

**DRAFT MINUTES OF DUCKLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 4 JULY 2012
IN THE LILAC ROOM, VILLAGE HALL, DUCKLINGTON AT 7.30 PM**

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

In Attendance: Helen Sandhu – Clerk
Steve Hayward – West Oxfordshire District Councillor to the end of Minute 91.12

89.12 Members' Apologies: Glyn Rees

90.12 Minutes of meeting held on 6 June 2012

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

91.12 County/District Council Matters

Steve Hayward provided an update on matters relating to both the District and County Councils.

The most significant recent event is the rejection by the inspector of the compulsory purchase order for the land required to construct the Cogges link road. This had been unexpected as the construction of the link road has featured as a policy of the County Council for many years. It had been subject to 15 official inspections, 13 of which came out in favour of the link road as being the best potential solution to Witney's traffic problems. It has featured in four local plans which are subject to widespread consultation. The County Council has decided that there is insufficient time to appeal against the decision without risking losing significant sums contributed towards the scheme, some of which must be spent by 31 December 2012. The County Council now intends to negotiate with the developers who have contributed money towards the construction of the road and who will have the right to have their money returned (some £4.5 million) to seek their agreement to use it for other transport improvements in the Witney area. This could include the construction of the new junction on the A40 at Downs Road, which could be built as a roundabout off the main road if some of the Cogges link road money can be put towards it (the current plan is for the roundabout to be constructed on the A40 itself).

Mr Hayward informed the Parish Council that James Mawle, the owner of the land for which the compulsory purchase order was subject, wants the County Council to develop a full junction at Shores Green. Mr Hayward expressed the view that this would not solve all of Witney's transport problems and that this had been the conclusion of 13 of the 15 inspections that the Cogges link road scheme had subject to. Even the inspector who rejected the compulsory purchase order acknowledged that developing Shores Green would not solve the problem of poor air quality in Bridge Street. The inspections have also said that if Shores Green is developed there will be an increase in the pressure of traffic on the Ducklington roundabout. An earlier inspection had recommended that if Shores Green is developed, the slip roads off the A40 at Ducklington roundabout would need to be

redesigned to cope with the increase in traffic. This would not now be possible as the land which would be required has been built upon.

The inspector has advised the County Council to look at all the alternatives to improve the flow of traffic within Witney, and not just Shores Green. The West End link is a possible alternative; Mr Hayward told the Parish Council that the County does not at this point have all the money which would be required for this.

Oxfordshire County Council and West Oxfordshire District Council have formed a combined team which will negotiate with the developers who have contributed funds towards the link road and will produce a strategic plan.

The rejection of the Cogges link road compulsory land purchase will impact on the District's Local Development Framework, causing a further delay as the content of the Framework will need to be reassessed.

Mr Hayward left the meeting.

92.12 Parish Councillors – Disclosure of interests on agenda items

Edmund Strainge, the planning application for 61 Witney Road – minute 97.12 as the applicant is a family member.

Edmund Strainge, the email from a resident about traffic using the farm track as a route to Cogges, as the landowner – minute 94.12(f).

David Duthie, as a member of the Sports Club committee, the redevelopment of the pavilion – minute 96.12(e).

93.12 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

a) Parish infrastructure issues

- *Installation of waiting restrictions on Standlake Road near Fritillary Mews*

The County Council has started the installation of the lines but an officer has now advised that this has temporarily been stopped (with two gaps remaining in the stretch of single line) as residents have complained that they were not informed. The Parish Council expressed surprise at this as residents had been made fully aware of the plans, although they had not necessarily been given sufficient advance notice of when the lines would be painted. No residents have complained to the Parish Council. The County Council will finish installing the lines once they are satisfied that all the necessary consultation and required notices have taken place.

b) Village Pond

The Clerk advised that the work to install the swale has been delayed due to the recent wet weather. It should now be installed during the last two weeks of July/first two weeks of August.

c) Village information signs

The three signs have now been received. Edmund Strainge agreed to meet with Dick Rudd to agree the position of the sign at the entrance of Witney Road.

d) County Council proposed submission document for the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy to 2030

The document was put in the July folder for circulation amongst councillors. No formal response was agreed.

