**Dorchester Parish Council**

The Monthly Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 13th February 2019 commencing at 7.30 p.m. The Chairman, Cllr Chris Hill, presided; present were Cllrs. Rob Ballantyne, Maurice Day, Keith Russell and Mark Williams (Vice-Chairman) with G Russell in attendance. Also present for part of the meeting were District Cllr John Cotton and two residents.

1/2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were accepted from Cllrs Mike Rimmer, Oliver Margison, and Viviane Quirke and County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale

2/2 Public Participation

Val Howells reported that the PTA of the Village School has become a charity and that she is waiting for a ‘Just Giving’ account to be approved. She is arranging for the fund-raising campaign to be advertised in ‘Dorchester News’ and this will be supported by a separate village-wide, house-to-house leaflet delivery. Val submitted draft copy for both the advertisement and the leaflet for the approval of the Parish Council, to be confirmed after the meeting.

District Cllr John Cotton said that he hoped to have more funds available for local projects available from June and that County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale may also be able to help.

Keith Ives gave the Council some background details in support of his planning application P18/S4265/FUL 41 Abingdon Road, which would be discussed later in the meeting. He emphasised the ‘eco’ friendly design of the new structure and the fact that when the present dwelling is demolished all of the materials will be recycled.

3/2 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

The Chairman re land at Waterloo and behind 13 Bridge End as before (Minute 3/3 2018).

4/2 Minutes of the Monthly Meeting held on 9th January 2019

It was proposed by Cllr Keith Russell that the Minutes as circulated should be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Maurice Day and carried unanimously. The Chairman signed the Minutes as being a true record.

5/2 Matters Arising from the Minutes

1. There have been complaints about the surface of Cheyney Lane. The Clerk said that he would ask the County Highways Inspector if this could be repaired.
2. The Chairman will progress the project to fit the old ‘phone box in Bridge End with a defibrillator. Two of the window panes need repair.
3. The anchor post for the High Street bus shelter will be re-installed. The Clerk will talk to Trevor Greenaway about what refurbishment can be carried out before the end of March.

6/2 County Councillor’s Report

A written report from County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale has been circulated.

7/2 District Councillor’s Report

District Cllr John Cotton forecast that there will be Council Tax rises from the County, District and Police. He encouraged Councillors to play an active role in the consultation process for the South Oxfordshire Local Plan. Among the issues for consideration are the overall number of homes planned, their density and the proportion that should be ‘affordable’ – a very high number risks potential developers losing interest. The location of this housing mostly on green belt sites around the edge of Oxford is also very contentious.

8/2 Planning

i. Applications:

P19/S0261/HH 3 Tenpenny; Single storey rear extension

It was proposed by Cllr Rob Ballantyne that the Council should have No Objection to this Application. This was seconded by Cllr Keith Russell and approved unanimously.

P18/S4265/FUL 41 Abingdon Road; Demolition of existing bungalow and erection of a two-storey family home with basement level.

Several councillors and some neighbours had expressed concerns about aspects of this Application, not least because the site is so prominent. Upon hearing these concerns the Applicant said that he would be willing to make adjustments and to return with a new plan.

Pending these changes being made, however, it was proposed by Cllr Rob Ballantyne that the Council should Object to the Application as being of a mass, scale and heightthatis too large for the plot, and for the position relatively close to the road on which it is located. This was seconded by Cllr Keith Russell and approved unanimously

NLREG41 Dyke Hills Village Green Application Re-advertisement

The Council noted that this Application has been delayed because of an error in the drafting of the public notice issued in December. This has caused the Application to be re-advertised.

ii. Belcher Court access; Possible encroachment on land owned by Parish Council.

There have been complaints from some local residents about obstructions being caused by vehicles belonging to site workers and construction service vehicles. These matters should be raised with the site foreman who is reported by near neighbours of the building work to be very helpful.

The Clerk was asked to raise again with Freeths, the Council’s advising solicitors, the control of site access arrangements across land which is owned by Parish Council and whether the Council can insist that any damage to its property is made good at the expense of the developers, SOHA. It is thought that South Oxfordshire District Council is also involved in these questions.

iii. South Oxfordshire Local Plan Consultation

It was agreed that the Parish Council should send in an official objection to the SODC Local Plan and Councillors were encouraged to do so as individuals. In all cases the box should be ticked to ensure the opportunity of being involved in the inspector’s assessment of the Plan later in the year. The Chairman will draft the Council’s submission; Cllr Ballantyne drew the Council’s attention to the apparent lack of integrated thinking about public transport on buses and facilities for cyclists, which had led to the Plan’s transport provisions being unsustainable.

