

**DRAFT MINUTES OF DUCKLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 7 MARCH 2012
IN THE LILAC ROOM, VILLAGE HALL, DUCKLINGTON AT 7.30 PM**

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

In Attendance: Helen Sandhu – Clerk
Martin Layer from Smiths of Bletchington to minute 32.12 inclusive
2 members of the public

29.12 Members' Apologies: Glyn Rees

30.12 Minutes of meeting held on 1 February 2012

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

31.12 Open session for public debate

The Chairman invited the two members of the public to address the Parish Council. They informed the Parish Council that they live on Church Street adjacent to the grassed area belonging to the Parish Council on which there is a tree. They asked the Parish Council to consider giving them permission to prune the tree to improve its shape and to reduce its height. They said that they want to do this for several reasons: to prevent potential damage to their property from the roots; to reduce the amount of light being blocked from their property; to improve its shape; and to reduce the risk of leaves blocking the guttering on their property.

Edmund Strainge told the residents that the tree is on land registered to the Parish Council before their property was built and that it is in the Ducklington Conservation Area. Work to trees in Conservation Areas can only be carried out if permission is first obtained from the tree officer at the District Council.

It was resolved that the Clerk would contact the District Council officer to ask for his advice in relation to the tree.

The residents told the Parish Council that they look after the land in front of their property, including cutting the grass. The Clerk advised them that this area of grass is included in the Parish Council's contract with the external grass cutter, but that the contractor will only cut the grass if it is long enough when they are on site.

The residents told the Parish Council that the grass is being eroded by people parking on the edge of it and asked the Council to consider what could be done to prevent this.

Edmund Strainge advised the residents that the Parish Council would consider this further at a future meeting.

32.12 Presentation by Martin Layer of Smiths of Bletchington

Martin Smith showed the Parish Council a map of the proposed restoration and after-use of the Gill Mill site, including the proposed extension, once the minerals have been fully extracted. The map had previously been presented to the Parish Councils' liaison meeting on 5 March which Edmund Strainge had attended. Mr Layer explained that the current plans are a compromise between the County Council's requirements for biodiversity, ecology and public access and the Ministry of Defence's requirements for the control of the risk of bird strike on its aircraft. Mr Layer showed the Parish Council that the proposals can be divided into three broad areas, the first being 62 hectares of reed bed which will be a big biodiversity gain and which has been designed in conjunction with the RSPB with the hope that it will attract bitterns. The second area is the section of the site nearest the A40 – this will be owned by a third party and will include one large lake for private use, with the rest of the area restored to agricultural use. The third area will include twenty eco-tourist lodges for short term holiday lets, with the hope that people will come to visit the site as a nature reserve – a similar site in Suffolk is successful. The revenue generated from the lodges will help fund the management of the site ensuring its sustainability – Smiths are required to retain ownership of the land and lodges up to 2064 at the earliest. This area will be accessed from the A415 (the current entrance to the quarry) and will also include a car park, visitor centre and series of lakes designed for public use, particularly walking, cycling and jogging. One of the lakes is being designed to be suitable for canoeing as there is a perceived shortfall in canoeing centres in the region. There will be no motorised-boat use. A series of new footpaths will be built, creating circular walks and bridlepaths of different lengths.

Mr Layer told the Parish Council that the proposed extension to the quarry will provide access to a further 14 years' minerals reserves; the restoration work will take place after those reserves are depleted.

The reed beds will be cut on a 7-year cycle, with the cut reeds to be burned in a biomass generator on site which will generate power for the lodges. Wood coppiced from the managed deciduous woodland will also be burned in the biomass generator.

Edmund Strainge told the Council that he had raised concerns at the liaison meeting about the protection of the fritillary field and the potential for people to park in Ducklington so that they can walk from Back Lane towards Cogges Road via the new footpaths.

Peter Almgill asked how drivers could be discouraged from taking their vehicles down Back Lane onto the footpath/bridleway. Martin Layer said that he would raise the issue of the possible restriction of the access onto this track with the County Council, but that access for agricultural vehicles would need to be preserved.

Richard Border asked when the benefit from some of the new footpaths would be gained.

Martin Layer replied that this would not be for some time, with the only path which could be opened up in the short term being the link between Cogges Road and Ducklington. He advised that Smiths are looking into whether permissive use of the path round the rear edge of the site could be granted, although this would have to be removed once the site became a working quarry.

