

Drayton Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Drayton Parish Council, Held on Monday 1st December 2008 at 7.30pm At the Caudwell Day Centre, Gravel Lane, Drayton.

Present: Mr Scharf, Mrs Parker, Mrs Pooley, Mr Webber, Mr Butler, Mrs Morris, Mrs Morrison.

156/08. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mrs Seaman, County Councillors Mike & Marilyn Badcock.

157/08. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

158/08. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- 3 members of the public were present. Mrs Butler, allotment warden, attended the meeting to raise two concerns; what can be done about getting the additional water supply to the allotments and how the growing waiting list for an allotment can be managed. Mr Scharf proposed that Mrs Butler meet on site with PC members and a contractor to discuss installing the additional water supply.

Mrs Butler went on to talk about the waiting list, which now had 8 people on it, and asked if anything further could be done to chase those tenants who hadn't been sorting out their allotment for some time. Mrs Parker said that, following the allotment meeting, people felt the PC shouldn't be too heavy handed with tenants who hadn't been cultivating their allotment for some time as this could be due to a change in circumstances. Mrs Butler said that there should be a procedure in place for contacting tenants who may be in breach of their Tenancy Agreement. Mr Scharf suggested that local landowners could be contacted to ask if there was any chance of more land being made available to use as allotments. **Action** – The Clerk to draft a letter to current allotment holders and mention the growing waiting list and whether the tenant wishes to continue having an allotment. The letter to also remind tenants that sub-letting their plot is a breach of their Tenancy Agreement. The draft letter to be forwarded to the allotment warden for approval first.

Mrs Parker then spoke about the 3 allotment tenants who were previously interested in starting up an allotment association. However, once it had been looked into further, they had decided it would involve too much administration and they wouldn't be going ahead with it.

Mrs Butler mentioned that she had spoken with a couple of other allotment holders who may possibly be interested to join her in being an allotment warden, so the workload could be shared.

- Mrs Ann Webb attended the meeting to ask the PC for a contribution towards having 2 doors replaced in the Village Hall. Mr Scharf mentioned that the PC had had a finance meeting recently and had earmarked funds for the next financial year for having additional car parking spaces and lighting work done outside the village hall. There was also money in the budget this year for the PC to have their solicitor look at the old agreement document between the PC and Village Hall Committee and bring this up to date so that all parties could understand it.

Mr Scharf suggested that a meeting between members of the Village Hall & Recreation Ground Committee and the PC was organised so that the issues could be discussed further, once the PC had finalised the budget for 2009/2010.

Mrs Webb said that the wooden doors, which needed replacing, were rotten. Mr Webber suggested that the Village Hall Committee contact the VWHDC, who might be able to assist with some funding.

Mrs Parker had received an invoice for £350 for the Village Hall from Ron Sharpe for work he had done to try and remove the graffiti, which she passed to Mrs Webb. Mrs Webb was advised that if the Village Hall Committee paid the bill in the first instance, the PC would then look favourably at reimbursing the cost. Mrs Webb would look into the cost of having the brickwork re-pointed, which was damaged by the pressure washer when having the graffiti removed. **Decision** – The PC would pay for the cost of the re-pointing. Mr Scharf said that the Village Hall could ask Ron Sharpe straight away in the future if they noticed more graffiti, as he had some of the solvent left.

159/08. MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF 3RD NOVEMBER 2008.

Mr Butler proposed and Mrs Morris seconded that the Minutes be agreed without amendment. Mr Scharf then signed the Minutes.

160/08. THAMES WATER – UTMRD – REPORT ON STAGE 2 INVOLVEMENT

The Clerk had received a copy of the report. Mr Webber mentioned that a meeting was due to be held on Friday 5th December with the Environment Agency and Ed, concerning the proposed reservoir. Mrs Parker and Mr Scharf to also attend the meeting.

Mr Webber went on to say that Ed had managed to get a supplementary debate in Parliament three weeks ago, concerning the proposed reservoir, and he is pushing for a public inquiry to be held. Mr Scharf commented that he thought a public inquiry would be a waste of money and it could be tackled in a different way, such as through a hearing or mediation. Mrs Parker proposed and Mrs Morrison seconded that Mr Scharf should suggest a hearing should take place, rather than a public inquiry. **Action** – Mr Scharf to suggest a hearing.

161/08. MATTERS ARISING

40/06 Topple testing for headstones – The Clerk had received an email from Mr Cline, who would be moving from the village so is unable to carry out the testing. **Action** – The Clerk to try and obtain 2 quotes from companies to carry out the testing and for staking and binding any loose memorials, or those they have made loose.

