

**MINUTES OF DUCKLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 3 NOVEMBER 2010
IN THE LILAC ROOM, VILLAGE HALL, DUCKLINGTON AT 7.30 PM**

141.10 Members Present: Edmund Strainge (Chairman)
Peter Almgill
Adrian Armitage
Brian Hicks
Peter Godwin
Catherine Maddison

In Attendance: Helen Sandhu - Clerk
PC Sam Moore, Thames Valley Police to item 144.10
Steve Hayward – District Councillor, to item 145.10

142.10 Members' Apologies: Richard Border
Graham Lenton
Glyn Rees

143.10 Minutes of meeting held on 6 October 2010

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

144.10 Thames Valley Police

PC Sam Moore from the Witney neighbourhood police team was in attendance. The Clerk had met with PC Moore and Bill Butcher, West Oxfordshire District Council's Crime Reduction Advisor earlier in the day at the Bartholomew Close open space. PC Moore told the Parish Council that the work already carried out and planned for the autumn/spring (reducing the height of the hedge, coppicing the trees and potentially raising the canopy of some of the trees) will improve the site and will help to reduce the risk of anti-social behaviour. He told the Parish Council that if residents remain concerned about the safety of the area the police team could arrange for a street meeting to take place at the site so that they could meet with residents and discuss their concerns. It was agreed that the Parish Council would bear this in mind if residents express further concerns about the location. PC Moore also said that if the Police receive repeated calls about problems at the open space it would become a policing "hot spot" and would therefore receive more patrol visits.

PC Moore went on to talk about other current policing issues in the village – there has been some new graffiti around Witney lake and on a private fence in Ducklington. The Police believe they know who is responsible. PC Moore said that he had seen that there had been some damage to the grass surface at the playing field from a vehicle being driven over it and asked whether this has been caused by unauthorised access to the field. The Parish Council told PC Moore that the Sports Club has not informed the Parish Council that there has been unauthorised damage to the field. It was noted that there has been some further criminal damage in Ducklington since PC Moore attended the Parish Council meeting in June – vandalism of the Parish Council noticeboard on Witney Road and of the Highways fence between Moors Close and Beanhill Road. It was further noted that there has been no more damage to parked vehicles for some time.

144.10 Thames Valley Police (continued)

A Parish Councillor raised the issue of on-street parking on Standlake Road during sporting events and the traffic and road safety issues that this can cause. PC Moore advised the Parish Council that as there are no parking restrictions at the location this issue could only be looked at as potential obstructive parking, which is very difficult to enforce. He recommended that the best approach is to educate the people parking there about the problems the parking can cause.

PC Moore was told that nothing seems to have been done about the vehicles being parked in the hammerhead turns of Tristram Road, Sealham Road and Starnham Road – he agreed to look into this.

PC Moore encouraged the Parish Council to ensure that his contact details are included in the Ducklington newsletter so that residents can get in touch with him if they need to.

145.10 County/District Council Matters

The County Councillor was not in attendance.

Steve Hayward provided the Parish Council with an update on both District and County Council matters:

The County Council has committed to not increasing its share of the council tax next year. Substantial cuts in County Council activities have been agreed, with one of the principle areas being in the “Building Schools for the Future” programme. This programme was one of the previous Government’s key policies and included building projects for further education colleges, including Abingdon and Witney. However, despite this being a Government policy, Mr Hayward said that no money had ever been put in place to finance it, so the loss of this programme does not really represent a cutback as the money was never in place anyway.

The County Council took away the fixed speed cameras across the county in August, but now the Police have persuaded the County Council to put them all back in place again, with the funding to come from the Police. The cameras will be back on in April 2011.

Mr Hayward told the County Council that the Chief Executive from the County Council visited the area recently and Mr Hayward brought her to Ducklington to show her the issue of the poor junction at Station Lane. It now seems that the County Council does not want to spend any of the money paid by McDonalds and Lidl for improvements at this junction until they see how the traffic changes once the Cogges Link road and new A40 junction at Downs Road have been built.

