

## Dorchester-on-Thames Parish Council

The Monthly Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2016 commencing at 7.30 p.m. The Chairman, Cllr Chris Hill presided; also present were Cllrs. Rob Ballantyne, Val Howells, Viviane Quirke, Mike Rimmer and Mark Williams (Vice-Chairman) with G Russell in attendance. Present for part of the meeting were District Cllr John Cotton and four residents.

### 1/10 Apologies for absence

Apologies were accepted from Cllrs Keith Russell, who was on holiday, and Oliver Margison due to his business commitments.

### 2/10 Public Participation

Residents of Herringcote, particularly those who live opposite Belcher Court, expressed concern about the future of this SOHA-owned building. The Parish Council has not been given any detailed information, simply that the building is to be redeveloped by SOHA and the dwellings that are created will be sold on the open market. The Chairman promised that as soon as the Parish Council had more information this would be passed on.

### 3/10 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

None.

### 4/10 Minutes of the Meeting held 14<sup>th</sup> September 2016

The Minutes as circulated were approved and signed as a correct record.

### 5/10 Matters Arising from the Minutes

- i. The meeting scheduled with John Howell MP for 28<sup>th</sup> September has been cancelled. Questions can and have been submitted by email instead.
- ii. The Clerk reported that he is still trying to contact the area inspector, Mark Pearce, to discuss the state of the Meadside/Dorchester Bridge footway.
- iii. Mark Francis (OCC) has confirmed that the task of repainting the white lines in the car park at Bridge End is on the County Highways task list.
- iv. The Clerk said that he has not progressed fitting the Bike Rack outside the Co-Op because the signed agreement has not yet been returned to the Council.

### 6/10 Guest speaker: John Taylor, Oxfordshire Community Foundation

The Community Foundation aims to bring together local philanthropists to solve local needs. 'Giving' can include time/expertise as well as cash donations; the key is to find community-based solutions to local social problems and the grants made can be relatively small-scale: hundreds of pounds rather than thousands.

Following the County Council's decision to reduce support for the County-wide network of Children's Centres, the 'Berin Centre' is a project that needs local backing to support its work amongst children and young people. The Employment Action Group is taking the lead in this venture and a business plan is currently in draft form. Development of these services is entirely consistent with the District Council's Berinsfield Regeneration Scheme which, by improving local facilities, is likely to have spin-off benefits for residents of Dorchester. For this reason Dorchester Parish Council should be prepared to make a financial contribution and John Taylor asked that this should be considered at the Council's next monthly meeting.

### 7/10 County Councillor's Report

County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale's report for October has been received and circulated. It will also appear on the Village website and in 'Dorchester News'.

## 8/10 District Councillor's Report

District Cllr John Cotton said that Central Government seems to have lost its appetite for re-organising Local Government. There have been more than 2,000 responses to the draft Local Plan including a reasonably positive reaction to the idea that there should be modest growth in development everywhere in the District, which is coming under increasing pressure to take housing for not just Oxford but also Reading and Wycombe. Cllr Cotton's report will be forwarded to Dorchester News and includes the announcement that in future the household waste collection service will decline to take black sacks. There have been too many cases recently where waste that could have been recycled has had to go to landfill because it has been contaminated.

## 9/10 Planning:

### a. Application:

P16/S2732/HH 70 Watling Lane

Proposed re-modelling of the front elevation to bring the front wall forward, creating loft space for a bedroom and putting a pitched roof over the garage.

The Council agreed that it had no strong views about this Application and accepted that the matter would be determined by the District Council

P16/S3364/HH15 Page Furlong Dorchester-on-Thames

Single-storey front extension (porch) and changes to rear windows

Details of this Application have only just been received and the Clerk was asked to request an extension to the consultation period so the matter could be determined at the Council's November meeting.

### b. Report on future of Belcher Court

The Chairman said that for the last 12 months the Parish Council has been trying to discover SOHA's plans for the future of Belcher Court. Recently Steve Lynch, the Director of Property and Development, has confirmed that, now all the residents have been moved to alternative accommodation, the property is to be redeveloped and the dwellings sold into the private sector. Cllr Rob Ballantyne suggested that the Council should ask SOHA for a meeting because it is important to know if SOHA's plans will have any impact upon the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

When the Planning Application is eventually received the Council has been asked to pay attention to the protection of a much-loved magnolia tree that is adjacent to the present building.

### c. Progress of Neighbourhood Development Plan

The Chairman said that there has been little progress since the Council's October meeting but that the NDP Group will be meeting again in a few days. Mr Jason Winterbourne said that he is willing to have some indicative concept drawings prepared within the next few days which would illustrate the potential of development at Allen's Pit.

### d. Review of Parish Demand for Storage Space

The Chairman said that in response for his request for information about future storage space requirements he has received replies from the Sports Club and the Hurst Water Meadow Trust.

### e. Planning Decisions

The Council noted that consent has been given to Application P16/S2937/LB

Amalgamation of 15 & 16 Malthouse Lane

### f. PAGE

The Inspector's report has just been published. Contrary to the hopes of PAGE and other local campaign groups, the Inspector has agreed with the County Council's estimated extraction requirements. The selection of which sites will actually be used is expected to take another 2/3 years.