93.12 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings (continued)

- e) *Chopping back overgrowth from combined footpath/cycle path between Avenue 2 Station Lane, Witney and Four Pillars Hotel*

The Clerk advised that after the June meeting she again reported the problems with the reduction in the useable width of this path to Oxfordshire Highways. Highways has obtained agreement from the Four Pillars Hotel and the developer of the Lakeside flats that they will cut back any trees/hedges on their land which overhang the footpath. The Highways officer has advised that there is currently no budget for the siding-out works required and has suggested that it could be funded from the Area Stewardship Budget controlled by Don Seale.

Councillors expressed the view that this budget should not be used for routine day-to-day maintenance. The Clerk was asked to inform Don Seale.

- f) *Dog bin on the footpath between Tristram Road and Sealham Road*

The Clerk advised the Parish Council that she contacted the District Council again about this bin following the June meeting. The District Council officer has agreed to "flag" the bin on the system to ensure that it is not missed from the emptying cycle and has advised that the bin could be moved if the Parish Council meets the cost (£85 + VAT).

It was resolved that the District Council will be asked to move the bin to the grass verge outside the garages nearby, with the Parish Council meeting the cost.

- g) *Overgrown hedge/tree, 46 Manor Road*

The Clerk contacted Highways about this issue again (copied to Don Seale), but hasn't yet had a response. The Clerk was asked to inform Highways that the Parish Council will arrange for the hedges overhanging the footpath to be cut back provided this is acceptable to Highways.

- h) *Strimming of footway edges, including Curbridge Road to A415*

The Clerk advised that she has contacted Highways about this issue. Highways officers are informing parish clerks that Highways has no budget for this type of work this year, and footways will be left to become overgrown unless and until they are considered to pose a significant safety risk.

It was resolved to carry forward further consideration of this issue to the next meeting.

94.12 New Business

- a) *Bids to Highways Area Stewardship fund*

The Clerk informed the Parish Council that she had received confirmation from the residents of Manor Road who have reported problems using their mobility scooters in Ducklington indicating four kerbs which need to be dropped (where the footpaths meet between Manor Road and Peel Close, Park Road and Peel Close and Park Road and Lovell Close, and also at the entrance to the open space at the bottom of Bartholomew Close). It was resolved that the Parish Council would ask Don Seale to consider funding this work from his Area Stewardship fund.

It was further resolved that Don Seale would be asked to consider funding the installation of two permanent vehicle activated signs on Witney Road (one pointing in each direction) near the entrance to Moors Close.

94.12 New Business (continued)

b) Damage to tree on Peel Close

Councillors had already been advised that a branch of the smaller tree on the Parish Council land in the centre of Peel Close split from the trunk in the high winds on 7/8 June. It had come to rest against the side of a car which was parked on the grass. No damage was done to the car (as evidenced in photographs taken both before and after the fallen branch was removed). The owner of the car has not contacted the Parish Council.

The Clerk asked Dick Rudd to remove the fallen branch on Saturday 9 June, but when he arrived on site it had already been removed by persons unknown.

The Clerk contacted the tree officer at the District Council who recommends that the tree is removed as it has become significantly mis-shapen and has damage to the trunk where the branch split off. The tree is not subject to a tree preservation order.

It was resolved that Dick Rudd would be asked to remove the tree, treating the stump as necessary, but not in any way which could affect the planting of a replacement tree in the autumn.

It was further resolved that the Parish Council would consider replacing the tree in the autumn.

Residents will be informed of this action in the next newsletter.

c) Vacant allotment plot 7C

There are no residents from Ducklington on the waiting list despite the availability of an allotment being advertised in the last newsletter.