The District Council has continued to build new social housing at the rate of 120-140 units per year despite the downturn in the housing market. The District Council hopes to continue with this provided the next sites are identified and agreed. The publication of the new Local Development Framework has been put back to January 2011 following the change in government. The Government’s preferred means for local councils to deliver social housing is still unclear. West Oxfordshire District Council’s preferred large new residential developments remain the site next to Deer Park and after that has been developed a new site in North Witney.

Mr Hayward told the Parish Council that he was aware that large hospitality events (weddings/raves) had been taking place at a farm in Lew. Officers from the District Council had become involved to bring this to a stop and the issue seems to have been resolved for now.

145.10 County/District Council Matters (continued)

The Local Government Boundary Commission has commenced an electoral boundary review in Oxfordshire County Council, one of the reasons being the continued growth of Witney.

The District Council is continuing to work on preparing its budget for 2010/11 and onwards – it is under less pressure to cut costs and scale down activities than the County Council is.

The Government has indicated that it does not intend to introduce further unitary councils in this parliament – they think that removing regional government will represent enough change for this parliament.

146.10 Parish Councillors – Disclosure of interests on agenda items

Edmund Strainge, as a neighbour, the planning application for Mutchmeats discussed at Minute 151.10.

147.10 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

a) Parish infrastructure issues

- *Request for new signage/waiting restrictions around entrance to Fritillary Mews*
After discussions with senior staff at Oxfordshire Highways and West Oxfordshire District Council it has been confirmed that the amendment to the West Oxfordshire District traffic order which is required must be initiated by Oxfordshire Highways. This is in hand, but there is still no date for its action.
- *HGV signage on Ducklington roundabout*
The Parish Council has been advised that the street lighting department of the County Council needs to remove the electrical supply from the existing signage before the new signs can be installed – there is no date yet for this work.
- *Virtual footpath by Old Rectory*
Peter Almgill and Glyn Rees met with Tony Currell from Oxfordshire Highways on Monday 11 October to discuss this issue. Following that meeting Oxfordshire Highways has already undertaken the work to put the virtual footpath in place – “SLOW” has been painted on the road from both directions, white lines delineating the virtual footpath have been painted and cats eyes have been installed. Highways would not fund the installation of a priority system. Councillors seemed confident that the work carried out would be a big improvement to the safety of pedestrians at this location.
- *On street parking - Standlake Road*
This was discussed earlier in the meeting with PC Moore and later under Minute 147.10e (risk assessments).
- *Gulley/drainage pipe repair at the A415 junction into Aston*
During the recent heavy rainfalls there has been no evident drainage issue at this junction. It appears that the ditch clearance works may have substantially resolved the problem.

b) Surface water drainage issue – sportsfield extension

Edmund Strainge confirmed that the ditch has now been dug out.

147.10 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings (continued)

c) *Village Pond*

Edmund Strainge informed the Parish Council that he has not heard further from Martin Layer on the support that Smiths of Bletchington may be able to offer with the removal of the sludge from the bottom of the pond.

Richard Border has agreed that he is happy for his well to be included in the water table monitoring.

Over 70 ducks have recently been counted at the pond on a single occasion. It was agreed that a notice should be put in the newsletter asking people to stop feeding the ducks.

d) *Public open space at Bartholomew Close*

As discussed under Minute 144.10, the Clerk had met with PC Sam Moore and Bill Butcher (WODC Crime Reduction Advisor) earlier in the day. Both PC Moore and Mr Butcher had agreed that the work already carried out on the open space and the planned work (reducing the height of the hedge and coppicing the trees) had improved the area and would help reduce the risk of anti-social behaviour at the location.

