

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

104.11 Members Present: Edmund Strainge (Chairman)
Peter Almgill
Adrian Armitage
Richard Border
David Duthie
Peter Godwin
Catherine Maddison

In Attendance: Helen Sandhu – Clerk
Don Seale, Oxfordshire County Councillor for part of the meeting
1 member of the public

105.11 Members' Apologies: None

106.11 Minutes of meetings held on 6 July 2011 and 3 August 2011

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

107.11 County/District Council Matters

Steve Hayward had sent his apologies for the meeting.

Don Seale asked whether the edges of the footpath between Curbridge Road and the A415 have been strimmed yet? The Clerk said that this work still hasn't been done and that she had chased Highways again about it the week before. Mr Seale asked the Clerk to forward the information to him so that he could also chase it on the Parish Council's behalf.

The County Council has two consultations out for public comment at the moment – on the libraries and on minerals extraction. The Clerk said that the information about the minerals extraction consultation had been received after the preparation of the agenda and so it would be discussed by the Parish Council at the October meeting.

Mr Seale went on to talk about the issue of delayed hospital release from the Radcliffe hospitals which had been reported in the media recently. He advised that the problem had been exaggerated by the media and that there are proposals in place to improve the situation.

Mr Seale then turned to the issue of aircraft noise from RAF Brize Norton. There has been an increase in complaints from the Broadwell/Kencot end of the runway, primarily about ground engine running of the Hercules aircraft. It was agreed that this is less of an issue for Ducklington, whilst Councillors said that there has been a marked increase in the amount of night flying recently. Don Seale said that if residents do have complaints they can be referred to him.

Mr Seale informed the Parish Council that the Government's new Planning Bill which is currently a White Paper is causing a lot of disquiet in the villages which he represents. People's concerns hinge around the fact that the Bill says that sustainable development should always be permitted unless there are strong reasons for it to be refused. The Bill says that land within the Green Belt, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and conservation areas will be protected, but Mr Seale expressed a lack of conviction about how strong this protection would be – developers have money to spend on appeals and appear to win them very frequently. It is already difficult for planning authorities to refuse an application for development, and the proposed Bill would make this even harder.

108.11 Parish Councillors – Disclosure of interests on agenda items

Edmund Strainge, as a potential recipient of the advice provided by the Berks, Bucks & Oxon Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group, their application for a donation under Minute 110.11(i) – a prejudicial interest.

David Duthie, as a committee member of Ducklington Sports Club, the setting of the pitch fee for 2011/12 under Minute 112.11(g) – a prejudicial interest.

109.11 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 had chased this up, informing the County Council of the traffic accident in this location on 5 August, in which parking on the bend was considered to be a contributory factor. The County Council response is that “pressure of work” has caused a delay in this exercise, but that it is still the intention that the proposed restrictions will be put in place. Don Seale agreed to follow this up further on behalf of the Parish Council.

- *HGV signage on Ducklington roundabout*

The Clerk has chased this again with a new officer from Oxfordshire Highways but the installation of the new sign is still delayed until the electrical supply from the existing signage has been removed.

b) Village Pond

Images of the proposed revised highway water drainage mechanism received from Steve Watts of Gemma Building & Design from Witney were reviewed. Peter Almgill explained what the images show and that they were produced following a site meeting between Steve Watts and Wayne Barker of Oxfordshire Highways which Mr Almgill and Richard Border had attended. The swale included in the design would only be about 30cm high. Both Steve Watts and Wayne Barker had questioned whether the Parish Council needs to install the filter beds previously proposed – the pond doesn’t really benefit from the water which runs from the highway as any water reaching the pond drains straight down to the water table. It should not therefore be detrimental to the pond for the run-off from the road to be held in the swale and for it to drain into the water table from there. There may, however, be some benefit in having an “overflow” filter bed on the edge of the pond where the large drainage pipes are, nearest to Standlake Road, and the design allows for this.

