

Dorchester-on-Thames Parish Council

The Monthly Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 9th December 2015 commencing at 7.30 p.m. The Chairman, Cllr Chris Hill presided; also present were Cllrs. Claire Andersson, Val Howells, Mike Rimmer, Keith Russell and Mark Williams (Vice-Chairman) with G Russell in attendance. Present for part of the time were 16 members of the public.

1. Apologies for Absence & Chairman's Opening Remarks

Apologies for absence were accepted from Cllrs Sue Graney, who was unwell, and Cllr Oliver Margison, due to work commitments.

The Chairman said that he had received a letter from Cllr Claire Andersson giving notice that she is resigning as a member of the Parish Council due to family commitments. Claire has said, however, that she would like to continue to be involved with her 'action points' – the planned improvements to the Sports Pavilion and starting a village youth club. She would also be willing to assist with special projects. The Chairman thanked Claire for all the work that she had done and said he was pleased that she would continue to assist the Parish, albeit in a less official capacity.

2. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests for this meeting

None

3. Public Participation

Many residents had attended the meeting to register their concern about the possibility that the demesne field might lose its classification as part of the green belt. It was agreed that lobbying the District Council on this matter is important at an early stage and that there should be contact with other Parish Councils facing a similar problem. It was noted that a campaign website called www.mindthegreengap.org has already been created in East Hagbourne. John Metcalfe, who has been a member of the Neighbourhood Planning Group, said that the Parish must suggest alternative sites for future development which would be better for the village than the demesne field.

Another member of the public, Trevor Greenaway, asked about the enclosure of the land by the River Thames behind 13 Bridge End. He believed that there are documents which state that this land should be open for public access and he said that he would be able to produce this evidence at the Council's meeting in January.

4. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 11th November 2015

The Minutes as circulated were approved and signed following the correction in Minute 12 of the amount of the grant by SSE to purchase generating equipment and ancillary materials for use in an emergency from £1,560 to £1,516 and the removal of Cllr Keith Russell's name from the list in Minute 14 of councillors who had attended the training meeting on planning.

5. Matters Arising from the Minutes

The Council noted that on behalf of the Village Carbon Project, Laura Bristow is costing a reprint of the 'Dorchester bag' and may bring back the idea of recycling 'swap-shops' in the Village Hall.

6. County Councillor's Report

The written report received from County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale has been circulated.

7. Finance:

Bank balances:

NatWest Current Account 30 th November 2015	£52,164.99
NatWest Reserve Account 30 th November 2015	£47,844.21
The Council noted that Allotment rents of £1.050 have been received	
The following cheques were approved for payment:	
Royal British Legion (payment for wreath and donation)	£100.00
Philip Greenaway (war memorial plants)	£30.98
Oxfordshire County Council (speed surveys)	£480.00
Berinsfield Community Business (grass cutting October)	£910.50
Open Spaces Society (annual sub)	£45.00
Allan Smith (fixing memorial plaque)	£20.00
Lister Wilder (parts for strimmer/ safety gloves)	£45.51
Total Pest Control (quarterly charge play area/ rec and cemetery)	£234.00
St John Ambulance (attendance at Fireworks 5 th November)	£84.48
Bryans Lock Services (fitting of dog bins and bag dispensers)	£360.00
Geoff Willis (Village handyman 4 weeks)	£386.25
Neil Willis (Handyman duties)	£70.00
G Russell (admin)	£212.14
G Russell (Clerk salary)	£538.82
Val Howells Christmas tree concert catering	£63.47
Oxfordshire Association for the Blind (donation)	<u>£100.00</u>
	£3,681.15

The Parish Precept for 2016/17 must be set at the January meeting. It was agreed that among the new projects to be costed for possible inclusion in the expenditure budget would be the removal of surplus soil from the Cemetery and the provision of some adult keep-fit equipment.

8. Correspondence, Reports and Other Business:

a. Sports Club, Recreation Ground & Playground;

The restoration of the grass affected by the recent Fireworks Night bonfire will be carried out by Berinsfield Community Business in the next few days.