Richard Border asked whether there is certainty that the water management of the proposed extension required to extract the minerals won't affect the fritillaries. Martin Layer said that the risk of any detrimental impact on the fritillaries is very low and that where he hasn't been able to obtain adequate assurance that the dewatering of certain sections won't affect the fritillaries, he has had those areas removed from the proposed extraction area. He advised that what is currently proposed provides better protection than what Smiths already has permission for, in that the buffer is larger. The technical work already carried out indicates that none of the operations will negatively impact on the fritillary field once the mitigation measures which include a clay seal and recharge trenches are put in place. The

extraction areas that don't have enough space for a recharge trench and clay seal will be dug wet.

Martin Layer left the meeting.

Edmund Strainge provided the Parish Council with some further detail from the liaison meeting – there are an estimated 5 million tonnes of gravel in the area which Smiths would like to dig, covering 97 hectares. Including the area for which Smiths already has planning permission, the quarry will be extended by 180 hectares over the next 14+ years.

There are an estimated 1 million tonnes of gravel in the area around the fritillary field which Smiths are proposing not to dig because of its proximity to the fritillaries. There are already 330 vehicle movements from the site per day, with the volume of movements restricted by the capacity of the processing plant. The aggregate recycling plant which is not currently in operation will generate an additional 76 movements a day. Mr Strainge told the Parish Council that he had asked whether Smiths know how far away the aggregates extracted from the quarry are taken. Smiths have done a survey of their own lorries (not third party vehicles which also remove aggregates from the site) which indicates that 75% of the journeys are for a maximum of 16 miles, with only 2% travelling over 26 miles.

33.12 Parish Councillors – Disclosure of interests on agenda items

Edmund Strainge – as a neighbour of the applicant, the planning application for Firdales, Course Hill Farm, Course Hill Lane under Minute 38.12.

34.12 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

a) Parish infrastructure issues

- *Request for traffic calming measures/waiting restrictions around entrance to Fritillary Mews*
Awaiting installation by the County Council.
- *HGV signage on Ducklington roundabout*
The new sign directing traffic to use the A415 to access Ducklington Mill has been installed.

b) Village Pond

Smiths of Bletchington intend to carry out the work on the new swale at the end of May/beginning of June – this information will be put in the newsletter.

Oxfordshire Highways has authorised the payment to cover the cost of the works which will be paid direct to the Parish Council.

c) Public information signs

Bartholomew Close sign

Peter Almgill advised that he is still trying to meet with Dick Rudd to agree the position of the sign.

Village information sign

The Clerk advised that the sponsorship payments from Millhouse Construction and the Four Pillars Hotel have been received, with the payment promised by the third organisation outstanding. It was resolved to carry this item forward to the April meeting.

34.12 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings (continued)

- d) *Commemoration of Queen's Diamond Jubilee in June 2012 – commemorative tree*
The Clerk had provided the Parish Council with information on the three possible options proposed by Oxfordshire Highways for the planting of the tree.
It was resolved that Oxfordshire Highways would be asked to obtain, plant and maintain the tree, including the watering in the early years direct, with the cost to be funded by the Parish Council (a one-off payment of £250).
It was further resolved that a full black metal guard would be purchased and installed by the Parish Council.
It was resolved to carry forward discussion about a commemorative plaque to a future meeting.
- e) *Commemoration of Queen's Diamond Jubilee in June 2012 – help with teas on Sunday 3 June*
Adrian Armitage volunteered to help Peter Godwin on 3 June.
- f) *Bench to commemorate Brian Hicks' service as a Parish Councillor*
Peter Godwin told the Parish Council that the bench is now in his possession and that he has started to apply the preservative.
Peter Godwin and David Duthie agreed to make the arrangements for the commemorative plaque.
David Duthie agreed to speak to Brian Hicks about where the bench should be installed on the sportsfield.
- g) *New bus stop pole and flag on Standlake Road near Strange's Close*
This has now been installed by Oxfordshire Highways.
- h) *Oxfordshire High Sheriff's awards for 2012*
The Clerk advised the Parish Council that the two nominations had not been successful.
- i) *Travel Allowances Scheme*
The Clerk told the Parish Council that she had contacted Keith Butler, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services at the District Council about the proposed scheme. He had proposed some minor amendments which the Clerk had made. The final proposed scheme which had been circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes was reviewed by the Parish Council and it was resolved that it should be adopted.
- j) *Allotments*
The Clerk told the Parish Council that a new tenant for half of allotment 3B has been identified and he is prepared to accept the allotment as it is if the Parish Council provides a skip which could be used to dispose of the items on it which he doesn't want.
It was resolved that the Clerk would arrange for a 6 yard skip to be put on the allotments for the tenants to use to dispose of unwanted items from their allotments.
The Clerk was asked to advertise the availability of allotments to Ducklington residents in the next newsletter.
Information about the management of allotments had been circulated in the February folder. Councillors agreed that there were no issues to discuss arising from this information.