Mr Almgill advised the Parish Council that there is a choice to make on how the water will drain from the road – either through cast-iron gully traps, as now (although these would need to be reset and the way the pipes run from them towards the pond would need to be redesigned so that they don’t silt up too quickly because of the swale), or grips could be put into the kerb – essentially gaps left in the kerb to enable the surface water run-off to drain freely towards the new swale. It was resolved that this second option would be preferred. Mr Almgill informed the Parish Council that whilst the County Council’s approval for the new scheme still needs to be obtained, Mr Barker had seemed to be in agreement with the suggestions made by Mr Watts.

The works have been costed by Smiths of Bletchington at £7,000. It is not yet clear what help Smiths may be able to offer. This cost does not include the removal of the sludge which Smiths have already promised to do and also does not include the rebuilding of the eroded banks which has been discussed previously. It was resolved that the Parish Council approves the drainage design in principle but that the means of funding it will need to be

109.11 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings (continued)

Village Pond (continued)

looked into before it can go ahead. The Clerk was asked to write to Martin Layer of Smiths of Bletchington to advise him of this and to inform him that the cost will be difficult for the Parish Council to meet and to ask him what help Smiths may be able to offer. Martin Layer also to be asked to proceed with the removal of the sludge as soon as possible, with liaison with Edmund Strainge required in relation to the disposal of the sludge. It was agreed that the stones from the middle island should be left out of the way at the edge of the pond near the cottage to be reused at a future date.

The Clerk was also asked to inform Steve Watts that he can send the design to Oxfordshire Highways to request their approval.

c) *Public open space at end of Bartholomew Close*

It was agreed that the land which had been cleared by the Parish Council in the spring does not need to be leveled or reseeded currently.

Peter Almgill asked whether the benches need to be treated. Peter Godwin agreed to go to look at them before the next meeting so that he can advise on this.

d) *Public information signs*

The revised designs received from G&G signs were considered.

It was resolved that the following changes should be made:

Bartholomew Close sign

Remove the full stop at the end of "for everyone to enjoy"

Remove the first two pleases from the advice for use of the site

Find out whether it is possible to produce a sign sized between A3 and A2; if not it was resolved that the Clerk should order an A3 sign once the amendments have been made

Village information sign

Include information saying "You are here"

Include numbered points for the Four Pillars hotel and the service station

Ask whether it is possible to produce a sign which is half as big again – between an A3 and an A2 size and find out the cost for this.

e) *Ivy on cemetery walls*

Two chemical treatments were put on the ivy in August, to apparently limited effect.

It was resolved that this should be considered again in spring 2012 to see whether more treatments will be required.

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

A report prepared by the Clerk and circulated in the Briefing Notes which included quotations for 2 different size benches received from 3 companies was discussed.

It was resolved to order a 5ft heavyweight iroko bench from Oxford Memorial Benches at a cost of £650. It was further resolved to use money from the contingency budget to meet this expenditure.

It was agreed that consideration of what should be included on the plaque would be included on the agenda for the October meeting. Edmund Strainge proposed the wording: "Thanks to Brian Hicks, PC member for 38 years."

g) *Vacant allotment plots*

Plot 8A has been let to Tony Maycock of The Leys, Witney. Plot 7C remains vacant but should be let soon to someone from outside the village on the waiting list.

109.11 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings (continued)

h) Co-option of new Councillor

Applications from two candidates had been circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes. It was resolved to co-opt Sarah Stanley of 8 Manor Road. The Clerk will inform the District Council and will write to the unsuccessful candidate.

110.11 New Business

a) Bampton bound bus stop on Sandlake Road near Strainges Close

A report on the proposed installation of a formal bus stop flag and pole had been circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes.

