**Dorchester Parish Council**

The Monthly Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 8th January 2020 commencing at 7.30 p.m. The Chairman, Cllr Mark Williams, presided; present were Cllrs. Rob Ballantyne (Vice-Chairman), Maurice Day, Chris Hill, Viviane Quirke, Mike Rimmer and Keith Russell with G Russell (Clerk to the Council) in attendance. Also present for part of the meeting were three residents.

1/1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for Absence were accepted from Cllr Mike Corran who was away and District Cllr Robin Bennett who was unwell.

2/1 Public Participation

Mr Jason Winterbourne informed the Council about the latest development plans for the site on Abingdon Road known as Allens Pit, of which he is a part-owner.

3/1 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Cllr. Mark Williams concerning village maintenance work that is carried out by any company with whom he works, principally grass-cutting and grounds maintenance.

Cllr Chris Hill said that he would take no part in the decision regarding P19/S4479/HH 45 Watling Lane because he is a friend of the Applicant.

4/1 Minutes of the Meeting held on 11th December 2019

It was proposed by Cllr Mike Rimmer that the minutes as circulated should be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Viviane Quirke and passed unanimously. The Chairman signed the Minute Book at a true record.

5/1 Matters Arising from the Minutes

a. The Clerk has contacted the Area Highways Inspector about the long delay in repairing the light above the access to the by-pass bus stop on the southbound carriage. This was logged on ‘Fix My Street’ in September and since that time has had the status ‘Action scheduled’. The Clerk will contact the Inspector again, with a copy to County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale, saying that the delay is unacceptable since it is causing a road safety problem.

b. The Village Christmas Tree has now been taken down and the Council expressed its thanks to Cllr Chris Hill and his team of helpers. Several residents expressed their appreciation of the display, but it was agreed that next time there should be more decorations and, especially, more lights.

c. The Clerk will make contact with the County traffic officers about the location and timing of the proposed village speed surveys with a view to having something in place by the end of March.

6/1 County Councillor’s Report

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

7/1 District Councillor’s Report

A written report from District Cllr Robin Bennett has been received and circulated. Cllr Rob Ballantyne confirmed that he has made an application to Cllr Bennett for a grant towards the cost of providing a defibrillator in the former telephone box in Bridge End. The sum of £1,000 has been requested which would leave the Council to find the balance of £600.

8/1 Council’s Four-Year Vision

a. The Chairman has requested advice from SODC Planning about whether the Council should conduct a ‘light review’ of its Neighbourhood Development Plan at the end of Year 3.

b. District Cllr Robin Bennett will inform the Council if SODC would give its approval to repainting and refurbishment work to the building containing the public lavatories in Bridge End. He will also follow up the suggestion made by Healthmatic that there should be an audit of the facility’s usage. The Clerk reported on his contact with Watlington Parish Council concerning their arrangements for running a similar facility in the village.

c. It was agreed to organise working parties to plant bulbs in several locations.

9/1 Planning Applications:

P19/S4508/FUL Land at Allens Pit Abingdon Road; Proposed development of site to provide residential development for 2 apartments and 6 houses with new vehicular access and allocated parking.

Cllr Chris Hill summarised the design comments that, together with Cllr Rob Ballantyne and advised by Malcolm Airs, he has submitted on behalf of the Parish Council during the development of these plans by the team at Sovereign. The Parish Council agreed to support this Application subject to the market houses not changing from the current design. Cllr Ballantyne will draft the Council’s formal response.

P19/S4490/LB 28 Bridge End; Replacement of failed lath and plaster ceiling and repairs to cracks in plaster finishes to wall.

The Council agreed that it fully supports this Application.

P19/S4479/HH 45 Watling Lane; Single-storey side extension and alterations to residential dwelling.

The Council has No Objections to this Application

P19/S4348/LB Thatchers Cottage 15 Queen Street; Renew thatch to cottage with wheat straw and a flash ridge.

The Council has No Objections to this Application

P19/S3317/FUL 26 Martins Lane (Amendment 2 dated 16th December)

The Council sees no reason to alter the view that it has previously expressed.