Update on outstanding works:

- stump grinding - will be done when Dick Rudd is able to
- picnic bench - now installed
- litter bin - Clerk has met with officer from WODC and placed order
- litter picking - Brian Hicks will speak to the Parish Council litter picker about this when the gate and the bin have been installed
- coppicing of trees - order placed
- wooden gate - it was agreed that two further quotations would be requested – one from IA & IJ Godfreys (Edmund Strainge to arrange) and one from Gibbs Brothers (Clerk to arrange)
- sign for gate - suggested wording “Keep clear for access”. Will be considered further when the gate has been installed.

e) *Risk Assessments*

Peter Almgill gave a copy of the draft risk assessments to the Parish Councillors. There was some discussion and Mr Almgill provided explanations on some of the content.

It was agreed that a copy of the risk assessments would be included in the Briefing Notes for the December meeting so that Councillors can review them in advance of the meeting.

f) *Annual Parish Meeting 2011*

This has been arranged for Tuesday 10 May 2011.

g) *Street lighting faults on Starnham Road and Sealham Road*

These have still not been fixed. The Clerk informed the Parish Council that she has spoken to the street lighting department at Oxfordshire County Council and been informed that their records show that only one lamp in the area is not working and that a repair has been ordered. Peter Godwin said that he has been speaking to the electricity suppliers who have acknowledged that there is a cable fault, meaning that lamps 1 to 4 on Sealham Road are all off. Mr Godwin agreed to continue chasing the electricity supplier and the Clerk agreed to speak to the County Council again.

h) *Tree at Lovell Close/Peel Close*

Councillors have inspected this tree and it was agreed that it does not need any work done on it at this time.

147.10 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings (continued)

i) Junction improvements – Station Lane, Witney

Steve Hayward had informed the Parish Council earlier in the meeting that the County Council does not intend to make any changes to this junction until the impact of the Cogges Link Road and the new A40 junction at Downs Road (both yet to be built) has been assessed.

148.10 New Business

a) West Oxfordshire District Council's review of polling districts and polling places

No changes are proposed for the parish.

It was resolved that the Parish Council would not respond to this review.

b) Oxfordshire County Council's consultation on the full draft of its Local Transport Plan 3 (2011-2030).

The response deadline is 9 January 2011. The consultation document was placed in the folder for circulation amongst the Councillors so that a response can be formulated at the December meeting.

149.10 School Report

There was nothing to report.

150.10 Playgrounds/Sportsfield

a) Inspection Report for October

A copy of the inspection report prepared by Dick Rudd had been circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes.

The Parish Council noted that the pigeon spikes had been removed without authority very soon after they had been put up. It was agreed that information about the reason for the spikes would be put in the next newsletter and that they would be replaced after this had been circulated.

b) Current works

Work orders placed:

- Quotation to lift and resecure safer surface tiles accepted and glue ordered

c) Playground & other painting – Probation Service project

The materials remaining at the end of the project were disposed of by the Sports Club. It was agreed that this would be raised at the joint Parish Council/Sports Club committee meeting.

Some painting (second coat and complete work on the area of the frame around slide entrance) on Chalcroft spiraslide left outstanding.

d) Joint Parish Council/Sports Club Committee

The first meeting has not yet taken place – it is hoped that it will have happened by the December Parish Council meeting.

150.10 Playgrounds/Sportsfield (continued)

e) *Renewal of lease for sportsfield extension*

The Parish Council was informed that further discussions with Bryant Land & Property after the October Parish Council meeting indicated that the cost of a 15 year lease could substantially exceed £700. A decision about whether to proceed with this or to opt for a 5 year lease had been required before this meeting. The Clerk had consulted Edmund Strainge and it was agreed that a 5 year lease was the best option.

Bryant Land & Property has agreed to ensure that the costs of entering into the 5 year lease will be capped at £250.

The process by which this decision had been made was discussed. It was suggested that if a similar situation arises in the future a meeting of the Urgency Committee should be called.

f) *Non-functioning roadway lights – car park to pavilion*

Despite the replacement of the control gear on one light faults on the circuit have continued to cause the pavilion electrics to trip. The circuit has now been disconnected at the board.

The Clerk has been speaking to Howse & O'Reilly and Brian Hicks informed the Parish Council that he has also spoken both to Nick Howse and to Steve Townsend from the Sports Club. He agreed to continue to follow this matter through.

g) *Proposal to culvert ditch between sportsfield and playground*

The Clerk has continued correspondence with WODC and the Environment Agency.