It was resolved that the Parish Council would request the installation of a heritage style bus stop provided an acceptable location can be identified. Clerk to contact the County Council. It was resolved that the Parish Council would contribute the required sum of £95 in order for the bus stop to be a heritage style rather than modern – this will be spent from the contingency budget.

b) Purchase of "The Law of Allotments" book from SLCC

It was resolved that this book would be purchased, at a cost of £17.95.

c) Resignation of Margaret Hellowell as newsletter editor

The Clerk informed the Parish Council that Mrs Hellowell would like to stop editing the newsletter early in 2012. Information received from Mrs Hellowell was put in the folder for circulation. It was resolved that information about the vacancy and the Parish Council's thanks to Mrs Hellowell would be included in the newsletter.

d) Surface water drainage issues on Standlake Road

Peter Almgill informed the Parish Council that during a heavy downpour at the end of August there was some localised flooding on Standlake Road caused because the roadside gulleys were blocked. It was noted that the County Council has recently been out to clear the gulleys in the village. The Clerk was asked to check whether all the gulleys have been done and to ask how often they are programmed to be cleaned. The Clerk told the Council that if they become aware of any problems with specific gulleys, they can be reported to the County Council. Edmund Strainge suggested that it may be a good idea to resume the village surveys which Parish Councillors had previously undertaken.

e) Request for perimeter fencing around the allotments

A letter received from an allotment tenant was considered. It was resolved that fencing could not be installed because the cost would be prohibitive and attempting to recoup it by increasing the allotment fees would necessitate unacceptable increases in those fees.

f) Principles for decision making/terms of reference

The "General Principles" which are included as an appendix to the Code of Conduct which all councillors agree to follow when they sign the declaration of acceptance of office had been circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes – these were noted.

The model Standing Orders published by the National Association of Local Councils were placed in the folder for circulation so that councillors could review them. Discussion of whether to tailor them to suit Ducklington Council so that a set of Standing Orders could be adopted would be included in the October meeting.

110.11 New Business (continued)

g) Grant request from Oxfordshire Association for the Blind

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 grant of £20.00 to Oxfordshire Association for the Blind. 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.

h) Grant request from Oxfordshire Carers' Forum

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 grant of £25.00 to Oxfordshire Carers' Forum. 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.

i) Grant request from Berks, Bucks & Oxon Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group

Having declared a prejudicial interest, Edmund Strainge left the meeting.

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 grant of £20.00 to Berks, Bucks & Oxon Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group. 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. Edmund Strainge rejoined the meeting.

j) County Council survey on community emergency plans

Adrian Armitage and Richard Border agreed to look at the information received and to report back to the October meeting.

k) County Council autumn event on community emergency planning

Adrian Armitage agreed to attend this event on the subject of "Emergency response and winter preparedness" on Tuesday 27 September.

l) Local winter treatment – County Council supply of salt bins and salt stock

It was resolved that the Parish Council would request the installation of a salt bin on the wide area of path at the right hand side of the entrance to Tristram Road, at a cost of £250. Cost to be met from the contingency budget. The salt will be available for spreading on the public highway by road users.

It was further resolved to accept the County Council's offer of a free one tonne bag of salt to be used by the Parish Council to replenish the bin. The bag will be stored by Edmund Strainge who will also arrange to replenish the bin as required.

m) Review of electoral arrangements for Oxfordshire County Council

Information about the review and the proposed changes for the division including Ducklington was put in the folder for circulation. A response will be agreed at the October meeting.

n) County Council review of Octabus Dial-a-Ride service

The Clerk was asked to contact Glyn Rees (the Parish Transport Representative) to see whether he has any comments to make. A response to the review was delegated to the Clerk.

o) Armed Forces Community Covenant

Information about the covenant launched by the County Council was put in the folder for circulation. The Parish Council's response to the covenant will be included as an agenda item for the October meeting.

111.11 SCHOOL REPORT

Richard Border told the Parish Council that the new head has started at the school.

