

**DRAFT MINUTES OF DUCKLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 7 DECEMBER 2011
IN THE LILAC ROOM, VILLAGE HALL, DUCKLINGTON AT 7.30 PM**

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

In Attendance: Helen Sandhu – Clerk

152.11 Members' Apologies: Richard Border, Adrian Armitage

153.11 Minutes of meetings held on 2 November 2011 and 23 November 2011

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

154.11 County/District Council Matters

Don Seale had sent his apologies. Neither he nor the District Councillor were present.

155.11 Parish Councillors – Disclosure of interests on agenda items

None.

156.11 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

a) Parish infrastructure issues

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

The formal consultation letter from the County Council was considered. It was resolved to respond positively to the consultation and to ask the County Council to progress with the installation of the restrictions as soon as possible.

- *HGV signage on Ducklington roundabout*

Installation still delayed until the electrical supply from the existing signage has been removed. The Clerk will try to chase this up further in January 2012.

b) Village Pond

There has been no response yet to the Parish Council's bid, supported by Don Seale, for the highways drainage scheme to be funded from the Highways Area Stewardship fund. It was resolved to accept Dick Rudd's quotation of £60 for coppicing the willow and dogwood plants by the pond.

c) Staining of benches on open space at end of Bartholomew Close

This work will be carried out by Dick Rudd soon.

156.11 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings (continued)

d) Public information signs

Bartholomew Close sign

The order for this sign has been placed.

Village information sign

No response has been received from three of the four local companies approached for sponsorship. Sarah Stanley advised that the landlady of the Strickland Arms has verbally informed her that she would be prepared to provide sponsorship up to £50. Sarah Stanley offered to contact the Four Pillars Hotel again. It was resolved to carry this item forward to the January meeting.

e) County Council survey on community emergency plans

The Village Hall Committee has confirmed that the hall can be used as a survivor reception centre. The information has been sent to the County Council.

f) Grass cutting tenders from 2012 onwards

The four tenders (five for the cemetery) received were opened and considered.

It was resolved to accept the tender from ISS Landscaping for the cutting of both the verges and all the grounds maintenance at the playing field for the three seasons to 2014.

The Clerk reported that one of the contractors had contacted her to query the number of cuts at the playing field. They advised that they maintain a similar multi-use field (cricket and football) locally and that the grass there is only cut weekly during the cricket season in advance of matches and fortnightly at other times.

It was resolved that the Clerk would contact the new contractor to discuss a reduction in the number of cuts, with the whole field to be cut fortnightly outside of the cricket season and only the cricket outfield to be cut weekly during the cricket season, with the remainder of the field to be cut fortnightly.

g) Salt bin at entrance to Tristram Road, bulk salt supply

The salt bin has been installed by the County Council. Edmund Strainge confirmed that he has received the one tonne bag of salt which he will use to replenish the salt bin as necessary.

h) Commemoration of Queen's Diamond Jubilee in June 2012

Ducklington Sports Club has confirmed that the playing field can be used for a family picnic on Monday 4 June 2012; the Jubilee co-ordination committee has been advised.

There was a discussion about the planting of a commemorative tree. It was agreed that the large verge at the junction of Aston Road/Standlake Road near the school opposite the War Memorial would be a good location for the tree. The Clerk will contact Highways to see if this would be acceptable to them. There was a discussion about what species of tree would be suitable. The Chairman was asked to bring a recommendation on the type and size of tree to the January meeting. It was agreed that the tree would need to be planted early in 2012, in advance of the Jubilee.

i) Date of Annual Parish Meeting 2012

This will take place on the evening of Thursday 10 May.

157.11 New Business

a) *Donation request from Volunteer Link-up*

It was resolved that the Council, in accordance with its powers under sections 137 and 139 of the Local Government Act 1972, would pay a donation of £40.00 to Volunteer Link-Up. This is, in the opinion of the Council, in the interests of the inhabitants of the Parish and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure.

b) *Retirement of Margaret Hellowell as newsletter editor*

Mrs Hellowell has just completed her last edition of the village newsletter, having edited it for 25 years. It was resolved that Mrs Hellowell would be given a £25 garden centre voucher as a token of the Parish Council's appreciation for her work, to be sent with a letter of thanks written by the Clerk. It was resolved that a public letter of thanks would be included in the next newsletter; Edmund Strange was asked to draft this.

c) *Letter from resident about Bartholomew Close open space*

A letter from a local resident expressing concern about food being left on the ground at the Bartholomew Close open space had been included in the Clerk's Briefing Notes. The resident has reported that she believes that eating the food, which may be being left for the birds, has made her dog ill.

