**DORCHSTER PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES** of the Parish Council meeting held on 10th April 2024 at 7.30pm Dorchester Village Hall.

Members present; Chairman Mike Corran MC, Vice Chairman John Taylor, JT, Councilors Mark Williams MW, Mike Atkinson MA, Charlotte Garside CG, Chris Hill CH, Jon Brydges JB.

Attending Clerk Jenny Welham JW, District & County Councilor Robin Bennett RB.

Chair opened the meeting, noted the recent passing of Maurice Day former Chairman of the PC, many attended his funeral. Introduced matters on the Agenda.

**1. To Receive Apologies for Absence.** Becky Waller accepted.

**2. To Receive Declarations of Interest** for Items on this Agenda including Disposable Pecuniary Interests. None

**3. To Facilitate Public participation** with regard to items on this Agenda.

5 MOP present one for Planning application query.

**4. To Approve Minutes of the Previous Council Meeting 6th March 2024.**

Approved as a True Record

**4.1 Matters Arising** from those minutes not elsewhere on the Agenda.

The Clerk had circulated the Action List (Appendix A) with the papers for the meeting.

No other matters raised.

**4.2 Progress Updates** on Outstanding Items.

Clerk gave update on the actions. The Action List had been circulated with the papers for the meeting, see Appendix A. **(**Note proposals for Decisions to be Made shall be included on a future Agenda**.)**

**5. To receive Report from District & County Councillor.**

**SODC.**

Empty Homes Policy

The council’s commitment to tackling our social housing waiting list and to making sure local families have somewhere to live has led to the approval of a new Empty Homes Policy.

Police and Crime Commissioner election

The election takes place on 2 May, full details on the SODC elections webpage.

People wishing to vote will need photo ID.

Some council car park fees to change from April 1

New fees for car parks in South Oxfordshire are being introduced from April 1.

The car park fees are being simplified and rounded to the nearest whole pound while all car parks will continue to have a period of free parking. This means some of the fees are being reduced by up to 16 percent while other will see modest increases. Parking permits rates have also been frozen.

**OCC**

Surface dressing to improve road surfaces and help prevent potholes. Nearly 100 roads across Oxfordshire will be improved as part of a £7 million highway maintenance programme beginning this spring.

Oxfordshire County Council and its contractor Milestone Infrastructure Ltd will be visiting more than 50 locations between 8 April and 3 June to carry out surface dressing work. The programme is part-funded by the government, with £2.629 million coming from the Department for Transport’s road resurfacing fund.

Road safety - Following recent incidents and concerns raised by residents, I have met again with County officers about, in particular, the Dorchester bypass stretch of the A415, and the A415/Tollgate Road crossing. I have asked for updates on what can be done to bring forward safety improvements and will report back as soon as I have more info. I’ve also asked for an update on the wider A4074 corridor study as the consultation on this took place some time ago.

MC advised that DPC had an FOI with Thames Valley Police as their data on their website is out of date.

Fly tipping - If you see fly tipped waste, please report it to Biffa – Fix My Street no longer accepts reports of fly tipping. Please call Biffa on 03000 610 610 or email: [admin.southoxford@biffa.co.uk](mailto:admin.southoxford@biffa.co.uk)

River levels in Oxfordshire - River levels in Oxfordshire have remained generally high and responsive to rainfall. Find links to relevant agencies here: <https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/high-river-levels/>

Fire Safety - awareness training being given 13 April, 11 May.

**6. Dorchester 2030/Agenda for May 1st APM (**Appendix B) **–** update on Workstreams and next actions. Prepare Agenda for Annual Parish Meeting

Chair advised the format proposed for beginning of the meeting, Chair’s report, Clerk to cover Finance. Aim to get public to endorse the DPC priorities for D2030, and try to get volunteers to get involved with the workstreams.

JT will summarise key points from the survey and propose priorities and take any questions. Secondly to split into break out areas with various councillors to man the different areas speak to people who wish to become involved. Lisa from CFO will attend to take any questions. The Priorities;

Wildlife/Water quality – MA, CH.

Solutions Traffic noise and safety, Car parking - MA David Ross

Progress and use of Pavilion/Refurb plans – BW, JB, JT, Chris Smith

Develop plan for 10-20 affordable homes – CH, MW, JT John Stevenson

Transform PC Operations Governance, Finance, Risk, Emergency Planning, MC, JT, JW, Grounds Maintenance MW, NP quinquennial review MW, CH. (MC,JT,JW overview).

