

Dorchester-on-Thames Parish Council

The Annual Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Abbey Guest House on Wednesday 14th June 2017 commencing at 7.30 p.m. The Chairman, Cllr Chris Hill presided; present were Cllrs. Rob Ballantyne, Maurice Day, Mike Rimmer, Keith Russell and Mark Williams. Also present for part of the meeting were 7 residents.

1/6. Apologies for absence

Apologies were accepted from Cllr Viviane Quirke and Oliver Margison, who were both away working; County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale, who was on holiday; and District Cllr John Cotton who had another meeting.

2/6. Public Participation

Philip Goodliffe told the meeting that he had been concerned about the methods and materials used to mark out the pitches on the Recreation Ground. The Chairman said that although the Council had not been represented at the Sports Club Committee meeting on 18th May, the Council was aware of the recent controversy on this matter. He understood that all allegedly harmful materials had now been properly disposed of by the Club's officials. Dr Goodliffe said that he had been an active member of the cricket club but had left on 19th May.

Meg Fisher said that she has noticed that events at the Pavilion produce a large quantity of potentially recyclable material that could be disposed of more efficiently. As someone who lives very close to the Pavilion she offered her assistance to the event organisers. The Clerk will arrange for all the parties to communicate.

3/6 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

The Chairman declared an interest in connection with item 11/6 c since he is a member of the group known as 'Friends of The Fleur'.

4/6 Election of Parish Council Chairman 2017/18

The Clerk took the chair for this item. Cllr Chris Hill was nominated by Cllr Rob Ballantyne to serve as Chairman of the Council for 2017/18 and this was seconded by Cllr Keith Russell. Cllr Hill was re-elected unanimously and resumed the chair.

5/6 Election of Parish Council Vice-Chairman 2017?18

Cllr Mark Williams was nominated by Cllr Mike Rimmer to serve as Vice-Chairman of the Council for 2017/18 and this was seconded by Cllr Chris Hill. Cllr Williams was re-elected unanimously.

6/6 Minutes of the Meeting held 10th May 2017

Cllr Mike Rimmer proposed that the Minutes as circulated should be confirmed as a true record of the Meeting. This was seconded by Cllr Keith Russell and unanimously approved. The Chairman signed the Minutes.

7/6 Matters Arising from the Minutes

The Clerk said that he is progressing the application for a grant from Mid-Counties Co-Operative Society that, together with funds provided by the Parish Council, will be used for the purchase of a new litter bin outside the Co-Op branch in High Street. The Clerk said that he taken photographs of potential locations for a drop kerb near the Toll House. These will be sent to the Area Highways Inspector Keith Stenning.

8/6 County Councillor's Report

County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale had been re-elected on Thursday 4th May and was taking some holiday before resuming her work as a member of Oxfordshire County Council's Cabinet.

9/6 District Councillor's Report

District Cllr John Cotton was unable to attend due to another commitment.

10/6 Report on contacts with Bishops Court Farm and Friends of Dorchester and Little Wittenham Open Spaces (FODLWOS)

The final version of the report from RoSPA has been received in electronic format and so copies can now be made available to all interested parties. The Parish Council is still hoping that the Environment Agency (EA) will show an interest in the risks that RoSPA identified regarding 'portage' and also the steep drop into the River Thames that exists by the newly created permissive path alongside the bridge to Little Wittenham. The Chairman is keeping in regular contact with the EA.

Scott Ruck, the farm manager has been in touch with the Clerk about covering the remaining lengths of exposed barbed wire. The Council has been assured that this project will be completed.

The Council understands that FODLWOS has prepared three applications for Footpath Modification Orders but these have not yet been submitted to the County Council pending a possible meeting between representatives of FODLWOS and Mr Andrew Reid.

11/6 Planning:

a. Applications:

P17/S1907/FUL Belcher Court, Martins Lane

Demolish existing flats and erect four dwellings

It was proposed by Rob Ballantyne and seconded by Chris Hill that the Council should recommend refusal and this was unanimously agreed. Cllr Ballantyne will draft the Council's response to SODC.

The Clerk will contact Franklins to obtain advice about the Parish Council's rights as the owner of the adjacent property and the impact that an apparently restrictive clause within the Land Registry documents might have upon the type of development that would be permitted.

P17/S1866/FUL & P17/S1973/LB White Hart Hotel 22-26 High Street

Alterations and rear additions

It was proposed by Keith Russell and seconded by Rob Ballantyne that the Council should take no strong views on this application and this was unanimously agreed.

