

## **Dorchester-on-Thames Parish Council**

The Monthly Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2016 commencing at 7.30 p.m. The Chairman, Cllr Chris Hill presided; also present were Cllrs. Sue Graney, Val Howells, Oliver Margison, Keith Russell and Mark Williams (Vice-Chairman) with G Russell in attendance. Present for part of the time were District Councillor John Cotton and 5 members of the public

### 1/3. Apologies for Absence & Chairman's Opening Remarks

Apologies were accepted from Cllr Mike Rimmer who is on holiday and County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale who is attending a meeting in London

### 2/3. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests for this meeting

There were none.

### 3/3. Public Participation

Richard Tilley was interested to learn what further comments the Council had received about traffic speeds through the village. It was agreed that the Clerk should supply copies of these comments to both Richard Tilley and Gordon Roberts.

Malcolm Corry said that he has updated the draft questionnaire about village bus services and is in the process of arranging that the questionnaire be circulated as a loose insertion with every copy of the April edition of Dorchester News.

### 4/3. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 17<sup>th</sup> February 2016

The Minutes as circulated were approved and signed after 'Dorchester New' was amended to 'Dorchester News' in the final paragraph about Public Participation and a full stop was added to the last sentence of Minute 7/2. County and District Councillors' Report.

### 5/3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

- a. Village Clean – up working party; this group, financed by the District Council, was due to start work on 9<sup>th</sup> March (today) but bad weather has caused the postponement of the visit.
- b. Listed boundary wall at St Birinus; the Clerk has written to Father John saying that the Parish Council will support an application for a post and chain fence but not double yellow lines
- c. Land behind 13 Bridge End; the Clerk has written to Father John asking to see a copy of the documents that are in the Diocesan office at Birmingham confirming the Church's ownership of the land behind 13 Bridge End. Since the PC would like to register the land known as 'Waterloo' it will be helpful to know exactly where the Church land finishes.

### 6/3. Parish Council Vacancy to be filled by co-option

Rob Ballantyne and Vivian Quirke had put themselves forward for consideration and described their professional careers, work experience and special interests. They are both keen to take an active part in village life where their skills and knowledge can benefit the community as a whole. They left the room while the Council discussed how best to proceed. All Councillors agreed that both candidates are equally well-qualified and choosing one over the other would be very difficult. The Clerk was therefore asked to approach the Democratic Services team at SODC to see whether it might be possible to increase the Council's permitted quota of councillors from eight to nine. The candidates were recalled and this was explained. Both agreed to place their applications on hold pending resolution of this point.

### 7/3. County and District Councillors' Report

Written reports from both Councillors had been circulated electronically. Now that District Councillor John Cotton has started sending written reports these will also go to Dorchester News and the Village website.

The Council noted that there is strong disagreement between County and District about their respective plans for local government reorganisation.

Cllr John Cotton explained the joint District Councils' recently published plan to create a 'unitary authority' by combining the current South Oxfordshire and the Vale of The White Horse District Councils. He said that this body would be bigger than Reading and the 16<sup>th</sup> biggest unitary authority in England. However 'big', he said, is not necessarily 'better'; it is important to ensure that 'big' does not mean 'bloated'.

### 8/3. Finance:

#### Bank balances

NatWest Current Account 29 <sup>th</sup> February 2016	£46,192.44
NatWest Reserve Account 29 <sup>th</sup> February 2016	<u>£47,850.17</u>
	£94,042.61

During the meeting the Council was given a cheque for £3,775 - repayment of the expenses that the Council had paid towards Fireworks Night in November 2015.

The following cheques were approved for payment:

Community First Oxfordshire (formally known as ORCC) sub.	£70.00
Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils sub	£187.80
OPFA (Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association) sub	£40.00
Total Pest Control (UK) Ltd quarterly charge for moles	£234.00
Chris Hill (storage boxes)	£75.20
Geoff Willis (Village handyman 3 weeks)	£245.00
G Russell Admin (J/F/M)	£156.75
G Russell (Clerk salary)	£538.82
Denis Froud Pest Control	<u>£265.00</u>
	£1,812.57

### 9/3 Correspondence, Reports and Other Business:

a. Sports Club, Recreation Ground & Playground; (including reviewing plans for the extension and refurbishment of the pavilion)

The Sports Club has been told by SODC that it will receive a grant of £1,875 towards the cost of roof repairs. It was agreed to accept the quotation from Cherwell Roofing in the sum of £3,880 plus VAT with a contingency of up to £500 to allow for the cost of replacing any rotten timbers discovered during the repair work.

Cllr Oliver Margison said that following the councillors' recent site visit he thought it probable that the existing pavilion footprint would be sufficient to accommodate the desired new amenities. He has prepared a drawing which the Chairman would take to next Sports Club meeting due to be held the following day.

The Council agreed to provide a professional grade vacuum cleaner to a maximum cost of £300. Cllr Graney will source this as soon as possible.

The Council had received a request for a donation to the Cricket Club towards the cost of a practice net enclosure. It was unanimously agreed to award £500 – the indicated sum needed. Claire Andersson told the Council that after obtaining three quotations the Tennis Club has selected a 'Servace' Tennis Practice Fence which will be installed in place of three panels of the existing court perimeter fence. The Club is requesting a grant of £1,000 from the Parish Council and this was unanimously agreed.

b. Footpaths; There were no matters to report.

c. Cemetery /Closed Abbey Churchyard;

The Chairman will obtain three quotations for the removal of the bank alongside the boundary fence with Page Furlong. This area will then be levelled and grassed over.

