

MINUTES of ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

held on Wednesday 17th April 2019

in Dorney Village Hall at 7.30pm

Present: - Cllr K. Harris (Chaired the meeting), Cllr A. Foxley, Cllr J. Dax and Cllr R. Ormond.

In Attendance:- Mrs S. Moffat (Clerk), Bucks Cllr D. Dhillon, SBDC Cllr D. Pepler, Mr Jim Stacey (Highways England), and Matt Orchard (Balfour Beatty), and 28 members of the public.

Cllr Graham Easton - Before the meeting commenced Cllr Alice Foxley paid tribute to Cllr Graham Easton who sadly died this week. He was a very active member of the community, volunteering tirelessly as a member of Dorney Village Hall Committee and Dorney Parish Council. He will be sadly missed, an inspiration and a true gentleman. A minute's silence took place to remember Graham.

1. **APOLOGIES for absence were received from:** - Cllr A. Purdie and Cllr P. Smith.

2. **RESOLVED to approve and sign the minutes of the 2018 meeting** held on 19th April 2018.

3. **Chairman's Report**

Cllr Harris thanked everyone for attending and introduced the parish councillors and welcomed Jill Dax on board. He went on to report that:- (i) The biggest expense for the Parish Council this year was the 2 solar panelled Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS). He has downloaded recordings from the signs and circulated a detailed report. Briefly, regards the VAS sign near Court Lane, the average speed into the Village is 24.68mph and leaving is 26.97mph. The average speeds monitored by VAS sign at the cattle grid is 26.15mph coming into the Village and 28.76 mph leaving the Village. A bigger concern would appear to be the number of vehicles driving through the Village which is about 20k in each direction each week; (ii) The M4 Smartmotorway works is the fourth major disruption to the Village after Eton Rowing Lake, Jubilee River and the 2012 Olympics. The Smartmotorway disruption will be similar to the Jubilee River works but more serious as Marsh Lane bridge will not be replaced online so will be closed for 18 months. Dorney Parish Council is concerned that Dorney Reach may become isolated having only one road in and out during the bridge closure. Therefore, to ensure access to Dorney Reach at all times, the Parish Council has asked for double yellow lines along Court Lane and Marsh Lane to stop Eton Lake visitors parking and causing congestion, the hedging to be cut back along Court Lane and Marsh Lane and the road cleaned. We have also asked for a temporary roundabout at the junction of Village Road with Court Lane, similar to that at the time of the 2012 Olympics, to assist traffic flow and make it safer for all vehicles and pedestrians.

Lastly, Cllr Harris thanked John Farrell for all his hard work keeping the Village looking neat and tidy, the Clerk and the Councillors for all their time and expertise.

4. **Finance – Budget & Precept:-** Cllr Ormond, the Chairman of the Finance Committee, presented the budget for 2018-19. The Budget set for 2018/19 was expected to have been overspent by approximately £2,100 due to the purchase of 2 Mobile Vehicle Activated Signs (MVAS). Our actual income and expenditure for the year in most cases was very much in-line with the forecast, the exception being the MVAS's signs where installation costs were underestimated. By year end expenditure exceeded income by £2,500, an increase of £400.

For 2019/20 we have asked the Council for an additional 3% on our precept - that's an increase of £656 taking it up to £22,546. We have secured another year's funding from the Devolved Highways. Bucks CC did initially say we would get it for another 4 years but since the announcement of us moving to a single unitary authority it has only been approved for this year, at this time. Cllr Ormond reminded residents that 4 years ago we used to get £8,000 a year from Devolved Highways now it's only £2,319 a year.

Expenditure is based on previous levels and income and expenditure are expected to be balanced by year end. 53% of all income goes on the village upkeep.

We have £24,491.94 in the reserves.

5. **M4Smart Motorway** – Matt Orchard from Balfour Beatty reported that he has been raising the concerns of Dorney Parish Council at the Highways Stakeholders meetings that he attends and last month there was a representative from Bucks County Council present who has now taken these on board but has had no answer to date. Vegetation clearance work has commenced but this is curtailed by nesting birds and badgers. The work around the

badgers will have to wait until 1st July when the breeding season has finished. The Smartmotorway works have taken part of the field at the end of Oak Stubbs Lane and the gully sucker has cleaned the drains at the corner. (It was suggested that by cutting through the grass to the ditch being an easy solution to prevent puddling in this area).

Marsh Lane bridge will be closed for a year from 1st November.

Jim Stacey (Highways England) explained that a dilapidation survey, taken with cameras, has been carried out and any damage to roads deemed to be due to construction traffic will be repaired. It was pointed out that construction traffic was using Meadow Way to save turning round at the end of Oak Stubbs Lane. Matt Orchard took this on board and will stop it. Enquiries were made about the length and height of the new sound barriers. Matt Orchard will check this out and report back but did confirm that there will be low noise surfacing along this stretch of the M4. Lastly Matt Orchard stressed that if any local residents do have a problem with construction works, please report it so it can be remedied.

