

**MINUTES OF DUCKLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 5 JANUARY 2011
IN THE LILAC ROOM, VILLAGE HALL, DUCKLINGTON AT 7.30 PM**

01.11 Members Present: Edmund Strainge (Chairman)
Peter Almgill
Adrian Armitage
Brian Hicks
Graham Lenton

In Attendance: Helen Sandhu - Clerk
Don Seale, County Councillor

02.11 Members' Apologies: Richard Border
Peter Godwin
Catherine Maddison
Glyn Rees

03.11 Minutes of meeting held on 1 December 2010

The reference to the most recent newsletter covering November/December noted in Minute 163.10(b) was amended to read December/January.
Subject to this amendment the minutes of the above meeting were approved and signed by Edmund Strainge as a true record.

04.11 County/District Council Matters

Don Seale reported on matters relating to the County Council. He informed the Parish Council of the series of scrutiny meetings held on 20 December looking at the County Council's finances. The proposed cut backs which have attracted the most attention from the public are the withdrawal of funding from some youth centres and some of the county's libraries (where funding is being withdrawn from 20 out of the 43 Oxfordshire libraries). The County Council is making efforts to provide people involved with these services with information and support to enable them to continue to run on a self-help basis as far as possible.

Mr Seale was asked whether the cutbacks in the library service will affect the mobile library. Mr Seale replied that there could be an expansion of the library van service so that it visits certain areas more often and starts visiting areas which are not currently covered.

Mr Seale told the Parish Council that one of the key service areas which will be maintained without financial cutbacks is adult services/services for older people. These services are used by fewer people but due to their nature they either can't be cut back or the County Council has decided that they won't be cut back. Whilst there will be no actual cutbacks in adult services, the way services are provided will be different.

Schools will get slightly more money from Central Government, and there will be no cutbacks to the county's children's service, especially where the service relates to the care of vulnerable children.

There will be cutbacks in Highways; it will take even longer than it currently does for potholes to be repaired, but residents and the Parish Council should continue to report repairs which are required.

04.11 County/District Council Matters (continued)

The number of waste recycling centres will be reduced, although this won't have an impact locally.

Staff numbers at the County Council will be reduced by 500, across all seniority levels. Unison seems to be accepting the reductions, appreciating that the cutbacks are unavoidable.

Mr Seale told the Parish Council that there will be a consultation on the proposed cutbacks in the library and youth centre services, but unless the consultation reveals very persuasive reasons why the cutbacks should not be made, it is unlikely that the proposals will change.

The Parish Council asked Councillor Seale to help achieve action on several outstanding issues; the repair/replacement of the Highways fence between Moors Close and Beanhill Road; the traffic order on Standlake Road near Fritillary Mews; and the promised improvements at the Station Lane junction in Witney.

05.11 Parish Councillors – Disclosure of interests on agenda items

Edmund Strainge, as a neighbour, the planning application for Oxleaze Barn discussed at Minute 09.11.

Edmund Strainge, as a relative of the Flower Show secretary, matters relating to the Flower Show discussed at Minute 07.11(b).

06.11 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

a) Parish infrastructure issues

- *Request for traffic calming measures/waiting restrictions around entrance to Fritillary Mews*
Traffic Order still awaited.
- *HGV signage on Ducklington roundabout*
Installation delayed until the electrical supply from the existing signage has been removed.

b) Village Pond

The Clerk advised that a letter has now been received from Smiths of Bletchington confirming they will be able to provide the equipment and staff to remove the sludge when the conditions are appropriate, and that they will fund this from the Smiths Community Fund. The Clerk was asked to forward the names of the two residents who have agreed to have their private wells included in Smiths' water level monitoring to Martin Layer. The Clerk was also asked to ask Mr Layer when the visible water gauge which Smiths has agreed to erect at the pond will be installed.

There was some discussion about how the Parish Council should proceed with the works at the pond (removal of the sludge and the digging out of the new filter beds). It was agreed that it would be most efficient if the filter beds could be dug out at the same time that the sludge is removed. It was agreed that the Pond Working Party would meet to develop proposed designs of the pond surroundings including the filter beds for the full Parish Council to approve. It was agreed that the final design needs to be agreed by/at the April meeting so that the work can start as soon as the pond dries up sufficiently for the sludge to be removed. Graham Lenton and Peter Almgill agreed to organise a meeting of the Working Party.

