

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

118.11 Members Present: Edmund Strainge (Chairman)
Peter Almgill
David Duthie
Peter Godwin
Catherine Maddison
Sarah Stanley

In Attendance: Helen Sandhu – Clerk
Steven Hayward, West Oxfordshire District Councillor,
for part of the meeting

119.11 Members' Apologies: Adrian Armitage, Richard Border, Glyn Rees

120.11 Minutes of meeting held on 7 September 2011

The minutes of the meeting on 7 September 2011 were approved and signed by Edmund Strainge as a true record of the meeting.

121.11 County/District Council Matters

Don Seale had sent his apologies for the meeting.

Steve Hayward told the Parish Council that he has attempted to chase up the outstanding County Council work on the establishment of waiting limits near Fritillary Mews and the installation of a new sign on the Ducklington roundabout.

The Government has recently announced that they will provide additional funding to county and district councils who cap any proposed increase in their share of the council tax at 2.5% so that there are no increases in the council tax charged to residents. Mr Hayward said that in his opinion the District Council has still not made any serious inroads into reducing its cost base. The target savings it needed to reach have been achieved through the new waste collection contract which costs less than the old contract and generates more money from the recycling collected. The District Council is now looking into making further savings through more partnership working with Cotswold District Council (CDC). Mr Hayward said that he is not completely happy with these plans as CDC is in a different county and partnership working across county boundaries duplicates some work, particularly where it involves community safety as two police districts are then involved. Mr Hayward told the meeting that Oxfordshire County Council has managed to reduce the number of people it employs by 1,000 at the same time as continuing to deliver all the front line services expected from a county council.

169 social houses have been built in the area covered by West Oxfordshire District Council in 2010/11 – more than in any other Oxfordshire district council area. Work is continuing on completing the Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF will not have a significant impact on Ducklington; the aspect of the proposed framework causing the greatest contention is the proposals for the expansion of Carterton. The residents in Curbridge seem to have accepted the proposals for the expansion of Witney towards Curbridge. They are working towards ensuring they get the infrastructure improvements needed to minimise the impact on their village, including a new junction on the A40 at Downs Road. This will

121.11 County/District Council Matters (continued)

impact on Ducklington as it should alleviate some of the traffic congestion on the Station Lane junction.

Edmund Strainge expressed the view that if the Cogges Link Road (CLR) is built the additional traffic coming onto Station Lane at the Sainsbury's roundabout will make the congestion problems that this road already suffers from worse. Steve Hayward replied that the CLR won't increase the volume of traffic, it will just mean that the vehicles on Station Lane will have come through Witney via a different route to that currently used. He advised that the County Council could end up in serious difficulties if it does not take action to reduce the level of pollutants in Bridge Street.

Peter Almgill asked whether there is any further information on the proposed roundabout for the Station Lane junction which the Highways Area Steward mentioned at the Annual Parish Meeting. Mr Hayward replied that he had heard nothing further. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact the Area Steward to ask for an update.

122.11 Parish Councillors – Disclosure of interests on agenda items

Edmund Strainge, as a relative of the candidate for the role of editor of the newsletter under Minute 123.12(h) – a prejudicial interest.

123.11 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

a) Parish infrastructure issues

- *Request for traffic calming measures/waiting restrictions around entrance to Fritillary Mews*

The Clerk advised that she has received a revised map with proposed changes to the waiting restrictions from Oxfordshire Highways. The revised proposition is to put a double yellow line (no waiting at any time) between the electricity substation next to 26 Fritillary Mews round the entrance into the Mews, double yellow lines round the bend into the Mews onto the opposite side and round the bends into Wesley Barrell and a single yellow line (no waiting Monday to Friday 8.30am to 6pm) outside numbers 2 to 8 Fritillary Mews.

It was observed that this is more in keeping with what the Parish Council had originally discussed with Oxfordshire Highways. The proposal was approved and the Clerk was asked to contact Highways to ask them to proceed with its implementation.

- *HGV signage on Ducklington roundabout*
Installation still delayed until the electrical supply from the existing signage has been removed.

b) Village Pond

The sludge and a thin layer of gravel were removed on 26 September. Edmund Strainge and Martin Layer agreed that it would be preferable for the stones which made up the central island to be stored at Gill Mill pending future use, rather than being left around the edge. It was agreed that the team from Smiths had done an excellent job and the Clerk was asked to write to the directors of the company to thank them for their assistance, with a copy to be sent to Martin Layer. The Clerk was also asked to write to Paul Hutchinson to thank him for agreeing to have the sludge disposed of on his land.