129/07 HGV’s using bridleway – Item carried forward as County Councillors not present.

37/08 Grants/donations from the PC – Mr Butler to email all a copy of the article for the Chronicle.

38/08 Policy for fly posting/village noticeboards - Item carried forward.

APA11 Play/recreation facilities in the village – Item carried forward.

84/08. Villages of the Year Competition, Village website – Item carried forward.

86/08. Changes to bus services – Mr Scharf had written an article to go in the Chronicle regarding the changes, which he had cleared with the County Council last week.

123/08. Public Liability Insurance – Village Hall car park – Mr Butler had looked over the insurance policy and there wasn’t anything in it to say whether or not the car park area was covered. The tarmac is now safe, so no further action is required.

139/08. Terms of reference for Allotment Committee – Action - Mrs Butler to find out if there is more enthusiasm for additional wardens, instead of having an Allotment Association.

139/08. Graffiti on brickwork at Village Hall – Action – Ann Webb to pay the invoice from Mr Sharpe and then ask the PC to reimburse the Village Hall.

141/08. Sutton Courtenay incinerator – A meeting to be held with the Environment Agency on 2nd December, which Mrs Pooley would attend.

149/08. Policy re. health & safety on donation criteria – Mr Butler proposed that the Finance Committee should look at this issue. **Action** – The Finance Committee to look at this and Mr Butler to draft a document on health & safety criteria for donations.

153/08. Parishes Group Meeting on 5th November – Mrs Morris attended the meeting and said that, as a relatively new Parish Councillor, she had found it very helpful.

154/08. Draft article and advert for Drayton Chronicle – All the adverts were reviewed. Mr Scharf proposed and Mrs Pooley seconded that the adverts should be given to someone outside of the PC to read. **Action** – Mr Scharf to review the drafts with the help of his son.

154/08. Uneven tarmac, bus stop at The Green – Following the email the Clerk had received from Mandy Bell, OCC Highways, 2 Councillors had inspected the tarmac around the bus stop. **Action** – The Clerk to contact Mandy Bell and let her know that the PC feels that there isn’t anything that can be done (short of removing the whole tree) to improve the surface, as it consists of various levels and the tree roots have disturbed the tarmac.

162/08. FINANCE/ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE BUSINESS

All invoices, payments and receipts had been checked by Mr Butler, prior to the cheques being signed.

A Payments

M Sellwood	Clerk’s Salary	£559.98
Inland Revenue	NI & tax	£52.03
M Sellwood	Expenses	£221.26 (incl. VAT £28.33)

R Sharpe	November caretaker	£192.50
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S142 (2A) – Abingdon & District CAB		£500.00
S142 (2A) – Didcot & District CAB		£50.00
S137 – St. Peter’s Church	Contribution for hedge cutting	£68.00
S137 – South & Vale Carers		£275.00
S137 – DAMASCUS Youth Project		£2350.00

Receipts

M & J Didcock Funeral Service	Burial – Burgess, plot 190	£40.00
Abingdon Stone & Marble	Additional inscription (Buckell)	£25.00

B Other business

• Grants/Donations

The Clerk had received advice from OALC regarding how much the PC can give to one body under S137. There is no absolute threshold, but the PC must ensure that the amount donated is reasonable and commensurate with the number of parishioners the donation will benefit. It should be recorded explicitly in the Minutes why the PC decided to donate a certain proportion of the S137 allowance for the year to a certain body.

S137 – St. Peter’s Church – The donation of £68.00 had been previously agreed under Minute Ref: 50/08.

S137 – South & Vale Carers – Mr Butler said that the Finance Committee proposed a donation of £275.00. Mrs Parker seconded this proposal. **Decision** – It was decided to donate £275.00 to South & Vale Carers.

S137 – DAMASCUS Youth Project – The Project had requested a donation of £2500.00, £150.00 of which was for the Drayton Youth Zone project. The PC had budgeted £2200.00 for the DAMASCUS Project. Mr Webber proposed and Mrs Parker seconded, that the DAMASCUS Project should be given £2350.00; £2200.00 as per the original budget and an additional £150.00 for the Youth Zone. **Decision** – It was decided to donate £2350.00 to the DAMASCUS Project. The reason for such a large amount of the donation budget being awarded to the DAMASCUS Project was that it benefits such a large number of local residents.

S142 (2A) – Abingdon & District CAB – Mr Butler said that the Finance Committee proposed a donation of £500.00. Mrs Parker seconded this proposal. **Decision** – It was decided to donate £500.00 to Abingdon & District CAB.

S142 (2A) – Didcot & District CAB - Mr Butler said that the Finance Committee proposed a donation of £50.00. Mrs Morris seconded this proposal. **Decision** – It was decided to donate £50.00 to Didcot & District CAB.

