**Dorchester Parish Council**

The Monthly Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 12th February 2020 commencing at 7.30 p.m. The Chairman, Cllr Mark Williams, presided; present were Cllrs. Rob Ballantyne (Vice-Chairman), Mike Corran, Maurice Day, Chris Hill, and Mike Rimmer with G Russell (Clerk to the Council) in attendance. Also present for part of the meeting were two residents, County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale and District Cllr Robin Bennett.

1/2 Apologies for absence

Apologies for Absence were accepted from Cllrs Viviane Quirke and Keith Russell who had other engagements.

2/2 Public Participation

The Applicant responsible for P19/S4688/HH Bridge End House 2 High Street offered to answer any questions about this development but the Council confirmed that it had none.

The Applicant responsible for P19/S3317/FUL 26 Martins Lane was in attendance at the meeting to support a request from his architect, Richard Anderson, that the Council should review if this Application is in conflict with the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP).

It was agreed that the Parish Council would withdraw its objection to this specific application although in general terms the point made by the NDP in DoT 8 is confirmed and will continue to inform the Council’s approach to dealing with future applications.

3/2 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.

4/2 Minutes of the Meeting held on 8th January 2020

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

5/2 Matters Arising from the Minutes

a. It was agreed that the Clerk will send to County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale copies of the correspondence which he has had with the Area Highways Inspector about the lack of repair to the light over the access to the bus stop on the southbound carriageway of the by-pass (logged on ‘Fix My Street’ as receiving attention in September 2019). The County Councillor will support the Council’s request that action is now taken.

b. The Clerk will progress arrangements for a new Speedwatch survey at a meeting with County Officers on 17th February.

c. The meeting of the Council’s Communications sub-group will take place on 17th February and will include discussion about the Village Website’s compliance with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No.2) Accessibility Regulations which came into force on 23rd September 2018. The purpose of the Regulations is to improve the accessibility of public sector websites/mobile apps so that they can be used by as many people as possible.

d. The potholes in Bridge End have been repaired.

6/2 County Councillor’s Report

A written report has been received and circulated. County Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale updated this with her report about the County Council’s recent debate upon whether it is willing to take over responsibility for the South Oxfordshire Local Plan if requested to do so by Robert Jenrick, Secretary of State for Housing Communities and Local Government.

7/2 District Councillor’s Report

A written report by District Cllr Robin Bennett has been received and circulated.

8/2 Council’s Four-Year Vision

a. The current Neighbourhood Development Plan is scheduled to be reviewed after two years but the Chairman pointed out that there have been no suggested changes to the Plan so far and proposed that the review should be postponed for 12 months. This was agreed.

b. District Cllr Bennett told the Clerk that John Backley is the officer to contact about the Parish Council’s wish to improve the facilities and presentation of the public lavatories in Bridge End and to present suggestions about how this should be paid for.

c. It was agreed that Cllr Mike Corran would arrange the working party to plant bulbs.

9/2 Planning

a. Applications:

P20/S0131/FUL 41 Abingdon Road; Variation of conditions 2 (approved plans) and 6 (first floor windows) of application P19/S1746/FUL-Internal layout alterations to ground and first floor bedrooms. Slight relocation of bathroom windows facing South East elevation and North West elevation to suit proposed layouts. Alterations to basement footprint only, to suit construction process and buildability. Demolition of existing bungalow and erection of a two-storey family home with basement level.

The Council noted these variations and agreed to make no further objection or comment.

P19/S4688/HH Bridge End House 2 High Street; Proposed extension and alterations to include re-cladding of existing dwelling

The Council agreed that it has No Objections to this Application.

b Other Planning Matters;

P19/S4508/FUL Land at Allens Pit Abingdon Road Dorchester-on-Thames OX10 7JY;

Proposed development of site to provide residential development for 2 apartments and 6 houses with new vehicular access.

It is understood that the consultation process has raised several matters and progress of this application will be closely monitored.

Footpath Diversion Bishops Court Farm;

Cllr Mike Corran reported a conversation which he had held with County Rights of Way Officer Andy Sylvester. Negotiations about the exact route of the diverted footpath are ongoing and there is still a possibility that fencing will be proposed. Cllr Corran expects that further consultation will be required.

