

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

The Monthly Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2017 commencing at 7.30 p.m. The Chairman, Cllr Chris Hill (CH) presided; present were Cllrs. Rob Ballantyne (RB), Oliver Margison (OM), Viviane Quirke (VQ), Mike Rimmer (MR), Keith Russell (KR) and Mark Williams (MW, Vice-Chairman). Also present for part of the meeting were County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale, Gillian Johnson (representing FODLWOS), Shammy Puri (to discuss the implications of the Oxford Flood Alleviation Plan for Dorchester), Maurice Day (who had put his name forward to join the PC), 2 spokespersons for the potential Orchid Fishing Lake development, and 5 residents from the Drayton Road/Page Furlong area.

### 1/5 Apologies for absence

The Chairman said that as the Parish Clerk Geoff Russell was unwell and therefore could not be present at the meeting, Cllr Quirke would be taking the minutes.

### 2/5 Public Participation

The 5 residents from the Drayton Road/Page Furlong area were interested in discussing the planning application P17/S1166/FUL, for what was in effect a new as well as a replacement boundary fence around Dorchester Lake, Drayton Road. On the SODC website, to date, there were 50 comments opposing the erection of the planned chain-link fence, and 7 supporting it (mainly it seems from the angling community). The comments opposing the fence were summarised by Tim Hender (of 11 Page Furlong): the planning application provided inadequate information; there had been no ecological report prior to the application; the planned fence was ugly and not in keeping with the rural character of this part of the village; it would prevent access from the local community who had been coming to the lake to feed the ducks and swans for generations. This matter would be discussed by the Council under 10/5/a. The two spokespersons for the potential Orchid Lake development explained that they were carrying out a preliminary consultation with the Parish Council. At this stage it was an outline of a plan, rather than a planning application. The Chairman asked whether they had looked at the NDP, and as they had not, recommended that they do so. He also advised that they send the PC a preview of their application, so that we could provide them with our feedback. The northern part of the area around Orchid Lake is thought to be within the Parish of Berinsfield. Shammy Puri discussed his report on the Oxford Flood Alleviation Plan (see below under 10/5/e)

### 3/5 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

The Chairman declared an interest re Planning Application P17/S1300/HH, 7 Bridge End; single storey rear extension (his own Application).

The Vice-Chairman declared an interest re P17/S1340/HH, 18 Abingdon Road; Construction of a first-floor infill bathroom at rear to provide additional bathroom (he is a neighbour) and also the BCB quote for a replacement vehicle gate into Cemetery.

### 4/5 Parish Council Vacancy

Maurice Day had expressed interest in this position; his email had been circulated on 6<sup>th</sup> May. It was proposed by OM and seconded by KR that he should be elected to the PC and this was unanimously approved.

### 5/5 Minutes of the Meeting held 12<sup>th</sup> April 2017

Other than a minor correction to 9/4 a) on page 2 (which involved inserting 'be' between 'to' and 'carried out') it was proposed by RB and seconded by KR that the

Minutes as circulated be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman. This was unanimously agreed.

#### 6/5 Matters Arising from the Minutes

- a. Fireworks: All going ahead. Clerk had been in regular contact with Maggie Davies (Footsteps).
- b. Litter bin outside Co-Op: Work was in progress.
- c. New gate on to Watling Lane: The matter has been raised with planners but no info had as yet been received.
- d. Number of people walking from Meadside to catch bus at Shillingford: OM explained that the matter was ongoing.
- e. Drop kerb Abbey rose walk entrance: Work was in progress.

#### 7/5 County Councillor's Annual Report

Due to County Council elections no report had been received from Cllr Lindsay-Gale. However, in the meeting she provided an update on the issue of footpaths and fences, explaining that Arthur (the footpath officer) was dealing with outstanding matters including the kissing gate at the end of Wittenham Lane. She also provided information about the Berinsfield Children's Centre, and confirmed that it was up and running.

#### 8/5 District Councillor's Report

No written report had been received from John Cotton this month. In his absence, RB and MR reported on a local plan consultation meeting they had attended, and councillors were invited to make their comments individually.