Fiona Brown at CFO is involved on affordable homes and CFO provide support for Village Halls and may be able to support the Pavilion, JT is engaging with them. Publicity will be, Notification on Notice Boards, Facebook, Village website, Dorchester News and Posters A4. JB to send format to Clerk. MOP offered to help put posters up. Chair asked Councillors to attend early to help set up the meeting area.

The draft Agenda had been circulated prior to the meeting and was Approved Appendix B.

**7. Clerk Report –** update. The 2 Financial year Agars not sent are now being reviewed by the internal Auditor and should be ready for sign off at the May meeting. Geoff Russell retired Clerk still working on Orientation boards MC dealing with this.

**8.Dorchester PC IT Infrastructure –** review website & email domain proposal for future. **Appendix C** circulated prior to the meeting.

MA felt spending funds on a new website is a waste of money very against this expenditure. JB commented he felt it is almost impossible to be completely accessibility compliant and did not feel the quotation for new website was value for money. He felt that the look and feel was very important especially with D2030, DPC want to portray a forward thinking PC.

JT wants the Clerk to have the tools to do the job, and an IT support system. Someone is needed to call on when there are issues.

JT feels that we need one tool and consolidate integrate parts of the village website and see what reactions we get and what is left.

Clerk felt that as SODC registered Dorchester Parish Council, not on Thames, that the email address should change to this. MA did not want the email domain to change to Dorchester Parish Council, this was supported by some other members.

**Resolved**

MC asked if JB can give some training to Clerk on the current website to enable her to be able to use it and update the content. The Site needs further development. This engagement should lead to a quick decision on whether the current new site can be the efficient complaint tool for the Clerk, right for councillors and wider community.

Clerk to explore support on an ad hoc basis rather than sign into a contract. Cllr. not happy to change emails. Clerk email to change to clerk@ remove the word parish, JB to action. Other emails remain the same.

**9.Risk Assessment – Appendix D** to review the Risk Assessment document to cover DPC activities. Some minor changes noted.

**Resolved** to Adopt and Councillor for internal controls MC. JT thanked the Clerk for creating this document.

**10.Parking –** review DPC parking areas, discuss guidelines.

Comments on FB about parking on the recreation ground for the Lambing event. No damage was done to the ground, MC went and inspected. The parking was on Cricket Outfield but nowhere near the square.

When used for this Sundays Lambing event BCF will have a marshal this time. Farm will cone the corner where cars were parked against traffic regulations. BCF are planning a 70 space car park off the new access road, likely for 2025.

CH requested that a Tape across to close off certain areas near Pavilion. Mops made comments about the bad parking around certain junctions.

MC Advised that the current arrangement with Village Handyman carrying out the parking responsibilities, putting out cones, unlocking gates will need to be taken back by DPC as the he wants to stand down.

MC asked if Councillors would think about some options; do DPC recruit a handyman or engage volunteers. MA advised at times the Signage on parking from Abbey needs to be clearer.

**11.Finance**

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| Clerk Salary |  | 11/04/2024 |  | GR March hours 22.5 | | | | Geoff Russell | | |  |  | xxx | |  |  |  |  | xxx | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Subscriptions |  | 11/04/2024 |  | OPFA Subscription | | | | OPFA | | |  |  | 47.00 | |  |  |  |  | 47.00 | |
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| Subscriptions |  | 11/04/2024 |  | Subscription | | | | Oxfordshire Neighbourhood Plans Alliance | | |  |  | 50.00 | |  |  |  |  | 50.00 | |
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| Rates |  | 11/04/2024 |  | Cemetery Rates | | | | SODC | | |  |  | 661.18 | |  |  |  |  | 661.18 | |
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| Dog/General wastebins/dispensers | | 11/04/2024 |  | Dog & Waste Bins | | | | Shield Maintenance Ltd | | |  |  | 242.32 | | 48.46 | | | | 290.78 | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Grass cutting |  | 11/04/2024 |  | Grass Cutting | | | | The Landscape Group Oxford | | |  |  | 825.70 | | 165.14 | | | | 990.84 | |
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| Pavilion Maintenance/Elec/Water | | 11/04/2024 |  | Pavilion Water | | | | Castle Water | | |  |  | 29.87 | |  |  |  |  | 29.87 | |
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| Training |  | 11/04/2024 |  | Training courses | | | | OALC | | |  |  | 40.00 | | 8.00 | | | | 48.00 | |
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| Administration |  | 11/04/2024 |  | Payroll | | | | C & M Accounts and Payroll | | |  |  | 10.00 | | 2.00 | | | | 12.00 | |
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| Pavilion Maintenance/Elec/Water | | 11/04/2024 |  | pavilion electricity | | | | SSE Southern Electric | | |  |  | 87.31 | | 4.37 | | | | 91.68 | |
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| Dorchester Flyer |  | 19/04/2024 |  | Buses | | | | Going Forward Buses CIC | | |  |  | 50.00 | |  |  |  |  | 50.00 | |
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| Clerk Salary |  | 28/04/2024 |  | Clerk Salary JW | | | | Jenny Welham | | |  |  | xxx | |  |  |  |  | xxx | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Administration |  | 30/04/2024 |  | Administration | | | | Gap HR Services | | |  |  | 47.00 | | 9.40 | | | | 56.40 | |
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| Administration |  | 30/04/2024 |  | Clerk Mobile phone | | | | Vodafone | | |  |  | 29.75 | | 5.95 | | | | 35.70 | |
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|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Total** | | | **3,485.63** | |  | **243.32** | | | | **3,728.95** | |