9/2 Finance;

Bank Balances:

Current Account at 30th January 2019 £41,813.16

Reserve Account at 5th February £47,925.06

£89,738.22

The following payments were recommended for approval by Cllr Keith Russell. This was seconded by Cllr Rob Ballantyne and approved unanimously:

Q Transport (Oxford) Ltd (Container rental) 92.76

BCB (Cemetery and bus-shelter) 1,332.00

Oxfordshire County Council (Flyer 2 months) 337.50

Denis Froud (Pest control Jan to April) 805.00

Southern Electric (Pavilion) 135.99

South Oxfordshire District Council (dog bins) 117.86

Face North Forestry Ltd (chipper Page Furlong) 360.00

Castle Water Limited (Pavilion) 133.18

Castle Water Limited (Cemetery for year) 108.54

OALC (books) 8.00

Society of Local Council Clerks (annual sub) 122.00

Association of Local Council Clerks (annual sub) 40.00

Geoff Willis (Village Handyman) 398.13

G Russell (admin 3 months) 228.00

G Russell (salary) 549.65

£4,768.61

An appeal for a donation has been received from Wallingford Volunteer Centre. The decision upon whether or not a donation will be made will be considered at the March Council meeting

Cllr Rob Ballantyne said that following the opening of the branch of Lidl at Hithercroft it has been suggested that the Dorchester Flyer should include this as a regular stop.

Cllr Ballantyne pointed out that while the new map for the ‘River Rapids’ service showed Dorchester-on-Thames located near the route, the times at which the service calls at the by-pass bus stops are not included. The Council agreed that Cllr Ballantyne should write to Thames Travel requesting this information is supplied.

ii. Final S137/Charitable Donations for 2018/19

The Clerk will produce a summary of all the S137/charitable donations that have been made to ensure that the maximum permitted allowance is not breached.

10/2 Land Registration: ‘Waterloo’ and War Memorial and other areas

Following consideration of the letter from solicitors acting on behalf of the occupants of 13 Bridge End and the advice that the Council has received both from the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils and its own solicitor, Wellers Hedleys, the Council believes that ever since Mr and Mrs Watson attended the Parish Council meeting in April 2015 and raised in public the matter of care, control and access to some of the land adjacent to their property at 13 Bridge End, dealing with all aspects of this topic has given the Council a ‘public task’, the conduct of which must be recorded in the minutes of the Parish Council meetings. For clarity of identification these records require the address of the property and the names of the owners to be published.

The Council has a legitimate interest in this property because trees on the land in question have in the past been maintained by the Parish Council and many members of the community claim that that there has been (and should continue to be) public access to the site for generations. This matter is far from being one that is private and personal to the Watsons alone. In fact, it is in the public domain.

Such data that the Council has about Mr and Mrs Watson has been provided by the Watsons themselves and is limited to their names and postal address. Paper and scanned electronic copies of their correspondence with the Council carry this information but it has not been entered in to any formal data base nor communicated with any third parties beyond the Parish Council’s advisors. The Council has no knowledge of any of the Watsons’ telephone numbers, electronic mail addresses etc and has no interest in obtaining these. The suggestion that in this matter the Council has in any way contravened GDPR is therefore rejected.

11/2 Correspondence with Chairman and/or Clerk

1. It was agreed that the charge for providing off-street car parking for this year’s Dorchester Festival should be £200, the same fee as in 2015 and 2017.
2. Although there is as yet no confirmed organiser it was agreed that the date for this year’s Dorchester Fireworks Display should be provisionally set as Saturday 2nd November

12/2 Affordable Housing Project

The Chairman reported that Sovereign is making progress preparing the scheme and draft plans have been drawn up by the company’s architects. It was agreed that Sovereign should be invited to attend the Annual Parish Meeting on 17th April.

13/2 Parish Council Grass-cutting and Groundworks 2019

The Council noted that Berinsfield Community Business has ceased trading and is being prepared for a solvent liquidation. The grass-cutting scheduled for March will be carried out by a sub-contractor known as the Landscape Group, working for the same price as BCB. It is understood that several parish councils, former clients of BCB, have transferred their contracts to the Landscape Group, which has been in business for 14 years and is prepared to take over BCB business offering 2/3 years of continuity.

14/2 Speedwatch 2019

New volunteers have been requested in an article in ‘Dorchester News’.

15/2 Annual Parish Meeting 17th April 2019

County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale and District Cllr John Cotton have agreed to take part in the meeting. Representatives from PAGE and Sovereign have been invited.

16/2 Routine Reports:

a. Sports Pavilion & Playground;

The contractor carrying out the Play area repairs has agreed to complete the work before the end of March.

b. Footpaths;

The County Council has confirmed that the Parish Council will be consulted when the application for a variation in the route of the footpath around the buildings at Bishops Court Farm is considered.

c. Cemetery/Closed Churchyard;

It is hoped to get the Adopt-a Grave scheme under way in March/April. There is to be an article about the scheme in the March ‘Dorchester News’. The Clerk is to supply Cllr Keith Russell with the names of those who have volunteered to take part. Cllr Day suggested that some more trees in the Parish Cemetery should be removed.

d. Allotments

The Chairman reported that the draft new tenancy agreement is being prepared for approval at the next Parish Council meeting.

The Clerk confirmed that Tom Cottrell Landscapes is to repair the perimeter fence.

18/2 Any Other Urgent Matters

In response to a question from Cllr Day, the Clerk confirmed that the white lines in High Street, Queen Street and Manor Farm Road are due for re-painting as soon as warmer weather arrives.

Meeting closed at 10.09 p.m.