35.12 New Business

- a) *Annual review of the Parish Council's assets*
Peter Almgill volunteered to carry out this review and to ask Glyn Rees if he could help.

35.12 New Business (continued)

b) Parish Council insurance renewal 2012

The Council confirmed that the Clerk should obtain competitive quotations for the renewal in June.

c) Annual Parish Meeting – Thursday 10 May 2012

There was a discussion about which external organisations should be invited to make presentations.

It was resolved to invite – Martin Layer from Smiths of Bletchington, a representative from West Oxfordshire Motor Auction to talk about their proposals for the Dudley Motor Homes site, and representatives from Thames Valley Police, RAF Brize Norton, Ducklington Primary School and Ducklington Sports Club.

It was resolved that the next newsletter should be circulated with a separate sheet inviting residents to the meeting, printed in a bright colour.

d) Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association networking event – 21 March 2012

David Duthie volunteered to attend this event – Clerk to send the RSVP.

e) Donation request from Ryder-Cheshire Volunteers Oxfordshire

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 £25.00 to Ryder-Cheshire Volunteers Oxfordshire. 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.

36.12 School Report

Richard Border gave the school report. The school held a Visions and Values meeting on 1 February which had been attended by nearly 50 people. In common with all schools, Ducklington Primary will need to integrate any required changes created by the new Ofsted framework which it is anticipated will be more stringent than the previous one. The Governors are going to need to further consider whether the school should become an academy outside of Local Authority control; there is a big push from central Government for schools to go down this route.

37.12 Playgrounds/Sportsfield

a) Inspection Report for February – circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes

Dick Rudd has carried out two minor maintenance jobs identified by the Clerk. There were no other issues requiring action.

b) Inspection for the end of March

Peter Godwin volunteered to carry out this inspection.

c) Replacement zipwire – WREN grant application

The Clerk informed the Parish Council that WREN will be offering a grant of £8,000 - £2,450 short of the full project cost. It was resolved that the Parish Council would fund the shortfall from the funding received from Primesite Media when the bus shelters next to the A415 were installed.

37.12 Playgrounds/Sportsfield (continued)

d) Dog fouling on sportsfield – new signage

The Clerk was asked to contact West Oxfordshire District Council to ask for their advice on the wording of the signs in order to ensure that the byelaws will remain enforceable. The Clerk will then contact David Duthie so that he can arrange for the signs to be produced.

e) Playing field/development of pavilion

David Duthie informed the Parish Council that Oxfordshire Highways has informed him that they do not own/are not responsible for the land between the existing fence and the ditch alongside the A415, and that this type of land would normally be the responsibility of the landowner on the other side of the ditch (the Parish Council and the Feilden family in this instance). David Duthie agreed to forward the emails he has received from Highways to the Clerk. Mr Duthie said that he believes that the emails mean that the Parish Council can choose to move the fence between Aston Road and the end of the rented extension without any further reference to Highways. Mr Duthie said that he has been trying to contact Warefence to obtain a price for a new fence on this boundary of the field. It was noted that moving the fence would also mean that the hedge would need to be replanted, the new area of land would need to be turfed or seeded on the field side and surfaced with tarmac on the car park/roadway side.

f) Roadway lighting

Catherine Maddison informed the Parish Council that Ducklington Primary School does not want the light unit which remains in storage on Peter Almgill's property.

g) Pavilion safety

The asbestos management survey has been received from Amiantus. It confirms that there are no asbestos-containing materials in the pavilion. David Duthie told the Parish Council that he has downloaded information on fire safety and legionella from the Health & Safety Executive website and will now start work on the related risk assessments.

h) Replacement external door to bar area at pavilion

The three quotations received were considered. It was resolved to accept the quotation from Townsend Brothers (Builders) Ltd at a cost of £272.48.

