

Dorchester-on-Thames Parish Council

The Monthly Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 13th December 2017 commencing at 7.30 pm. The Chairman, Cllr Chris Hill presided; present were Cllrs. Rob Ballantyne, Maurice Day, Oliver Margison, Mike Rimmer, Keith Russell and Mark Williams (Vice-Chairman) with G. Russell in attendance.

1/12 Apologies for absence

Apologies were accepted from Cllr Viviane Quirke, County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale and District Cllr John Cotton all of whom had other commitments.

2/12 Public Participation

No members of the public were present.

3/12 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

None.

4/12 Minutes of the Meeting held 8th November 2017

It was proposed by Cllr Mike Rimmer and seconded by Cllr Oliver Margison that the minutes as circulated should be approved. This was unanimously agreed and the Chairman signed the Minutes as a true and accurate record.

5/12 Matters Arising from the Minutes

School Wall Safety; based upon the result of an official inspection the County Council has decided that there is no need for further action. This was noted by the Parish Council. It was agreed that the condition of this wall should be informally monitored.

Parish Christmas Tree; the new decorations have been welcomed.

Speedwatch; PCSO Sue Harris has said that the training to use the device does not take long. It was agreed that the team of volunteers needs to be identified and should meet in late February/early March with the aim to commence monitoring by April.

Village Hall; Cllr Mark Williams said that the Land Registry document for the Village Hall needs amendment. The boundary does not show the rear terrace and the address of the registered owner needs updating. The Clerk will progress this.

6/12 County Councillor's Report

County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale had sent her apologies. She also confirmed that she had supported the motion calling for a public enquiry prior to decision about the routing of the proposed Oxford/Cambridge Expressway, which the County had approved on the previous day, and had that morning held meetings about the Expressway with both the Council Leader, Ian Hudspeth, and the Campaign Coordinator, Peter Rutt. Routine matters had been dealt with in her monthly report which had been circulated prior to the meeting. There were no questions arising from this.

The Parish Council noted that the Application for the County to approve gravel extraction at Culham had been turned down but a similar Application at a site near Cholsey had been approved. It is understood that the Culham decision might be the subject of an appeal.

7/12 District Councillor's Report

District Cllr John Cotton had sent his apologies along with a note congratulating the Parish Council on its success in getting the NDP through. The Chairman commented that this news was earlier than he had been expecting.

8/12 Planning:

a. Applications:

17/S4179/HH 11 Bridge End; Single story rear and side extension

(The Chairman said that as an immediate neighbour of this site he would not take part in the Council's discussion).

The Council was told that Professor Malcolm Airs had commented upon this application on the basis that this is an important property which is subject to NDP Policy DOT 2. His letter to the Chairman dated 13th December said that it is one of a group of distinctive cottages built on the wayside waste following the demolition of the medieval bridge in 1816. Its essential character is its simple rectangular form complemented by the lean-to roof along the entrance elevation.

It was proposed by Cllr Oliver Margison and seconded by Cllr Mark Williams that the Council should take the view that the proposal is contrary to the policy of the emerging NDP and should be opposed. It should be added that the Council is not in principle against development of this site but that this design does not meet requirements. This was unanimously agreed (with the Chairman, as an interested party, abstaining).

17/S4143/LB 12 Bridge End Lime Mortar Repointing of Front Brick Façade

It was unanimously agreed that this Application should be approved.

ii. Neighbourhood Development Plan; Inspector's comments

The Chairman reported that Ricardo Rios, Senior Planning Policy Officer (Neighbourhood Planning), has advised the NDP Group to accept the Inspector's comments. The Parish Council agreed that it is content with these remarks and expressed its thanks to all those people who have been involved with the NDP process over several years. Cllr Margison said that after a successful referendum has been held the Parish Council should write to everyone involved and send each of them a token of the Council's appreciation.

iii. The Fleur de Lys Report

At the recent public meeting it was disclosed that the amount of funding raised is well below target, which in itself is well below the owner's asking price. It was commented that an alternative business model might have more success in raising the required funds and the matter would be discussed again in the new year.

9/12 Affordable Housing at 'Allens Pit'/ Housing Needs Survey

The Chairman reported that the Winterbournes are interested in promoting a development which contains 25% commercial plots. A Housing Needs Survey is necessary and would have to be paid for out of Parish Council funds. It was suggested that the Council should find out if either SOHA or the Sovereign Housing Association would be interested. Cllr Ballantyne suggested that contact should be made with Jason Winterbourne to see how he is getting on with these bodies and the Chairman said he would follow this up. Cllrs Oliver Margison and Mark Williams said that the Parish Council will need a new Housing Needs Survey anyway.

10/12 Registration of land known as 'Waterloo'

The Clerk reported that the Church's surveyor, John Scanlan, retires at Christmas and that he has exchanged emails with his replacement, Joan Diamond. He has supplied her with the evidence that has been submitted to the Land Registry. She will respond when she has spoken to Father John.

The Clerk has been told by the Land Registry officer that the existence of the fence erected by the Watsons is a problem. Ideally the fence will be removed before the Land Registry's inspector visits the site. The Council urgently needs to know if the Church gave the Watsons permission to erect the fence so that it can consider its future actions.

The Chairman has written to Alison Jarratt, Simon Escreet's former assistant, asking if she would be available to advise the Council direct but no reply has been received so far.

11/12 Oxford-Cambridge Expressway; campaign actions and expenses

The Campaign group has requested that each Parish Council make a donation of £50 and this was agreed. It is understood that the cheque should be paid to Cuddesdon Parish Council. Mrs Lammer from Herringcote has contacted the Clerk offering to join the campaign. She is not internet-connected so the Chairman is going to call round to assist her to get started.

