

**MINUTES OF DUCKLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 4 NOVEMBER 2009  
IN THE LILAC ROOM, VILLAGE HALL, DUCKLINGTON AT 7.30 PM**

**153.09 Members** Edmund Strainge (Chairman)

**Present:** Peter Almgill  
Adrian Armitage  
Brian Hicks  
Peter Godwin  
Graham Lenton  
Catherine Maddison

**In Attendance:** Helen Sandhu - Clerk  
Steven Hayward, Witney District Councillor (to Minute 156.09)

**154.09 Members' Apologies:** Richard Border, Glyn Rees

**155.09 Minutes of meeting held on 7 October 2009**

The minutes of the above meeting were approved and signed by Edmund Strainge as a true record of the meeting.

**156.09 County/District Council Matters**

Steve Hayward spoke about District and County Council matters. Marriotts Walk is now open. The Parish Councillors expressed some concerns about the development; young adults have been observed racing in vehicles around the multi-storey car park in the evenings; there was a question about whether there is adequate car parking – Steve Hayward said that there had already been several discussions at the District Council about the parking provision; there was some concern about the safety for pedestrians crossing Welch Way, particularly as the pedestrian crossing has been removed and the part of the road which has been made level with the path makes it hard for visually impaired people to identify where the edge of the path is – Steve Hayward said that this had been done by the developers without prior consultation; lastly there was a view that the building materials used did not seem to be in keeping with a Cotswold stone town and were not what the District Council had committed to in advance of the building. Steve Hayward said that he would find out whether a pedestrian crossing will be installed and would raise the point about pedestrian safety with District, Town and County Councillor David Harvey. Mr Hayward asked that the Parish Council send any written comments about Marriotts Walk to the Leader of the District Council, Roger Curry.

Mr Hayward said that there was a further delay to the introduction of the system of civil parking enforcement following the Government's decision to decriminalise parking offences. Oxfordshire County Council declined the opportunity to be responsible for this so it will become the responsibility of the District Councils. The Government is delaying signing off the agreements between the County and District Councils and so this change will not now be introduced until 2010.

The Planning Department of the County Council has turned down the two applications for waste incinerators in the County. The application for the one at Ardley is to go to appeal. The initial rejection of the planning application may end up delaying the building of an incinerator to the point where the local Councils will end up paying substantial increases in landfill tax (which could go up to £175 per tonne from the current rate of £40 per tonne). This will significantly increase the cost of dealing with the county's waste.

**156.09 County/District Council Matters (continued)**

The County Council is intending to ensure that the increase in its share of the Council tax is no more than 2.5% for 2010/11.

Brian Hicks asked for Steve Hayward's reassurance that the recyclable waste put in the boxes by residents is actually recycled. Whilst some residents sort the waste it has been observed that when it is collected it is all mixed together in one refuse lorry. Steve Hayward agreed to double check that the waste is recycled.

Steve Hayward left the meeting.

The Parish Council decided that December's agenda should contain an item where the Parish Council's comments on the Marriotts Walk development could be discussed.

**157.09 Parish Councillors – Disclosure of interests on agenda items**

None.

**158.09 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings**

*a) Parish infrastructure issues*

- Request for new signage around entrance to Fritillary Mews
- HGV signage on Ducklington roundabout

The Clerk had no update on these outstanding matters.

*b) Cyclepath*

The Clerk has chased the outstanding works again – the County Council believes that the relining work may have been done. Catherine Maddison agreed to check and inform the Clerk.

*c) Temporary vehicle activated signs*

The temporary vehicle activated signs do not contain trigger counters.

The site for the second VAS has been reconfirmed as on the grass verge adjacent to the electric pole by the entrance to the Philip Dennis site. The County Council will carry out underground services check prior to installing base (which also needs to wait until they have a bulk of base installations to order).

The VAS was put up on the base near Moors Close on 22 October. It was vandalised (large stones thrown at it breaking the plastic cover and damaging the LEDs behind) during the weekend of 30/31 October. The Clerk reported this to Thames Valley Police and the County Council who have now removed the sign.

