**Dorchester Parish Council**

The Monthly Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Back Room of the Village Hall on Wednesday 12th October 2022 commencing at 7.30 p.m. The Vice-Chairman, Cllr Rob Ballantyne, presided with Cllrs Mike Corran and John Edwards present and G Russell (Council Clerk) in attendance. Also present for part of the meeting was County and District Councillor Robin Bennett.

1/10. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were accepted from the Chairman, Cllr Mark Williams, and Cllrs Maurice Day, Chris Hill, Mike Rimmer and Keith Russell.

2/10. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None

 3/10. Public Participation

No members of the public were present.

 4/10. Minutes of the Meeting held on 27th September 2022

The Minutes as circulated were approved as a correct record of this meeting after the date in Minute 10/9 regarding the deadline for grant applications was amended to read ‘21st October’ instead of ‘the end of the year’.

5/10. Matters Arising from the Minutes

1. Cllr Mike Corran confirmed that he is in contact with the County Council department running the introduction of 20 mph speed limits in Oxfordshire.
2. The Clerk reported that the original artwork for the Village Orientation boards which were produced in 2006 has not yet been located. He will report again on this matter in November. It was noted that the reference to a camping site at Day’s Lock should be removed.

 6/10. County and District Council Reports

The written reports from Cllr Robin Bennett have been received and circulated. County libraries are open to people seeking warm facilities and the County Council is offering to help people who need advice with financial problems. Cllr Bennett said that school bus services have been operating below the desired standard, but this should be solved by a reorganisation following the current re-tendering process

It was noted that Cllr Bennett’s letter to Thames Valley Police about the problems caused by motor cyclists driving too fast along the A4074 Dorchester by-pass has not yet received an answer.

New traffic controls have been introduced in Oxford. The attempts to reduce vehicle movements in the City have an influence upon traffic planning in the surrounding area. There is funding to improve bicycle access between Berinsfield and the City but a final decision about the best route has yet to be made.

The District Council has now moved to Abbey House, Abbey Close, Abingdon . OX14 3JE. It is hoped that the new offices in Didcot will open in 2024.

 7/.10 Planning

a. Applications:

P22/S3456/HH 14 Abingdon Road Removal of existing garage and construction of detached outbuilding

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

b. Other Planning Matters:

i. Bishops Court Snug Café hours of opening

The SODC Planning Committee Meeting is taking place this evening.

ii. Allens Pit project progress report

 It is understood that the project will be approved in the next few weeks by the directors of Sovereign Housing

 iii. Housing Needs Survey

The survey was completed at the end of September. The results are being analysed by Community First Oxfordshire whose report is expected shortly.

8/10. Finance: Bank Balances and Payments

NatWest Reserve Account 12th October 2022 £48,089.54

NatWest Current Account 12th October 2022 £26,999.26

 £75,088 80

Unity trust bank balance £464.00

 Total £75,552.80

The following payments were approved:

Q Transport (Oxford) Ltd (Container rental) 92.76

The Landscape Group Oxford (Sept grass cutting) 1,149.66

JRB Enterprise Ltd (dog waste bags) 255.84

Dorchester Football Club (shower heads) 239.94

Shield Maintenance Ltd (dog waste collection service August) 108.79

Going Forward Buses (Dorchester Flyer September) 50.00

Geoff Willis (Village Handyman) 304.00

G Russell (salary) 851.72

 Total £3,052.71

The Council has been advised that it will be receiving a new C.I.L payment of £2,511.34 arising from developments at Bishops Court Farm. This will take total C.I.L received to £9,952.54

9/10. Chairman and/or Clerk Correspondence

The Council noted that later this month the Co-Op stores in the High Street is to be closed for a few days while it is refurbished.

10/10. Playground Improvements

The District Councillor grant of £2,500 has been approved. Cllr Rob Ballantyne is now preparing an application for a capital grant amounting to a further £22,500. He told Cllr Bennett that he would like to involve the parents of children at the Village School in planning the improvements. Cllr Bennett agreed and suggested that the Berin Group should be invited to contribute the experience that has been gained from the Group’s activities in Berinsfield.

The Council agreed that Cllr Ballantyne, Vice-Chairman, could apply for playground improvement grants on behalf of the Parish Council, and that the Parish Clerk, Geoffrey Russell, would receive and manage any monies awarded to the Council for this purpose. Other councillors will make themselves available to review the application while it is in draft form and Village residents will be kept informed through Dorchester News.

The project may be expanded to include the provision of fitness equipment for adults in a ‘trim trail’ on the Recreation Ground.

11/10. EV Charging and Climate Emergency Action Policy

It was agreed that, in consultation with the County Council, a scheme for the installation of some EV Charging spaces in the Bridge End car park should be designed and costed. If this is thought to be affordable, then a village survey will be carried to test the views of residents.

The Council recognises that there is a climate emergency and accepts that it has a responsibility to set policies that will help to mitigate the present dangers. Its decision to install solar powered lighting at the by-pass bus stop and to introduce a 20 mph speed limit in the centre of the village are consistent with this view. It was agreed that the Council should regularly review its progress towards reducing carbon emissions and moving towards carbon zero.

12/10 Village Maintenance Master Plan

The Clerk confirmed that TLGO will be dealing with the Abingdon Road weed problems in next few weeks. The mapping of Parish Council assets is recognised as being part of the drafting of the Maintenance Master Plan. There are specialist software packages that will facilitate this task.

13/10. Gigaclear Progress Report

A status report from Gigaclear has been circulated to all Councillors but it was agreed that much more information is required. The Clerk will contact the Company again.

14/10 New Code of Conduct Training

Details of the District Council’s on-line programme have been circulated including notice of the next briefing by Patrick Arran, Head of Legal and Democratic Monitoring Officer on 27th October. A video recording of this meeting will be available.

15/10. Routine Reports:

a. Sports Pavilion, Recreation Ground & Playground;

The planting of a disease resistant elm tree on the Oxford Road boundary will be progressed through the Chairman.

New spare pads are required for the defibrillator on the front of the Pavilion. New shower heads have been fitted in the changing area

b. Footpaths;

The County Council’s Countryside Officer will be asked for advice about what can be done to remove the hazardous barbed wire along the path that leads from Drayton Road to the Hurst (Footpath 190/4)

c. Cemetery/Closed Churchyard;

The Council agreed to accept an offer from Hayley Poole to plant a tree in the Cemetery in order to demonstrate some tree-growing skills to a young resident who is studying this subject. She will be replacing one of the flowering cherry trees that had to be removed due to disease..

d. Allotments.

It is understood that some plots are vacant.

16. Any Other Urgent Matters

The Clerk will use Dorchester News to remind residents about the regulations regarding the lighting of bonfires

Meeting closed at 8.48 p.m.