P19/S4717/HH 14 Page Furlong Alterations and additions

The Council has No Objections to this Application

10/1 . Finance:

i. Bank Balances & Payments

NatWest Current Account balance at 30/12/19 £46,474.26

NatWest Reserve Account balance at 3/1/20 £48,012.85

£94,487.11

The following payments were approved:

Oxfordshire South & Vale Citizens Advice – (Grant) 300.00

Q Transport (Oxford) Ltd (Container rental) 92.76

Oxfordshire County Council (Flyer) 112.50

Society of Local Council Clerks (annual sub) 140.00

Chris Hill (Christmas Tree decorations) 57.38

Castle Water Ltd (Allotments) 100.11

Castle Water Ltd (Sportsground) 37.38

The Landscape Group Oxford (Abbey View trees and hedge) 588.00

Geoff Willis (Village Handyman) 297.50

G Russell (salary) 775.98

£2,501.61

ii Precept 2020/21

The Parish Council Precept has been held at £42,280 since 2015/16. The Council agreed that in 2020/21 the Precept should be £43,350, an increase of 2.53%.

The Clerk confirmed that CIL money received to date amounted to £7,441.20.

iii Clerk’s Contract

It was agreed to carry forward discussion of this matter to the February meeting.

11/1 Correspondence with Chairman and/or Clerk

The Council is invited to attend the meeting of the Oxfordshire Neighbourhood Plans Alliance to be held at Chalgrove on Saturday, 11th January but no-one is available.

12/1 Village Communications including Website Accessibility

It has not yet been possible to arrange a meeting of the relevant people and so it was agreed to carry forward discussion of this matter to February.

13/1 Village Maintenance including Volunteer Projects

a. Louise Beland has provided more evidence that the boundary fence outside 20 Meadside is in the wrong place causing road safety problems because of important sight lines becoming blocked. The Clerk will go back to SOHA and SODC with these details.

b. The Chairman obtained a third quotation from contractors pricing repairs to the road leading to the Cemetery. The most competitive quote was supplied by The Landscape Group Oxford and it was agreed that this firm should be asked to carry out the work. It was noted that access into the Cemetery by a hearse is currently not possible.

14/1 VE Day Commemoration

The Parish Council and the Rector are in communication to plan an event(s) over the weekend which begins with a public holiday on Friday 8th May (this replaces the normal May Day holiday that would have taken place on Monday 4th May). The Council agreed to make contact with local members and supporters of the Royal British Legion. Cllr. Chris Hill will follow up this suggestion and the Clerk will contact the Village School about its plans.

15/1 River of Life II Project: Use of Abbey View Meadow

Cllr Mike Rimmer has written to Rebecca Chiazzese about the terms of the proposed licence and her reply awaited.

The Clerk will order extra parking signs indicating an area of roadside parking along Henley Road between Meadside and Dorchester Bridge. These signs will be useful whenever it is necessary to close Abbey View Meadow due to bad weather.

16/1 Newcomers’ Evening 20th February

It was agreed that the event should be described as an ‘Information Evening that is open to all’ not just to residents who have moved to the Village since the last such evening in October 2016. It will be advertised comprehensively around the Village.

The Parish Council will provide light refreshments free of charge and Cllrs Viviane Quirke and Chris Hill agreed to take charge of these arrangements.

17/1 Routine Reports:

a. Sports Pavilion Recreation Ground & Playground; The recent complaints about an increase in dog fouling on the Recreation Ground have been written up in ‘Dorchester News’ February issue with an appeal for those responsible to show more consideration.

b. Footpaths; the Clerk confirmed that work to reduce the dead tree behind 41 Martins Lane will be carried out during the forthcoming village school half term holiday which is 17th - 21st February. This is in order to minimise the impact upon surrounding premises when the electricity supply is turned off so that the work on the tree can be safely done. The electricity company has agreed to make no charge for this service because the tree work will also improve the security of their equipment.

The footpath section of Malthouse Lane, the path that runs alongside the Cemetery and the short length of path which connects the end of Rotten Row to the Allotments have all been reported as needing attention. Costings are required.

c. Cemetery/Closed Churchyard; Nothing to report

d. Allotments; Some rents have been received but the number of tenants is down.

18/1 Any Other Urgent Matters

a. Potholes in the road outside 9 and 11 Bridge End are to be reported via FixMyStreet.

b. The rubbish placed in the bin outside the Co-Op in the High Street will no longer be removed by the Co-Op since there is no way of ensuring that it can all be recycled. The task of taking away the contents of the bin must now be transferred to the District Council.

c. Cllr Viviane Quirke reported that she has been in contact with Anthony Dumper of Abingdon & Oxford Anglers Alliance concerning access to the walk around the Alliance’s lake off Drayton Road. This is available to permit-holders and controlled by a padlock with a code. Everyone who is granted a permit will obtain the code from the Alliance.

The Meeting closed at 9.10 p.m.