#### 9/5 Report on contacts with Bishops Court Farm

One alteration to the routing of fencing had been achieved namely along the length of the Thames Path nearest to Days Lock. Although limited, in an e-mail received on 10<sup>th</sup> May, the Footpaths Officer had described it as 'doubling the width of the walkable path'.

An informal meeting with FODLWOS had taken place on 2<sup>nd</sup> May. Following this, the Vice-Chairman had been trying to organise a meeting between BCF and FODLWOS. It was recommended that a third person be present, such as John Cotton. In the meantime, the Clerk will continue to contact Scott Ruck about several matters including his progress with covering the unprotected lengths of barbed wire. Further revisions to the draft report had been received from RoSPA, so a publishable version now exists if required.

It was agreed that the Chairman would send the final version of the report to the Environment Agency, in the hope that they will show an interest in the risks that RoSPA has identified in the area around Days Lock.

#### 10/5 Planning:

##### a. Applications:

P17/S1452/HH, 14 Abingdon Road, Single storey front porch extension.

The Clerk had reported that the next-door neighbour, Mrs Shirley Dean, had objected to windows in the proposed extension that will overlook her property. It was proposed by OM and seconded by RB that the PC should take no strong view on the proposal and this was agreed.

P17/S1429/FUL, 31 Martins Lane; erection of new detached dwelling with integral garage (as amplified by Tree Survey Report dated April 2017)

The Council noted the letter from the applicant, Dr Pritchard, which had been circulated on 25<sup>th</sup> April. It was proposed by OM and seconded by RB that the PC should take no strong view on the proposal and this was agreed.

P17/S1166/FUL, Dorchester Lake, Drayton Road; replacement of Boundary Fence. Following the discussion with members of the public that took place at the beginning of the meeting, and a brief discussion among councillors, it was proposed by OM and seconded by RB that the PC should recommend refusal and this was agreed.

It was agreed that OM would write up a detailed response on behalf of the PC and that this will be sent to the Planning Officer.

P17/S1340/HH, 18 Abingdon Road; Construction of a first-floor infill bathroom at rear to provide additional bathroom. (MW withdrew from the meeting and took no part in the decision)

It was proposed by OM and seconded by RB that the PC should take no strong view on the proposal and this was agreed.

P17/S1300/HH, 7 Bridge End; Single storey rear extension. (CH left the room for this item). OM, as architect of the Application, remained to explain the design of the extension but took no part in the decision.

It was proposed by RB and seconded by MR that the PC should take no strong view on the proposal and this was agreed.

P17/S1276/PAR, Bishops Court Farm; Change of use of agricultural building to single dwelling house.

The Council noted that Malcolm Airs had questioned whether this project actually qualifies for permitted development status.

In the discussion that followed examination of the application, it was agreed that the PC would recommend that SODC consider a number of factors, including the fact that this was a rebuild rather than a conversion (by referring to the Hibbitt case); that the size of amenities and parking were very limited for a dwelling of this size; that the new dwelling proposed in the application was situated within the curtilage of a listed building, with no reference made to this or any of the other buildings within the curtilage, nor to their current use as part of a working farm.

It was agreed that RB would help to draft the letter that will form the PC response to SODC Planning and will be copied to John Cotton. The Chairman will ensure the PC response is sent to SODC.

#### b. Neighbourhood Development Plan for Dorchester

Direct correspondence with SOHA over its plan for Belcher Court had taken place.

Status of Abbey View Meadow had been queried although Clerk had pointed out the reasons why this is not part of 'Old Bridge Meadow'.

It was agreed that these issues would be discussed at the next NDP meeting on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> May.

c. Historic England's invitation to comment on fencing on the Dyke Hills SAM; The Parish Council did send its comments by the due date. Several other village groups also did so.

#### d. SODC Local Plan Consultation

Posters and leaflets advertising the consultation process had been displayed and there had also been a mention in Dorchester News. It was decided that councillors would respond individually to the consultation (see above, under 8/5).

#### e. Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme Consultation

Some Councillors had attended the 'pop-up' consultation meetings. Hydrogeologist and resident of Drayton Road, Shammy Puri, was present at the meeting, and was invited to speak to his report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting. He explained that, having seen the details of the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme, he saw no evidence of catchment-wide management having been considered. In his view, the greatest risk to Dorchester came from the fact that it is situated at the confluence between two rivers (the Thames and the Thame), and that climate change was leading to an increased likelihood of cloud burst, with an associated risk of flooding.