The Environment Agency's policy on culverting and a consent application has now been received. The paperwork from the Environment Agency was put in the folder for circulation amongst Councillors. It was agreed that this should be discussed at the joint Parish Council/Sports Club committee meeting so that the Parish Council is informed about the Sports Club's stance on the idea of the ditch being culverted.

151.10 PLANNING

PLANNING APPLICATIONS GRANTED:

10/1299/P/FP 74 Witney Road

Erection of replacement garage/workshop to side elevation, single storey rear extension and insertion of two rooflights in existing rear roof slope

NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS

10/1489/P/FP Mutchmeats Ltd, New Close Lane, Witney

Erection of single storey factory extension

The extension will increase the floor space by 21%

No comments.

152.10 FINANCE

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

Balance on Current Account at 31 October 2010	£15,139.55
Balance on Deposit with WODC at 31 October 2010	£27,300.00
Total Cash Holding	<u>£42,439.55</u>

b) *Bank reconciliation to 30 September 2010*

This had been circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes – contents noted

152.10 FINANCE (continued)

c) *Draft budget for 2011/12*

A second draft of the budget and a report thereon had been circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes.

It was decided that a budget of £767 should be included for work on the pond in 2011/12.

It was decided that the cost of work on the Bartholomew Close hedge should be included at the rate for 2010/11 + 5% as reducing the height of the hedge should not increase the cost by much.

It was decided that the brought forward reserve for the new sports pavilion should be included as a contingency item.

It was decided that in order to balance the budget the precept for 2011/12 would be set at £26,500.

The budget was approved subject to these amendments. An explanation of the reasons for the increase in the precept to be included in the January newsletter.

d) **OCTOBER INVOICES**

PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL AND PAYMENT AT 3 NOVEMBER 2010 MEETING

		Statute
Clerk's salary & working from home allowance	336.08	LGA 1972, s112 & LGA 1972 s111
Clerk's expenses –mileage & materials for playground project	16.51	LGA 1972, s111 & LG(MP)A 1976, s19
HM Revenue & Customs (PAYE on Clerk's salary)	24.20	LGA 1972, s112
Margaret Johnson – stationery & copying	46.29	LGA 1972, s111
AK Timms – materials for playground, pavilion & bus shelter	102.63	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
West Oxfordshire District Council – two cuts of verges in September (12 cuts invoiced this year to date)	576.71	HA 1980, s116
Countrywide – 5 cuts of playing field in September (24 cuts invoiced this year to date)	440.63	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Dick Rudd – work at Bartholomew Close and sportsfield ditch, inspection and painting of fence stub	460.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
B Lockett – litter picking for September and October	120.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
J Miles – one cut of grass at walled cemetery (8 cuts this year to date)	75.00	LGA 1972 s214
TOTAL	£2,198.05	

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

153.10 Other matters for discussion – for information only

- a) Peter Godwin informed the Parish Council that the County Council recently cut only part of the path between Curbridge Road and Starnham Road.
- b) The Clerk informed the Parish Council that Ms R Strzelecki has decided to give up her allotment. It was agreed that it should be offered to the next Ducklington resident on the waiting list.
- c) The Clerk informed the Parish Council that an allotment holder has requested that the Parish Council considers installing a locked gate at the allotments to improve security. It was decided that this would not be effective as allotment users often leave the current gate open and would be unlikely to reliably lock a replacement gate. Furthermore, a locked gate would not prevent unauthorised people from accessing the allotments as they could climb over the gate and fence.

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

- d) The Clerk informed the Parish Council that she has received a complaint from a local resident about dog mess on the green and verges near the village pond. It was agreed that a note should be put in the newsletter reminding people to clean up after their dogs.

154.10 Date of next meeting: 1 December 2010 – Lilac Room, Village Hall, 7.30pm
Monthly meeting of Parish Council

Signeddated.....