

**MINUTES OF URGENCY COMMITTEE MEETING OF
DUCKLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 5 AUGUST 2009
IN THE LILAC ROOM, VILLAGE HALL, DUCKLINGTON AT 7.30 PM**

112.09 Members Present: Edmund Strainge (Chairman)
Peter Almgill
Richard Border
Brian Hicks
Catherine Maddison

Edmund Strainge welcomed Peter Almgill to his first meeting as a Parish Councillor.

In Attendance: Helen Sandhu - Clerk

113.09 Members' Apologies: Glyn Rees

114.09 County/District Council Matters

Neither the County nor the District Councillor were present.

115.09 Parish Councillors – Disclosure of interests on agenda items

None.

116.09 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

a) *Parish infrastructure issues*

- Additional street lighting – Standlake Road to Fritillary Mews
Now installed.
- *Request for new signage around entrance to Fritillary Mews*
- *Changes to signage on Standlake Road due to extension of 30mph speed limit*
- *HGV signage on Ducklington roundabout*
Meeting to discuss these matters between Parish Councillors and Tony Currell of Oxfordshire Highways to be arranged for either Monday morning, 10 August or Tuesday 11 August – Clerk to arrange. Edmund Strainge, Richard Border and Brian Hicks to attend.
- *Footpath resurfacing – Standlake Road to Fritillary Mews*
As requested at the July meeting, the Clerk forwarded the email correspondence about the quality of this work to County Councillor Don Seale. He has in turn emailed Oxfordshire Highways to reinforce the Parish Council's concerns. The Clerk has not been told by Councillor Seale whether he has received a response.
- *Work to footpath verges in Ducklington*
The footpath between Curbridge Road and the A415 was strimmed on Monday 3 August.
Clerk requested to ask that the footpath between Starnham Road and Curbridge Road be strimmed again.
The path across the Moors has still not been cut back – Clerk to send a reminder.

116.09 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings (continued)

b) Cyclepath

Nothing new to report.

c) HGVs in village

The Clerk told the Urgency Committee that following the Parish Council meeting on 1 July she had asked Tony Currell of Oxfordshire Highways whether the proposed new signage on Ducklington roundabout could be designed to be even more explicit for lorry drivers to be clear that they should use the A415. He said that signage indicating a lorry route (black with an illustration of a white lorry on it) would not be suitable for the location, but agreed to leave the directional sign into Ducklington and attach a blue "Unsuitable for HGVs" sign onto the same pole. He would do the same at the Aston Road entrance. As previously reported, the sign to the A415 at the Ducklington roundabout will be replaced with additional wording indicating that this is the direction to Ducklington Mill and Gill Mill.

The Clerk had circulated a copy of a letter received from a resident of Witney Road in which they expressed their concerns about HGV traffic in the village – the Clerk informed the Parish Councillors that she had already replied on the Parish Council's behalf to inform the resident of the ongoing work to improve road signage.

d) Weed killing on footpaths and road edges

This work was done on 13 July.

e) Progress on temporary vehicle activated signs

Installation still awaited.

f) Potential new bus shelters on A415 near A40 flyover

Primesite Media has sent revised draft agreements and confirmed that they will affix a noticeboard for Parish Council notices to the shelter to be installed on Witney Road and that they will do the necessary work to obtain planning and Highways permission, whilst the formal instruction to install the bus shelters has to come from the Parish Council as the body with a statutory power to erect bus shelters. Primesite Media has also supplied a copy of the potential bus shelter designs for the Parish Council to choose from. The revised draft agreements and bus shelter designs were placed in the folder for circulation amongst Councillors, with further consideration on this issue to take place at the September meeting. It was decided that the Clerk would write to the householders nearest to the proposed Witney Road bus shelter to inform them of the Parish Council's intention to erect a bus shelter at this location.

g) Tree inspections

The Clerk told the meeting that 3 quotations had been received for the requested inspections:

Company A - £820 + VAT

Company B – £750 + VAT

Company C - £600 + VAT

It was decided to accept the quotation from Company C – Boward Tree Surgery.

h) Request for installation of kissing gate next to field gate opposite Moors Close

Oxfordshire County Council has agreed to install a metal kissing gate, with 50% of the cost of the gate and the installation to be paid by the County Council, the remainder by the landowner/tenant. Edmund Strange requested that his contact details be passed on to the County Council officer so that he can arrange for the installation and personal payment of 50% of the cost.

