; Proposed subdivision of existing dwelling to form 1 x 2 bed dwelling and 1 x 1 bed dwelling, including a single storey lean to front extension and removal of flat roof rear dormer and replacement with 2 (no) pitched roof dormers and single roof light. The Council reviewed the decision that had been taken at the previous meeting. Cllr Mark Stevenson proposed that the Application should be approved subject to all car parking being provided to the rear of the property. This was seconded by Cllr Chris Hill and approved unanimously.

5 Bank Mandate following Parish Council Election 7th May 2015

The Clerk said that all three councillors with authorisation to sign cheques will be retiring after the election in May. It was agreed that Cllr Chris Hill should be added to the list of signatories.

6 Letters to Chairman and Clerk

a. The Clerk has received a letter from Mr Nigel Oddy, proprietor of The White Hart Hotel, saying that he is about to submit a planning application for part conversion of the Hotel into three cottages with a further three to be built in the car park. The Hotel will retain the existing bar and restaurant space and have 11 letting bedrooms. Together with his architect, Tony Herring, Mr Oddy wants to meet with the Parish Council to show the plans, receive comments and answer questions. It was agreed that this meeting would be arranged as soon as possible.

b. The Clerk has received an invitation for the Parish Council Chairman plus guest to attend the RAF Benson Annual Reception on 21st May. The Clerk has advised RAF Benson that the Council will have a new Chairman by that date.

c. Cllr Margot Metcalfe, as the Council's representative to the Dorchester Allotment Society, has drawn the Society's attention to some trees which have been planted on the Allotments. Due to the status of the land as a Scheduled Ancient Monument trees, even fruit trees, are not permitted and the Society has been asked to take action. Cllr Metcalfe has asked the Director of the archaeology project, Paul Booth, copied to David Wilkinson and the Allotment Society, to advise the Parish Council and the Allotment Society how many more years' excavation they envisage.

7. Any Other Business

a. Cllr Metcalfe asked the Council to note that residents of Malthouse Lane have been campaigning against P15/S0569/HH Bradley House 8 Malthouse Lane for the erection of a two storey side extension. The Parish Council has already recommended that this application should be refused.

b. Before she closed the meeting the Chairman thanked all members of the Council for their support and hard work during her term of office. Together with the Clerk, they had been an excellent team and she was pleased to have had the opportunity to be the Chairman.

The Meeting closed at 9.00 p.m.

Dorchester-on-Thames Parish Council

The Monthly Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 8th April 2015 commencing at 7.30 p.m. The Vice-Chairman, Cllr Chris Hill presided; present were Cllrs. Ken Bryan, Maurice Day, Sue Graney, Mike Hill, Val Howells and Mark Stevenson, with G Russell in attendance. Also present were three residents.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were accepted from the Chairman, Cllr Margot Metcalfe. In her absence the Vice-Chairman, Cllr Chris Hill, thanked all the Councillors who are not standing for re-election in May for their collective years of service to the Parish Council and the residents of Dorchester-on-Thames. The retiring councillors include three former chairmen, Cllr Maurice Day, Cllr Ken Bryan and Cllr Margot Metcalfe.

2. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None

3. Public Participation

Colin and Kate Watson have just moved into 13 Bridge End and are interested to learn more about the status of the land between the end of their garden and the River Thame. The ownership of the land is not recorded at the Land Registry. This is not to say that it is not owned – a possible claimant is the Catholic Church, which is believed to have sold a similar piece of land to a previous owner of 11 Bridge End.

It was suggested that Mr and Mrs Watson make their own searches at the Land Registry. Mike Stimpson was present to talk about PA/S0686 for 9 Wittenham Lane. He said that the Conservation Officer has commented that the design of the proposed new windows is an improvement. He also said that he is prepared to be flexible about the location of the car parking spaces.