The recent incidences of criminal damage in the village were discussed. Vehicles parked on Standlake Road near Fritillary Mews have been damaged, milk stolen, and an abandoned car set alight in the car park on Aston Road. It was decided that an item about this should be put in the newsletter with a request that residents report any acts of anti-social behaviour to Thames Valley Police.

*d) Potential new bus shelters on A415 near A40 flyover and on Witney Road*

Primesite Media has now offered £4,000 for the Parish Council to use as it wishes if the Parish Council enters into an agreement for them to install the shelters on the A415. As there does not seem to be sufficient need for a bus shelter at the Witney Road layby bus stop and Oxfordshire Highways has indicated that it would not approve the erection of a bus shelter at the stop near the pond it was decided to accept the £4,000 offered and enter into the agreement.

**Matters Arising from Previous Meetings (continued)**

*e) Tree inspections*

The further inspection report on the horsechestnut tree at Bartholomew Close was circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes. Given the results of the resistograph test it was decided that the tree should be felled. There are already two quotations for this. Clerk to seek to obtain a third (with a separate cost for grinding out the stump). Clerk to request permission for the work from the District Council. It was agreed that at some future point the Parish Council will plant at least one additional new tree on the Bartholomew Close open space.

*f) Allotment tenancies*

Brian Hicks has met with the next applicant on the waiting list who seemed keen to take on the allotment. They haven't however yet contacted the Clerk to make arrangements for the tenancy agreement to be issued. Clerk will follow up.

*g) Ducklington village pond*

Graham Lenton, Richard Border, Sally Craig, Ann Morris and Terry Hunt met with Rod d'Ayala at the pond on 13 October.

A copy of the draft report prepared by Rod d'Ayala following his visit was circulated at the meeting. There was some discussion of the main points made by Mr d'Ayala. He stated that the mud which is now exposed is not dangerous – it won't contain harmful levels of bacteria. The key decision to be made is what sort of pond it should be – a duck pond or a wildlife pond – the two are mutually exclusive. His report contains advice about what can be done to improve the pond if it is decided that it should be a habitat for mixed wildlife. The first thing which would need to be done is to substantially reduce the number of ducks by ensuring that the artificial feeding is stopped.

Mr d'Ayala was not too concerned about the willow tree at the centre of the pond – his view is that it will not be drawing as much water from the pond as had previously been thought. In his opinion the decision of whether or not to retain the tree was more about the aesthetics of it.

It was decided that there should be a meeting of the Pond Working Group to discuss the issues raised in the report. All Parish Councillors, Terry Hunt, Ann Morris and Sally Craig to be invited. It was agreed that a copy of the report could be given to Mr Hunt, Mrs Morris and Mrs Craig. Provisional date: Wednesday 25 November at 7.30pm in the Lilac Room of the Village Hall. Graham Lenton to confirm his availability to the Clerk who will then make the arrangements.

Item to be put in the newsletter giving the main points from the report and informing residents that there will at some point be a public meeting to discuss the future of the village pond.

*h) Grass strimmer – cutting of churchyard grass*

As requested the Clerk had obtained three quotations for different suitable strimmers. However, as the work needs to be submitted to tender for next year it was decided to carry the decision about the purchase of a strimmer forward until after the tender has been awarded.

*i) Proposed parish website*

Peter Almgill informed the Parish Council that he has found a cheaper potential host for the website. Given the time constraints of the meeting it was decided to carry further discussion of the website forward to the December meeting.