06.11 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings (continued)

c) *Public open space at Bartholomew Close*

Update on outstanding works:

- stump grinding - will be done when Dick Rudd is able to
- litter bin - awaiting installation by West Oxfordshire District Council
- 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 with Dick Rudd
- wooden gate - Edmund Strainge confirmed that he has placed the order with IA & IJ Godfrey. They have agreed to tell the owner of the field which is accessed through the open space so that he can then be supplied with the lock combination.
- sign for gate Wording (likely to be "Please leave clear for access") and size to be considered further when the gate has been installed.

d) *Risk Assessments*

Peter Almgill informed the Parish Council that he has made the requested changes to the assessments previously considered by the Council but that he has not yet been able to complete the new assessment for the car park. Item to be carried forward to the February meeting.

07.11 New Business

a) *Inspection of horse chestnut tree on Bartholomew Close*

The tree was reinspected by Boward Tree Surgery at the beginning of December. The report indicates that there is no significant difference in the condition of the tree since its previous inspection and that no action is required at the present time. The tree will be reinspected next year.

b) *Request for use of sports field for the annual Flower Show from Ducklington & Hardwick Produce Association*

It was resolved that the Produce Association would be given permission to use the sports field for the annual Flower Show for the next five years (to 2015) as requested by their committee.

c) *New multi-user track adjacent to A415 to be built by Oxfordshire County Council*

After the December meeting the County Council informed the Parish Council of its intention to install a multi-user track on a short stretch of verge adjacent to the A415 just below the entrance to Gill Mill. The Parish Council had been informed of this by the Clerk and Councillors' comments invited. The County Council was informed that the Parish Council had concerns about the safety of horseriders using this track due to its proximity to the A415. The Parish Council had suggested that a fence was installed to shield the track from the A415.

An email in response to the Parish Council's concerns from the County Council was read out – a post and rail fence was considered but will not be installed due to the risk it could pose to users of the highway, and a metal highways barrier cannot be installed due to its disproportionate cost. The County Council email noted that they have consulted with the British Horse Society who have no outstanding objections.

08.11 Playgrounds/Sportsfield

a) Inspection Report for December

A copy of the inspection report prepared by Dick Rudd was presented to the meeting. The only new issue noted was a small amount of new graffiti on the Chalcroft slide.

b) Current works

Work orders placed:

- Work to lift and resecure safer surface tiles - Dick Rudd will carry out when he is able to and when the weather/ground conditions are right
- Anti-pigeon spikes – new spikes to be installed later in the spring

c) January playground inspection

Adrian Armitage and Graham Lenton volunteered to carry out this inspection.

d) Annual independent inspection 2011

It was resolved to re-engage John Hicks to carry out the annual inspection in June. The Clerk was asked to request that John Hicks inform the Parish Council of the date he intends to come nearer the time so that any Councillors wishing to accompany him could do so.

e) Joint Parish Council/Sports Club Committee

- Edmund Strainge told the Parish Council that he has put a number-code padlock on one of the gates of the sportsfield fence, as previously agreed.
- Glyn Rees was not in attendance at the meeting – discussion of any information he may have received from Leafield Parish Council about the management arrangements for the sports pavilion on their land to be carried forward to the February meeting.
- The joint committee will meet again on 22 February. It was agreed that the key points that the Parish Council would like discussed at the meeting is the Sports Club's progress on the proposed building of the new pavilion and an indication of their expected timelines. Proposed culverting of the ditch next to the pavilion also to be discussed.
- It was noted that the Sports Club has still not fixed or locked the barrier to the field.

f) Additional sportsfield works 2011

It was resolved that the Clerk would request a quotation for the routine additional works (spiking of main football pitch twice in April, weed killing the whole field in spring and fertilizing the whole field twice, once in spring and once in autumn) from the mowing contractor. Brian Hicks told the Parish Council that whilst the Council had previously paid for the main football pitch and the newer part of the sports field to be chain harrowed twice during the season, the Sports Club now has its own harrow which it uses regularly. He therefore recommended that this work should not be placed with the external contractor, and this recommendation was accepted. The Clerk was asked to inform the Sports Club. It was agreed not to seek competitive quotations for the additional works as it would be difficult to co-ordinate the work of two contractors and the Sports Club to ensure that the field is effectively maintained.

g) Renewal of lease for sportsfield extension

The Clerk informed the Parish Council that the new draft lease had been received shortly before the meeting. The Clerk outlined the major changes and the draft was placed in the folder for circulation amongst Councillors in advance of February's meeting. The earliest date a final copy could be signed is at the March meeting.

08.11 Playgrounds/Sportsfield (continued)

h) Non-functioning roadway lights – car park to pavilion

The Clerk was asked to write to Nick Howse and to Steve Townsend asking them when the work is going to be done (Mr Howse and Mr Townsend having previously agreed to liaise about it). It was noted that the failure of the one light is still causing problems for people using the pavilion in the evening, particularly the whist group.

i) Proposal to culvert ditch between sportsfield and playground

To be discussed at the meeting of the joint Parish Council/Sports Club committee.