4. Minutes of the Meeting held 11th March 2015

After a correction to a small typing error in Minute paragraph 8 (b) ('as' was replaced by 'at'), the Minutes as circulated were approved and signed as a true record.

5. Matters Arising from the Minutes

a Sue Ryder Hospice, Nettlebed; Cllr Chris Hill and the Clerk had visited earlier in the day and had been impressed by what they had been shown on the tour. The Hospice will be remaining in its present location for the foreseeable future. Several former residents of Dorchester, including former Parish Council chairman, Mike Smith, have been cared for at this Hospice, which would be grateful for any financial assistance that the Council would be prepared to offer. This will be discussed by the new Council in due course.

b. The Clerk said that he had heard nothing further from Graham Simmons, the Post Office Field Change Advisor.

c. The Hurst Water Meadow Trust will be moving the cut timber from Abbey View Meadow in the very near future.

6. District & County Councillors' Reports

The report from County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale has been circulated by email and there is a paper copy in the folder for circulation.

Cllr Stevenson raised the issue of free school buses. He said that calculations of the distance between a pupil's home and school are based upon walking routes rather than driving routes.

This can cause anomalies in some cases. The system may change but it will be too late for this year. Cllr Stevenson said that the problem is partly due to the academies who can set their own catchment areas and he asked that the Parish Council should request that County Cllr Lindsay-Gale investigates this matter.

7. Finance: Bank balances & payments

Natwest Reserve Account 27th February	£47,826.29
Natwest Current Account 30th March	£42,725.21

The following cheques were approved for payment:

SODC (Dog bin Emptying Oct - March)	£226.04
Mark Bristow Chartered Surveyors (Pavilion Roof)	£175.00
Thames Water (Sportsground/Pavilion)	£61.08
Neurotechnics Limited (Defibrillator)	£954.00
Neurotechnics Limited (Cabinet)	£298.80
Total Pest Control (UK) Ltd Bridge End Green	£321.60
Town and Country Memorials Ltd (Cemetery Plaque)	£117.60
A Smith (fitting memorial plaque)	£20.00
Mark Stevenson pp NDP Presentation on 31st January (dated in March 2015)	<u>£145.00</u> £2,319.12

SODC Cemetery Rates 2015/16	£136.80
ORCC (annual subscription)	£65.00
OALC (annual subscription)	£200.53
OALC (new Councillor training)	£546.00
Geoff Willis (4 weeks)	£315.00
Sue Graney (refreshments for Council meetings)	... £36.00
G Russell (salary) (dated in April)	<u>£538.82</u> £1,838.15

Grand total £4,157.27

The Clerk reported that Allotment rents received in March were £780.00 net (after £200 was deducted for work to repair the central area that puddles).

Bank Mandate; none of the present three account signatories is staying on the Council after the May election. It was agreed that Sue Graney, Chris Hill, and Val Howells should be added to the account after 7th May but it will take a few days to get the bank to action these instructions and so Ken Bryan, Maurice Day and Margot Metcalfe will not be removed from the list until the additions have been confirmed.

Accounting system for 2015/16; the Council's internal auditor, Kevin Rose, has recommended that the Council switches from Excel spreadsheets to Sage Instant Accounts. This has an RSP of £135 plus VAT but is available from several vendors with varying degrees of back up support. The Council agreed that the Clerk could proceed with this purchase. Cllr Bryan will introduce the Clerk to his supplier.

An appeal for financial support has been received from Oxfordshire Touring Theatre Company 'Good Night Out' who say that their scheme may close at the end of this year. The Company has visited Dorchester many times in the past few years. The letter and the brochure will be circulated so that this request can be considered by the new Council.

8. Correspondence and Other Business:

a. Sports Club Pavilion & Playground;

Pavilion extension: Richard Anderson has confirmed that he is progressing the plans and planning application.

Pavilion Roof repairs; a third quotation is required.