123.11 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings (continued)

Village Pond (continued)

The highway drainage plans prepared by Steve Watts of Gemma Building & Design have been approved by the County Council highway drainage engineer and the design has been put on the website and on the noticeboards

Martin Layer of Smiths of Bletchington has prepared information for the directors of Smiths to consider what further support they may be able to offer.

It was resolved that the Parish Council would consider whether the willow plants round the pond should be coppiced at the meeting on 2 November.

c) *Benches on open space at end of Bartholomew Close*

Peter Godwin reported that there is some graffiti and small scorch marks on the benches.

It was resolved that Dick Rudd would be asked to treat the benches with a dark spirit based stain.

d) *Public information signs*

Bartholomew Close sign

The Clerk reported that the requested amendments to the signs have been made and that the price for a 510mm x 360mm complete sign would be £157 (including delivery but excluding installation). It was resolved that the sign would be ordered and that Dick Rudd will be asked to install it. Peter Almgill agreed to meet with Dick Rudd when the sign has arrived to agree its precise location.

Village information sign

The revised sign including the amendments agreed at the September meeting was reviewed and approved. A 510mm x 360mm sign will cost £47.50 + delivery + installation. It was proposed that the Parish Council would consider installing two signs – one in the bus shelter and one at the car park on Aston Road. It was further proposed that it would be beneficial if a sign could be installed at the Witney Road entrance to the village, but as the Parish Council does not own any land or property here, the best location for it would be likely to be on the Four Pillars hotel boundary. The Clerk was asked to write to the Four Pillars hotel to see whether they would give permission for this and to ask whether they would sponsor the sign.

It was resolved that the Clerk would write to the landlords of the two public houses in the village to ask whether they would consider providing some sponsorship for the signs. Sarah Stanley said that she knew the owner of a business in the village who may also be prepared to sponsor the signs – she agreed to contact them and to advise the Clerk if a formal letter should be sent to them.

e) *Bench to commemorate Brian Hicks' service as a councillor*

The bench has been ordered and should be delivered in January 2012 – the payment of the £175 deposit is included in the payments schedule.

The Clerk advised that she has been told by Oxford Memorial Benches that the bench comes untreated but that they can supply two layers of clear preservative for an additional cost of £45. Peter Godwin volunteered to apply the appropriate treatment to the bench when it has been received and it was resolved that he should do so.

It was resolved that the wording of the plaque to be attached to the top rear slat of the bench would read: "Thanks to Brian Hicks//Parish Council member for 38 years". David Duthie agreed to speak to the trophy supplier he has contact with to ask for recommendations on the size of the plaque, its depth and metal choice.

123.11 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings (continued)

f) Vacant allotment plots

The Clerk advised the Council that plot 7C has been let to Mrs Ann Davis of Abbey Road, Witney and that there are now no vacant plots. She further advised that the tenant of plots 8B & 16 (which are generally let as a combined plot) has given notice of her intention to quit at the end of December and that the plots will then be offered to the Ducklington resident at the top of the waiting list.

g) Bampton bound bus stop on Standlake Road near Strainges Close

David Duthie agreed to attend the joint site meeting arranged by the County Council on 20 October.

h) New editor for the newsletter, terms of reference for the newsletter

The Clerk had prepared a report about the terms of reference for the newsletter which had been circulated in the Briefing Notes.

The report was reviewed and its content was agreed, namely that:

- The newsletter is owned by the Parish Council
- Any significant alterations to the content or format of the newsletter would need to be approved by the Parish Council, but councillors would welcome any suggestions for improving the newsletter
- Advertising should remain local and the volume of it should be restricted so that the balance of the newsletter is not detrimentally affected
- Information about local charity events can be included for free provided there is sufficient space

Edmund Strainge left the meeting.

It was resolved that Helen Strainge would be appointed as the new self-employed newsletter editor. It was resolved that she would be paid £45 for editing each edition and could in addition include a quarter page advertisement for her business in each edition free of charge. It was resolved that the arrangements would be reviewed after six months.

Edmund Strainge rejoined the meeting and was informed of the resolutions made.

i) Proposal for adoption of Standing Orders for the Parish Council

It was resolved that Peter Almgill and Richard Border and any other councillors who wanted to be involved would form a working party to produce an initial tailored draft set of Standing Orders, based on the NALC model. This will be reviewed and considered further by the Parish Council at a future meeting.

j) County Council survey on community emergency plans

The County Council's requests for the provision of 24 hour contact details for the Parish Council and for the identification of a local survivor reception centre were discussed. It was resolved that Edmund Strainge and Helen Sandhu would act as the Parish Council contacts and that the Clerk would write to Sarah Temple as the secretary of the Village Hall Committee to ask whether the committee would consider agreeing to the village hall being nominated as a survivor reception centre.

k) Review of electoral arrangements for Oxfordshire County Council

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

l) County Council Armed Forces Community Covenant

It was resolved that the Parish Council had no response to make to the County Council's information about this covenant.