**Matters Arising from Previous Meetings (continued)**

- j) *Oxfordshire County Council's proposed new river crossing at Newbridge*  
Edmund Strainge, Brian Hicks, Graham Lenton, Peter Godwin, Peter Almgill and the Clerk attended a preview meeting with Oxfordshire County Council officers immediately in advance of the Parish Council meeting. The proposal is to build a new bridge 250 metres upstream of the current bridge. It will be built with a double carriageway but will be initially operated as a single carriageway with traffic light controls as at present. There will be no weight limit on the new bridge. It is forecast that building the new bridge will increase traffic by approximately 600 vehicles a day (1 per minute at peak times). Building would start in 2015 at the earliest, with forecast completion of mid 2016 at the earliest. The current bridge would then be closed to all traffic.  
The County Council has arranged a public exhibition of the proposals to take place at the Rose Revived, Newbridge, between Thursday 26 and Saturday 28 November.  
It was agreed to include discussion of the proposals as an agenda item for the December meeting so that a Parish Council response for submission to the County Council can be agreed.
- k) *New dog bin – Standlake Road*  
Quotation for a new dog bin from WODC - £158.68. It was decided to accept the quotation and request that WODC install the bin.
- l) *Vehicle parking hammerhead turns, Tristram Road and Starnham Road*  
Oxfordshire Highways has agreed to look into what road markings they could put here to discourage people from parking – this will be a medium-term solution.  
Ducklington Neighbourhood team PCSO has agreed to attend in the evening, note the vehicle details, trace the owners and speak to them. She also said that she would put a parking ticket envelope on the vehicle windscreens containing a note requesting that the vehicles are not parked there in the future. She has agreed to take stronger action if these approaches do not work.
- m) *Sports Club parking*  
Response from Sports Club regarding Parish Council concerns about on-street parking in Standlake Road and Fritillary Mews “we will address the issue of car parking as a matter of urgency.”
- n) *Proposed new pavilion – legal arrangements*  
Given the time constraints of the meeting it was decided to carry forward this discussion to the December meeting. Councillors were asked to forward any issues they think should be discussed to the Clerk in advance of the next meeting so that they can be included on the agenda.

**159.09 New Business**

- a) *Resident's concerns about traffic speeding/traffic calming on Witney Road*  
The Clerk informed the Parish Council that she has recently corresponded with a resident of Witney Road on the matter of traffic speeding/traffic calming on Witney Road. A copy of the email correspondence was circulated in the folder.

### **159.09 New Business (continued)**

b) *Tenders for grass cutting contracts for 2010*

It was decided to send tender requests to:

Playing field: Green Scythe, WODC, Countrywide, ISS

Verges, etc: Green Scythe, WODC, Countrywide, ISS

Graveyard: Jim Miles, A. Fisher, Green Scythe, WODC, Countrywide ISS

It was decided that the organisations should be asked to provide quotations for two years.

c) *SLCC Regional one day conference for the South West on Thursday 3 December 2009*

It was decided that the Clerk should attend this conference. Aston, Cote, Shifford & Chimney Parish Council will be asked to pay 50% of the costs (fee, travel & childcare) and there is a bursary available for 50% of the conference fee.

### **160.09 School Report**

Graham Lenton provided a report on recent school activities. The school had a Diocesan inspection on 22 October – the report is not available yet.

Mr Lenton attended a curriculum sub-committee meeting on 3 November and will attend the next Governors' meeting on 12 November.

New safety regulations for schools have been introduced. The school will be having new safety fencing erected to fill in the gaps in the current fencing in 3 weeks' time. It will be hidden by the hedge on Standlake Road. Once this has been installed the only access into the school will be via a locked door.

A letter from a parent of the school raising her concerns about the car park on Aston Road was discussed. The letter suggested that the car park should have spaces marked out. It was decided that this was not required and that the letter should be passed to the school for them to address the parent's concerns about the safety of children in the car park at the end of the school day.

### **161.09 Playgrounds/Sportsfield**

a) *Inspection Report for October*

- Dick Rudd still needs to meet with Graham Lenton or Adrian Armitage to agree which areas of the frames need to be sanded down and treated with rust-inhibiting paint.
- The zipwire trolley has been replaced.
- Dick Rudd met with Brian Hicks to discuss the repair of the cable which has frayed within the eye next to the pulley. Mr Rudd recommends that the cable should be cut to remove the frayed section and clamped – this will cost around £50. It was decided that Mr Rudd should undertake this work.

b) *Request for help with monthly routine inspections*

Training for Councillors with Roger Davies of OPFA/RoSPA to take place on for Saturday 7 November.

**161.09 Playgrounds/Sportsfield (continued)**

*c) Criminal damage to tennis court fence & floodlight*

Adrian Hollier has carried out an initial inspection of the damaged floodlight – there is substantial fire damage within its electrical supply. He has requested a meeting with a member of the Parish Council to discuss what further inspection/testing needs to be done to identify how the damage can be repaired. Peter Godwin will have an initial conversation with him on Friday 6 November and Peter Almgill offered to meet with Mr Hollier on site to discuss the damage with him. Mr Hollier also advises that the metal casing of the light should be painted as the fire has damaged the galvanised surface and unless it is painted it will rust.

