

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

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

In Attendance: Helen Sandhu – Clerk

144.12 Members' Apologies: None

145.12 Minutes of meeting held on 3 October 2012

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

146.12 Parish Councillors – Disclosure of interests on agenda items

None declared.

147.12 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

a) Installation of waiting restrictions on Standlake Road near Fritillary Mews

The small gap in the single yellow line remains.

b) Dog bin on the footpath between Tristram Road and Sealham Road

Catherine Maddison informed the Parish Council that she had spoken to the residents whose property would be nearest to the proposed new location for the bin and they have said that they would not be happy with this..

It was suggested that the bin could be relocated to the area of hardstanding in front of the opposite garage block. The Clerk agreed to discuss this with Dave Austin from West Oxfordshire District Council.

c) Overgrown hedge/tree, 46 Manor Road

The tree and hedge have been trimmed back from the highway. It was agreed that the work which has been done has resolved the immediate problem and councillors resolved to monitor the situation in case it becomes an issue again.

d) Ditch/gulley/culvert maintenance end Standlake Road near Fritillary Mews

No further contact has been received from the agent for the Feilden family on whether they will arrange for the clearance of the ditch for which they are responsible.

The Clerk advised that she has written to Philip Dennis Food Service to ascertain whether they own the land between their site and Standlake Road and to request that they clear the ditches and culvert entrances at this location if they do. A representative from the company has confirmed that Philip Dennis does own this land but stated that they were not aware that this meant they would be responsible for maintaining the roadside ditch. The Clerk has

147.12 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

Ditch/gully/culvert maintenance end Standlake Road near Fritillary Mews(continued)

explained that Philip Dennis is responsible for the ditch as the riparian landowner, and the representative has agreed to take this up with the MD of the company.

The Clerk advised that she has arranged to meet with the officer of Thames Valley Community Payback who plans their projects on 14 November. The Clerk was asked to request that the team cuts back the overgrowth from the ditches which run adjacent to the sportsfield on Standlake Road, the ditch which runs at right angles towards the A415 from the end of the sportsfield and the ditch between the pavilion and Standlake Road. An observation was made that the ditch outside the school fence seems to run up hill towards Standlake Road, which inhibits its ability to drain water. There was a suggestion that it would benefit from being dug out. It was noted that this work may be the responsibility of the County Council, and some concern was expressed that it may have to be funded from the school budget.

Peter Almgill told the Parish Council that Standlake Road near Fritillary Mews had flooded again over the weekend of 3/4 November. He expressed the view that the main problem is that the ends of the culvert which runs diagonally underneath the road between the edge of the field belonging to the Feilden family and outside the Philip Dennis site are badly silted up. In addition to this, the culvert pipe is not big enough. As the culvert runs underneath the highway the Clerk advised that its maintenance is probably the responsibility of Oxfordshire Highways. The Clerk was asked to contact Highways to inform them that the pipe is undersized and should be replaced, and to request that the pipe be jetted through as a short term measure. The Clerk was asked to send a copy of the request to Don Seale and to ask him to fund the necessary work from the Area Stewardship budget if possible and if Highways advises that they have insufficient funds within their general budget for the work.

e) Parish "walkabout" with Oxfordshire Highways

Richard Border and Sarah Stanley reported on the meeting with Bert Pridgeon, the Highways area representative, on 18 September. Mr Pridgeon had listened to the concerns expressed by the parish councillors but had advised that Highways has insufficient money to carry out work unless the maintenance need and risk it poses are very serious. A pothole has to be 40mm deep before it is even assessed.

f) Jubilee Tree

The Clerk advised that she has not received any new information from the tree officer at the County Council as to when the tree is likely to be received for planting.

g) Tree at centre of Peel Close

The damaged tree has now been removed, although the stump remains.

Edmund Strange informed the Parish Council that he has visited Bampton nursery to find out what tree sizes they have available and their respective prices. A 5ft hornbeam would cost £40. Mr Strange has requested a quotation for a larger tree, both bare-rooted and potted.

