

## **Dorchester Parish Council**

The Monthly Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Back Room of the Village Hall on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2023 commencing at 7.30 p.m. The Chairman, Cllr Mark Williams, presided with Cllrs Rob Ballantyne, Mike Corran, Chris Hill, Mike Rimmer and Keith Russell present and the Clerk, Geoff Russell, in attendance. Also present were County and District Cllr Robin Bennett and one resident.

### 1/3. Chairman's Opening Remarks

The Chairman said that at this meeting the Clerk, Geoffrey Russell, had achieved 25 years of service with the Parish Council. In recognition of this achievement Councillors presented Geoff with a framed copy of the map of Dorchester-on-Thames and surrounding village published by Ordnance Survey in 1900. Geoff was delighted and thanked everyone for this generous and thoughtful gift. It would be a much-treasured souvenir from his time as Parish Clerk.

### 2/3. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were accepted from Cllr John Edwards.

### 3/3. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Cllr. Mark Williams concerning village maintenance work that is carried out by any company with whom he works, principally grass-cutting and grounds maintenance. The Clerk has received applications from Cllrs Mark Williams and Keith Russell for Dispensations to be granted which would allow them to participate in discussions about matters in connection with the Village Hall, of which they are both Trustees. It was agreed that further discussions on this matter should be held with the Monitoring Officer, Steve Corrigan at SODC.

### 4/3. Public Participation

No matters were raised

### 5/3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2023

After the Clerk had corrected the description of 'Housing Development Manager' to 'Housing Delivery Manager' it was proposed by Cllr Chris Hill that the minutes as circulated should be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Mike Corran and passed unanimously. The Chairman signed the Minute Book as a true and accurate record.

### 6/3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

The Council noted that the County Council's project team in charge of installing EV charging points has identified the parking area in Bridge End as a suitable location, although no date for this work has so far been scheduled.

### 7/3. County and District Council Reports

Written reports from Cllr Bennett had been received and circulated. They will also be published in Dorchester News.

### 8/3. Planning

#### a. Applications:

P23/S0428/FUL and P23/S0429/LB 28 High Street (latterly Lily's)  
Demolition of the rear outbuildings and erection of a single-storey rear extension, internal alterations, and the change of use of the ground floor tea room and upstairs flat into a single dwelling.

The Council agreed that it had no comments to make on this Application.

P23/S0375/HH Overy Barn, Overy; Ground mounted solar panels.

The Council agreed that it had no comments to make upon the Application.

b. Allen's Pit and Affordable Housing

Following the withdrawal of Sovereign Housing, it is understood that Sovereign has now contacted several other Housing Associations to see if they could progress the scheme. Cllr. Rob Ballantyne has spoken with a representative from Hastoe Housing Association who are one possibility, and they are believed to be in contact with the landowner.

The District Council will shortly have some new members of the Housing Delivery team and it is hoped that fresh impetus can be given to the project following a clean break from the frustrating lack of progress of the last two years.

c. Planning Committee Meeting to be held 15<sup>th</sup> March P20/S4467/FUL and P20/S4469/LB including a new vehicular access to the site from Abingdon Road. As close neighbours of the proposed development, the Chairman and Cllr Mike Corran declared their personal interest in this matter. It was agreed that Cllr Rob Ballantyne will represent the Parish Council at the meeting.

9/3. Finance: Bank Balances and Payments

NatWest Reserve Account 8 <sup>th</sup> March 2023	£48,231.61
NatWest Current Account 8 <sup>th</sup> March 2023	<u>£11,509.46</u>
	£59,741.07

The Council noted that Cemetery Fees of £640 in total were received in February. It was proposed by Cllr Mike Corran that the following payments should be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Chris Hill and passed unanimously.

Q Transport (Oxford) Ltd (Container rental)	116.76
The Landscape Group Oxford (barbed wire removal)	348.00
Denis Froud Pest Control January to April	805.00
Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils (sub & training)	248.57
Castle Water (Cemetery)	168.83
Castle Water (Sportsground and Pavilion)	147.52
SODC (Cemetery non-domestic rates)	71.43
JRB Enterprise Dog waste bags (2 deliveries)	511.68
Shield Maintenance (Dog bin services)	108.79
Going Forward Buses (Dorchester Flyer January)	50.00
Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association (sub)	45.00
Earth Trust Village Christmas Tree underpayment	40.00
G Russell (salary)	<u>905.89</u>
Total	£3,567.47

The Council agreed that Cemetery and Parking Fees should be reviewed annually in February.

10/3. Chairman and/or Clerk Correspondence

a. The Clerk confirmed that Roger Taylor from Wellers Hedley, Solicitors, has sent him a document called a 'Memorandum of Gift' and this will be shown to the Council's potential benefactor who is proposing to make funds available for grounds maintenance work in several parts of the Village.

b. Oxfordshire Scouts have informed the Clerk that a repeat of the 'Aqua Camp' held last summer on Bishop's Court Farm is planned for 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> June. It is intended that the Recreation Ground will again be used as the main drop-off and pick-up point with some parking along the Oxford Road end. These arrangements have been agreed with the Cricket Club which has a match set for Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June.