Use of Recreation Ground by a third party; As chairman of the Sports Club, Mike Stimpson said that Footsteps Foundation wants to run a fund raising Football Six a Side tournament on the Recreation Ground on Sunday 5th July. It may develop into a sports day / fete, depending on who wants to get involved. There are no cricket matches scheduled on that day, The Sports Club has given its approval and now seeks the permission of the Parish Council. The Council agreed to this request. Mike Stimpson will ask Footsteps if the event will be covered by their own insurance.

b. Footpaths;

The County Footpaths Officer, Mark Sumner, has been contacted about the future status of Watling Lane clearance and the sign outside 50 Watling Lane. Cllr Mike Hill confirmed that the repairs to the bridge at Overy Mill have been carried out.

c. Cemetery /Closed Abbey Churchyard;

The Clerk confirmed that, as requested, the word 'Contact' on the new signs has been painted over.

d. Allotments;

The central area that has frequently flooded after heavy rain has been repaired at a cost of £200 compared with the estimate of £500.

e. Letters to Chairman and Clerk

Broadband connections; some residents in Abingdon Road have contacted the Clerk to complain that their high-speed service is not yet available. This is understood to require extra cabling work which is expected to be completed in the next few weeks.

Mike Corran of Willoughby Grange, 77, High Street has confirmed to the Clerk that the much-needed repairs to the cob wall that runs between his home and Willoughby Lodge, 75 High Street, will be carried out as soon as the new owners of Willoughby Lodge have settled in.

9. Planning

a. Applications

P15/S1011/LDP 81 Abingdon Road

The Council noted that this development is under permitted Development Order P15/S0968/FUL 25 Bridge End Variation of Condition 2 of planning permission P14/S1635/FUL, to amend the approved plan numbers. Demolition of existing garage/workshop and car port. Erection of new detached dwelling with extension and restoration of existing cottage and creation of new parking areas. P14/S1635/FUL Conditions(s)

No paper copies have so far been received of the plans and supporting documents. These are expected shortly and a special Council Meeting will be held to discuss these on either 21st or 22nd April (later confirmed as 21st April) by which time it was hoped that the Conservation Officer's comments would be available.

P15/S0686/FUL 9 Wittenham Lane Proposed subdivision of existing dwelling to form 1 x 2 bed dwelling and 1 x 1 bed dwelling, including a single storey lean to front extension and removal of flat roof rear dormer and replacement with 2 no pitched roof dormers and single roof light.

Several letters from residents have been received, mainly on the subject of car parking. The Conservation Officer has recommended that the Application should be approved. The

Council agreed to recommend the application for approval subject to all car parking being located to the rear of the property.

P15/S0667/LB 36 High Street Proposed internal and external alterations, including new render and replacement dormer windows.

The Council agreed to recommend the application for approval and commented that the improved insulation properties of the building are to be commended.

b. Neighbourhood Development Planning Report

Following the Consultation meeting held in the Village Hall on 31st January there had been general approval of the draft plan but it had been agreed that details of the housing policy should be amended. The next stage is preparation of a full plan for submission to the statutory consulting bodies. The new Parish Council must appoint a minimum of two representatives to the Neighbourhood Planning Group which includes non-council members Malcolm Airs, John Metcalfe, Chris Smith and Richard Winslet. The plan should include reference to the open spaces that are regarded as particularly significant for public access.

c. Dorchester Rural Exception Site for Affordable Housing

Cllr Mark Stevenson has been in contact with both the District Council planners and the agents for the owners of the site known as 'Allen's Pit'. The Council is understood to be supportive of starting consultation and the agents have passed this information to the owners, whose reply is expected in the near future.

d. Consultation on Options for Local Plan 2031

Cllr Mark Stevenson said that Dorchester Parish Council should have an interest in the paragraphs dealing with exception sites in small villages. If there is to be discussion about development sites with the village the Parish Council would wish to comment upon how this process is managed, one important aspect being its impact upon local schools. The SHMA (Strategic Housing Market Assessment) figures are being disputed by some although they have been agreed by SODC. It was agreed not to take part in the discussion but the NDP Group will have to be ready to respond if there are approaches.

