

Dorchester Parish Council

The Annual Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the main Village Hall on Wednesday 10th May 2023 commencing at 7.30 p.m. The Chairman, Cllr Mark Williams, presided with Cllrs Mike Atkinson, Jon Brydges, Mike Corran, Charlotte Garside, Chris Hill, John Taylor and Becky Waller present and the Clerk, Geoff Russell, in attendance.

All the Councillors signed their Declarations of Acceptance of Office before the start of the meeting, and these were witnessed by the Clerk. All Councillors agreed that the forms to Register their Interests will be sent to the District Council's Monitoring Officer within 28 days.

Also present for part of the meeting were County and District Cllr Robin Bennett and fourteen residents.

1/5. Apologies for absence

None; all Councillors were present.

2/5. 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; and Cllr Charlotte Garside on any matter concerning Bishops Court Farm where she is employed.

3/5. Election of Parish Council Chairman 2023/24

Cllr Mike Corran was proposed by Cllr Chris Hill and Cllr John Taylor was proposed by Cllr Becky Waller. After a show of hands Cllr Mike Corran was declared elected as Chairman. He signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and this was witnessed by the Clerk.

Cllr Mark Williams vacated the chair in favour of Cllr Corran, who thanked Mark for his years of service on behalf of both the Parish Council and Village residents. Cllr Corran said that he also wished to record the Parish Council's appreciation for the work done by former Councillor Mike Rimmer over his eight years of service. He commented upon the excellent voter turnout in the Parish Council Election on 4th May which was declared as 64.84%, with 520 ballot papers issued to the electorate of 802.

4/5. Election of Parish Council Vice-Chairman 2023/24

Cllr John Taylor was elected as Vice- Chairman unopposed. He signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and this was witnessed by the Clerk.

5/5. Minutes of the Meeting held on 12th April 2023

After the addition of 'the' in front of Football Club in the fourth paragraph of Minute 17/4 it was agreed by those who had been present at the meeting that the Minutes were a true and correct record. The Chairman signed the written record.

6/5. Matters Arising from the Minutes

a. The Clerk said that he had received a letter from Berinsfield Parish Council offering some support for action to try to reduce the noise created by motor cyclists speeding along the Dorchester by-pass, particularly on Monday evenings when large numbers gather at H Café by the Berinsfield roundabout.

Cllr Robin Bennett commented that he also supported such action. The Police have been attending the Monday night gatherings and warning signs have been placed along the routes followed by the riders. It was suggested that the Annual Parish

Meeting in June provides an opportunity to test the strength of feeling about this matter in Dorchester-on-Thames.

b. The Clerk reported that he has discussed the loss of the existing disabled parking space outside 11 High Street with County Highways and he has been told that this is likely to be replaced by a disabled parking space outside the Co-Op, which is something that will be welcomed by the shop staff.

c. Further to comments at previous meetings, it has been agreed to review the list of publications shown in the 'Document Archive' section of the Parish Council area of the Village website and to make this reference material a more comprehensive and accurate record of the several documents that have been adopted by the Council in recent years. Once this record has been updated, the documents themselves will be reviewed to see if some of their provisions need to be updated. The Council will be required to action such updates in a formal review and publish the latest versions of all these working documents during the next few months.

7/5 County and District Councillor Reports

Written reports from Cllr Robin Bennett have been received and circulated prior to publication in Dorchester News. Details of a new round of discretionary funding are now available; Robin suggested that applications should be made within six months.

8/5. Planning

a. Applications:

P23/S1252/HH 5 Meads Proposed part single storey, part two storey extension and associated internal works.

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

P23/S1259/FUL Dorchester Pre-School, Queen Street

Remove existing equipment and construct new oak framed gazebo.

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

b. Allen's Pit Development Status Report

A letter has been received which confirms Hastoe Group's interest in taking the project over from Sovereign. Cllr Chris Hill will stay in touch with all those involved with this development and will work with Cllr John Taylor to keep the Parish Council informed not just about this project but also every other possibility of progressing Affordable Housing opportunities in Dorchester.

9/5 Finance: Bank Balances & Payments

NatWest Reserve Account 10th May 2023 £48,310.26

NatWest Current Account 10th May 2023 £33,133.83

£81,444.09

It was proposed by Cllr Mike Corran that the following payments should be approved.

This was seconded by Cllr Chris Hill and unanimously agreed.