Mr Hollier has also raised concerns about the consumer unit within the pavilion which he says does not comply with the current standard BS7671 (2008). The Clerk informed the Parish Council that the electrical installation of the pavilion was tested and inspected by Southern Electric in March 2008 and there is a certificate of compliance with BS7671 (2001). Clerk to check whether work needs to be done to ensure compliance with the 2008 standard.

*d) Sportsfield roadway lighting*

Now fixed.

*e) Sports Club use of tennis court and flood lighting*

The under-7s football team would like to use the tennis court for training on Friday evenings between 5-6pm until Easter 2010. The Parish Council has historically charged the Sports Club for using the flood lights for training. Clerk to inform the Sports Club that the level of charges will be decided once the flood lights have been repaired.

**162.09 PLANNING**

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS GRANTED:**

09/1161/P/FP 20 Bartholomew Close, Ducklington  
Erection of single storey rear extension

**NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS:**

09/1380/P/FP 47 Witney Road  
Conversion of detached garage to form separate dwelling with single storey extensions to front and side elevations  
*No comments*

**163.09 FINANCE**

a) Account Balances and Debts due to Council – as circulated with the meeting papers

Balance on Current Account at 31 October 2009	£10,301.57
Balance on Deposit with WODC at 31 October 2009	£27,300.00
Total Cash Holding	<u>£37,601.57</u>

b) Bank Reconciliation to 30 September 2009

Copy circulated in Clerk's Briefing Notes – contents noted.

**163.09 FINANCE (continued)**

c) Draft budget for 2010/11

Second draft circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes.

- There was a discussion about how the future work required on the playgrounds could be funded
- Brian Hicks asked the Clerk to check the accuracy of the figures relating to the income and expenditure on the allotments
- It was decided to include a budget for weed killing the village road and path edges twice during the year. The Clerk expressed her concern about increasing the level of expenditure within the budget given that the budget is already showing a forecast deficit for 2010/11
- The Clerk was asked to increase the room rental payable for the village hall to £120
- It was agreed that the precept should be set so that the amount payable by individual households remains the same as in 2009/10 but with the total precept receivable by the Parish Council increasing slightly now that the occupation of Fritillary Mews has created more households

d) OCTOBER INVOICES

PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL AND PAYMENT AT 4 NOVEMBER 2009 MEETING

		Statute
Clerk's salary - H Sandhu – gross of £344.72 less tax of £34.20	310.52	LGA 1972, s112
HM Revenue & Customs (PAYE on Clerk's salary)	34.20	LGA 1972, s112
B Luckett – replacement for cheque for July picking sent in September see below ***	60.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Margaret Johnson – stationery & copying	3.83	LGA 1972, s111
ISS Waterers – 2 cuts of verges in September (14 to date), 3 cuts of playing field in September (27 to date)	388.24	HA 1980, s116/ LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Oxfordshire County Council – installation of 2 street lights	3498.30	PCA 1957, s3
Dick Rudd – October inspection, clearing overgrowth at pond, replacement of zipwire trolley	150.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
J Miles – 1 grass cut in graveyard (8 this season to date) including additional £10 for use of own strimmer	80.00	LGA 1972 s214
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£4,525.09</b>	

\*\*\*Replacement cheque – the payment to Mr Luckett sent in September has not been put through the bank account and he does not recollect having received it, nor does he have it to bank. This payment is a replacement for that cheque.

The payments were approved. The cheques were signed by Brian Hicks and Graham Lenton.

**164.09 Parish Councillors' reports from meetings attended since last meeting**

- Edmund Strainge attended the official opening of Marriotts Walk on 30 October.
- Richard Border and Peter Almgill met to complete the Highways transport questionnaire on behalf of the Parish Council.

**165.09 Other matters for discussion – for information only**

None.

**166.09 Date of next meeting** – 2 December 2009 – Lilac Room, Village Hall, 7.30pm  
Monthly meeting of the Parish Council

Signed .....dated.....