147.12 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

h) Litter picking

The Clerk informed the Parish Council that Will Hutchinson of Standlake Road has expressed an interest in this role. The preparation of a written agreement between the Parish Council and the litter picker was delegated to the Clerk, who agreed to circulate the draft agreement to councillors by email. The areas to be covered were confirmed as Chalcroft, Glebelands, the village green and pond area, Bartholomew Close, the car park and the open spaces at Peel Close and along the footpath between Peel Close and Lovell Close. It was further confirmed that the litter picker will be self-employed, will provide his own materials and equipment and will be paid £15 per week, with the time required to complete the work estimated as two hours per week. The Clerk was asked to inform Mr Hutchinson that no dogs are permitted on the sportsfield.

i) Proposed signage for playgrounds

The Clerk had circulated proposed artwork for the two signs in the Briefing Notes. She showed Councillors the draft artwork prepared by G&G signs on the basis of the Clerk's designs.

It was resolved to make the following amendments:

Information expressed in circles to have a white background, litter image to portray a person putting litter into a bin rather than the picture of litter crossed out as on the G&G design.

Remove the "Please enjoy and respect it" message.

Header for the playground at Glebelands to say: "Glebelands Play Area and Sports Field."

Message conveying "for emergency purposes the nearest postcode is xxx" to be added.

The Chalcroft sign to have a brief reference to the byelaws which can be viewed on the Parish Council's website.

j) Anti-social behaviour – improvements to security of the car park/playing field -

The Clerk informed the Parish Council that she has spoken to the District Council officer responsible for the flytipping covert CCTV camera to request that he considers including the car park on the list of sites. The officer reports that the site has been reviewed previously but was not at that point considered suitable for the camera as there is no secure, discrete location to site it. The officer agreed to review the site again and to erect signage indicating that the covert camera could be in operation.

Edmund Strange asked the Parish Council to reconsider whether there would be a benefit in reducing the height of the hedge bordering Aston Road. It was resolved not to lower the hedge as the reduction would need to be significant given that the car park is lower than the road, and this would expose the recycling bins which would be undesirable.

148.12 New Business

a) Resignation of Clerk

It was noted that the Clerk had tendered her resignation to Edmund Strange on 13 October, with the last date of her employment to be 31 December 2012.

The Clerk had circulated her current job description and the SLCC/NALC model job description and person specification in the Briefing Notes.

Amendments to the model job description and person specification to make them suitable for the post were agreed and the Clerk was asked to prepare a revised copy for circulation to councillors by email.

It was resolved that the post will be advertised as 34.75 hours per month at £10.93 per hour.

It was agreed that the closing date will be 30 November, with interviews to take place in the week commencing 17 December.

148.12 New Business (continued)

a) *Resignation of Clerk (continued)*

The Clerk was asked to prepare advertisements for the post to be put on the noticeboard, on the Parish Council website and in some external media. There was a discussion about which media to use to advertise the job, with it being agreed that the school should be asked whether they would circulate information via parent mail, and suggestions that the job should be advertised on the SLCC and OALC website, on the County Council job pages and on the Oxfordshire Times website.

The Clerk was asked to include short-listing and agreement of the procedures for the interview process on the agenda of the December meeting.

b) *Incident at and complaints from resident about condition of Chalcroft play area*

The Clerk informed the Parish Council that she had been contacted by West Oxfordshire District Council on 19 October as they had been contacted by a resident of Ducklington who had reported that she had fallen on the Chalcroft open space.

The Clerk contacted the resident by telephone on 22 October. The resident advised that she had tripped and bruised her toe due to the length of grass and bumpiness of the ground, in her opinion. The resident had also expressed other concerns about the general maintenance of this open space.

The grass was cut on Thursday 25 October. The Clerk contacted Dick Rudd by email on 26 October and asked him to check for the other issues reported by the resident during the playground inspection which he was due to do. Mr Rudd's comments in the playground inspection report were noted.

The Clerk advised that the resident had telephoned her again on 29 October to complain that the cut grass had been left on the ground, expressing the view that this made the ground slippery and unsafe to use and would inhibit the grass from growing. The Clerk advised her that the contract did not include the collection of cut grass and that this practice is common to most local councils.