10/2 Finance:

 i. Bank Balances & Payments

NatWest Current Account balance at 30/1 £45,759.18

NatWest Reserve Account balance at 5/2 £48,021.01

 £93,780.19

It was proposed by Cllr Mike Corran that the following payments should be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Rob Ballantyne and passed unanimously:

Dorchester on Thames Village Hall (phone and broadband) 1,220.40

Earth Trust (Christmas tree) 101.00

Trevor Greenaway (memorial plaque and gate repair) 45.00

OALC (Training event for trustees) 108.00

Q Transport (Oxford) Ltd (Container rental) 92.76

Oxfordshire County Council (Flyer January) 187.50

South Oxfordshire District Council (dog bin service 6 months) 248.64

SSE (Pavilion Electricity) 144.94

CommuniCorp (annual sub to ClerksandCouncilsDirect.co.uk 100.00

Dennis Froud (pest control 6 months) 1,610.00

Castle Water Ltd (Allotments) 103.45

The Landscape Group Oxford 978.00

Face North Forestry Ltd 564.00

Geoff Willis (Village Handyman) 371.87

G Russell (salary) 775.98

£6651.54

The Clerk reported that the Council’s application to be granted on-line banking facilities is still on-going.

 ii Clerk’s Contract

Carry forward to March meeting

11/2 Correspondence with Chairman and/or Clerk

a. The Clerk has received a letter from the Oxfordshire Neighbourhood Plans Alliance (ONPA) with questions about how Dorchester’s Neighbourhood Development Plan is progressing. He has passed this to the Councillors who were involved in writing the Plan.

b. The Council has been invited to attend the District Council Charity Dinner on Friday 20th March The Oxfordshire Golf Club but no-one is able to attend.

12/2 Village Information Evening 20th February

There has been a good take up of the exhibition space and a comprehensive range of village information will be available on the night. The Clerk is arranging publicity for the evening via a village-wide display of A4 posters and delivery of an A5 leaflet to the homes of some of those known to have recently moved to the Village.

Cllr Viviane Quirke is organising the refreshments and will be assisted by Cllr Chris Hill.

13/2 . Village Maintenance including Volunteer Projects

The comments received from Andrew Clements are to be circulated.

14/2 VE Day Commemoration

Correspondence from the Rector has been circulated. A group of residents has expressed an interest in running a themed evening event in the Village Hall on Friday 8th May. Cllr Chris Hill is in contact with them and is also trying to revive the Village branch of the Royal British Legion. Publicity for both of these projects will displayed at the Village Information Evening.

15/2 River of Life II Project: Use of Abbey View Meadow

The formal agreement between the Parish Council and the Earth Trust is being progressed.

16/2 Land Registration

The Clerk has met Roger Taylor of Wellers Law and given him his files about the registration of the land around the War Memorial and the land known as Waterloo off Bridge End.

17/2 Village Fireworks 2020

The Parish Council has been informed by Footsteps Foundation that it does not wish to run the display in 2020. The Council will not be looking for an alternative organiser.

18/2 Community Emergency Planning – County Survey

The County Survey of Parish Emergency Plans is due to be completed by 31st March. A paper copy of the current plan will be distributed to Councillors for comment. Cllr Mike Corran said that he would work through the document and make suggestions.

The Council discussed the difficulty of creating and maintaining lists of ‘vulnerable people’ both in practical terms and also in compliance with GDPR. It was agreed that it may be possible to co-operate with the Abbey’s Pastoral Care Group but that the natural tendency for the vast majority of residents to be ‘good neighbours’ together with their local knowledge would be the best resource should any emergency situation arise.

19/2 Routine Reports:

a. Sports Pavilion Recreation Ground & Playground;

The Council confirmed its approval for the Tennis /Netball and 5-a-side soccer courts repair and repainting project which had been described in an emailed letter from Chris Smith, Chairman of Dorchester Tennis Club, dated 14th January. This is being managed and funded by the Tennis Club.

It is reported that there are some repairs needed to the Pavilion building. The Clerk has asked Trevor Greenaway for a quote.

b. Footpaths;

The reduction of the dead tree behind 41 Martins Lane is being done on Tuesday 18th Feb. The electricity supply will be turned off in that area of the Village while this is done.

The Chairman advised that the laying of pea shingle on the path alongside the Cemetery would not improve its condition as much as a simple clean and tidy operation. This was agreed along with the suggestion that there should be some patch repairs in the paths leading from Malthouse Lane to Watling Land and from the end of Rotten Row to the Allotments.

c. Cemetery/Closed Churchyard;

The Council approved the Application for a memorial headstone to commemorate the life of Jane Hill that would exactly match the headstone for her late husband Leo Hill which had been erected in 2005.

d. Allotments

The Council noted that a nesting box has been placed in the boundary hedge adjacent to the site of the recent archaeological excavations.

20/2 Any Other Urgent Matters

a. Annual Parish Meeting; It was agreed that the Annual Parish Meeting should take place on Wednesday 8th April and would be followed by the April monthly meeting of the Parish Council. Among the invited speakers would be our County and District Councillors and representatives from PAGE and Neighbourhood Watch.

b. PAGE 20/20; Following the County Council’s decision to excavate an area north of Nuneham Courtenay, this new group will represent the interests of the parishes of Berinsfield, Drayton St Leonard, Newington and Stadhampton.

Funds received by the original PAGE group from parishes which are thought to be no longer at risk from having gravel extracted within their boundaries will receive a repayment.

The Meeting closed at 9.32 p.m.

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.