38.12 PLANNING

NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS

12/0208/P/FP Firdales, Course Hill Farm, Course Hill Lane
Erection of single storey extensions
No comments

12/0239/P/FP 37 Witney Road
Erection of single storey extension to form entrance porch
No comments

PLANNING APPLICATIONS GRANTED

12/0093/P/FP 12 Standlake Road
Conversion and extension to garage to form living accommodation

38.12 PLANNING (continued)

PLANNING APPLICATIONS GRANTED

12/0112/P/FP Dudleys American Motor Homes, Aston Road

Change of use of site from sale and display of motorhomes... to motor auctions including parking and storage of cars. Removal of derelict buildings and erection of sealed car wash facility and site security fence

Permission is for 5 years initially and is subject to 11 detailed conditions.

An extract from the Minutes of the meeting of the Lowlands Planning Committee meeting of the District Council at which permission was approved was put in the folder for Councillors' information

39.12 FINANCE

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

Current Account at 29 February 2012 £16,191.48

Deposit Account at 29 January 2012 £27,400.00

b) *Annual review of investment policy*

The Council considered a report prepared by the Clerk which had been circulated in the Briefing Notes.

It was resolved to leave the cash balances not required for short-term use on deposit with Santander.

c) *Santander deposit account – fax instruction form, compensation for poor service received*

The Clerk informed the Parish Council that a new fax instruction form needed to be submitted to Santander to enable transfers to be made between the deposit and the current accounts. This was signed by the Councillors present who are signatories on the account.

The Clerk informed the Parish Council that she had received six bottles of wine from Santander as further compensation for their poor service on the opening of the account. It was resolved that the wine would be served to people attending the Annual Parish Meeting, together with cheese and biscuits and soft drinks to be purchased by the Parish Council.

d) *FEBRUARY INVOICES*

		Statute
Clerk's salary & working from home allowance	358.85	LGA 1972, s112 & LGA 1972 s111
Clerk's expenses – photographs, telephone calls & printing	33.23	LGA 1972 s111
HM Revenue & Customs	12.20	LGA 1972, s112
Margaret Johnson Ltd – stationery & photocopying	40.08	LGA 1972 s111
B Lockett – litter picking for February	60.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Henry Box School – printing of Feb/March newsletter	85.20	LGA 1972 s111
The Information Commissioner – renewal of ICO registration	35.00	LGA 1972 s111
Lawnmower Sales & Service – service of mower (50% recharged to St Bartholomew's church)	123.48	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Boward Tree Surgery – reduction work to ash tree on Bartholomew Close	324.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
IA & IJ Godfrey – hedgecutting at sportsfield & Bartholomew Close	259.20	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Mrs F Bryant – rent of sportsfield extension, quarter beg March 2012	102.50	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Oxfordshire County Council – contribution towards heritage style bus stop sign Standlake Road, near Strainges Close	95.00	LGRA 1997, s29

Thames Water – allotment supply bill q/e 16 February 2012 (estimated reading)	28.66	SH & AA 1908
Thames Water – pavilion supply bill q/e 16 Feb (estimated reading)	142.94	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
R Rudd – coppicing of bushes round pond, Feb playground inspection, minor works at Glebelands playground	130.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Ryder Cheshire Volunteers Oxfordshire - donation	25.00	LGA 1972 s137
TOTAL	£1,855.34	

Ducklington Parish Council – transfer into deposit account	£12,000.00	n/a
--	-------------------	-----

The payments were approved. The cheques were signed by Edmund Strange and Peter Almgill.

40.12 Other matters for discussion – for information only

- a) Notes from the recent Jubilee co-ordinating committee meeting were put in the folder.
- b) Emails received from the residents of Manor Farm about the relocation of West Oxfordshire Motor Auction to the Dudley Motor Homes site were put in the folder for Councillors’ information.
- c) David Duthie informed the Parish Council that 3 of the recycling bins in the Parish Council car park had been damaged because someone had fires set in them recently. The Clerk will inform the District Council.

41.12 Date of next meeting - 4 April 2012 - Lilac Room, Village Hall, 7.30pm
Monthly meeting of Parish Council

Signeddated.....