P17/S1807/HH 4 Jemmetts Close

Addition of single storey pitched roof garage side extension, rear conservatory, glazed enclosure and conversion of existing garage to kitchen use including new windows front and back. Addition of timber porch and associated minor internal alterations.

The Council noted that there would be the loss of a parking space if this application is approved but it was proposed by Rob Ballantyne and seconded by Keith Russell that the Council should take no strong views on this application and this was unanimously agreed.

b. Neighbourhood Development Plan

The steering group had met on 9th June and agreed that Community First Oxfordshire would be asked to do some consultancy work for which the fee is £400 per day. The Parish Council received a grant of £5,000 from SODC to pay for the costs involved in the NDP process. Most of this grant is still available and so there is ample funding for all the work that will be needed to finish the Plan. The Group is minded to take the existing plan through its final stages and then immediately to form a new committee, possibly including some new members, who, over the next two years, would look at introducing some proposals for new developments. The advice which the group has received from the planning officer that SODC has appointed to assist its work has said that the plan as currently drafted is technically and legally correct.

c. Proposed sale of The Fleur de Lys, an Asset of Community Value

The Council noted that the current membership of the 'Friends of The Fleur' will hold a public meeting in the Village Hall on 6th July. This will decide whether there is sufficient support to request that SODC should declare a six-month moratorium so that 'The Friends' can prepare a bid.

12/6 Finance:

Current Account balance at 30/5	£60,538.68
Reserve Account balance at 5/6	<u>£47,869.38</u>
	£108,408.06

The Council noted a donation of £20 from Dorchester Angling Society for the use of Abbey View Meadow in 2017/18. This is an annual custom – the Society had been using the Meadow long before it came under Parish Council control thanks to the generosity of the late Richard Douglas.

It was proposed by Mike Rimmer and seconded by Keith Russell that the following payments should be approved. These were unanimously agreed:

Zurich Insurance (annual premium)	2,028.40
Total Pest Control (UK) Ltd (Rec, Cemetery, Play Area)	234.00
Carterton Lions (Records in a bottle scheme)	100.00
Oxfordshire County Council (Dorchester Flyer March and April)	378.00
Berinsfield Community Business (April grass)	1,114.50
Community First Oxfordshire (annual sub)	70.00
Sue Graney (defibrillator spare parts)	148.80
Town & Country Memorials Ltd (plaque)	117.60
Allan Smith (fixing plaque)	20.00
Neil Willis (strimming of paths)	93.50
Geoff Willis Village Handyman (4 weeks)	393.75
G Russell	538.82
G Russell (admin Feb – June)	<u>308.45</u>
	£5,545.82

A decision about whether to make a donation to Open Spaces Society Legal Department will be taken at the Council's July meeting.

Annual Return: The visit of the Internal Auditor which had been expected on 13th June has been postponed until 15th June so the Annual Report will be presented for approval at the July meeting.

13/6 New Division of Responsibilities between Councillors

After discussion, the following division of responsibilities was agreed:

Allotments: Mike Rimmer

Broadband: Oliver Margison

Car Parking: Chris Hill and Viviane Quirke

Cemetery: Keith Russell

Christmas Tree & Firework Display: Val Howells* will liaise with Sue Graney*

Defibrillator Supervisor: Sue Graney*

Earth Trust Local Stakeholder Group liaison: Mike Rimmer

Emergency Planning: Chris Hill

Flooding & Drainage: Keith Russell

Footpaths: Mark Williams

Gilbert Scott Memorial; Keith Russell

Hurst Water Meadow: Chris Hill

Land Registry and Open Spaces: Oliver Margison and Maurice Day

Neighbourhood Development Planning: Chris Hill, Mike Rimmer, Mark Williams, Rob Ballantyne and Maurice Day

Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust/Community Care etc. liaison: Rob Ballantyne
PAGE: Chris Hill
PCC: vacant
Playground: Val Howells*
Responsible Financial Officer: Geoff Russell, Parish Clerk
River Users Group: Simon Broadbent
School Governor: Val Howells*
Sports Club: Chris Hill
Street Lighting: Mark Williams
Tourism: Viviane Quirke
Transport Policy including Bus Services: Rob Ballantyne
Tree Officer: Mark Williams
Village Carbon Project: Oliver Margison
Village Hall: Keith Russell
Village Website: Mark Williams who will liaise with Sue Graney* and Dan Duke*

- *Non-member of the Parish Council*

14/6 Correspondence with Chairman and/or Clerk

The Chairman said that he has been contacted by a member of the public trying to trace a former village policeman called Robert Gregory, thought to be in the area in the early 1970s. Cllr Hill said that so far he has been unable to find any record.