**11.1** To review & Approve Payments presented as above. **APPROVED**

To Note Receipts.

1st half year Precept budget received from SODC £26,400. Parking Fees £300.00

Still paying GR for his time working with Clerk to continue handover, this will stop shortly MC to speak to GR.

Funds As of 9th April 2024;

Lloyds Treasurer £29,362.82. Lloyds Reserve £52,87.26 Nat West current £1,991.93.

**11.2** To Consider any Quotations received for works. – Collapsed Wall Abbey Church yard boundary.

3 quotations received circulated to councillor before the meeting these being;

£ 2660.00 plus VAT, £2340.00 + vat, £1,960.00 + VAT

The Abbey had agreed to contribute £980.00 towards the works. **Resolved** to accept the quotation for £1960.00. Clerk to check with Conservation officer.

Zurich Insurance quote for renewal £2695.99. DPC in 3 year contract. **Resolved** to accept.

School had requested some funding for their school fete. Need to look at what is set aside for donations, and follow a process in future DPC to adopt a grant policy. £250.00 Approved

**11.3** Outstanding Agars FY 2021/22, 2022/23 update. **Currently being worked on by Internal Auditor.**

**11.3** Financial Year End – Report. Clerk handed out Unaudited Annual Return report. Clerk asked if some payments can be set up as standing orders and Direct Debit for utilities.. Agreed and Approved.

**12. Planning –** to consider planning application received from SODC and any other applications submitted and published on the SODC planning portal between circulation of this Agenda and the meeting.

**P24/S0893/FUL** Material change of use of land to a site for testing jet-propelled boats (continuation of use approved under application ref. P18/S1841/FUL). Queenford Farm Lake Drayton Road Dorchester-on-Thames OX10 7PJ.

Mop read report and it referred to noise and report suggested the A4074 was noiser than the boats suggested Page Furlong residents need to be advised of this in case they are not aware and this is for permanent permission. No noise identified, activity restricted 9-5pm Mon to Fri

This is an application for continuation of use but on a permanent basis (previous was for 5 years). Not aware of any past complaints or issues from villagers. SODC Ecology Team have Temporary hold due to wildlife birds reduction over the years on this lake. Requested further information as there is concern about impact on bird numbers.

**P24/S0736/HH** Replace dilapidated wall with new wall to match existing. Old School House, 11 Queen Street, Dorchester OX10 7HR. This has been granted prior to the meeting.

**P24/S0340/LB** Abbey Guest House - Amendments per request from Heritage Officer. No strong view.

P24/S1031/FUL Temporary planning permission for 2 years and associated change of use for an eco pod prototype building for the purposes of testing energy performance and sustainable technologies. Bishop Court Farm. This is to build an Eco Pod in the farmyard to test sustainability etc, prior to an eventual application to build 10 such pods by the lake. The siting is in the main yard and is just outside the Conservation Area.

No objections.

**13. Items for Information or Next Agenda 2024**

CG asked if PC could fund the school to stop parking, suggestion cardboard children would the PC fund? Decided not at the moment and suggested school contact OCC.

Agreed need a grant policy.

Resident is 100 years old on 29/4/24 DPC to send a card, Chair to action.

Benson Weir raised FOI asking when work on the weir will start, likely to start in April, main work will start in May weather permitting, completion anticipated late 2025.

Red telephone box with defib inside, the bottom of door has fallen off CH to send photo to Clerk to organise repair..

*Meeting closed at 21.45*

**14. Date of Next Meeting 8th May (This will be Annual Parish Council meeting)**

Signed………………………….. Date……………….