It was resolved that the next newsletter would include a request for people not to feed the ducks at the pond and not to leave food out for wildlife on the public open spaces as it can encourage vermin and can make domestic animals ill.

d) *Inspection of horse chestnut tree at Bartholomew Close, condition of adjacent ash tree*

The Clerk reported that the annual inspection of the large horse chestnut tree is due. She further reported that when on site she had noticed potential issues with a large ash tree nearby. The base of the trunk of this tree is hollow and split wide apart to the ground. It was resolved that the Clerk would ask Boward Tree Surgery to inspect both the trees. It was further resolved to delegate authority to the Clerk, in consultation with the members of the Urgency Committee, to approve any emergency work to either of these trees identified during the inspection.

e) *High Sheriff of Oxfordshire Awards 2012*

Oxfordshire Parish Councils have been invited to nominate people for an award. A proposal to nominate two specific people from Ducklington was discussed. It was agreed that there should be further consideration of the proposed nominations. David Duthie volunteered to write the necessary citations which will be considered at the January meeting.

158.11 School Report

A report received from Richard Border was discussed. The Parents' Association has changed its name to Friends of Ducklington School so that the wider village community can be more easily involved with the school. Some concerns have been raised about the safety of staff working at the school outside of school hours. The school governors will be looking into the feasibility of creating a car park at the front of the school and in the meantime are seeking support from the Parish Council with the improvement of safety at the council car park. At the last meeting of the governing body the Headteacher had given a full report and analysis of the children's achievement and attainment over the last year and had advised that priority will be given to ensure that the children's opportunities to progress are maximised.

158.11 School Report (continued)

There was a discussion about how the Parish Council could help with improving the safety of the car park. It was noted that the Parish Council cannot install any lights as there is no working electricity supply to the car park. It was also observed that the lights installed by the school which point towards the car park are quite effective in providing light to the area of the car park nearest the school entrance. It was resolved that the Parish Council has no objection to the school installing more lights on the land belonging to the Parish Council which the school already has use of. Catherine Maddison and Sarah Stanley volunteered to feed this information back to the school.

Glyn Rees informed the Parish Council that the Rotary Club has agreed to present an illustrated dictionary to all children leaving the school at the end of year 6 from 2012 onwards.

159.11 Playgrounds/Sportsfield

a) *Inspection Report for November – tabled at the meeting*

Sarah Stanley provided a verbal report on this inspection which she had carried out. There were no significant issues requiring immediate attention.

b) *Playground inspection end of December 2011*

This inspection will be carried out by Dick Rudd.

c) *Replacement of zipwire*

The Clerk advised that following the last meeting SMP supplied a revised quotation. The quotation was reduced to £10,450.00 for the whole project and was submitted with the WREN grant application.

The grant application to WREN has been submitted. The Clerk advised that WREN has asked for a copy of a formal minute recording the identities of people who can sign the contract on behalf of the Parish Council. It was resolved that Edmund Strange and/or Adrian Armitage can sign the contract, with the Clerk authorised to sign the grant application. As the signed minute will not be available until after WREN's deadline the Clerk had prepared a letter confirming this information for the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Clerk as Proper Officer to sign. It was signed by the Clerk and by Edmund Strange. The Clerk will arrange for it to be signed by Adrian Armitage and forwarded to WREN after the meeting.

Confirmation about whether the grant application has been successful will be received after 1 March and the project would not be able to start (if successful) until at least one month after then (the time it takes for the successful schemes to be registered with the regulator of the scheme).

d) *Protecting Playing Fields Fund*

No progress has been made on this item. David Duthie asked for it to be carried forward to the next meeting.

e) *Maintenance at sports pavilion/playing field*

The Clerk has not yet obtained the quotations for the replacement of the external door – item to be carried forward.

David Duthie advised that the guttering has been repaired but that the broken material which was removed was left on site by the contractor. The Clerk will ask the contractor to return to remove it.

159.11 Playgrounds/Sportsfield (continued)

f) *Proposed new sports pavilion*

David Duthie provided a verbal report on the meeting Ducklington Sports Club had with the Oxfordshire Football Association and the overall Football Association. The Association representatives supplied some very discouraging news about the availability of funding – Oxfordshire has been allocated £200k total funding to spend on sports facilities over the next three years. The meeting took place at the pavilion and the Association representatives informed the Sports Club that Ducklington already has more facilities than some of the other clubs who are seeking grant funding. The Association representatives said that the FA would consider an application for improving the existing facilities but not an application for a large new build. A condition survey on the pavilion would need to be prepared. The OFA has supplied the information needed to carry this out and David Duthie informed the Parish Council that the Sports Club will be taking this forward.