Although the scheme was welcome, he would like to see the model results from OCC

and the EA in order to better understand how the water would be released to avoid increased risk of flooding downstream.

11/5 Finance:

Bank balances:

Current Account balance at 28/4	£62,528.20*
Reserve Account balance at 31/3	<u>£47,868.17</u>
	£110,396.37

\*Includes first half Precept receipt of £21,140

It was proposed by OM and seconded by CH that the following cheques be approved and this was agreed:

SODC Cemetery Annual Business Rates	147.73
Berinsfield Community Business (March grass)	759.36
Lister Wilder 'RoundUp' refill	15.16
Sue Graney (defibrillator spare parts)	20.00
SSE Southern Electric (sports pavilion)	53.75
Total Pest Control (Abbey View)	66.00
Neil Willis (strimming of paths)	75.93
Geoff Willis Village Handyman (4 weeks)	368.75
G Russell (salary)	<u>538.82</u>
	£2145.50

Insurance Review: although the Council is committed to Zurich Insurance for another year, it was agreed that the disclosure statement would need to be reviewed, and that a written risk assessment should be carried out as well as values kept up to date.

The Council had received an appeal for funds from Open Spaces Society Legal Department. It was agreed to make the decision at the June meeting.

The donation of £100 towards the Medical records in a Bottle scheme was carried forward until the June meeting by which time the name of the payee will be known.

12/5 Correspondence with Chairman and/or Clerk

Following an invitation for Councillors to tour the recovery facility at Ardley on 25<sup>th</sup> May it was agreed that OM, KR, and MW will attend. The Clerk will inform SODC.

13/5 Miss Susan Bowditch: Village Planting Project

Following another site meeting a second planting proposal has been written by Susan Bowditch (SB) with the assistance of Wildlife Gardening Expert Stuart Mabbutt. This will be published in Dorchester News with residents invited to send their comments via the Clerk for consideration by the Council at its June meeting.

SB has made a start on this project by getting her gardener to help her clear rubbish from the area beyond the top of Oxford Road, between the footpath and the by-pass.

14/5 Land Registration Progress

Due to the Clerk being unwell the meeting with Simon Escreet has been postponed. All the papers for submission to the Land Registry were expected to be available for signature and swearing before an officer of the court.

15/5 Arrangements for Annual Parish Meeting 31<sup>st</sup> May

FODLWOS and representatives from Bishops Court Farm have been invited to attend the Meeting. The County and District Councillors are both expected.

16/5 'Better Oxfordshire' Consultation

Discussions about the future arrangements for local government in Oxfordshire are on hold pending the General Election.

17/5                    Dorchester Village Website and Social Media

This item is being carried forward until the June meeting.

18/5                    Routine Reports:

**Sports Club Pavilion & Playground;**

The Chairman explained to the Council that there had recently been several resignations from the Sports Club Committee and arrangements for the future management of the Club are in doubt. CH intends to make an attempt to bring the parties back together.

**Footpaths:**

The Chairman has made contact with the Townsends and has arranged to discuss the future maintenance programme for Watling Lane with Richard Juniper on 16<sup>th</sup> May.

**Cemetery/Closed Churchyard;**

The cost of supplying a replacement wooden gate for the Cemetery entrance from Drayton Road has been given by BCB as £525.35 plus VAT. Following a proposal by OM, seconded by CH the Council agreed that this should be accepted

The project to carry out an audit of graves which are no longer being looked after by family and friends is still needed in order for the Parish Council to assess if alternative maintenance arrangements need to be made.

**Allotments**

The stolen footpath direction signs have been replaced the Rosbys of 51 Watling Lane. The Clerk has written to thank them.

19/5    Any Other Urgent Matters

- a. Arrangements for the Meadside 100-year celebrations were briefly discussed.
- b. Comments were made about the high quality of the events that made up the Dorchester Festival this year. The Parish Council wished to express thanks to the organisers and all of the helpers over the two-week programme.
- c. The Annual Meeting of the Council will take place on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2017 when there will be Elections for Chairman and Vice-Chairman 2017/18

Meeting closed at 10.05 pm.