• Finance Committee Meeting on 24th November 2008. Budget/precept for 2009/2010.

All Parish Councillors had received the updated budget papers, prepared by the Clerk. The Council discussed items raised at the meeting on 24th November and the accompanying budget papers. There was an expected carry forward from this year of £35k, with a total expenditure for next year of £32k. A large amount, £10k, had been allowed in next year’s budget for work and improvements to the Village Hall car park and outside lighting. This amount was then discussed further. Mrs Pooley and Mrs Morrison said that perhaps more people would use the hall if it was updated and the car parking/outside lighting was sorted out. **Decision** – It was decided to allocate £10k in the 2009/2010 budget towards work at the Village Hall. Mr Scharf added that, if other projects were brought to the PC’s attention that required funding, then funds could be earmarked for them as well.

Mr Butler said that the budget for the next financial year would be an increase of £7.5k. This would mean setting a precept of £32k, an increase of £8k on last year. Mr Butler proposed that the PC should provisionally set a precept of £32k, but look again at the expected carry forward following next month’s meeting. (The deadline for the precept request to be sent to the Vale is 31st January). **Decision** – All agreed to provisionally set the precept at £32k.

- The Finance Committee also discussed the internal auditors recommendations
 - The internal auditor had informed the Parish Council of the new requirement imposed under the Accounts & Audit (Amendment)(England) Regulations 2006 to undertake a review of the effectiveness of their internal auditor, which should have been carried out by 31 March 2008. However, the PC was unaware that this needed to be done until it was highlighted in the internal auditor’s report in June 2008. The Finance Committee went on to discuss the internal auditor’s effectiveness and to review his recommendations, made for the year 2007/2008. One point that the external auditor had picked up upon, which the internal auditor had not, was that the Fidelity Guarantee cover of £50,000 needed to be increased in light of the PC’s current account balance combined with the balance of the savings account.
 - VAT of £11.16 for cheque no. 1657 hadn’t been included on the reclaim form for that period. The Clerk had subsequently included this amount on the reclaim form for 19th February – 5th July 2008.
 - VAT of £8.75 for cheque no. 1670 couldn’t legally be reclaimed by the PC as the invoice/receipt wasn’t made out to the PC. The Clerk hadn’t included this amount on the reclaim form anyway.
 - Section 137 – grants and donations. The auditor had pointed out that not all payments listed in the grants/donations column in the cashbook should be Section 137. For example, grants/donations made to the CAB should be listed separately under Section 142 (2A). **Action** – The Clerk to update the spreadsheets to show the difference in donations. The auditor had also mentioned an upper limit of £2000 for S137 payments. The Clerk had since obtained advice from OALC (see 162/08 B).
 - Financial Regulations – The PC had agreed the draft document (see below).
 - The auditor mentioned in his report that the PC needs to approve both parts 1 & 2 of the annual return independently and record the minute to that effect.

Matters arising from the Finance Committee Meeting

- There was currently an underspend of £2230.24 in the burial ground/allotments budget for the current year, which could possibly be used to install an additional water supply for the allotments.

- RSA (working from home allowance) for the Clerk. The Finance Committee proposed a stepped change from £200 to £225 a year, then in future an annual increase of 5%.
- Mr Scharf to find out more information about the PC's annual donation of £50.50 to the Custodian Charities.
- Rights of Way – in 2009/2010 the PC would be contributing to the installation of 3 further kissing gates.
- Allotments, rental access – the 2 householders are currently paying the PC £60 per year. This would be discussed at a future main PC meeting.
- Date of the next Finance Committee Meeting – The next meeting was scheduled for 7pm on 2nd February.
- **Draft Financial Regulations** – All members had received a copy of the Draft Financial Regulations. **Decision** – Mr Scharf proposed and Mrs Morris seconded that the Regulations now been agreed without amendment. The Regulations were then dated as effective from 1st December 2008.
- **Risk Assessment obligations for 2008/2009 – Action** – Mr Butler to check on the obligations for this year.
- **Internal Audit for 2008/2009** – The Clerk had received a letter from the PC's internal auditor, who wished to know whether the PC wished to employ him as auditor for next year. Mr Butler proposed and Mr Scharf seconded that the PC continue to employ BR Consulting as internal auditor for 2008/2009. **Decision** – All agreed that BR Consulting would be the PC's internal auditor for 2008/2009.
- **External Audit for 2007/2008** – The Clerk had received back from BDO Stoy Hayward, the external auditor, the Notice of Conclusion of Audit, the Annual Return and Issues Arising from Audit. The only matter mentioned on the Issues Arising from Audit was that level of Fidelity Guarantee cover appeared to be insufficient in light of the bank balances held at 31 March 2008. **Action** – The Clerk was asked to have the Fidelity Guarantee insurance increased next year from £50k to £60k. The Annual Return was approved and accepted by the Council.