Cllr Val Howells said that the litter collection sacks in the Play Area should be replaced by enclosed refuse bins and this was agreed.

b. Footpaths;

The Council noted that the County Highways inspector has placed white paint around several degraded areas of both footpath and roadway around the village which indicates that these areas have been scheduled for repair within the next few weeks.

c. Cemetery /Closed Abbey Churchyard;

All the trees around the Abbey have recently been surveyed and marked up on a map for ease of reference. The horse chestnut tree in the Cemetery which is over-hanging the garden of 2 Page Furlong is to be cut back. Cllr Keith Russell has been trying to contact a representative from Total Pest Control (UK) in order to discuss how to control the moles in the Closed Abbey Churchyard. The approval of the Abbey PCC will have to be given before treatments can start.

d. Allotments;

The Clerk has raised the right of way matter with Ed Metcalfe and Mark Townson and the issue is being dealt with,

e. Letters to Chairman and Clerk

The Parish Council has received a letter from the Footsteps Foundation thanking everyone for the funds raised at the Village Fireworks Party on 5th November. The letter is being circulated with the monthly folder.

9. Planning Applications Received:

P15/S3967/FUL 25 Bridge End Variation of condition 2 application P14/S1635/FUL to include roof-light and front door position to be altered Demolition of existing garage/workshop and car port. Erection of new detached dwelling together with extension and restoration of existing cottage and creation of new parking areas

Vlasta Fordova reported that the Planning Notice had not yet been displayed. The Chairman said that an extension to the consultation period should be requested in order to give councillors more time to study the paper plans and supporting documents. This was agreed and the Clerk will contact the Planning Officer.

P15/S3727/HH & P15/S3728/LB 2 Queen Street Proposed single storey extension of existing cloak room to form a bathroom for users with limited mobility and/or using a wheelchair Cllr Val Howells proposed and Cllr Keith Russell seconded a proposal that this application should be recommended for approval and this was agreed unanimously.

10. Neighbourhood Development Planning

a. Chairmanship of the NDP Committee; due to pressure of work Cllr Oliver Margison has submitted his resignation as Chairman. No other councillors wished to be considered. Cllr Chris Hill said that he would be willing to be appointed as Vice Chairman and to carry out the duties of chairman for the time being. This was agreed.

b. Future planning status of the 'Demesne Field'. It was agreed to proceed with the meeting that has been arranged for the evening of Thursday 14th January. The meeting would be advertised with a door-to-door leaflet drop as well as posters around the village.

There will be several guest speakers and an attempt to brief all residents about the issues involved, including access and infrastructure.

c. Neighbourhood planning status of adjoining Parishes;

Berinsfield; the document is available on line at <http://www.berinsfield-pc.gov.uk/Berinsfield-Parish-Council/Default-16200.aspx>

The Council noted that all comments should be made by 15 January 2016. Cllr Keith Russell said that Berinsfield's plan would have an impact upon the surrounding area and so Dorchester residents should take an interest in what is being proposed. Berinsfield's housing growth, for example, might be a good thing for Dorchester's village school if that increased demand for places but at this stage nothing can be predicted with any certainty.

Warborough & Shillingford has submitted a neighbourhood planning area proposal while **Brightwell-cum-Sotwell** has sent out a scoping report asking for neighbouring parishes to comment by 19th January. The Clerk will circulate this document prior to the Council's January meeting.

11. Sports Pavilion Extension Project

The application for a roof repair grant has been submitted.

12. Traffic Speed Survey Follow-Up

There are clearly some village residents who believe that there is a problem with traffic speeding dangerously through certain parts of the village and that measures should be taken which will slow traffic down, while others are of the opinion that, since there have not been

any accidents, the most appropriate action is for the police to set occasional speed traps which will catch the small number of drivers going much faster than the speed limit.

It was agreed that Graham Shaw would draft an article for the February Dorchester News which would suggest 'proposed actions' to be debated by the Parish Council. The article is to be circulated for the Parish Council's approval before publication.

13 Parish Council Records

There has been a request that the Parish Chest and its contents should be permanently removed from the Abbey Museum during the period when the Museum is closed for winter. This work would need to be carried out well before the Museum re-opens on Easter Saturday. Unless another home for the Parish Chest can be found (the Village Hall, for example) the contents would probably have to be submitted for archiving by the Oxfordshire History Centre at St Luke's Church, Cowley. The future of the Chest itself is less certain.

14 Letter from Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Oxfordshire

The Parish Council agreed that it would like to mark the 90th Birthday of H.M The Queen by taking part in the national celebrations which are being organised over the weekend of 11th and 12th June. Ideally the Council would like to run the weekend project as a joint venture together with the Abbey PCC

15. Any Other Business

The Clerk said that he would be away on business on 10th February, the normal date of the Council's monthly meeting. It was agreed therefore that this meeting would take place on 17th February.

The Meeting closed at 9.57 p.m.