

# **Minutes for Dorchester on Thames Parish Council Meeting**

## **Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

Member present; Chairman Mike Corran MC, Cllrs. Jon Brydges JB, Mark Williams MW, Beccy Waller BW, Charlotte Garside CG, Chris Hill CH. Robin Bennett District & County Cllr. RB. Clerk Jenny Welham JW.

### **Standing Items Part 1**

#### **1.1 Chairmans Introduction**

The Chairman welcomed members and residents. He raised the matter of the flooding, the handover to new clerk, tree survey, DC2030 results and further actions.

2.1 Apologies for Absence – Apologies accepted from Cllr. John Taylor, Cllr. Mike Atkinson out of the country. Geoff Russell due to sickness.

3.1 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests. – Cllr. Mark Williams on any matters relating to ground maintenance.

4.1 Public invited to speak no questions at this point. 15 Members of public present.

#### **2. Minutes of Parish Council Meeting 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

Corrections requested, no public present change to 5 MOP present. Urgent business correction to read investigating capability of the sewage works to ensure efficiency for the population of Dorchester on Thames. Following corrections, Approved as a true record.

#### **3. Reports County & District Councillor**

Cllr. Robin Bennett reported that OCC had been busy over the past week. Government have announced a support initiative for a payment program for flooding but no detail released yet. Oxfordshire flood tool kit, Agency were coordinating but difficult to find detail.

District South and Vale joint local plan, some events scheduled designed to be as accessible as possible for all to attend. Waste contract extended for 3 years with Biffa, SODC recycling are ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in the country. Government is introducing new rules re waste disposal, not yet released.

BW advised she had contacted SODC re the exercise class arrangements and left a message, no reply, she requested RB to chase this matter.

#### **4. Priority Items** Chairman made a change to agenda to talk about the flooding.

Emergency Plan does exist for the village. He suggested ideas could be collected and exchanged to update this plan, he asked if a councilor could take the lead and gather information. Asked public for views;

A resident spoke who had flooded. Used environment agency website for tracking matters. Lesson to be learned is help before the event, older neighbours would need help. Set up a task group, operate similar to lifeboat crews, this group have action plan to help vulnerable people, his neighbours agree with this idea.

Thanked the PC, but felt could be more useful before the water actually entered the house. Assistance before the event.

Sandbags can be a problem, not convinced they make a lot of difference but do filter out nasty items, also houses on roadside for bow wake from cars passing. Need to manage locally.

Total of 10 houses flooded which helps identify the vulnerable areas. Cllr. CH had used sandbags helped. Supported the task force group idea. Not all from water coming in, but coming up from ground and run off.

Properties at Bridge End water soaked in through footings from the ground upwards. Pumps can pump the water out but the water will continue to rise.

Cllr. BW advised, problems arose in some houses in Bridge End and Watling Lane as drains bubbled up after Thames Water turned pumps off due to high water levels. Bishops Court farm situation acceptable although to water going onto their land.

Thames Water need to be more proactive re information, need to be contacted re their lack of information re pumps they were turning on/off. RB advised the county would deal with TW.

Cllr. MW not fully aware of the severity of the problem until it happened, noted the Task group needs to be aware to engage help before it gets too severe.

Gather emails/contacts from all the residents who may flood or have flooded so the group can contact them. PC do have a generator which was very helpful.

Suggested members for Task Force Group, Mike Atkinson who owns the Emergency Plan, Jon Brydges agreed and Chris Hill. View to update the emergency plan over the next few months. Review if any grants possibly for a pump etc. Possibly CIL can fund or the Environment agency.

The Parish Council acknowledged the help from residents and local businesses with food and accommodation at reduced cost. The PC note they all helped enormously, and thank all for their efforts, also OCC for sand bags.

4. Clerk handover – Paper presented by the Chairman was approved. Following this meeting JW is now in place as Parish clerk/RFO. GR will continue until end of February and will manage cemetery for a few months until JW has received training on cemetery procedures.

4. Budget 2024/2025 - Chairman advised Budget had been agreed at previous meeting. Precept will rise by 10%, due to inflation and also to allow the PC to carry out more projects in the village.

Allotments are also a source of income, suggested 20% increase on allotment plot fees, awaiting a reply from the Allotment committee. Review cemetery costs overdue, to be reviewed, Action: Clerk JW to review with GR.

4. Tree survey quotes. The PC own approximately 90 trees. 3 quotations reviewed, one was double the cost of the other two. Remaining two, one £900 one £750.