11/3. Celebrating the Coronation in Dorchester-on-Thames

A party will be held in Queen Street on the afternoon of Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May and an application has been made for the road to be closed on that day from 9.00 to 21.00 between the area outside the Village Hall and the junction with Jemmetts Close

which it is estimated will provide enough space for approximately 300 people to be entertained.

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May, which has been designated as the Coronation Bank Holiday, will be dedicated as a day for volunteer activities with up to nine activities taken place around the Village, to be known as 'The Big Help Out' for the community.

The organising group is Mike Corran, Jill Corran, Nick Forman, Steph Forman and Geoff Russell who have already received many offers of assistance. As Parish Clerk, Geoff Russell is dealing with the road closure application and insurance aspects.

### 12/3. Playground Improvements

The Applications for grants from SODC and the FCC Communities Fund have been successful and the Council congratulated Cllr Rob Ballantyne for this achievement. As a condition of receiving the FCC Communities Fund payment of £47,000, the Parish Council is expected to make a third-party funding payment of £5,052.50 within 28 days. It was agreed that this payment should be made in the Council's new financial year which commences on 3<sup>rd</sup> April.

Cllr Ballantyne confirmed that although he will no longer be a member of the Parish Council after the May elections, he is willing to continue his involvement with this project. Now that significant funding is available he will reconvene the discussion group and ask potential suppliers to requote. This will enable him to set a timetable for the completion of the project, the emphasis of which will continue to be improved accessibility, accompanied by a possible enlargement of the play area to include the adjacent naturally sloping area.

### 13/3. Council Elections 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023

The Election notice will be published on 20<sup>th</sup> March and this marks the start of 'Pre Election Period'. Nominations close 4<sup>th</sup> April at 4.00 p.m. and the names of candidates will be available the following afternoon. If the election is contested, voting will take place in the Village Hall on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May and the result will be announced on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> May after counting has been carried out in Abingdon. The timing of the Council's May meeting will be discussed at the monthly meeting that is being held on 12<sup>th</sup> April.

### 14/3 Village Maintenance Master Plan and Volunteer Projects

Having studied the notes prepared by Andrew Clements and circulated in advance of the meeting, all Councillors agreed to support Andrew's team of volunteers in their several projects around the Village.

The Council noted with thanks that James Pratt has made a donation of £50 towards the cost of purchasing some new bulbs

The County Council has informed the Parish Council of its intention to plant a tree on land opposite The Plough. OCC had been asked to plant a tree in the boundary hedge in the Recreation Ground along Oxford Road but has rejected this request saying that it wishes to plant trees only on what is considered to be Highways land.

The Parish Council considers that there are already sufficient trees in the chosen area and would like the County Council to reconsider its decision.

### 15/3. Defibrillators and Training

The White Hart's Nihon Kohden defibrillator is to be replaced by another from WEL Medical meaning that all three defibrillators in the Village are from the same supplier. A training session with Paul Fairfax, the company's regional manager, has been arranged to take place at the Village Hall from 18.00 to 19.00 on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March. At least 20 people are expected to attend.

### 16/3. Orientation Boards

It is understood that InHouse has withdrawn its offer of sponsorship.

Malcolm Airs has reviewed and approved the Village history text and Thom Airs has supplied new images. Some of these will be replaced in a few weeks by pictures taken when there has been more growth. Amendments to the map to show the new 'village green' areas have been sent to the designer along with revised copy and new icon placements from Cllrs Rob Ballantyne and John Edwards.

17/3. Traffic control especially Event Parking

The Clerk will discuss this when he meets with the new Events team at Dorchester Abbey later this week.

18/3. Village Hall Development

As Treasurer of the Village Hall Management Committee, Cllr Mark Williams explained that the project is now going to be carried out in phases with the first action being to create the new kitchen facilities for around £50,000.

The Council confirmed its existing commitment but it is recognised that a newly-elected Council may wish to review the whole project.

19/3. Routine Reports:

a. Sports Pavilion, Recreation Ground & Playground

The Clerk confirmed that Agey Bosse has completed the improvements to the Pavilion wiring up to a certifiable standard.

The outdoor Table Tennis Table had been delivered earlier today. Its exact positioning will be carefully agreed with representatives of the Cricket and Football sections.

b. Footpaths;

Some realignment to the footpaths across Bishop's Court Farm has been made necessary by the various building works and introduction of new activities on site.

c. Cemetery/Closed Churchyard;

Nothing to report.

d. Allotments.

Nothing to report.

20/3. Any Other Urgent Matters

The Council has been told that following the completion of the current programme of repairs and restoration, The Fleur de Lys will be re-opening in the near future.

The Meeting closed at 9.39 p.m.