

Dorchester-on-Thames Parish Council

The Monthly Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 10th August 2016 commencing at 7.30 p.m. The Chairman, Cllr Chris Hill presided; also present were Cllrs. Rob Ballantyne, Oliver Margison, Viviane Quirke, Mike Rimmer and Mark Williams (Vice-Chairman) with G Russell in attendance.

1/8 Apologies for absence

Apologies were accepted from Cllrs. Val Howells and Keith Russell; County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale and District Cllr John Cotton.

2/8 Public Participation

None – no members of the public were present.

3/8 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

None, but Cllr Mike Rimmer said that he would take no part in the decision about whether a grant should be awarded to Home Start since his wife Jan has written a letter to the Council in which she expressed her strong support for this charity. Cllr Rob Ballantyne lives close to the property which is the subject of P16/S2526/HH (4 Malthouse Lane) and will take no part in the decision about this application.

4/8 Minutes of the Meeting held 13th July 2016

After a typing error ('that' for 'than') was corrected in Minute 14/7, the Minutes as circulated were approved and signed.

5/8 Matters Arising from the Minutes

- (i). Home Start Appeal; although the charity currently has no clients in Dorchester, the Council recognises that it does good work, as described by Mrs Jan Rimmer, and this may well be of future benefit to our residents. Cllr Oliver Margison proposed a donation of £200. This was seconded by Cllr Mark Williams and agreed.
- (ii). Berinsfield Children's Trust; the Council noted that John Taylor would like to discuss this matter when he returns from holiday in the second half of August.
- (iii). Best High Street competition; the information from Malcolm Airs has been circulated. The Council agreed that it would enter the competition provided the process was simple and did not involve any expense.
- (iv). New Notice Boards; the Clerk reported that delivery of the notice boards had been delayed because the 'plexiglass' was scratched on arrival and has to be replaced.
- (v). Repainting of Bridge End phone box; David Youngman has told the Clerk that he hopes to complete this task before the end of September
- (vi) County Highways has supplied no news about the Meadside path survey despite being sent a reminder. Another attempt will be made.

6/8 County Councillor's Report

County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale has sent a report which has been circulated.

7/8 District Councillor's Report

District Cllr John Cotton is away.

8/8 Planning:

- a. P16/S2526/HH Mandrel Cottage 4 Malthouse Lane; single storey rear extension

The Council agreed to recommend that this application should be approved, subject to any conditions that may be recommended by Historic England and/or the County Archaeological Service.

b. Sale of Bishops Court Estate;

The Council noted that virtually every Lot in the original offer for sale has been sold to an unknown buyer subject to contract, including Lot 7, the area for which the Parish Council had made an offer. It was agreed that the Chairman should write to Adkins, the selling agents, informing them that the Parish Council would like Lot 7 to be used either wholly or in part as an extension to Dorchester Cemetery. The Chairman will also refer in his letter to the Council's concern about the importance of preserving public access to the Dyke Hills. The Council noted that some additional Bowditch properties, including dwellings in the High Street and Malthouse Lane, have recently been brought to market.

c. Neighbourhood Development Plan and Other Planning matters

The Neighbourhood Development Planning Group has reviewed the District Council's comments upon the draft NDP document. Overall SODC Officers have suggested an approach that is 'evidence-based' rather than 'aspirational-based'. Over the next few days each of the NDP section writers will have a consultation meeting with Charlotte Colver, Senior Planning Policy Officer (Neighbourhood) for the District Council. Charlotte will be leaving that post at the end of August having been appointed to take a new role in the Council's Housing and Development Service from 15th September.

The Clerk was asked to supply Cllr Rob Ballantyne with some background information about past affordable housing surveys and site selections.

Cllr Oliver Margison said that he has been informed by the Winterbournes that a developer called Vanderbilt Homes is preparing plans for new house building on the site known as Allens Pit. These plans include opening up new public access from the River Thames.

d. SODC Local Plan

It is understood that the District Council is considering the introduction of an intermediate village classification between the existing 'small' (which includes Dorchester-on-Thames) and 'large'. It was agreed that Cllr Rob Ballantyne would draft the Council's response to this suggestion which would argue in favour of Dorchester retaining its classification as 'small'.

e. SODC Design Guide

Cllr Oliver Margison had studied the new Guide, which had been out for Consultation until 29th July, and said that very little has changed since the previous version.

9/8 Finance:

Bank balances

Nat West Current Account 5 th August	£38,170.45
Nat West Reserve Account 5 th August	<u>£47,860.07</u>
	£86,030.52

The Clerk said that for future months he would ask the bank to prepare statements on or close to the last day of each month.

A cheque for £5,000 has been received from the Tennis Club towards the cost of the new hitting wall. This leaves a loan balance of £950 which will be repaid in October.

The following payments were approved:

PAGE (Donation towards professional fees)	£1,000.00
Berinsfield Community Business grass-cutting June	£1,669.86
Berinsfield Community Business grass-cutting July	£1,669.86
SSE (Pavilion Electricity)	£142.53
Pipeline Direct (Pavilion water leak)	£120.00
Allan Smith (fitting new rubbish bin in Play Area)	£60.50

JRB Enterprise Ltd (Dog waste bags for dispensers)	£70.20
South Oxfordshire District Council (dog bin emptying)	£113.03
Broxap Ltd (Two waste bins)	£377.88
Geoff Willis (Village handyman 4 weeks)	£341.25
G Russell (Clerk salary)	£538.82
Playsafety Ltd (Annual Play Area inspection)	£222.60
Home Start (donation)	<u>£200.00</u>
	£6,526.53

Following the recommendation by the Internal Auditor, Kevin Rose, that the Parish Council should consider increasing its Cemetery Fees, the Clerk will prepare a comparative schedule of the fees currently being charged by other local burial grounds.