The resident's concerns were noted but it was resolved that no immediate action was required.

c) *Amendment to Parish Council insurance following the replacement of the zipwire*

The information obtained by the Clerk was considered. It was resolved to increase the insurance value of the playground equipment to a total of £56,805.

d) *Request from the owner of 11 Lovell Close for the Parish Council to cut the hedge alongside her property and to review the safety of the trees in the vicinity*

The Clerk reminded the Parish Council that the hedge was last cut in 2008, that the trees are subject to a Tree Preservation Order, were last inspected by the independent arboricultural company in August 2009 and are due to be formally inspected again in 2014 when the Parish Council's entire tree stock will be re-inspected.

It was resolved that the Clerk will inform the resident that councillors have inspected the hedge and have resolved not to cut it at this point in time. The resident to be informed that she can cut back any overgrowth of her property to the boundary. The resident also to be informed that the trees were inspected in 2009 and will be formally inspected again in 2014, with no change to their condition having been observed by councillors.

e) *Request from resident of Bartholomew Close to be given permission to pay for the planting of a tree at Bartholomew Close in memory of his wife*

The Parish Council considered the request and resolved not to grant permission for the proposal as it would go against Council policy and would set an undesirable precedent.

148.12 New Business (continued)

- f) *Archiving of historic Parish Council minute books and primary accounting record books (cash book) with Oxfordshire County Council archive*

The Clerk informed the Parish Council that she has minute books dating back to 17 March 1970 and cash books dating back to 1 April 1979.

It was resolved that the older records should be taken to Oxfordshire County Council for archiving.

- g) *Donation request from Sue Ryder*

It was resolved that the Parish Council would not give a grant due to the geographical distance of the hospice from the parish.

- h) *Allotment tenancy of plot 6A, vacant plot 7C*

The Clerk informed the Parish Council that plot 6A has been let to Ms K Kernahan of Peel Close who has chosen to switch plots from 7C.

Plot 7C is vacant, with no residents from Ducklington on the waiting list. Information about the vacancy will be put in the next newsletter and on the website.

149.12 School Report

Richard Border informed the Parish Council that the school had received a very successful Ofsted report following the recent inspection. A copy of the report was put in the folder for circulation between the Councillors.

150.12 Playgrounds/Sportsfield

- a) *Inspection Report for October*

A copy of the report had been circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes.

Peter Godwin agreed to meet with Dick Rudd to discuss the solution to the problem of the sharp edges under the slide platform at the sportsfield playground.

The zipwire brake is not working. The Clerk advised that she had spoken to SMP, the manufacturer, who advise that the unit should be opened up to release the spring forming the brake and the mechanism greased. The Clerk will request that Dick Rudd does this work.

It was resolved that Dick Rudd would be asked to replace the two broken seat slats on the picnic table at the sportsfield playground.

- b) *Outstanding work*

- Installation of two replacement flat swing seats at Chalcroft – Dick Rudd is awaiting contact from Edmund Strange

The Clerk advised that she has included the replacement of all the swing seats in the draft budget for 2013/14, with the proposed seat being manufactured by Sutcliffe. The Clerk will check whether these seats will be suitable for the existing swing chains.

- David Duthie advised that he has not yet been able to meet with G Hill & Sons Ltd from Minster Lovell to ask them to provide a quotation for digging out the weeds and repairing the tennis court surface where necessary.

- c) *Inspection for November*

Adrian Armitage volunteered to carry out this inspection.

150.12 Playgrounds/Sportsfield

- d) *Consideration of potential funding sources for playground development*
Catherine Maddison told the Parish Council that she is still carrying out research into a potential application to the Big Lottery Fund.
- e) *Lighting between car park and pavilion*
It was resolved to carry this matter forward. It was agreed that a permanent solution would be preferable and that a potential cost should be built into the budget for 2013/14.
- f) *Pavilion safety – fire and legionella risk assessments*
This work has not yet been completed – to carry forward to a future meeting.

151.12 PLANNING

PLANNING APPLICATIONS WITHDRAWN

12/1331/P/FP 39 Feilden Close
Erection of single storey front and side extension

NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS

12/1508/P/FP 6A Standlake Road
Erection of single storey rear extension
It was resolved that the Parish Council would not comment on this application.