It was resolved that the allotment will be offered to someone on the waiting list who does not live in Ducklington.

d) To set the allotment fees for 2012/13

In accordance with the Parish Council's policy which has already been advised to allotment tenants, it was resolved to increase the allotment rents by 3.1% (the annual RPI in May 2012). It was resolved to leave the water rate contribution at its current level of £8.50 per tenant.

e) Contact from a resident about road noise generated on the A415

The Clerk informed the Parish Council of an email received from a resident who has recently moved into Beanhill Close and would like there to be consideration of the reduction of the speed limit on the A415 to reduce the road noise generated. It was resolved that the resident will be informed that the Parish Council has requested that the County Council reduces the speed limit on several occasions, without success. The resident will be advised that she can contact Don Seale, the County Councillor for the ward, to seek his support with her request.

f) Contact from a resident with concerns about vehicles using the lane behind the church as a cut-through to Cogges

The Clerk informed the Parish Council of an email received from a resident concerned about an increase in the number of vehicles and their perceived speed using this lane. Having previously declared an interest in this matter as the part-owner of the lane, Edmund Strainge informed the Parish Council that he is aware of the problem and that it should be resolved within a few months. The process to convert this lane to an official bridleway with access for the landowners controlled by gates has been started and should be achieved by the autumn. The Clerk will inform the resident.

94.12 New Business (continued)

g) *Request from resident for Parish Council to plant their homegrown horse chestnut tree on Parish Council land in Ducklington*

It was resolved that this request would not be granted. The Clerk will inform the resident.

h) *Invitation from Oxfordshire Highways for Councillors to have a "parish walk" with Highways staff*

The Clerk was asked to obtain possible dates for a parish walk from the Highways officer.

95.12 School Report

Richard Border provided the school report. The governors had a meeting on 13 June to gather information to enable them to explore whether they should consider the conversion of the school to academy status. Representatives of the Local Authority and the Diocesan Board were present at the meeting to contribute their thoughts and to discuss the pros and cons of conversion. The next meeting of the governing body will be on 9 July at which there will be a further discussion on whether governors should continue to look into the possibility of conversion. Mr Border stressed that consideration of conversion is still very much at the fact-finding stage.

There are two staff changes for September. Mrs Townsend who teaches KS2 is leaving. Some very good applications have been received for her replacement and the governors hope to announce an appointment very soon. The Business Manager has resigned. The governors are in the process of considering the management needs of the school before deciding how her role will be replaced.

96.12 Playgrounds/Sportsfield

a) *Inspection Report for June – circulated at the meeting*

This inspection was carried out by Dick Rudd. He reports that the rubber coating of the swing seats has deteriorated further. Mr Rudd reports that he can find no evidence of a loose step on the slide unit at Chalcroft.

b) *Work ordered*

- Dick Rudd has cut back the trees on Chalcroft which were overhanging the benches and litter bin
- Andrew Fisher has treated the weeds on the tennis court, but this has not yet been fully effective. It was resolved to withhold £50 from his payment. The Clerk will ask him what to retreat the weeds, possibly with a different product.

c) *Inspection Report for July*

Peter Godwin agreed to accompany Catherine Maddison and Sarah Stanley on this inspection so that he can pass on the knowledge he gained at the RoSPA training.

d) *Replacement zipwire*

The installation was completed on 2 July. The post installation inspection will shortly be carried out by the independent inspector for £225 + VAT.

Peter Almgill informed the Parish Council that the seat cannot be pulled all the way back to the platform which is making it hard for the younger children to get on it. The Clerk will query this with SMP.

96.12 Playgrounds/Sportsfield

e) Playing field/development of pavilion

Richard Border provided a report on the joint meeting of representatives of the Parish Council and the Sports Club on Friday 29 June. The Sports Club representatives stated at the meeting that a new pavilion is now officially not a project which the Club is pursuing. The Sports Club committee now intends to refurbish and extend the existing pavilion rather than replace it with a new one.

There had been a lot of discussion at the meeting about the refurbishments which the Sports Club want to achieve and why the work identified in the report already received by the Parish Council needs to be carried out as soon as possible; substantially to encourage members and other users to make more use of the pavilion, generating more funds. The representatives from the Sports Club had identified that the immediate priorities are to replace the windows to the field with doors; to install a window which can be used as a tea bar in the back of the bar area; to create ramped access where the new doors are to be installed and to replace the storage heaters. The Sports Club representatives asked the Parish Council to carry out this work as soon as possible.