163/08. RIGHTS OF WAY & CONSERVATION WORKING GROUP

- There was a fallen tree across Bridleway 12, which had been removed by the village caretaker, who had included the 5 hours extra work in his invoice this month.
- Mrs Pooley mentioned that the County Council have yet to remove the tree at an angle on FP19.

164/08. PLANNING COMMITTEE BUSINESS

NO	ADDRESS	DETAILS	PARISH	DISTRICT
27/08 DRA/14126/25-LB	STONEHILL HOUSE	TO REMOVE REDUNDANT BRICK & TIMBER PARTITION IN CELLAR TO PROVIDE SPACE FOR WOOD PELLET BOILER.	NO OBJ	
36/08 DRA/20685	49 SUTTON WICK LANE	RE-BUILDING A SEMI-DETACHED BUNGALOW PREVIOUSLY DAMAGED IN A FIRE.	NO OBJ	PER
37/08 DRA/10175/1	23 HILLIAT FIELDS	DEMOLISH EXISTING CONSERVATORY & ERECTION OF SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION. EXISTING GARAGE TO BE REDUCED IN SIZE.	NO OBJ	
38/08 WORK TO TREES	GARDEN STUDIO, GRAVEL LANE	CROWN REDUCE 1 JUDAS TREE BY 33% & FELL 2 FIR TREES.	NO OBJ	
39/08 DRA/20644/1	53 ABINGDON ROAD	DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUNGALOW & ERECTION OF A NEW HOUSE.		

165/08. LEISURE & GENERAL PURPOSES WORKING GROUP

- **Village caretaker** – The Clerk reported on the village caretaker's work for the month. Mr Scharf had spoken with Ron Sharpe about quoting for planting in the gaps in the hedge in the Parish Burial Ground. **Action** – The Clerk to ask the caretaker for a quote for planting in the gaps.
- **List of work from Drayton Village Hall & Recreation Ground Committee** – Mrs Webb had attended earlier in the meeting to ask the PC for a contribution towards having 2 wooden doors replaced in the Village Hall. **Decision** – The Clerk to ask Mrs Webb to obtain a second quotation for the work and, subject to this being acceptable to the PC, the PC would be prepared to offer a donation. **Action** – The Clerk to contact Mrs Webb to ask for a second quotation and explain that if this was acceptable the PC would donate 25% towards the cost of the work. The Clerk to also write to the PC's solicitor to find out whether the agreement document between the Village Hall & Recreation Ground Committee and the PC could be revised so that it is easier for all parties to understand it, or if a revision wasn't possible whether it would be preferable to have a new agreement drawn up.
- A member of the PC mentioned that the sign for Whitehorns Way had vanished. **Action** – The Clerk would contact OCC Highways about this.
- **Noticeboard for Allotment Holders** – Item deferred until new wardens/allotment group had been sorted out.

166/08. CORRESPONDENCE – to be noted

Clerks & Councils Direct

November 2008

OALC

November member's update

The Member's Update had included advice from the Information Commissioner regarding the Publication Scheme, which the Clerk read out. Under the Freedom of Information Act it is the duty of every public authority to adopt and maintain a Publication Scheme. The approval of all current schemes expires on 31st December. The Clerk then distributed a copy of the new scheme, which would take effect from 1st January 2009, to all PC members. **Decision** – The PC adopted the document without modification.

On 1st January the PC would need to have 2 documents in place; an adopted copy of the Model Scheme and a completed guide to information, which the Clerk had.

Playbuilder Roadshow – 19th November

Oxfordshire County Council

Road Casualty Report for 2007

Real Time Information trial at Drayton Green

Information on the trial had been passed to Mr Scharf. The information trial would involve having screens installed on posts at the 2 bus stops which would detail bus times and other local information. The item was deferred as the trial wasn't due to start for the next 1-2 years.

OPFA

Autumn 2008

VWHDC

Future Development in the Vale – Core Strategy Preferred Options

Vale Community Safety Partnership Forum – 11th December

167/08. Any Other Business

- Mr Webber spoke regarding Abits and said that the scheme that was planned for Marcham Road had now been scrapped and there wasn't any policy on Drayton traffic.

168/08. The date of the next Parish Council Meeting would be MONDAY 5TH JANUARY 2009 @ 7.30PM in the CAUDWELL DAY CENTRE, GRAVEL LANE.