

**MINUTES OF DUCKLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 7 OCTOBER 2009
IN THE LILAC ROOM, VILLAGE HALL, DUCKLINGTON AT 7.30 PM**

138.09 Members Present: Edmund Strainge (Chairman)
Peter Almgill
Adrian Armitage
Richard Border
Brian Hicks
Peter Godwin
Graham Lenton
Catherine Maddison

In Attendance: Helen Sandhu - Clerk
1 member of the public

139.09 Members' Apologies: Glyn Rees

140.09 Minutes of meeting held on 2 September 2009

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

141.09 County/District Council Matters

Neither the District nor the County Councillor were present.

142.09 Parish Councillors – Disclosure of interests on agenda items

Peter Godwin – as a local resident – parking in Tristram Road to be discussed under “Other matters for Discussion” - Agenda Item 11 (Minute 150.09c)

143.09 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

a) Parish infrastructure issues

- Request for new signage around entrance to Fritillary Mews
- HGV signage on Ducklington roundabout
- gate on footpath between Curbridge Road and A415

The Clerk has recently spoken to the County Council officer – work on the first two points is in hand. Brian Hicks reported that the gate on the footpath between Curbridge Road and the A415 has now been replaced.

b) Cyclepath

Clerk continues to chase the outstanding works.

c) Temporary vehicle activated signs

The base near Moors Close has been installed. The temporary VAS should be placed here before the end of October. Oxfordshire County Council is going to reconsider the position of the base at the A415 end of Standlake Road following the extension of the 30mph limit.

The Clerk was asked to find out whether the VAS has a trigger counter.

Matters Arising from Previous Meetings (continued)

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

Clerk has spoken to Police team about current anti-social behaviour concerns.

Item placed in newsletter about littering.

Information about potential usage obtained from Stagecoach and Library service.

Stagecoach reports that the bus stop is not very well used. The Library Service reports that an average of 8 readers use the mobile library which stops in the layby every other Monday.

Oxfordshire Highways officer has not yet gone to look at the proposed site in order to give a Highways view.

It was decided to carry this item forward to the next meeting when it is hoped that the view of Oxfordshire Highways will have been obtained.

e) Tree inspections

Dick Rudd has removed the stakes and severed the ivy from the trees indicated.

All three companies approached for a quotation to remove tree 703 (large horse chestnut) on the open space land at Bartholomew Close questioned the need for its removal at the present time. WODC's tree officer has also inspected the tree and questions the need for its removal at this stage.

Quotations received for further investigative work received:

Company 1: resistograph test & closer inspection of cavity - £140

Company 2: Internal decay test and climbing inspection - £120

It was decided that Company 2 (Boward Tree Surgery) would be asked to carry out the further investigative work they recommended.

f) Allotment tenancies

The Clerk has not yet contacted the next person on the waiting list.

g) Ducklington village pond

Graham Lenton informed the Parish Council of the information/advice he has obtained since the last meeting. Alison Hopewell of the Windrush Valley Forum has agreed to help in any way she can. The pond expert from the Wychwood Forest Group has offered to help at a Parish meeting. He agreed that high numbers of ducks would present a problem. When informed about the weeping willow in the centre of the pond he agreed that this could also be a problem and stated that a large weeping willow can transpire up to 300 gallons of water a day. His recommendation was that Rod D'Ayala, a private consultant who has carried out a lot of work on Oxfordshire ponds should be consulted.

Mr Lenton informed the Parish Council that he has contacted Mr D'Ayala – he charges £40 per hour and is happy to visit Ducklington and prepare a report containing his recommendations.

It was decided that Mr D'Ayala would be requested to carry out an investigation and prepare a report, with a budget of a maximum of £240 for his work agreed. Graham Lenton to arrange, other Councillors to be informed of the day/time so they can attend the meeting. Sally Craig, Terry Hunt and pond volunteers from The Bell also to be informed. It was further decided that when Mr D'Ayala's report/verbal advice is to hand the Parish Council Working Group will meet in order to discuss the way forward, preferably in advance of the next Parish Council meeting. If Mr D'Ayala recommends immediate action, this could be done in advance of the next Parish Council meeting, and if any expenditure would be required an additional meeting of the Parish Council could be called to approve it.