The Parish Council representatives at the meeting had agreed that they would propose to the full Parish Council that a resolution is passed agreeing to the principles of refurbishing and extending the pavilion. It was duly resolved that the Parish Council supports these principles.

It was resolved that the Parish Council will obtain the necessary 3 quotations to replace the windows and doors requested and the storage heaters. This will be done on the condition that the Sports Club carries out improvements to the toilets (the ladies' toilets located off the bar area and the single cubicle in the changing room area) in the near future. The Sports Club will also be asked to confirm in writing that they have passed a resolution at a committee meeting to change their plans from building a new pavilion to refurbishing and extending the existing one. The Club will also be asked to continue working on the larger phased and costed improvement plan for the pavilion, with a copy to be sent to the Parish Council as soon as possible.

f) Pavilion safety – fire and legionella risk assessments

Peter Almgill asked for this item to be carried forward. He and David Duthie intend to meet during the next couple of weeks to work on these assessments.

g) Security of access to field

Edmund Strainge advised that he hasn't yet been able to install a new lock on the gate - item to be carried forward.

h) Broken window at pavilion

Steve Townsend had contacted the Clerk on 11 June to inform her that a window had been broken at the pavilion. The Clerk has asked him to replace it, using her delegated authority under the emergency financial powers.

i) Probation Service team

The Clerk reported that she had found out on 26 June that Ducklington Sports Club has arranged for the Probation Service to bring a team to paint inside and outside the pavilion. The Clerk has asked them to strim around the car park, along the edges of the roadway and around the pavilion where necessary. David Duthie advised that this is in hand.

97.12 PLANNING

PLANNING APPLICATIONS GRANTED

12/0654/P/FP 7 Macray Road
Erection of single storey front extension

NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS

12/0843/P/FP 61 Witney Road
Erection of self contained annex to replace garden store
Edmund Strainge introduced this item and then, having previously declared an interest, left the meeting.
It was resolved that the Parish Council will not object to the application but will request that a condition is applied to ensure that the annex remains ancillary to the main house and cannot be occupied separately.
Edmund Strainge rejoined the meeting.

12/1012/P/FP 10 Witney Road
Erection of new detached garage, wall and fence
No comments

98.12 FINANCE

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

Current Account at 30 June 2012	£16,310.73
Deposit Account at 30 June 2012	£39,582.10

b) *Receipts and Payments account for 3 months to 30 June* – circulated with the meeting papers. Content noted.

c) *Internal audit report for 2011/12* – circulated with the meeting papers.
There were no matters arising.

d) *JUNE INVOICES*

		Statute
Clerk's salary & working from home allowance	385.62	LGA 1972, s112 & LGA 1972 s111
Clerk's expenses	21.42	LGA 1972 s111
HM Revenue & Customs	4.20	LGA 1972, s112
Margaret Johnson Ltd – stationery & photocopying	40.02	LGA 1972 s111
ABS Accounting – internal audit for 2011/12	120.00	LGA 1972 s111
B Lockett – litter picking for June	60.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
A Fisher – removal and weed treatment of ivy on cemetery wall, strimming and treatment of weeds at zipwire and treatment of weeds on tennis court	350.00	LGA 1972, s214 LG(MP)A 1976, s19
E-on – electricity at pavilion q/e 12 June (actual reading)	242.32	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
J Miles – one cut of cemetery grass (7 cuts in year to date)	85.00	LGA 1972, s214
TOTAL	£1,308.58	

The payments were approved. The cheques were signed by Catherine Maddison and Peter Almgill.

99.12 Other matters for discussion – for information only

- a) The Clerk informed the Parish Council that she has received a request from a student preparing a MSC thesis on signal crayfish in the River Windrush to camp overnight on the open space at the end of Bartholomew Close to carry out some research. It was resolved that the Parish Council would not agree to this request as overnight camping is not permitted on the open space and it was considered that this could set an undesirable precedent.

**100.12 Date of next meeting - Wednesday 1 August 2012 - Lilac Room, Village Hall,
7.30pm
Meeting of Urgency Committee of Parish Council**

Signeddated.....

DRAFT