116.09 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings (continued)

- i) *Henry Box School – problems with youth anti-social behaviour at end of school year*
Response received from Headteacher of Henry Box School – copy in Clerk’s Briefing Notes
- j) *Replacement “Don’t feed the ducks” sign*
The old sign has been returned to its post – by person(s) unknown.
- k) *Ducklington Pre-School*
The Pre-school reports that there is now a full committee to start the new academic year in September.

117.09 New Business

- a) *End of allotment tenancy*
The tenant of allotments 8B & 16 has informed the Parish Council that he will give up his allotments with effect from 10 August 2009. It was decided that the tenant should be charged the full rent for 2009/10, which he has indicated he is willing to pay. The Clerk will inform the next person on the waiting list that there is a vacant allotment and request that they get in touch with Brian Hicks.

Brian Hicks reported that the condition of allotment 1C was still unacceptable, despite the tenant having been sent two previous requests to tidy it up. It was decided that the tenant would be given notice to quit, with them also to pay the full rent for 2009/10 as any new tenant will not be able to get a crop from the allotment this year.

- b) *Email from a Ducklington resident about the village pond and aircraft noise*
A copy of the email had been circulated in the Clerk’s Briefing Notes.
The problem of the low water level in the pond (and other local private ponds) was discussed. It was decided that the Clerk would contact Smiths of Bletchington who operate from Gill Mill to ask whether they have any data about changes in the local water table over recent months and also to ask whether they would help the local community with digging out the pond and clay-lining it. A quick response to be requested as any work would need to be done soon, whilst the water level is low. Clerk asked to contact Edmund Strange and Graham Lenton if Smiths respond positively.
It was decided that the Clerk should write to the local Pond Volunteers Group, c/o The Bell pub to inform them that the Parish Council is looking into ways of improving the condition of the pond.
It was suggested that if Smiths of Bletchington are unable to supply the Parish Council with information about the water table, a letter could subsequently be sent to the Minerals Planning Department at Oxfordshire County Council expressing the Parish Council’s concerns about local water levels.
It was decided that the Clerk would respond to the resident who had sent the email to explain that the Parish Council was looking into the situation and also to advise them that Glyn Rees would contact them separately about their concerns about aircraft noise. Clerk to contact Glyn Rees to request he make this contact.

- c) *Grass strimmer*
The Clerk told the Urgency Committee that Jim Miles has informed her that the Parish Council’s strimmer which he uses to cut the grass in the churchyard is broken and is beyond economic repair. He has said that he could use his own strimmer, with an additional fee per cut payable. It was decided that the Clerk would contact Mr Miles to find out what the level of the additional fee would be and to ask him to use his own strimmer whilst the Parish Council decides how to proceed.

117.09 New Business (continued)

- d) *Oxfordshire Highways review of speed limits on "A" and "B" class roads in Oxfordshire*
Oxfordshire Highways is not recommending changes for any of the roads in the parish. It was decided that the Clerk would write to repeat the Parish Council's previous suggestion that the speed limit on the A415 between Cokethorpe school and the Four Pillars roundabout be reduced to 50mph in line with the rest of the A415 to Newbridge. To comment that the Parish Council is concerned about the safety of the road, particularly at junctions, and knows that there have been accidents on this stretch of road historically.

118.09 Playgrounds/Sportsfield

- a) Inspection Report for July
Circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes. It was decided that the bench slat on the part metal/part wood bench on the sportsfield playground should be left as it is (with the damaged corner cut off at an angle), and that the worn slats on the picnic bench should be replaced as suggested. The other works identified are in hand.

The Clerk reported that Mr Rudd has asked the Parish Council to consider whether completion of the monthly inspections could be shared with someone else. It was decided that this would be carried forward for discussion at the September meeting.