Matters Arising from Previous Meetings (continued)

Ducklington village pond (continued)

Graham Lenton told the Parish Council that Sally Craig has provided him with her recorded rainfall data over the last few years – this shows that the rainfall in 2009 has not been lower than in many other years, suggesting that the current problems with the pond are not purely relating to the low rain levels. The Clerk informed Councillors that the Parish Council is the registered owner of the Village Green and pond, this ownership having been formally registered on 1 October 1970.

h) Grass strimmer – cutting of churchyard grass

Edmund Strainge confirmed that St Bartholomew's Church has agreed to pay 50% of the cost of a new strimmer. It was decided that the Clerk would speak to Jim Miles to see what make/model he would recommend, whether he knows of any retailers offering Autumn deals and whether it would be best to buy the strimmer now or wait until spring 2010.

i) Tree/hedge boundary between 11 Lovell Close and footpath between Peel Close and Lovell Close

It was decided that the top of this hedge should be cut down and that some of the self-seeded shrubs should be removed. Dick Rudd to be asked to do the work; Brian Hicks to meet with him to agree what exactly needs doing.

144.09 New Business

a) Proposed parish website

Reports on the different proposals/matters to consider as written by Peter Almgill and the Clerk had been circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes. Peter Almgill summarised his report. The majority of the Parish Council agreed that the idea of having a parish website should be pursued further.

Peter Almgill was asked to find out whether he can identify a cheaper hosting option.

It was decided that Peter Almgill would bring his laptop to the next Parish Council meeting so that Councillors could look at the two outline websites.

b) West Oxfordshire Citizens Advice Bureau - request for donation

It was decided to give a donation of £100 to the Citizens Advice Bureau.

c) Date for Annual Parish Meeting 2010

It was decided that the 2010 Annual Parish Meeting would be held on Tuesday 20 April.

d) Oxfordshire County Council's preview of the public exhibition on the proposed new A415 river crossing for Parish Councils

It was decided that the Parish Council would be interested in having a meeting with Oxfordshire County Council to review and discuss their plans for the A415 river crossing. Clerk to request that they come in advance of the Parish Council meeting on Wednesday 4 November, with the exhibition ready to view at 6.30pm.

If this date is not possible, Clerk to find out when exhibitions will be held in neighbouring parishes and to ask whether Councillors could attend one of those exhibitions.

e) Parish asset review

It was decided that a review of the external Parish Council assets only needs to be done once a year – next review to take place in March 2010.

144.09 New Business (continued)

f) Oxfordshire County Council – National Highways and Transport Survey

It was decided that Peter Almgill and Richard Border would complete this online survey on behalf of the Parish Council.

145.09 School Report

Graham Lenton provided a report on recent school activities. A short-notice Ofsted inspection took place last week; the report is expected in 4/5 weeks.

Mr Lenton informed the Parish Council that 49% of pupils at the school are from Ducklington. Richard Border pointed out that this is an indication of the school's good reputation and also means that it is vital that it maintains that reputation so that parents from outside the area continue to want to send their children to the school.

146.09 Playgrounds/Sportsfield

a) Inspection Report for September

- 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. Brian Hicks agreed to ask Mr Rudd to contact Adrian Armitage.
- Zipwire brake – new trolley to be ordered after this meeting.
- Gaps in safer surfacing. Dick Rudd has now completed the work on the surfaces under the slide frames. Further work (requiring additional material – possibly 10 more bags - and labour cost) needed on the other surfaces. Dick Rudd suggests that this should be left until next summer as the gaps close naturally over the winter as the ground moves.
- Dick has suggested that sand could be put under the tiles whose undersides are rotten to remove the trip hazard created. It was agreed that he should be asked to do this.

b) Request for help with monthly routine inspections

Training with Roger Davies of OPFA/RoSPA arranged for Saturday 7 November, 10.00am to 12.30pm.

c) Faults with cradle swing seats

Wicksteed refuse a refund or replacement – referring to their 12 month parts guarantee
It was decided not to pursue a complaint but to replace the swing seats with a different company's products when needed.

d) Criminal damage to tennis court fence & floodlight – burnt out car

An abandoned vehicle was set alight overnight on 19 September. The tennis court fence and floodlights and a Parish Council sign on one of the floodlights are damaged.
It was decided that Adrian Hollier should be asked to provide a quotation for the work required to repair the floodlights.

e) Sportsfield roadway lighting

Neither of these two lights is working. Clerk has asked Howse & O'Reilly to attend to them.

147.09 PLANNING

PLANNING APPLICATIONS GRANTED:

- 09/0919 Course Hill Farm, Course Hill Lane, Ducklington
Erection of detached building to create stables, tackroom and tractor shed with storage area above
With condition: "The building hereby permitted shall be used as accommodation ancillary to the occupation of Course Hill Farm House and shall not be occupied separately as a separate dwelling."
- 09/0988 1 Barley Park Cottage, Ducklington
Erection of two storey rear extension
- 09/1010 67 Witney Road, Ducklington
Remove existing barn and single storey extension. Alterations and extensions to enlarge existing accommodation

NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

- 09/1161 20 Bartholomew Close, Ducklington
Erection of single storey rear extension
No comments

148.09 FINANCE

- a) Account Balances and Debts due to Council – as circulated with the meeting papers
- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| Balance on Current Account at 30 September 2009 | £ 1,367.53 |
| Balance on Deposit with WODC at 30 September 2009 | £27,300.00 |
| Total Cash Holding | <u>£28,667.53</u> |

It was decided not to pursue further the one outstanding allotment rental from a former tenant.