15/6 Village Planting Proposal

Details of the proposal to create new wildlife habitats had been published in the June edition of Dorchester News along with Miss Susan Bowditch's promise that she would fund the whole scheme which is due to commence with planting in the autumn. The Clerk had received only one message of concern. This was from Dinah Picton of Herringcote and involved the proposed planting along the ditch in the Cemetery. There is currently an uninterrupted view across the Cemetery from Herringcote and she wants that to continue.

The Chairman will confirm to Miss Bowditch that her proposals are widely supported.

16/6 Land Registration Progress

The final papers concerning the land at 'Waterloo' and between 13 Bridge End and the River Thames will be signed before an officer of the court on 16th June.

17/6 Maintenance of Watling Lane

The Chairman told the Council about his communications with Richard Juniper, Nicholas Soffe and Adrian Townsend. It has been agreed that some of the proposed clearance will be carried out in July by a group known as 'Wallingford Green Gym'. The Council agreed that a formal maintenance programme should be established for future years so that last minute concerns can be avoided.

18/6 Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme Consultation

The Chairman is following up some of the points made in Shammy Puri's presentation especially about evidence of the flood modelling work.

19/6 Dorchester Village Website and Social Media

Following recent discussions between the Clerk, Sue Graney and Dan Duke, it has been agreed that the Parish Council will have its own section with a tab on the main navigation bar.

The Annual Parish Meeting will in future have its own pages within the PC section. This will make it easier to publish the non-PC reports that are given at the APM by organisations such as PAGE.

Dan will distribute information about the number of visitors and what pages are viewed on a monthly basis. The figures for May were distributed at the meeting. It was agreed that a brief report would appear on the website soon after each Parish Council meeting but the Minutes will continue to appear only after they have been approved the following month.

A disclaimer stating that the views expressed on the website are not necessarily the official views of the Parish Council will be more prominently displayed.

Councillors will shortly be asked to confirm the contact details that they are happy to appear on the website.

20/6 Routine Reports:

Sports Club Pavilion & Playground;

The Clerk confirmed that the annual Playground Safety Inspection has been booked for July.

Val Howells has reported that there is a slight unravelling of the cord at the top of the climbing ropes (the ropes associated with the large piece of equipment) but, as it is such a thick rope she is pretty certain it is safe. The old metal sack-holder ring needs removing; the grass needs to be rolled and all the equipment cleaned and painted.

The Chairman is trying to resolve the problems of Sports Club governance and future administration that have been caused by the recent multiple resignations. It may be necessary to introduce candidates from outside the present team.

Footpaths;

Footpath from Drayton Road to Hurst; Neil Willis to be asked to trim especially in the areas where the path has become narrow so there should be more clearance of blackberry bushes near the Manor Farm Road access.

A quote to re-surface this path will be obtained using the footpath alongside the Cemetery as the standard of surface desired.

More dog waste bag dispenser locations have been suggested. The Clerk will obtain a quote for the July Council meeting.

Cemetery/Closed Churchyard;

This year the Cemetery is being cut fortnightly. Maintenance of the area alongside the boundary with Page Furlong has been added to the job spec for BCB.

It was agreed that all the refuse sack holders need to be replaced. The Clerk will obtain a quote for the July Council meeting.

The audit of untended graves by Cllr Keith Russell and the Clerk is still needed.

Allotments

Maintenance of the boundary hedges has been discussed with Edward Metcalfe of the Allotments Society. The Chairman has also been in contact with Hannah Hudson of 45 Watling Lane.

The Council confirmed that it had no objection to an allotment holder running a money-raising display project through 'Just Giving'.

The Council noted that this year's Oxford Archaeology dig starts on 24th June. The Pavilion showers have been rented in return for a payment of £300 for the period 24th June to 8th July.

21/6 Any Other Urgent Matters

The Mike Smith Memorial bench has been removed for refurbishment at Pat Smith's expense before she moves away from the village in July. Allan Smith has the bench in his workshop at Page Furlong. It will be replaced outside the Co-Op in a few days.

Meeting closed at 10.25 p.m.