Q Transport (Oxford) Ltd (Container rental)	116.76
The Landscape Group Oxford (April grass cutting)	958.05
Shield Maintenance (General waste bin services)	181.99
Shield Maintenance (Dog bin services)	108.79
Shield Maintenance (Parking Cones for Rec.)	201.78
Going Forward Buses (Dorchester Flyer April)	50.00
Bristow Consultants UK Ltd (Pavilion and shed valuation)	99.00
G & L Tyler (gravediggers)	100.00
Andrew Clements (hedging plants part cost)	33.90
G Russell (salary)	<u>905.89</u>
Total	£2,756.16

Following the recent Council elections only Cllrs Hill and Williams remain as approved NatWest account signatories. It was agreed that Cllr Mike Corran should be added to this list and the Clerk will make these arrangements.

10/5. Correspondence with Chairman and/or Clerk

- a. A copy of the slide presentation given at the Bishops Court Farm information evening has been received and circulated to all Councillors along with a copy of the Farm's Housing Needs Survey. It was noted that none of those who expressed an interest in taking up an affordable housing opportunity has registered their names with the District Council's Housing Needs register. It has been suggested that they should be encouraged to do so in the near future.
- b. The Council has received details about a new time table from Going Forward Buses which offers connections from 15th May on three days per week. The uptake of these services will be carefully monitored and the publicity programmed over the next few weeks to try to match demand with availability
- c. The Clerk told Councillors about the receipt of invitations from SODC to visit the recycling plant in Ardley and the anaerobic digestion facility between Benson and Crowmarsh. He will circulate details of the dates and times.

11/5 Arrangements for Annual Parish Meeting (APM).

Several dates are possible; the main consideration is to pick a venue that is large enough to accommodate all the people that it is hoped will attend. Following the formal presentation of the Parish Council's Annual Report by Cllr Mike Corran and the Receipts & Payments Account for the year ended 31st March 2023 by the Clerk, it is intended that everyone attending the meeting will be encouraged to participate in a discussion about the future of the Village – their 'Vision for Dorchester in 2030' This process will be facilitated by experienced staff from communityfirst Oxfordshire (CFO). Having established on what dates the Meeting could be held in Dorchester Abbey, it is hoped that the Chairman and Clerk will be able to have planning meetings with the team from CFO and report back to the Parish Council meeting in June. Publicity for the date of the APM can begin as soon as it is clear that the CFO team is available. It may be possible to get help from CFO with the review of the Parish's Neighbourhood Development Plan and this will be explored in the discussions.

12/5. Coronation Celebrations

Mike Corran said that it was estimated that approximately 600 people had attended the Street Party and entertainment on Sunday 7th May. The event had made a profit of approximately £450 and it was agreed that this should be donated to the Village School and Pre-School.

The Council expressed its thanks to the organising team which had been led by Steph Forman, Nick Forman, Jill Corran and Mike Corran, helped by dozens of others. On the Monday over 80 volunteers had taken part in 'The Big Help Out', with every pre-advertised activity attracting interest.

The Clerk reported that approximately 130 Coronation mugs had been presented to village children aged 16 or under, while the sales of both sizes of mug to people attending the Street Party had totalled well over £1,000.

13/5 Village Maintenance

Nothing to report.

14/5 .Routine Reports:

- a. Sports Pavilion, Recreation Ground & Playground;

- i. The Pavilion and Tractor Shed rebuilding cost has now been estimated by Mark Bristow to be £355,000 plus VAT for insurance purposes and this information has been sent to Zurich Insurance in time for the start of the new insurance year which commences at the beginning of June.
 - ii. The Council noted that playground safety inspection training is available next month through OPFA.
 - iii. Publicity for the new outdoor table tennis table is being arranged with support from SODC.
- b. Footpaths including measures to reduce dog fouling;
The Clerk confirmed that contact has been made with Mr Richard Blundell of Mount Farm who owns the 'Demesne field' between the Drayton Road/Hurst footpath and the by-pass.
 - c. Cemetery/Closed Churchyard;
Nothing to report.
 - d Allotments.
Nothing to report.

15/5. Any Other Urgent Matters

- a. It was agreed that there should be another Village Information Evening in September or October. The Clerk will make a proposal for the June Council meeting.
- b. The list of Parish Councillor responsibilities brought forward from previous years will be reviewed. The Chairman will circulate his suggestions.
- c. The Clerk will circulate information about the various training courses that are available to all councillors.
- d. Cllr Jon Brydges will help the Council to consider improvements to its digital communications including a new Council website: the introduction of council specific email addresses for all councillors, not just the Chairman; internal communication techniques; use of social media etc.
- e. There should be an attempt to liaise with youth groups in surrounding villages especially Berinsfield.

Meeting closed at 9.34 p.m.