09.11 PLANNING

PLANNING APPLICATIONS GRANTED:

10/1598/P/FPEXT Troy House, 2 Aston Road, Ducklington
Erection of side extension to provide garage with bedroom in roof space above
Erection of single storey front and rear extensions. Conversion of part of garage to form additional residential accommodation

10/1489/P/FP Mutchmeats Ltd, New Close Lane, Witney
Erection of single storey factory extension

MW.0063/09 Gill Mill, Standlake Road, Ducklington
(County Council) Processing plant for recycled aggregates
(application considered by the Parish Council in February 2009)

NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS

10/1803/P/FP Oxleaze Barn, Coursehill Farm, Coursehill Lane, Ducklington
Single storey extension including glazed link to form self-contained accommodation
Parish Council response to request that a condition be attached that this development is ancillary to the main accommodation

10.11 FINANCE

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

Balance on Current Account at 31 December 2010	£11,268.41
Balance on Deposit with WODC at 31 December 2010	£27,300.00
Total Cash Holding	<u>£38,568.41</u>

b) Receipts and Payments account to 31 December 2010

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

c) Internal auditor

Following a previous Parish Council decision to investigate the possibility of changing the internal auditor for 2010/11 the Clerk informed the Council that she had identified a new potential internal auditor, Mr Bill Haire who lives in Minster Lovell. He carries out the internal audit for other local Parish Councils and has quoted a fee of £100 for the internal audit for 2010/11. It was resolved to appoint Mr Haire as the Parish Council's new internal auditor.

10.11 FINANCE

d) *DECEMBER INVOICES*

PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL AND PAYMENT AT 5 JANUARY 2011 MEETING

		Statute
Clerk's salary & working from home allowance	335.88	LGA 1972, s112 & LGA 1972 s111
HM Revenue & Customs (PAYE on Clerk's salary)	24.40	LGA 1972, s112
Clerk's expenses – printing and telephone calls, stamps	21.35	LGA 1972, s111
Margaret Johnson – stationery & copying	17.72	LGA 1972, s111
West Oxfordshire District Council – 1 cut of verges in October (13 cuts invoiced this year to date)	288.36	HA 1980, s116
Dick Rudd – playground inspection	50.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Boward Tree Surgery (Oxford) Ltd – inspection of horsechestnut on Bartholomew Close	76.38	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
e-on – electricity bill for pavilion, q/e 15 Dec 2010 (estimated)	623.54	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Society of Local Council Clerks – membership fee for 2011 (full fee shared 54%/46% with Aston, Cote, Shifford & Chimney Parish Council, in proportion to salary)	63.72	LGA 1972, s143
Mrs J Parry – honorarium for tennis court assistance	50.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
B Lockett – litter picking for December	30.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
E. Strainge – reimbursement for purchase of padlock	16.39	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Thames Water – replacement for lost cheque sent in December**	344.55	SH & AA 1908 & LG(MP)A 1976, s19
TOTAL	£1,942.29	

** The Clerk informed the Parish Council that Thames Water has lost the cheque between its original receipt (which they have acknowledged) and its onward transmission to their bank. The cheque has been cancelled (at no cost) and a replacement therefore raised.

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

11.11 Other matters for discussion – for information only

- a) Peter Almgill told the Parish Council about the repeated incidents of blockages in the foul drainage system at Fritillary Mews. Thames Water is aware of this and has attended to clear blockages several times in the past year.
- b) It was noted that a lot of new graffiti was done around the village in the second half of December. The Clerk informed the Parish Council that she has spoken to the local PCSO about this – the Police are aware, have logged and photographed all the incidences of graffiti up to 5 January and are working to identify the offender(s). Householders can now clear up any graffiti on their property. It was agreed that this information should be put in the next newsletter and on the website.
- c) Brian Hicks told the Parish Council that there has been more vandalism at the allotments – he has already informed the Police.
- d) Brian Hicks told the Parish Council that Mr Fuller has informed him that he intends to give up his occupancy of allotment 1B. The Clerk was asked to contact the next person on the waiting list and ask them to get in touch with Brian Hicks.

11.11 Other matters for discussion – for information only

- e) There was a discussion about the treatment of the roads in the village when there is snow/ice. Edmund Strainge told the Parish Council that it may be possible to arrange for a local person to clear the main road with a snow plough attachment on a tractor. It was agreed that this is a good idea, provided it will be acceptable to Highways and to the Parish Council's insurance company. Clerk to contact both bodies and Edmund Strainge to speak to his local contact to ascertain whether he has the right equipment and whether he would be willing to help when there is snow/ice.

12.11 Date of next meeting: 2 February 2011 – Lilac Room, Village Hall, 7.30pm
Monthly meeting of Parish Council

Signeddated.....