10/10 Finance:

a. Bank balances & payments

NatWest Current Account at 30 <sup>th</sup> September	£54,062.81
NatWest Reserve Account at 5 <sup>th</sup> October	<u>£47,864.20</u>
	£101,927.01

The following payments were approved:

Dorchester Village Fete (cash float for Fireworks expenses)	£1,000.00
Berinsfield Community Business (grass-cutting August)	£910.50
Lister Wilder (strimmer part)	£13.98
BDO LLP (annual audit fee)	£360.00
Geoff Willis (Village handyman 4 weeks)	£551.25
G Russell (40 new traffic cones)	£190.56
G Russell (Clerk salary)	<u>£538.82</u>
	£3,565.11

b. External Auditors Report

The Council's audited Annual Return for 2015/16 and the supporting documents were advertised as being available for inspection during the statutory period but no-one asked to see them.

c. Recreation Ground Grass-Cutting Costs

BCB has been asked to quote for the whole field apart from the wicket itself. The Sports Club has asked two other contractors for quotes. A meeting is to be held once all this information has been received. The Sports Club is seeking an increased contribution from the Parish Council towards the cost of maintaining the outfield.

d. Review of Cemetery Fees

The Clerk will circulate his recommendations for discussion by the Council.

e. Review of Parish Council's Donations

The Clerk will circulate an analysis of donations made over the past five years for discussion at the next meeting together with a reminder about the rule which limits the amount the Council is legally permitted to spend upon discretionary items.

11/10 Correspondence

- a. The Council has been invited to attend the District Council's Town & Parish Council Forum which is to be held at the River & Rowing Museum in Henley on 2<sup>nd</sup> November. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman will attend.
- b. Age UK: Judy Parker has attended a county branch meeting for the Abbey PCC and has agreed to keep the Parish Council aware of anything relevant, including leaflets which should be available for the Information Evening on 18<sup>th</sup> October.
- c. The Clerk said that he had been asked by Keith Ives if the Parish Council would consider awarding a grant towards the costs which some residents of Abingdon Road had incurred in obtaining a high-speed broadband connection from Gigaclear. If so he would attend the November meeting to present his case. The Council agreed that it could see no reason at all why it should make such a payment. The Chairman said that he had had previous correspondence with Keith Ives on this matter and that he would write again to confirm that the Parish Council's position has not changed.

12/10 Land behind 13 Bridge End and 'Waterloo'

The document prepared by Cllr Oliver Margison requires some small amendments but can then be sent to the Roman Catholic Diocesan Surveyor John Scanlon. The Clerk said that he would progress this if Oliver was unable to do so.

13/10 Village Information for Newcomers Evening, 18<sup>th</sup> October

Exhibitors so far confirmed include Hurst Water Meadow Trust; Abbey Bell-ringers and Abbey Choir; Museum; Historical Society, Dorchester Angling Society; Golf

Society; Tennis Club; WI, Abbey Tea Room; Lunch Club; Parish Council – emergency provision and NDP; Dorchester News and website; Sailing Club; DADS; Dorchester Festival; Village School; Village Hall; Footsteps Foundation, and Delicious Dinners, the sponsors of some food.

14/10            Dorchester Fireworks Evening, 5<sup>th</sup> November

Cllr Val Howells will issue detailed instructions nearer the time. Several councillors agreed to assist as marshals and 40 new traffic cones have been purchased.

15/10            Bus service report and by-pass bus stop safety

Cllr Rob Ballantyne said that regular passenger numbers are between 8 and 11 persons and so opening the service to passengers from Shillingford Hill is a possibility. In principle Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Parish Council has agreed to make a contribution but there are still some details that need to be confirmed with the bus company. No invoice for the service has so far been received. The meeting about trying to improve safety at the by-pass bus stops has not yet taken place.

16/10            Land Registration Progress

It was agreed to carry this item forward until the next meeting.

17/10            Parish Council Notice Boards and Village website

Additional Village information is now being displayed on the notice boards. This includes the Village Diary and publicity about the location of the defibrillators.

18/10            Routine Reports:

**a. Sports Club Pavilion & Playground;**

Levelling of the Play Area was recommended by Playground inspector but the Cricket Club roller will not fit through the gates. BCB will be asked to quote on this and also for pressure-washing of the signage and some equipment.

**b. Footpaths;**

Geoff Willis has cleared Dorchester Bridge of weeds and will continue this work in the High Street over coming weeks. The Clerk will arrange for the cutting of the hedge along the footpath side of the Cemetery.

BCB will carry out hedge maintenance work during the coming winter months and also the scheduled repairs to the gate that leads into the Cemetery from Drayton Road. SODC's Forestry Officer has been asked to agree to some tree maintenance work on Bridge End Green and on the corner of Drayton Road. The Council has been informed of a potentially dangerous tree at the end of Manor Farm Road. Jenks will be asked to recommend what action should be taken.

**c. Cemetery/Closed Churchyard;**

The report from Cllr Keith Russell about the mole activity at both sites has been circulated. The Clerk said that he hoped the audit of graves that are no longer being properly cared for will be carried out before the next meeting

**d. Allotments;**

The 5 bar gate at the Watling Lane main entrance is being repaired by Mr Robert Booth, who was responsible for the recent damage. New annual rents are now being received and £800 will be banked shortly.

19/10            Any Other Urgent Matters

It was agreed that the Chairman should try to arrange a private meeting with Mr Andrew Reid, the new owner of Bishops Court Farm. It was agreed that a maximum of three Councillors plus the Clerk would attend.

The Meeting closed at 10.05 p.m.

S137 LGA 1972

"A local authority may, subject to the provisions of this section, incur expenditure which in their opinion is in the interests of, and will bring direct benefit to, their area or any part of it or all or some of its inhabitants"

There is, of course, a limit to the amount that you can spend on S137 which is currently £7.42 per head