The Clerk reported that during the period available for public examination there had been no requests to view the annual accounts for 2015/16. The Annual Return will now be sent to the Auditors.

10/8 Correspondence with Chairman and/or Clerk

- a. A resident of Bridge End has suggested that the white lines in Bridge End car park need repainting and this request has been passed to the County Council.
- b. There have been several complaints about long grass in the Burial Ground and also about some uncared for graves. It is thought likely that the frequency of grass-cutting by the Council's contractors will have to be increased from once every four weeks. The Abbey Churchyard, for example, is cut fortnightly. Rule 8 of the Burial Ground regulations states that The Burial Authority reserves the right to keep untended graves in a tidy condition. The Council agreed that there should be an audit of which graves need attention from the contractors once the grass-cutting season is over. The Parish Council will have to pay for this work so it will be good to obtain estimates as soon as possible.
- c. The County's Emergency Planners have been in touch with the Clerk and have agreed to supply literature for the Newcomers Evening in October.

11/8 Land behind 13 Bridge End and 'Waterloo'

A site meeting with John Scanlan, surveyor from the Roman Catholic Diocese, took place on 9th June with the Parish Council's adviser, Simon Escreet, in attendance. Since that meeting the Council has received several maps, drawings and photographs showing how the land behind 13 Bridge End has been used by villagers over the past hundred years or so and several residents have offered to make sworn statements in support of the claim that this land has always been open for public access and enjoyment. Following comments received from Simon and his colleague, Alison, it was agreed that the Council should draft a 'robust' letter to Mr Scanlan upon which they will advise. Cllr Oliver Margison said that he would summarise the Council's case and prepare a first draft.

12 PAGE Report

The Chairman has circulated the recent minutes of PAGE meetings.

13 Village website

The Clerk has met with Sue Graney and Dan Duke. The Village website is being progressed and developed in various good ways. With the need for more Parish Council information to be published on-line, in line with the Transparency Code, the Clerk explained to Sue and Dan that the Village website will have to develop a dedicated Parish Council section which is easily accessible. If this cannot be done the Clerk asked the Council to consider separating

itself from the Village website and setting up www.dorchesteronthames-pc.gov.uk as a stand-alone site for the Council. This would be an extra expense and can hopefully be avoided.

14 New bus service – The Dorchester Flyer

More than 40 people have signed up to use the service, which until the end of the month is being provided free of charge, courtesy of the County Council. It is clear that Fridays are more popular than Tuesdays. Cllr Rob Ballantyne suggested that from the beginning of September the service should operate on Fridays only with two round-trips being made. The fare would be £3 return; tickets would have to be purchased in advance because there is no facility for the drivers to accept payments. The Clerk will ask Cyd O'Brien if she would agree to the tickets being sold through Lily's.

Final costs are not yet known and how much can be recovered through fares remains to be seen. The Parish Council agreed to guarantee the service for 6 months. It may be possible to make the service available to people living at Park Homes, Shillingford, in which case a contribution from Brightwell Parish Council will be received.

The Clerk and Sue Symonds were present at a bus route meeting on 1st August at Culham Science Centre's Conference Centre which discussed whether a subsidised service can be provided between Berinsfield and Abingdon. Although mainly for Berinsfield residents this service could be timed and routed to benefit passengers from Dorchester but it is early days and a further meeting will be held in September.

15 Oxfordshire Big Health and Care Conversation

Cllr Rob Ballantyne said that he has learned that there are serious concerns about the future viability of the Berinsfield Surgery. He will draft a comment for the Parish Council to approve which stresses the importance to Dorchester of maintaining the service in Berinsfield.

16 OCC roadside grass-cutting and tree-maintenance

In many places the County Council has reduced its programme from two visits to one visit per year with the result that some areas are now urgently in need of cutting. The County's new <https://fixmystreet.oxfordshire.gov.uk/> service allows specific problems to be reported and includes a facility to send a photograph along with the complaint.

17 Newcomers Evening

This is confirmed as Tuesday 18th October commencing at 7.00 p.m. The whole Village Hall has been booked. As in previous years the Parish Council will provide light refreshments free of charge from 7.00 p.m. until 9.00 p.m. Cllr Viviane Quirke volunteered to help with the organisation of the Evening.

18 Routine Reports:

Sports Club Pavilion & Playground;

The annual Play Area inspection has been carried out. The inspector's report is mainly Satisfactory but she suggests that an effort be made to flatten the surface, possibly using the Cricket Club roller. The Club has been asked to consider this. Cllr Val Howells is arranging for some play equipment and signs to be pressure washed to remove mould. A representative from Playdale has repaired the climbing frame.

Footpaths;

Emptying of dog waste bins has recently been erratic which has been reported to the SODC Waste Management Team. There has been liaison with the Hurst Trust about their anti-dog fouling campaign which uses spray powder to highlight the problem. Several Councillors agreed to take part and cans of the spray will be provided. It was

also agreed that a general litter bin be installed at the top of Manor Farm Road. This can also be used for dog waste which should help considerably in this problem area. The new litter bin for Abingdon Road will be installed when Ken Bryan is available.

Cemetery;

There have been some new suggestions about making the old gatehouse into a storage facility and even a parish office. The Clerk was asked to obtain costs for the supply of services such as electricity, water, drainage and telephone to this site.

Allotments

The archaeologists have finished excavations. They are expected for 3 more years.

The Meeting closed at 10.00 p.m.