**Dorchester Parish Council**

The Monthly Meeting of the Parish Council was held on Wednesday 10th November 2021 in the back room of the Village Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m.

The Chairman, Cllr Mark Williams, presided with Cllrs. Rob Ballantyne (Vice-Chairman), Mike Corran, Maurice Day, John Edwards, Chris Hill and Keith Russell present and with G Russell (Clerk to the Council) in attendance. Also present for part of the time were County and District Councillor Robin Bennett and five residents

1/11. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence on medical grounds were accepted from Cllr Mike Rimmer.

2/11. 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 and also, as a near neighbour, the Planning Applications regarding the creation of a new vehicular access from Abingdon Road to Bishop’s Court Farm. As another near neighbour of Bishop’s Court Farm who lives adjacent to the existing access, Cllr Mike Corran also declared that he has an interest in the same Applications.

3/11. Public Participation

The Vice-Chairman, Cllr Rob Ballantyne, took the chair while several members of the public expressed their views concerning the Applications which involve the creation of a new vehicular access from Abingdon Road to Bishop’s Court Farm. All those who spoke expressed their opposition to the creation of this access. It was agreed that there had once been a road along this route but that was when it was used only by horses and carts. There is now a wide access road into the Farm from the High Street which should be sufficient to provide for the needs of both domestic and commercial traffic currently serving the property.

4/11. Minutes of the Meeting held on 6th October 2021

Cllr John Edwards proposed that the Minutes as circulated should be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Mike Corran and passed unanimously.

5/11. Matters Arising from the Minutes

Allens Pit, Abingdon Road; Cllr Rob Ballantyne reported on a message received from Sovereign reporting changes in their project management team. It was hoped that the new contacts, together with the landowner, would soon be able to indicate that the project will be going ahead in 2022. In the meantime, Cllr Ballantyne hopes to get some information from Keith Ives, who owns the adjoining land, about sharing infrastructure which could provide a low-cost heating resource.

River of Life groundworks; the Clerk has informed Abbey event organisers and Dorchester Anglers that to allow the surface to recover from the recent works traffic impact, there will be no parking in Abbey View until the Spring. This has been understood and accepted.

6/11. County Council & District Council Reports

Written reports about County and District Council activities have been received and circulated. They will appear on the Village website and the December/January edition of Dorchester News. Cllr Bennett attended the meeting and invited applications for grants from his discretionary funding programme in 2021/22.

The Chairman asked County Cllr Bennett about the continuing nuisance of traffic noise from motor bikes using the by-pass. Cllr Bennett said that this enforcement matter is being raised with the Police & Crime Commissioner Matthew Barber. Robin says SODC Environmental Health will not involve themselves in traffic noise control.

The Council noted that changes have been made to the County Council’s framework for introducing 20mph speed limits in some areas. These need to be publicised and debated within the community.

7/11. Councillor Responsibilities 2021/22

The latest list of responsibility allocations had been circulated with the Minutes of the October meeting. It was agreed that there needs to be further discussion about what these responsibilities involve and a reporting process needs to be established.

Cllr Chris Hill said that he is stepping down as the Council’s representative on the Hurst Water Meadow Trust. The Clerk was asked to contact Robin Bennett as Chair of the Village School Governing body to ask if he could suggest any candidates to fill the vacancy of Parish Council nomination as a School Governor.

8/11. Planning Applications:

P20/S4467/FUL and P20/S4469/LB Bishop’s Court Farm 91 High Street

Bishop Court Farm 91 High Street Dorchester-On-Thames OX10 7HP

Conversion of farm buildings to residential use and creation of new vehicular access to site from Abingdon Road (as amended by several drawings and landscaping, tree protection, sustainability reports received on 27 October 2021)

As Cllrs Mark Williams and Mike Corran had declared their personal interest in this application, the chair was taken by the Vice-Chairman, Cllr Rob Ballantyne. The several objections which have already been made to these Applications were noted. These greatly outnumber the submissions made in support. After a discussion in which every councillor took part, it was agreed that the Council should ask SODC Planning not to determine this application either way until a highways impact study has been carried out and time has been given for its conclusions to be considered.

It was noted that even in response to the original application back in April, the Highways authority has recommended a ‘holding objection’ pending the receipt of further information. Now that an alternative access route has been proposed, the need for this information is considered even more necessary. This should take into account the overall development proposals which will also have an impact upon Farm access and traffic flows.

Cllr Rob Ballantyne will draft the Council’s response to these Applications and circulate this for the approval of all those Councillors who have not declared an interest.

P21/S4313/HH 47 Abingdon Road

Proposed two and single storey rear extension and front dormer window.

The Council agreed that it had no comments on this Application.