12/1520/P/FP 32 Bartholomew Close
Erection of conservatory (retrospective)
It was resolved that the Parish Council would not comment on this application.

12/1562/P/FP West Barn, 10 Back Lane
Conversion of part of existing double garage and loft space, including two dormer windows in south elevation, to create additional living space
It was resolved that the Parish Council would object to this application as it would exacerbate the existing parking congestion in the vicinity of the property, creating potential highway safety problems, and it would be an over-development of the site.

Application in neighbouring parish which could impact on Ducklington:

12/1589/P/FP Beech House, Ducklington Lane, Witney (the vacant house and plot adjacent to Lidl)
Erection of two and three storey hotel with associated parking and new access (57 bedrooms)
It was resolved that the Parish Council would respond to this application, expressing concern that the development would exacerbate the existing congestion problems at the Station Lane/Ducklington Lane junction. The response to request that West Oxfordshire District Council pushes for improvements to this junction to be made as soon as possible.

152.12 FINANCE

a) *Account Balances and Debts due to Council* – as circulated with the meeting papers
 Current Account at 31 October 2012 £ 4,901.22
 Deposit Account at 31 October 2012 £39,745.96

b) *Receipts & Payments account to 30 September 2012*
 Circulated in the Clerk’s Briefing Notes – contents noted.

c) *Bank reconciliation at 30 September 2012*
 Circulated in the Clerk’s Briefing Notes – contents noted.

d) *Budget for 2013/14*
 A first draft of the budget had been circulated in the Clerk’s Briefing Notes.
 The following amendments were proposed:

- Provision for the installation of bollard lights between the pavilion and the car park, with the wiring to be installed such that it could be used to replace the floodlighting at the tennis court in the future
- Provision for the pavilion roof to be replaced and the tennis court resurfaced at some point in the next few years – possible creation of dedicated reserves
- It was resolved not to increase the charges for advertising in the newsletter or the hire of the tennis court in 2013/14
- The Clerk was asked to contact Helen Strainge to ask whether she now has a quotation for the potential change in format of the newsletter
- It was resolved to include a budget of £500 for potential further improvement works at the pond
- It was resolved to increase the budget for expenditure on hedges, trees, fences, signs & ditches to £1,500
- It was resolved to leave the budget for litter picking at the current level

The Clerk will prepare a second draft of the budget for consideration at the meeting on 5 December.

e) *OCTOBER INVOICES*

		Statute
Clerk’s salary & working from home allowance	385.62	LGA 1972, s112 & LGA 1972 s111
HM Revenue & Customs	4.20	LGA 1972, s112
Margaret Johnson Ltd – stationery & photocopying	14.40	LGA 1972 s111
R. Rudd – playground inspection end Oct, removal of low tree branches, removal of damaged tree at Peel Close	485.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
OALC – 3 copies of Good Councillors Guide	3.00	LGA 1972 s111
J Miles – two cuts of cemetery grass (14 cuts in year to date)	170.00	LGA 1972, s214
TOTAL	£1,062.22	

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

153.12 Other matters for discussion – for information only

- a) Sarah Stanley informed the Parish Council that the dropped kerbs have been installed by the County Council and the residents who initially raised the issue are very pleased that this has been done.
- b) Edmund Strainge asked the Clerk to tell him the County Council number to call to report street lights which are not working. It was agreed that this number will also be put in the next newsletter.
- c) Edmund Strainge informed the Parish Council that he has been contacted by a resident who lives near the pond with concerns about rats near the pond. It was agreed that Edmund Strainge should advise her to contact the Environmental Health department at West Oxfordshire District Council.

154.12 Date of next meeting - Wednesday 5 December 2012 - Lilac Room, Village Hall, 7.30pm
Monthly Meeting of Parish Council

155.12 Confidential Item – allotment tenancy issues

- David Duthie informed the Parish Council that he has spoken to the tenant of plot 3A who has confirmed that she is maintaining the allotment herself.
- Catherine Maddison informed the Parish Council that she has spoken to the tenant of plot 5 who has confirmed that he has recently carried out work to improve the condition of his plot. The Clerk advised that she has still not received payment for his allotment fees and it was resolved that the Clerk should write to him again requesting payment of the fees by return.

Signeddated.....