124.11 New Business

a) *Grass cutting contracts from 2012*

It was resolved that the specifications for the three contracts should be left unchanged except for the removal of the specification for the use of cylinder mowers where this was referred to.

It was resolved that the Clerk would send tender documents to four potential contractors and also to the current contractor who cuts the graveyard grass to request that they submit tenders for the next 2-3 grass cutting seasons. The Council will decide whether to award a contract for 2 or 3 years once the tenders have been reviewed.

b) *Date for Annual Parish Meeting 2012*

It was noted that Thursday is a better evening taking into account existing bookings for the village hall. It was agreed that the preferred date would be Thursday 10 May – Clerk to contact Sarah Temple.

c) *Bids to be made to the new Area Stewardship Highways fund*

Don Seale has advised that a new division-level budget for minor highways works has been created by the County Council, with £50,000 available for projects in the Bampton division up to 2013.

It was resolved that the Parish Council would request that the installation of the highways drainage improvement works at the village pond be put forward by Don Seale for funding from this budget.

d) *County Council consultation on its Waste Plan to 2030*

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

e) *County Council consultation on its Mineral Plan to 2030*

Edmund Strainge reported on a meeting he attended in Stanton Harcourt on 28 September organised by County Councillors Ian Hudspeth and Charles Mathew. The 60 people at the meeting were shown a map illustrating where the sand and gravel deposits in Oxfordshire are – they cover most of the area around Witney. The County Council is proposing to dig most of the sand and gravel required in the plan period from the Lower Windrush Valley, Eynsham/Cassington/Yarnton whilst the majority of the planned larger building projects for the same period will be in the south and east of the county. Mr Strainge expressed the view which had been shared at the meeting, that the right policy would be to dig minerals from the area where they are required to be used, but the County Council's proposed strategy will mean that the minerals will be dug in West Oxfordshire and transported out by road to the areas in the county where they are required. Given the weight restrictions on most of the bridges crossing the Thames, the lorry movements will be routed on the A40 and A34 which are already very congested. If more land is dug in West Oxfordshire there will be more large bodies of open water and this will increase the bird strike risk for planes flying out of RAF Brize Norton.

It was resolved that the Parish Council would respond with these concerns to the consultation and would also express concern about the risk to the fritillary field if further digging is permitted around Ducklington.

Peter Almgill and the Clerk were asked to include information about the Parish Council's concerns on the website.

f) *County Council "snow day" on Saturday 29 October*

It was resolved that no-one would attend this event.

125.11 Playgrounds/Sportsfield

a) *Inspection Report for September – circulated in Clerk's Briefing Notes*

It was resolved that Dick Rudd would be asked to clear the ditch between the playground and the pavilion of the rubbish which has been put in it.

b) *Playground inspection end of October 2011*

This inspection will be done by Dick Rudd.

c) *Replacement of zipwire*

The councillors and the Clerk who had been present at the site meetings with Adventure Playgrounds and SMP gave a verbal report on those meetings.

It was resolved that SMP would be the preferred supplier and that the grant application to WREN should include the reinstallation of the bark pit to current industry standards. It was resolved that a quotation for this work should also be requested from Adventure Playgrounds for comparative purposes.

The grant application to WREN needs to be submitted by 23 November, the draft application completed by the Clerk will be circulated in the Briefing Notes for the November meeting.

The Clerk advised that she has received some evidence of community support for the zipwire but it would be helpful to have more. Sarah Stanley volunteered to arrange a petition for children and parents from the primary school to sign.

d) *Tennis court maintenance*

It was noted that there are some weeds growing through the surface of the court. It was resolved that the Clerk would ask Andy Fisher to chemically treat the weeds provided the price quoted is below £250.

e) *Proposed new sports pavilion*

David Duthie told the Parish Council that Ducklington Sports Club will be meeting with the Oxfordshire Football Association and the overall Football Association in November and that he will provide a report on this meeting to the Parish Council in December.

f) *Maintenance of playing field – joint Parish Council and Sports Club meeting*

Item to be carried forward to the November meeting.

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

The Clerk advised that Mr Fennymore has tested the cable between the pavilion and the streetlight and has identified that it has an underground fault (in addition to the fault between the two streetlights).