- b) Annual Return for 2008/09
The Clerk advised the Councillors that the audited return has now been received from the external auditors, BDO Stoy Hayward LLP. The Audit Report is unqualified and no Issues Arising Report has been issued. The audited Annual Return was approved and accepted by the Council
- c) Receipts and Payments Account to 30 September 2009
Circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes – contents noted.
- d) Draft budget for 2010/11
Circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes.
- It was decided that all of the sports pavilion reserve should be put in the contingency fund so that it can be drawn on during the year if necessary.
 - It was decided that the pond project will need to have a specific budget set aside – amount to be decided after the consultant's report has been received.
 - Brian Hicks requested that the outstanding charges that could be invoiced by ISS Waterers for the additional work on the sportsfield for the year be included in the expected out-turn for 2008/09.
 - Additional budgets for work on the trees/floodlights may be needed – more information on this should be available at the next meeting.

e) SEPTEMBER INVOICES
PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL AND PAYMENT AT 7 OCTOBER 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
BDO Stoy Hayward – external audit for 2008/09	327.75	LGA 1972, s111
B Luckett – litter picking for August & September	120.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Margaret Hellawell – preparing newsletter for Oct/Nov	45.72	LGA 1972, s111
Margaret Johnson – stationery & copying	37.48	LGA 1972, s111
ISS Waterers – 2 cuts of verges in August (12 to date), 4 cuts of playing field in August (24 to date)	422.74	HA 1980, s116/ LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Boward Tree Surgery (Oxford) Ltd – tree inspection	690.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
TST Toys – new trolley for zipwire (payment before despatch)	149.74	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Dick Rudd – August inspection, replacement post near pond, repair to notice board, work to trees, further work to safer surfacing	315.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
e-on – electricity supply to pavilion q/e 18 Sept (estimated bill)	321.02	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
J Miles – 1 grass cut in graveyard (7 this season to date) including additional £10 for use of own strimmer	80.00	LGA 1972 s214
West Oxfordshire Citizens Advice Bureau - grant	100.00	LGA 1972, s142
TOTAL	£2,954.17	

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

149.09 Parish Councillors' reports from meetings attended since last meeting

None.

150.09 Other matters for discussion – for information only

- a) Graham Lenton reported that the post outside his house still needs re-cementing – Clerk to ask Dick Rudd to do this.
- b) Graham Lenton said that the resident who lives near the pond has complained about the weeds growing in the shrubs there. It was decided that Dick Rudd would be asked to strim round the shrubs at the back of the fence and to remove the paling fence which is no longer needed.
- c) Peter Godwin reported his concerns about the vehicles that are regularly parked in the hammerhead turns of both Tristram Road and Starnham Road, preventing vehicles from turning there. It was decided that the Clerk would contact Oxfordshire Highways to ask if they can help with this matter.
- d) It was decided that information about the proposals for the pond would be put in the next Ducklington village newsletter.

150.09 Other matters for discussion – for information only (continued)

- e) Peter Almgill expressed his concern about the parking on Standlake Road on weekends. The large amount of vehicles parked on the edge of the road can make it very difficult for vehicles to pass when cars are approaching from both directions. This may get worse when the new (larger) pavilion is built. It was decided that the Clerk would ask the Sports Club to approach Philip Dennis/Wesley Barrell to see whether they can make use of their car park on very busy weekends.

- f) Peter Almgill asked whether there could be a catch-up session for new Councillors on what has been agreed in terms of the new pavilion. He expressed his view that, having read earlier minutes, there seems to be a lot of legal detail which has not yet been decided. He stated that he believes that there needs to be a lease with the Sports Club in place before work starts. It was agreed to include discussion on these matters as an agenda item for the next meeting.

- g) The Clerk asked Councillors to clarify who is responsible for maintenance of the tennis court. It was confirmed that Joyce Parry is only responsible for managing the bookings/receipts and not for any maintenance matters.

151.09 Date of next meeting – 4 November 2009 – Lilac Room, Village Hall, 7.30pm
Monthly meeting of the Parish Council
Richard Border gave his apologies for this meeting
Glyn Rees has already given his apologies to the Clerk.

152.09 Confidential Item – Clerk’s salary review

The Clerk left the meeting.
It was decided to award the Clerk a pay rise of 1.6% from 1 April 2010. It was further decided to pay the Clerk a working from home allowance of £10 per month from 1 April 2010.

Signeddated.....