With regard to the Green Belt Study, Dorchester representatives have always argued that it is important that the Green Belt continues to 'wash over' Dorchester and that existing green spaces are preserved, particularly those between Dorchester-on-Thames and Berinsfield. The District Council and Berinsfield Parish Council have recently indicated that it is just the existence of the main road that defines the separation between the two parishes and this point of view should be opposed.

10. Parish Council Communications including Welcome packs

The Council noted that the licence agreement covering the new notice board is still awaited from the Co-Op office in Warwickshire. This agreement will include the proposed bicycle rack.

11. Parish Council Elections & Representation on other bodies

Nominations closed at 4.00 p.m. on Thursday 9th April and it is now known that there will be several new members of the Council after 7th May.

The Clerk has booked the following places on training courses run by OALC:

Roles & Responsibilities training, on 29th July (4 places), Chairmanship training on 2nd September (2 places) and Finance training on 30th September (1 place). At least one training course on Planning is to be organised in the coming months. Sue Graney and Val Howells said that they would like to attend the course on 29th July. Two more volunteers are required. The Council Chairman and Vice Chairman for 2015/16 will be elected at the Council's Annual Meeting on 13th May.

The following special responsibilities for councillors (and others) will also be reviewed: Allotments; Broadband; Car Parking; Cemetery; Defibrillator Monitor, Emergency Planning; Flooding & Drainage; Footpaths; Gilbert Scott Memorial; Hurst Water Meadow Trust; Neighbourhood Development Planning; PAGE; PCC; Playground; River Users Group; School Governor; Sports Club; Street Lighting; Tourism; Transport policy including Bus Services; Tree Officer; Village Carbon Project; Village Hall; Village website.

12. Annual Parish Meeting

The date has been confirmed as Tuesday 19th May and the meeting will be held in the main Village Hall. In addition to the Chairman's Report and draft Parish Accounts for 2014/15 there will be a presentation from PAGE (Parishes Against Gravel Extraction) which will be given by Margot. It is anticipated that there will also be short presentations and table-top displays by the Neighbourhood Planning Group, Hurst Water Meadow Trust, and Neighbourhood Watch.

13. Parish Records / Safeguarding Open Green Spaces

A summary of the chairman's research has been placed into the folder for circulation. An electronic copy will be provided to all new councillors along with information about the options recently published by the Open Space Society. Cllr Bryan said that he would take Cllrs Sue Graney and Val Howells on a tour of the Village to show them the areas that are being considered.

14. Village Fireworks Proposal

Cllr Sue Graney said that she has been consulting with a representative from the Stadhampton fireworks committee who has put her in touch with a specialist fireworks display organiser. A reasonable budget would be between £1,500 and £2,000. Stadhampton recover their costs from a bucket collection on the night and the profit on sales of food and drink. There has never been a year when they failed to cover their costs. It was suggested that the invoices go through the Parish Council so the VAT element can be recovered. The display organiser is available on Thursday 5th November but not on 6th or 7th. The Parish Council agreed to go ahead with this project and Sue will start recruiting an organising committee.

15. Defibrillator

The precise locations at The White Hart and the Pavilion have been agreed and the installations will now take place. Cllr Graney has contacted South Central Ambulance Service who will register the new defibrillators and provide training for all volunteers. The cabinets will display a plaque stating the post code of their location.

16. Gilbert Scott Memorial Project

Nothing to report

17. PAGE (Parishes Against Gravel Extraction)

A copy of the article which appeared in the Wallingford Herald on 25th March will be circulated.

18. Any Other Business

Cllr Bryan said the ditch around the Recreation Ground needs clearing and it was agreed that the Clerk would ask BCB (Berinsfield Community Business) to carry out this work.

The Meeting closed at 10.39 p.m.