David Duthie agreed to calculate an estimate of the cost of digging a trench for a new underground cable to the streetlight from the pavilion before the November meeting.

h) *Possible water leak at sportsfield/pavilion*

David Duthie and Edmund Strainge attended on site when Hamblin Water Mains came out to carry out the test and repair on 5 October. They located a leak in the pipe where the old pit was and carried out a repair but did not then check to see whether the meter was stationary before leaving. David Duthie agreed to check whether the meter is stationary when all the water in the pavilion is off in order to confirm whether this problem has now been resolved.

126.11 PLANNING

NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- 11/1386/P/FP 10 Bartholomew Close
Alterations to existing conservatory to include new pitched roof with velux
No comments
- 11/1409/P/FP 34 Manor Road
Alterations and erection of single storey front extension and car port
No comments
- 11/1481/P/FP 10 Feilden Close
Erection of single storey front extension
No comments
- 11/1491/P/FP 11 Peel Close
Retrospective application to allow installation of boiler flue following conversion of garage done under permission granted in 2010
No comments

127.11 FINANCE

- a) *Account Balances and Debts due to Council* – as circulated with the meeting papers
Balance on Current Account at 30 September £38,925.34

- b) *Receipts and Payments account to 30 September 2011*
Circulated in the Clerk’s Briefing Notes – noted.

- c) *Annual Return for 2010/11*

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 but a standard Issues Arising Report has been issued due to the restatement of the fixed assets. No action is required.

The audited Annual Return was approved and accepted by the Council.

- d) *SEPTEMBER INVOICES*

PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL AND PAYMENT AT 5 OCTOBER 2011 MEETING

		Statute
Clerk’s salary & working from home allowance	358.65	LGA 1972, s112 & LGA 1972 s111
HM Revenue & Customs	12.40	LGA 1972, s112
J Miles – one grass cut at cemetery (eight cuts this year to date)	80.00	LGA 1972, s214
B Lockett – litter picking for September	60.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Society of Local Council Clerks – law of allotments book	17.95	LGA 1972 s111
BDO LLP – external audit for 2010/11	342.00	LGA 1972 s111
WODC – 2 grass cuts in village in July 2011 (7 cuts invoiced this year to date)	618.43	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Margaret Hellawell – Oct/Nov newsletter production	45.90	LGA 1972 s111
E-on – electricity at pavilion q/e 15 Sept 2011	218.16	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Oxford Memorial Benches Ltd – deposit for new bench	175.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Mrs F Bryant – rent of playing field extension q/b 29 Sept 2011	102.50	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
TOTAL	£2,030.99	

The cheques were signed by Peter Amgill and Catherine Maddison.

128.11 Parish Councillors' reports from meetings attended since the last meeting

Edmund Strainge attended a meeting of local parishes about the County Council's proposed Minerals Strategy on 28 September – as reported under Minute 124.11(e).

129.11 Other matters for discussion – for information only

- a) Peter Godwin reported that the boundary hedges at both 46 Manor Road and 24 Feilden Close are overhanging the path and highway. He also reported that the cars which are regularly parked over the path on the corner near 24 Feilden Close are obstructing drivers' visibility and forcing pedestrians to walk in the road. The Clerk advised that she has already written to the occupiers of 24 Feilden Close about the hedge and will write to the occupiers of 46 Manor Road. The Clerk agreed to attempt to contact the local police team to talk to them about the problems caused by people parking on the footpath near 24 Feilden Close.
- b) The Clerk was asked to request that Highways cuts back the overgrown verge on the footpath between the Four Pillars hotel and the underpass of the A40.
- c) The Clerk was asked to include information about the grants available from the Protecting Playing Fields fund on the agenda for the next meeting so that the Parish Council can consider whether to submit a grant application.
- d) Peter Almgill requested that a second councillor volunteer to be trained on how to manage the website. He was asked to speak to Richard Border to see whether he would be willing to do this.
- e) Peter Almgill agreed to bring a camera to the next meeting to take photographs of the new councillors for the website.
- f) Peter Almgill informed the Parish Council that he has been appointed to the Standards Committee of the District Council as a parish representative.
- g) The Clerk told the Parish Council that she would be meeting with an officer from Oxfordshire Highways on 6 October to agree the location of the new salt bin at the entrance to Tristram Road.
- h) The Clerk informed the meeting that West Oxfordshire District Council is running a training session on the Code of Conduct on 24 November and that all new councillors and existing councillors who had not previously attended the training are being encouraged to attend. David Duthie and Sarah Stanley agreed to attend the training. The Clerk was asked to contact Glyn Rees to see whether he would be able to attend the session.

130.11 Date of next meeting – 2 November 2011 – Lilac Room, Village Hall, 7.30pm
Monthly meeting of Parish Council

Signeddated.....