112.11 Playgrounds/Sportsfield

- a) *Inspection Report for August – circulated in Clerk's Briefing Notes*
No new issues of note. Dick Rudd has dealt with the sharp finger trap which had been forming underneath the slide platform on the sportsfield site.
- b) *Current works*
All safer surfaces have now been lifted and reglued. Dick Rudd will fill the remaining gaps as necessary.
- c) *Playground inspection end of September 2011*
Adrian Armitage and Peter Godwin volunteered to carry out this inspection.
- d) *Replacement of zipwire*
The Clerk advised the Parish Council that the area manager for WREN has said that if a grant application is submitted by mid-October it will be treated as part of the August application round.
The information included in the Clerk's Briefing Notes for August was discussed. It was resolved that a new steel unit would be purchased, with the preferred suppliers being either Adventure Playgrounds or SMP. The Clerk agreed to arrange site meetings with representatives from these suppliers.
Richard Border agreed to contact the school to ask them to help the children and their parents to compile the evidence of community support which will be required – by individual letters and/or a petition.
- e) *Proposed new sports pavilion*
David Duthie told the Parish Council that Ducklington Sports Club has sent the planning drawings for the proposed new pavilion to the Oxfordshire Football Association. These will be forwarded by them to the central Football Association for review/comment.
- f) *Maintenance of playing field – joint Parish Council and Sports Club meeting*
This meeting which had been proposed by the Parish Council in an email to the secretary of the Sports Club on 16 July has not taken place. David Duthie advised the Parish Council that he was not aware whether this email had been received. The Clerk agreed to resend it direct to David Duthie.
- g) *Pitch fee for 2011/12 to be charged to Ducklington Sports Club*
Having declared a prejudicial interest in this item, David Duthie left the meeting.
A report included in the Clerk's Briefing Notes was discussed.
It was resolved that the fee for 2011/12 would be kept the same as the previous year - £900 (plus a £1 peppercorn rent for use of the pavilion).
There was a discussion about how the cost of additional works at the sports field should be split – it was agreed that this would need to be discussed with the Sports Club when those works are considered.

112.11 Playgrounds/Sportsfield (continued)

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

The responses received from Mr Fennymore to the queries raised by the Parish Council at the meeting on 3 August were discussed:

- Two 70w lights are proposed for the pole because this is the maximum fitting recommended by the manufacturer of the bracket which will be used to attach the lights (because of their size and weight)
- To test the circuit and convert the wiring of the first light so that it works as originally designed could be achieved for approximately £260, although if the control gear, bulb, or sensor needs replacing this would lead to an additional cost. This does assume that the light can be brought back into operation.

Edmund Strainge, Richard Border, Peter Godwin, David Duthie and the Clerk met with Mr Fennymore on site after dark on 6 September to assess whether the light which the new fittings would be produced would be sufficient. The Councillors present at the site meeting advised that the fitting would produce adequate light and would be suitable for the location. It was resolved that Mr Fennymore would be asked to install the two new light fittings as covered by his quotation, subject to there being no fault on the cable from the pavilion to the pole.

i) Possible water leak at sportsfield/pavilion

Edmund Strainge advised the Parish Council that he had met with three further contractors, and their advice/quotations could be summarised as follows:

- Company A: to find the leak: £300, to carry out a single repair to the pipe: £480,
To install an entire new 25mm pipe from the meter to the pavilion: £2550
- Company B: To find and repair the leak, providing this takes 3 hours or less: £259.50
Each additional hour to be charged at £86.50
To install an entire new 25mm pipe with two chambers: £2321
- Company C: To install a new 25mm pipe up to the tarmac: £980
To dig up the tarmac to take the pipe up to the pavilion: additional £300
An extra £100 for a 32mm pipe

It was resolved to place an order with Company A (Hamblin Watermains Ltd) for them to attempt to find the leak and to carry out a single repair at a total combined cost of £780. If it becomes evident that there is more than one leak, this information would need to be brought back to the Parish Council for a decision on how to proceed.

Hamblin Watermains to be asked to advise of the date of the work as the Parish Council may choose to send a representative to observe.

j) Proposed installation of a borehole to irrigate the sportsfield

Peter Almgill advised that he had corresponded with Andy Dixon about this – Mr Dixon has provided a provisional quotation of £1445 to install a borehole. Mr Almgill said that he was optimistic that there would be ways to reduce the quotation. Issue to be carried forward to a future (unspecified) meeting.