David Duthie advised the Parish Council that one of the Sports Club's main reasons for wanting to build a new pavilion in a different location was to enable them to create a second full size pitch on the field. The Sports Club is now planning to pursue a different way of doing this – if permission can be gained from Highways to move the fence line nearer the A415, using some of the large Highways verge, then a second full size pitch could be created at the far end of the field. David Duthie will contact Highways to discuss this request with them.

g) *Maintenance of playing field – joint Parish Council and Sports Club meeting*
This has not yet taken place – item to be carried forward to the next meeting.

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

A quotation received from Jason Fennymore in the sum of £420 for installing the light unit which has been bought on the corner of the pavilion was considered. It was resolved that the Parish Council would not order this work. The Clerk was asked to get the light unit from Mr Fennymore and it was resolved that it could be offered to the school if it would be useful to them to install somewhere at their own expense using their own electricity supply to provide more lighting to the car park.

i) *Pavilion safety*

A report by the Clerk about issues relating to asbestos, legionella and fire safety had been circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes. It was resolved to carry discussion of this report forward to the next meeting so that Councillors have the opportunity to read the further information which had been put in the folder.

160.11 PLANNING

PLANNING APPLICATIONS GRANTED

11/1491/P/FP 11 Peel Close

Erection of single storey front and rear extensions. Conversion of part of garage to form additional residential accommodation (to allow installation of boiler flue)

11/1680/P/FP Oxleaze Barn, Coursehill Farm, Coursehill Lane

Erection of single storey extension and glazed link to form annexe (retrospective)

161.11 FINANCE

- a) *Account Balances and Debts due to Council* – as circulated with the meeting papers
 Balance on Current Account at 30 November £46,616.16

David Duthie had supplied cheques in settlement of the outstanding invoices issued to the Sports Club at the meeting.

Catherine Maddison presented the Parish Council with a cheque for £100 which she had raised from a 10k run. She asked for this to be put into the Playground Refurbishment Reserve. The Parish Council expressed their gratitude to Mrs Maddison for her donation.

- b) *Draft budget for 2012/13*

A second draft of the budget which had been circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes was discussed.

The Clerk will move the expenditure on the Jubilee tree from the budget into the current year forecast. The figures from the accepted tenders for the grass cutting will be added into the budget. The Clerk was asked to increase the budget for room rental for Parish Council meetings to £150. It was resolved to set the precept for 2012/13 at £26,500, the same as the current year.

Any excess funds from the revised budget will be added to general reserves.

The Clerk agreed to bring a third draft of the budget containing the above amendments to the January meeting.

- c) *NOVEMBER INVOICES*

PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL AND PAYMENT AT 7 DECEMBER 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
Clerk's expenses – postage, purchase from WODC of maps for grant app, telephone calls and printing quarter ended 30/11	59.90	LGA 1972 s111
Countrywide Grounds Maintenance – 4 grass cuts of playing field in October (31 cuts invoiced this year to date) & autumn fertilising	1,146.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
J Miles – one grass cut at cemetery (eleven cuts this year)	80.00	LGA 1972, s214
Margaret Johnson – stationery & copying	52.64	LGA 1972, s111
M. Hellawell – production of Dec/Jan newsletter	45.90	LGA 1972 s111
Henry Box School – newsletter printing, Oct/Nov edition	66.72	LGA 1972 s111
WODC – 1 grass cut in village in September 2011 (10 cuts invoiced this year to date)	309.22	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Mrs F Bryant – rent of playing field extension q/b 25 Dec 2011	102.50	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Society of Local Council Clerks – membership fee for 2012	66.42	LGA 1972, s143
Thames Water – allotment supply bill q/e 16 November 2011 (actual reading)	33.22	SH & AA 1908
Thames Water – pavilion supply bill q/e 16 Nov (actual reading)	165.84	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Volunteer Link-up (West Oxon) - donation	40.00	LGA 1972 s137
TOTAL	£2,539.41	

The cheques were signed by Edmund Strange and Peter Amgill.

162.11 Parish Councillors' reports from meetings attended

Sarah Stanley and David Duthie informed the Parish Council that they had attended the Code of Conduct training run by the District Council on 24 November.

163.11 Other matters for discussion – for information only

- a) An email from a local resident about the poor service provided by RH buses (buses arriving late or not at all) was discussed. Glyn Rees agreed to follow this up with the County Council.

164.11 Date of next meeting - 4 January 2012 - Lilac Room, Village Hall, 7.30pm

Monthly meeting of Parish Council

Signeddated.....

DRAFT