9/11. Finance: Bank Balances & Payments

NatWest Business Reserve Account 10th November 2021 £48,059.16

NatWest Current Account 10th November 2021 £26,102.72

£74,161.88

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

Q Transport (Oxford) Ltd (Container rental) 92.76

Tina Pratt (Play Area cleaning charges) 140.00

The Landscape Group Oxford (Sept/Oct grass cutting) 1,180.20

Philip Greenaway (War Memorial planting) 39.13

DoT Cricket Club (grass-cutting 2021 season) 750.00

Artisan Litho (1918 leaflet reprinted) 125.00

Data Systems Management LLP (village email hosting upgrade) 34.01

Andrew Clements (wild flower project at Cemetery) 211.74

Open Spaces Society (Annual membership) 45.00

City of Oxford Silver Band (Remembrance Sunday) 125.00

Shaun & Tanner (Village Hall Development Professional Fees) 3,900.00

Millbrook Building Consultancy (Village Hall Fees) 2,400.00

Southern Electric (Pavilion) 110.27

JRB Enterprise Ltd dog waste bags 234.24

SODC (Dog bin emptying July to September) 968.76

Chris Howlett (bench repair) 235.00

Geoff Willis (Village Handyman 5 weeks) 463.75

G Russell (salary) 810.33

G Russell (admin A/M/J/J/A/S 428.68

£12,293.87

Dorchester on Thames Parish Council (to open Unity Trust Bank) £500.00

10/11. Council Borrowing Powers

The Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council has the power if required to take a loan from the Public Works Loan Board. Full details are available on the internet.

11/11. Community Assets Register

Some allocations of Risk Ownership were agreed:

The Fleur, Chris Hill; The Co-op, Rob Ballantyne; Orchard Lakes and Dorchester Sailing Club, John Edwards; Rivers Thame and Thames and Water Quality in general, Chris Hill;

Bishop’s Court Farm, Mike Corran; Parish Cemetery & Closed Abbey Churchyard, Keith Russell; Abbey, Mark Williams; Bridge End Car Park and Public Toilets, Mike Rimmer; Traffic, John Edwards; Conservation Area and Listed Buildings, Chris Hill; Village School, Mike Rimmer. Overy Mill, risk ownership not allocated.

A copy of the Community Assets Register is attached to these Minutes.

12/11 Correspondence with Chairman and/or Clerk

a. Retirement of Sue Booys; there is a planning committee representing several interests. The Clerk is there for the Parish Council and will keep councillors informed.

b. Scouts Aqua Camp; the Council has been asked about the use of the Recreation Ground for parking by a large group on the weekend of 18/19 June. A Scout camp is being held on Bishop’s Court Farm and there is not sufficient parking space on the Farm itself.

The Clerk will find out more details and report to the December meeting.

13/11. Village Maintenance

Andrew Clements report was circulated to all Councillors earlier in the evening. Andrew was unable to attend the meeting itself.

14/11 War Memorial Centenary Celebration Report

The October 16th event went ahead as planned and a report with photographs has appeared in Dorchester News

15/11. Village Traffic Controls and Speed Signs

a. By-pass Bus Stop Light; the new light has been installed. It is working correctly but a plan to control the growth of the surrounding vegetation is required.

b. Gigaclear Installations; there are still some questions about the exact service that is to provided in Beechcroft, Watling Lane and Overy

16/11. Platinum Jubilee Celebrations 2022

The Clerk was asked to discuss this matter with the Church wardens to see what plans are being made by The Abbey. Matters for discussion include a possible Street Party on Sunday 5th June and the possibility of a commemorative gift for residents, as was done for the Diamond Jubilee in 2012.

The ‘Green Canopy’ aspect of the Celebrations has already attracted some interest from local residents.

17/11. Routine Reports:

a. Sports Pavilion, Recreation Ground & Playground;

Pavilion improvements have been requested following the promotion of the Cricket team to a higher league. More information has been requested along with costings.

Cllr Rob Ballantyne is expecting to receive some proposals about Play Area improvements in the near future, having had a site meeting with a representative from Playdale a few days ago.

The Clerk has been asked by the occupier of a neighbouring property if their boundary with the Recreation Ground could be tidied up. This will be discussed after a site visit.

b. Footpaths including measures to reduce dog fouling;

The cost for having the SODC contractor empty dog bins from April 2022 will be £6.30 per bin per week. This has rapidly increased since March 2019 when it was 73p per bin per week. SODC adds 15% admin charge. Cllr Bennett explained that the District Council had previously been subsidising the cost of this service but had decided it would no longer do so.

It was agreed that the Parish Council should carry out an audit of the dog waste bins within the Parish in order to see if they are all still required.

c. Cemetery/Closed Churchyard;

The Council has been asked to grant its approval for some cherry trees to be planted in memory of Leslie Radford. The details will be circulated and discussed at the December meeting.

The Council noted that so far there has been only one response to the invitation in Dorchester News to join the Adopt A Grave programme.

d. Allotments.

The final total for rents collected during the year is £1,190.

18/11 Any Other Urgent Matters

The Council noted the serious damage to the Wisteria plant growing along the perimeter of The Old College in High Street and Queen Street. Attempts to re-attach the plant to the side of the building continue.

The meeting closed at 9.52 p.m.