Cllr Keith Russell said that a new contractor, Denis Froud Pest Control, has been engaged to start work in the Closed Abbey Churchyard and has already been successful.

Jenks Oxford Ltd would soon be attending to the large horse chestnut in the Churchyard but the proposed work has first to be agreed by the SODC Tree Officer.

d. Allotments; There were no matters to report.

e. Letters to Chairman and Clerk

Oxfordshire CPRE has sent a letter entitled 'Need not Greed Oxfordshire' which calls for a review of the 'Strategic Plan' put forward by Oxfordshire LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership). The group behind 'Need not Greed' oppose the scale of the proposed development for the County. This letter will be circulated for further consideration.

### 10/3. Planning Applications

P16/S0485/HH No. 1 & No. 2 Chequers Court, Bridge End; Proposed single storey rear extensions to Nos.1 and 2 and single storey side car port to No. 2.

It was proposed by Cllr Oliver Margison and seconded by Cllr Keith Russell that the Application be recommended for approval and this was unanimously agreed.

P16/S0372/HH 10 Tenpenny; Proposed single and two storey extensions and alterations to form improved accommodation. Including provision of 2 no on-site parking spaces.

The Chairman asked that the District Council should be advised to check the access to the proposed development since, from the drawings, it appears that this may be across land owned by SSE. The Council noted a request for a condition that there should be an archaeological 'watching brief' during the proposed work.

Cllr Oliver Margison proposed, seconded by Cllr Keith Russell, that the Council should take no strong view on this Application and this was unanimously agreed

### 11/3. Neighbourhood Development Planning Group – to receive report

The Council noted that Mike Kitson, John Metcalfe and Chris Smith have now left the Group and that Land Registry searches have been completed on the areas identified as possible development sites. The Chairman said that he would inform the owners of these sites that they have been submitted for consideration.

The Chairman said that draft NDP would be sent to the District Council by the end of March. There will be reports in Dorchester News and on the village website.

It was suggested that the website page for the Berinsfield NDP should be reviewed.

District Cllr John Cotton said that an inspector has now been appointed for the Berinsfield NDP and details for a public examination would be announced in the near future.

### 12/3. Arrangements for documents stored in the Parish Chest and the Chest itself

The Council noted that most documents are now at County Record Office. The Chest was removed from the Museum by John Fisher and found to have woodworm.

Some documents are back with Clerk who is doing some office re-organising to accommodate them. They include 20 years or so of accounts and some files which may help with planning for the NDP Group

The Allotments Society has taken some old records into store c/o Edward Metcalfe.

### 13/3 Village response to traffic speed article in Dorchester News

The Clerk has circulated copies of letters that have been received as a result of the publicity in Dorchester News. It was agreed to allow more time for additional

comments to be received and considered.

The Clerk has also been in contact with the PCSOs and County Highways about speed checks, repeater signs and vehicle activated signs. The number and spacing of repeater signs meets Highways standards but one on the bridge needs replacing.

#### 14/3. Celebrations to mark the 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday of H.M. The Queen

Claire Andersson briefed the Council about her meeting with the Rector. The celebrations in Dorchester are being called 'A Celebration of Community'. Notices will be sent to the school, village clubs/societies and published in Dorchester News. Claire will talk to the Sports Club at its meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> March specifically about the arrangements for activities on the Recreation Ground on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> June. It is understood that the Lunch Club may be interested in holding a 'street party'.

A sample of a commemorative medal had been circulated but the Parish Council agreed that on this occasion it did not wish to distribute any commemorative items.

#### 15/3 Purchase and storage of Emergency equipment

The Chairman reported that following the removal of Parish records to the County Archive, boxes to hold the emergency equipment are now available. He will find out if there is any available storage space in the Cloister Garden hut.

Cllr Keith Russell said the Village Hall committee understands the need for the generator and is looking to see if storage and wiring difficulties can be overcome.

#### 16/3. Land Registration

The Council noted that the applications to register the Village Green at Bridge End, the Cemetery and the Village Hall have all been successful. The application to register the War Memorial had been turned down. It will be re-submitted with a statutory declaration and should be approved at the second attempt.

An application to register the land opposite Plough House is next, then the land outside the Co-op and also 'Waterloo' (subject to progress with the documentary evidence requested from the RC Church).

#### 17/3. Village Hall developments and improvements

Cllr Keith Russell said that the Village Hall Committee has received complaints about the unauthorised removal of notices from the board outside the Hall. It was felt that this notice board should be replaced with one which combined lockable sections with one open section. This would provide much greater control. The Village Hall Annual General Meeting would be held in one week. Among the projects to be discussed are improvements to the Hall's floor and refurbishment of the bar. In the longer term there will be examination of the possibility of adding an upper floor above the entrance / kitchen / store room area which could provide additional accommodation, including an office for the Parish Clerk and secure storage space.

#### 18/3 Future of village bus services; village survey.

Malcolm Corry offered to collect the survey forms from the Clerk and will analyse the replies to date in time for the Council's April meeting.

#### 19/3 Annual Parish Meeting

The meeting will be held in the main Village Hall on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May commencing at 7.30. Cllr Margison was asked to consider making a presentation about the NDP. Both County and District Councillors will be given an agenda slot and John Taylor will be asked to give a presentation about the PAGE Campaign.

There were no urgent items to discuss and the Meeting closed at 10.22 p.m.