6. **TVPA** – No report was available.

7. **Village Hall Update** - Cllr Foxley reported that the Committee does have new members and hall bookings are going well saving some of the income for future building repairs. The Village Hall AGM will be at 8pm on 29th May 2019 and it would be lovely if people can attend and receive the updates for the year. To note, SBDC maintains the field area and the Parish Council maintains the grounds around the Village Hall and the play area. Peter Bowman asked if there had been an amicable conclusion to the critical letter published in Dorney News about the Village Hall finances. Cllr Foxley responded that she was satisfied that the questions had been answered as the Committee had done the right thing for the best interest of the Village Hall. Virginia Sylvester again invited people to attend the AGM as being the correct forum to ask questions on Village Hall matters.

8. **Youth Club and Playground** – No report available.

9. **Defibrillator Update** – Cllr Foxley reported that it was not possible to have the defibrillator in the red telephone box in Harcourt Rd so it will now be located on the outside of the Village Hall in a lockable cabinet. One funding source has been turned down so now applying to the Heathrow Community Fund for a grant.

10. **Eton Dorney Centre** – No report available.

11. **South Bucks District Council Report** - Cllr Pepler reported that:- Since the last Parish Meeting in spite of representations made to the Secretary of State from the four District Councils in Bucks to have two Unitary Authorities for the County he decided that the four should be abolished on 31st March 2020 and be replaced by a Unitary Council for the whole County and it should be a completely new Council and not a reinvention of Bucks County Council so it will be called Bucks Council. Elections for this council will be held on the first Thursday in May 2020 at the same time as the Parish Council Elections. On the Housing Front we managed to achieve our targets in 2018 and the temporary houses that are being erected on the Bath Road opposite the Bishop Centre should be completed this Summer. Further houses are being built at the site of the former Police Station at Gerrards Cross. Planning issues do cause concern and the major one here is the Orchard Herbs site that is just outside the Dorney Parish Boundary. The general lack of enforcement action of the Planning Laws being taken would appear to be the fact that the breaches involve SBDC Planning and Environmental Health, Bucks CC Planning and the Environment Agency. There is now light at the end of the tunnel in that Highways England are going to compulsorily purchase the site for the Smart Motorway improvement works which should result in the present activities ceasing and the completion of the purchase is due to take place in May. On another site in Glebe Close which Highways England had purchased, the former owner was refused Planning Permission to move her animals into the adjoining field but managed to succeed on her appeal against the refusal. As matters stand at present we are in a wait and see situation as far as the future is concerned but in the long term I feel that more work will be delegated to the Parish and Town Councils.

12. **Bucks County Council Report** – Cllr Dev Dhillon reported that:- (i) Government approved a Unitary Authority in November 2018 and the Structural Order should be passed in Parliament by second week of May 2019. The Shadow Authority and Shadow Executive will then be set up having 232 and 16 councillors respectively. Bucks CC's vision for the Unitary

Authority is for it to be community based so parish councils will have a greater voice with services being transferred to community hubs, each hub having its own budget. The savings by having a unitary authority will be £18million which can be compared to the £14 million spent on roads each year. Cllr Dev Dhillon is hoping to bring the Shadow Executive to a meeting at Dorney Parish Council in the future to find out about the views at Dorney.

13. Matters raised

- (i) A question was raised as to why Dorney can't join Berkshire instead of Buckinghamshire? Another resident supported this as was not happy with the new Unitary Authority. Cllr Dev Dhillon reassured residents that District Council's proactive planning policy on where new houses will be built will be maintained. Likewise, the waste collection will not change as the same contract has been approved for the next 10 years. It was agreed to put on the next Council's agenda the question of moving boundaries.
- (ii) Another question was raised as to why more money wasn't spent on pothole repair? Cllr Dhillon responded that now the Unitary Authority will be making savings, hopefully more money will be available for roads. Cllr Harris informed the meeting that Huntercombe Lane South and Boveney Road are in the pipeline to be repaired soon.
- (iii) There is still the problem of some dog owners not clearing up after their dogs. There is a process to report the name of dog owners who do this which can be sent to the Clerk.
- (iv) Cllr Jill Dax informed the meeting that she has talked with the Head Person at Eton Dorney Centre and they will be moving their refuse bins into their own grounds, will take down the banners and staff have been asked not to leave cigarette butts on the pavements outside the school gates.
- (v) Cllr Foxley announced that the Village Clean-up day will be at 1pm on 23rd June and this will be co-ordinated with the Playground clean up.

No other business being raised the meeting closed at 8.50pm