- b) *Faults with flat swing seats*
Despite the Wicksteed sales representative attending on site and agreeing that the damage did not appear to be caused by vandalism, a letter has been received from Wicksteed stating that vandalism is still believed to be the cause and they will replace the seats as a "goodwill gesture", but not pay for their installation. It was decided that the Parish Council would accept the offer of six new seats, with the seats to be supplied before the old ones could be returned. They will be kept in storage by Edmund Strainge until the damaged ones need to be replaced.
- c) Grass seeding on sportsfield
It was decided to pay the £150 grant previously offered by the Parish Council, following receipt of a copy of an invoice from Ducklington Sports Club.

119.09 PLANNING

PLANNING APPLICATIONS GRANTED:

- 09/0599 47 Manor Road, Ducklington
Erection of two storey rear extension and insertion of windows in existing side elevation
- 09/0714 The Old Farmhouse, 7 Church Street, Ducklington
Internal and external alterations

PLANNING APPLICATIONS REFUSED:

- 09/0593 Oxleaze Barn, Course Hill Farm, Course Hill Lane, Ducklington
Erection of two single storey rear extensions
Reason: "The proposed... extensions... would be incongruous additions to the former agricultural building."

119.09 PLANNING (continued)

NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

09/0919 Course Hill Farmhouse, Course Hill Lane, Ducklington
Erection of detached building to create stables, tackroom and tractor shed with storage area above

It was decided not to comment on this application.

120.09 FINANCE

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

Balance on Current Account at 31 July 2009 £ 5,209.58

Balance on Deposit with WODC at 31 July 2009 £27,300.00

Total Cash Holding £32,509.58

b) Bank reconciliation at 30 June 2009

Circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes – contents noted.

c) JULY INVOICES

PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL AND PAYMENT AT 5 AUGUST 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 |
| Clerk's expenses – underpaid postage fee (newsletters) | 1.04 | LGA 1972, s111 |
| B Lockett – litter picking for June 2009 | 60.00 | LG(MP)A 1976, s19 |
| Margaret Hellawell – newsletter production Aug/Sept | 44.68 | LGA 1972, s111 |
| ISS Waterers – 2 cuts of verges in June (7 to date), 4 cuts of playing field in April (15 to date) | 422.74 | HA 1980, s116/ LG(MP)A 1976, s19 |
| Margaret Johnson – stationery & photocopying | 43.77 | LGA 1972, s111 |
| e-on – electricity at pavilion 13/3 to 23/6 | 542.78 | LG(MP)A 1976, s19 |
| Dick Rudd – June & July inspections, repairs to zipwire fence, picnic bench and start on work to safety surfaces | 225.00 | LG(MP)A 1976, s19 |
| Complete weed control – weed killing July 2009 | 333.50 | LGA 1972, s137 |
| Bounceback safety surfaces ltd – 5 bags filler for safety surface | 402.50 | LG(MP)A 1976, s19 |
| J Miles – 1 grass cut in graveyard (5 this season to date) | 70.00 | LGA 1972 s214 |
| Ducklington Sports Club – sportsfield grass seeding grant | 150.00 | LG(MP)A 1976, s19 |
| TOTAL | £2,640.73 | |

The payments were approved. The cheques were signed by Edmund Strange and Brian Hicks.

121.09 Parish Councillors' reports from meetings attended since last meeting

None.

122.09 Other matters for discussion – for information only

- a) The Clerk advised Councillors that she has been told that there will be overnight closures of the A415 near Cokethorpe School on 17 and 18 September when the new road markings (double solid white line) will be installed.

- b) The Clerk informed the Urgency Committee that she had been contacted by the owner of 12 Witney Road requesting that the Parish Council considers granting him the right to build a driveway access over the open space land at Bartholomew Close to enable him to get rear access to his property. It was decided to carry this item forward to the September meeting for further consideration.

- c) The Clerk told the meeting that she had been contacted by a resident of Feilden Close with a complaint that the hedge of 24 Feilden Close was overhanging the path forcing pedestrians into the road. It was decided that the Clerk would check the location and write to the occupiers of 24 Feilden Close if the hedge is obstructing the path.

123.09 Date of next meeting – 2 September 2009 – Lilac Room, Village Hall, 7.30pm
Monthly meeting of Parish Council

Signeddated.....