One quote did not contain enough detail was just on an email, further detail needs to be received before decision. Action: Clerk to work with MW to gather information required.

4. Dorchester 2030 survey. Raw data received, being written up by Community First Oxfordshire should be ready by end Jan and will be circulated to councillors. Report will be made public. River quality was one item that was high on the responses. Decisions to be considered at Annual Parish Meeting in May this year with what actions needed going forward. The report will show who has volunteered to be involved.

## **5. Other Work Streams**

20mph approved by OCC. No implementation date has been advised yet. All 30mph areas between High St / Abingdon Rd junction and the Abbey side of the bridge will change to 20mph.

Transformation Tracker circulated will become redundant, Clerk will advise at each meeting from the overall plan the Chairman produced.

Review carried out of electronic payments and paper presented to the Council. Agreed to add John Taylor as a signatory to authorize payments, All Agreed. Chair has checked back on past payments and all in order, will continue checks until the Lloyds account opened.

Donation from resident to maintain certain areas around village for some planting of trees and plants plus continued maintenance of these areas. Clerk GR is in discussion re the terms with the resident, as the donation will eventually run out and the PC need to ensure that the terms are clear on how the ongoing care will take place. PC thanked resident for this generous donation.

End of Year Annual Accounts “Agars” two outstanding, 2021/22 & 2022/23, in hand to be finalized by Clerk GR, but Action for Clerk JW to work together to conclude.

CIL return report will be sent in the next week as delayed, SODC been made aware.

VAT return in progress.

**6. Planning** no new applications.

## **7. Finances**

### **Finances January 2024**

#### Balances

NatWest Reserve Account 8 <sup>th</sup> January 2024	£32,673,49
NatWest Current Account 8 <sup>th</sup> January 2024	£11,816,52
Unity Trust Bank 13 <sup>th</sup> December 2023	<u>356.00</u>
	£44,846,01

The following payments need approval:

#### **Admin:**

Q Transport (Oxford) Ltd (Container rental)	116.76
Village Hall Room Hire for Council meetings July – December	125,00

Geoff Russell Clerk's Salary	959.89
Geoff Russell Back Pay to cover increase awarded April 2023	486.00
Simon Ratliff IT support to Clerk 2023/24	190.00
Clerks & Councils Direct subscription	120.00
Data Systems Management LLP (Domain name renewal)	21.58
Going Forward Buses (Dorchester Flyer Nov and Dec)	100.00
PC Technicians Limited Parish Clerk Lenovo laptop	562.95
9-2-3 Jobs Limited Parish Clerk Recruitment Fee	<u>1,200.00</u>
	£3,882.18

### **Sports Ground & Pavilion**

Sovereign Play final payment	6,484.70 *****
Deborah Finlay (Exercise classes December)	120.00
GL Jones Playgrounds Ltd spare keys for ability swing	<u>25.70</u>
	£6,630.40

### **General Village Maintenance**

The Landscape Group Oxford (sundry hedge and kerb clearing)	540.00
Andrew Clements – tools for use with Councillor Priority Fund	754.89
Becky Waller part for emergency generator	17.10
Trevor Greenaway (sundry tasks including cemetery gate repair)	<u>150.00</u>
	£1,461.99

### **Dog Waste**

Shield Maintenance (Dog bin services)	108.79
Shield Maintenance (Dog waste bags)	<u>181.99</u>
	£290.78

£12,265.35

Society of Local Council Clerks membership from 1<sup>st</sup> February to be confirmed by new Clerk

Proposer JB    Seconded BW    Agreed Approved for payment.

NB

\*\*\*\*\*The Sovereign payment was made on Monday afternoon. The Current A/c balance is now £5,331.82 and a small transfer from the Reserve Account is required pending receipt of the Council's refund of VAT.

GR 10.1.24

## **8. AOB**

BW advised no problems with the farm making good progress on plans.

CH Sewage treatment works, arranging a visit to the works open to all members of PC MC, JT expressed interest to attend. Date to be advised.

Drainage and ditch clearance is another way of taking flood water run off, to be considered in any grounds maintenance review.

General Power of Competence, Tree Survey, NHP, on Agenda for February meeting.

Clerk JW referred to hedge in Main Street overgrown and obstructing the footpath, vegetation letter suggested to resident to cut back.

Any further agenda items to be sent to the clerk, copy the Chairman. No later than 5 working days before the meeting.

*Meeting closed 21.10*

Signed..... Date.....