12/12 Report on contact with Bishops Court Farm/FODLWOS

The Clerk reported that the site visit by County Councillors is now scheduled for Monday 15th January. They will be met by a representative from the Parish Council, Little Wittenham Parish Meeting, and FODLWOS.

13/12 Finance: Bank balances & payments

Current Account balance at 30/11	£56,989.36
Reserve Account balance at 5/12	<u>£47,873.04</u>
	£104,862.40

The following payments were approved:

Castle Water Limited	368.16
Sue Graney (Christmas tree decorations)	201.58
Berinsfield Community Business (November Grass)	759.36
Berinsfield Community Business (Cemetery footpath)	356.76
Berinsfield Community Business (Cemetery hedge on Drayton Rd)	570.00
Berinsfield Community Business (New Cemetery Gate)	630.42
(total to BCB £2,316.54)	
BDO LLP (Audit fee)	396.00
CPRE (annual sub.)	36.00
Oxfordshire County Council (Flyer service Sept. and Oct.)	378.00
Neil Willis (Handyman duties)	61.25
Geoff Willis (Village Handyman (4 weeks))	253.75
G Russell (Admin)	218.50
G Russell (salary)	<u>538.82</u>
	4768.60

The Notice of Conclusion of Audit for 2016/17 is to be displayed on notice boards with an invitation to view the accounts at Clerk's office by appointment.

The Precept for 2018/19 must be decided at the Council's January meeting so the Clerk will prepare draft accounts and financial statement for the period ended 31st December.

The Council noted that it has been announced by NatWest that its Wallingford branch is to close next summer. The Council agreed that it should investigate a move to on-line banking.

14/12 Correspondence with Chairman and/or Clerk

- i. TPO on magnolia tree by Belcher Court; Phil Greenaway has suggested that Jenny Nudds can supply some useful historical info. He thinks that Jenny's father might have planted the tree.
- ii. There has been a suggestion that a resident of Page Furlong may be enclosing some land that should be left for open access. The Chairman said that he would make contact with this resident.

- iii. The Clerk has been told that a mobile post office service could start by the end of February and the council has been asked to suggest a location. Outside the Village Hall is where the mobile library used to park but most councillors thought that outside the Co-Op is a more central and visible location. The Clerk will ask how big the proposed vehicle will be, how frequently it will visit and for how long it will stay on each occasion.
- iv. Details about the proposed Abbey and Guest House alterations have been proposed and circulated. This will be an agenda item for January.
- v. Susan Bowditch has been reporting regularly to the Chairman and Clerk about the progress being made with her plans for introducing more wildlife-friendly habitats.
- vi. It was suggested that a discussion about the proposed alterations and improvements to the Village Hall should be held as part of the Council's February meeting.

15/12 Storage Container Trial at Berinsfield

It was agreed to proceed with renting this container for a trial period of six months @ around £17 per week. The Council's emergency equipment will be placed inside along with the decorations from the Village Christmas tree, some paperwork from the early years of the NDP process and some document storage from the Clerk's office. Keys will be held by the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, Cllr Margison and the Clerk

16/12 Revision of Allotment Society Rules

The Chairman has been in contact with the Society about this. A draft set of rules has been discussed and there will be some amendments as a result which will deal with archaeological finds and the lighting of fires. It was agreed that applications for the erection of sheds could be dealt with by the Parish Councillor with special Allotments responsibility, currently Cllr Mike Rimmer. The Chairman will prepare and circulate the new document.

17/12 Primary Care

Cllr Rob Ballantyne said that he recently attended a meeting of the local Clinical Commissioning Group. The main local concerns are caused by the expected one-third increase in the local population over the next few years and within that by an increase in the proportion of older people.

A new Berinsfield Health Centre is close to entering the detailed planning stage and it is expected that the Clifton Hampden Surgery will eventually move to Culham.

Cllr Ballantyne will tell this Group of the Parish Council's interest in these matters and ask for the Group to keep in touch.

18/12 Routine Reports:

a. Sports Club Pavilion & Playground;

Repairs to the turf damaged by the bonfire on 5th November have been completed and the invoice sent by BCB direct to Footsteps.

There has been a useful discussion with Dave Rippington of the Cricket Club about where the fire should be located in future years and making sure that it does not get any bigger. Sue Graney and Val Howells have both indicated that they would not wish to be involved in future years.

The status of the Sports Club re-organisation is not known.

b Footpaths;

There is a fallen tree on the path alongside Cemetery. Susan Bowditch and her contractor will take care of it (saving the tree if possible).

c. Cemetery/Closed Churchyard;

Cllr Keith Russell has reported to Denis Froude that the moles are back in the Closed Churchyard. Denis is due to take over all the Council's mole and rabbit control duties early next month.

The inspection and recording of untidy graves is to be held over until February or March.

d. Allotments

Rents received for 2017/18 to date amount to £1,015, the same as for the whole of last year. Waymarks from the County Council are expected by Christmas. Four posts are to be installed by the Allotments Society to mark the route of the designated footpath across the Allotments from Rotten Row to Watling Lane.

Rats – Denis Froude's recommendations have been discussed at a Society committee and, as a preliminary measure, it has been agreed to have a good clean up and ensure food waste is removed from compost bins.

19/12 Any Other Urgent Matters

There was a short discussion about the value of the Parish Council obtaining software for accounting, maintaining asset registers and asset locations, grounds maintenance, cemetery records and so on. Having looked into the various specialist packages available the Clerk will report on this at the January meeting. The Chairman will talk to the Village webmaster with a view to getting his input to some of these projects especially village asset mapping.

Meeting closed at 9.45 p.m.