113.11 PLANNING

PLANNING APPLICATIONS GRANTED

11/0913/P/FP Barley Park Farm
Erection of an agricultural building

11/1129/P/TCN Land at Yew Tree Mews, Church Street
Installation of communication equipment cabinet

113.11 PLANNING (continued)

PLANNING APPLICATIONS GRANTED

11/1131/P/TCN Land at Witney Road (near SPS opposite Chalcroft)
Installation of communication equipment cabinet

NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS

11/1277/P/FP 4 Chalcroft Close
Loft conversion to include insertion of two front dormer windows and three rear rooflights
No comment

114.11 FINANCE

a) *Account Balances and Debts due to Council* – as circulated with the meeting papers
Balance on Current Account at 31 August £40,665.61

b) *Bank mandate – current account*
The Clerk advised that Santander has confirmed that the signatories to the current account have been changed as requested, the councillor signatories now being Edmund Strange, Glyn Rees, Peter Almgill and Catherine Maddison.

c) *Bank mandate – deposit account*
The Clerk advised that Santander is requesting further information before this account can be opened. As there have been changes to the Parish Council since the original resolution to open the account was made, a new resolution is required.
It was resolved to open a business direct saver account with Santander.
The Councillors who had not yet done so completed identification forms as requested by Santander.
An instruction form giving the Clerk authority to make transfers between the business direct saver account and the current account by telephone and/or fax was approved and signed.

d) *Appointment of internal auditor for 2011/12*
It was resolved to reappoint Bill Haire as the Parish Council's internal auditor for a quoted fee of £120.

e) *AUGUST INVOICES*

PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL AND PAYMENT AT 7 SEPTEMBER 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, printing and telephone calls	83.31	LGA 1972 s111
Countrywide Grounds Maintenance – 7 grass cuts in July & August (26 cuts invoiced this year to date)	630.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
J Miles – one grass cut at cemetery (seven cuts this year to date)	80.00	LGA 1972, s214
Margaret Johnson – stationery & copying (includes £24.68 for printing of election notices)	49.30	LGA 1972, s111
Andrew Fisher – two treatments of ivy on cemetery walls	200.00	LGA 1972, s214
B Lockett – litter picking for August	60.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Dick Rudd – playground inspection, removal of tree at pond, removal of zipwire frame	200.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19

114.11 FINANCE (continued)

AUGUST INVOICES (continued)

WODC – 2 grass cuts in village in June 2011 (6 cuts invoiced this year to date)	88.20	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Thames Water – allotment supply bill q/e 9 August 2011 (estimated reading)	17.24	SH & AA 1908
Thames Water – pavilion supply bill q/e 9 August (estimated reading)	391.23	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Grant to Oxfordshire Association for the Blind	20.00	LGA 1972, s137
Grant to Oxfordshire Carers' Forum	25.00	LGA 1972, s137
Grant to Berks, Bucks & Oxon Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group	20.00	LGA 1972, s137
TOTAL	£2,235.33	

The cheques were signed by Edmund Strainge and Peter Amgill.

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

Peter Amgill attended the RAF Brize Norton liaison meeting on 25 August. He advised that the issues covered at this meeting had been discussed earlier with Don Seale under minute 107.11.

116.11 Other matters for discussion – for information only

- a) Edmund Strainge told the meeting that Ruth Edy has contacted the Parish Council to advise that the Open Gardens Committee is thinking of organising an event to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee weekend in June 2012. The Committee is keen for other village events to be organised for the same weekend and has arranged a public meeting on 12 October to discuss the co-ordination of events to celebrate the weekend. Mr Strainge told the Parish Council that he will try to attend this meeting. It was agreed that he would report back to the Parish Council at the November meeting.
- b) The Clerk was asked to inform Oxfordshire Highways that the road between the A415 and the A4095 has several potholes which need to be repaired (particularly after the bends near Mr Strainge's farm road).
- c) The Clerk informed the Parish Council that she had been contacted by a resident with concerns about the number of adults who cycle on the footpath. It was agreed that people should be advised that cycling on the footpath is illegal via the next newsletter.
- d) The Clerk advised that RAF Brize Norton is going to establish a consultation working group and has invited parish councils to send a representative to these meetings. The Clerk was asked to contact Glyn Rees to see if he would be able to represent the Parish Council at these meetings.

117.11 Date of next meeting – 5 October 2011 – Lilac Room, Village Hall, 7.30pm
Monthly meeting of Parish Council

Signeddated.....