

# Dorney Parish Council

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## MINUTES of ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

held on Wednesday 18th April 2018

in Dorney Village Hall at 7.30pm

**Present:** - Cllr A Purdie (Vice - Chairman of the Parish Council chaired the meeting), Cllr G Easton, Cllr L Kittel, Cllr A Foxley, Cllr P Smith and Cllr R Ormond,

**In Attendance:-** Mrs S Moffat (Clerk), Bucks Cllr D Dhillon, SBDC Cllr D Pepler, SBDC Cllr M Bezzant, Mr Nick Atkinson (CH2M Arcadis Joint Venture, Smart Motorways Programmed, Working on behalf of Highways England), Steve Foxley (Project Manager for Highways England), and Matt Orchard (Balfour Beatty), and 28 members of public.

**1. APOLOGIES for absence were received from:** - Cllr Keith Harris, Jill Dax, Bill Dax and Jill Palmer.

### **2. Introduction by Cllr Purdie**

Cllr Purdie thanked everyone for attending and introduced the parish councillors. Cllr Smith looks after planning matters, Cllr Easton takes care of the Village Hall and Environmental issues including the M4 Smartmotorway, Cllr Kittel looks after the Youth Club, Playground and fund raiser, Cllr Ormond is Chairman of the Finance Committee, Cllr Foxley looks after the web site, fundraised for the defibrillator and represents the Council on outside meetings and forums. Sue Moffat is our professional Clerk for Dorney.

**3. RESOLVED to approve and sign the minutes of the 2017 meeting** held on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2017.

### **4. Chairman's Reports:-** Cllr Purdie reported:-

- (i) John Farrell is still working for Dorney PC as the groundsman. The Devolved Highways budget has been cut so Dorney PC makes up the shortfall to ensure high standards are maintained.
- (ii) Dorney PC organised the pollarding of the trees in the Memorial Garden, Village Road.
- (iii) No traveller issues this year and have had support from SBDC to increase the security in Trumpers Field against another travellers incursion.
- (iv) Dorney PC took out a loan to enable the Village Hall to be renovated. There has been a Freedom of Information request about the financial transactions regards the loan.
- (v) Traffic concerns have been raised by Dorney Traffic Working Group. Dorney PC have taken on these concerns and are in the process of purchasing a Radar Speed Device.
- (vi) The biggest issue for Dorney at present is the M4 Smartmotorway works and the closure of Marsh Lane bridge.
- (vii) Broadband was discussed at the AGM last year and OpenReach still does not have a 100% success rate!

(viii) The proposal for change to a Unitary Authority is another big issue which SBDC and BCC councillors will probably discuss later.

**5. Finance – Budget & Precept:-** Cllr Ormond, the Chairman of the Finance Committee, presented the budget for 2017-18 and reported that The Budget for 2017/18 was expected to have income and expenditure balance at around £25,300. During the course of the year Dorney PC received additional grants and donations of £3,753 which were spent on a tree survey and then remedial work on the trees at the War Memorial site in Village Road. Dorney PC are obliged as a council under Health and Safety legislation to do this every couple of years. We purchased our first Defibrillator which is situated in the Telephone Box in Village Road, Cllr Foxley will be providing more information on defibrillators later. We have also purchased new computer equipment for our Clerk in order in to improve both the website and to make her life easier. The year therefore ended, almost balanced, at around £29,000 with an over spend of just £174.

The Budget for 2018/19 has been set which included a 3% increase in your precept, this is also the last year of a four year agreement with Devolved Highways who contribute £2,319 towards our village maintenance costs, and 3 years ago this was £8,000. There is no indication yet as to whether we will get anything next year. Just to put that in perspective the 3% increase in your precept this year provided us with an extra £637, to get an additional £2,319 we would have to increase the precept next year by 11%! The Village Hall are continuing to contribute towards our ground maintenance costs. In total 41% of all moneys collected go towards the upkeep of the village. The Council is intending to purchase two Mobile Vehicle Activated Signs, MVAS for short, with the intention to positively influence driver behaviour and make our roads safer. LAF are providing a grant towards these costs of £1,500 which are expected to be around £4,000 in total for 2 fixed solar powered radar speed signs. This will lead to an over spend this year of around £2,000 which will come from our reserves. At the 29<sup>th</sup> March 2018 we had £27,967.05 in the Bank.

**6. M4Smart Motorway -** Nick Atkinson reported that he works on behalf of Highways England and oversees the whole of the project with all the companies involved. He introduced Steve Foxley the Project Manager for Highways England and Matt Orchard who works for the Contractor Balfour Beatty who will be the Customer Liaison Officer when the work commences. There is not been much more to report since we came to Dorney Parish Council's meeting in January. The Smartmotorway is being built to increase capacity within the existing motorway boundary. It is the biggest Smartmotorway project in England from Junction 3 to Junction 12 so there will be at least 4 lanes in both directions and approaches to the M25 will have 5 lanes. There is insufficient curtilage under the bridges in Dorney so the bridges have to be made longer to accommodate the fourth lane. There is not enough land to build alongside the bridge in Marsh Lane so this bridge needs to be replaced which means it will be closed for some considerable time. The project is split into 2 contracts. Contract 1 from Junction 8/9 westwards will start first although Marsh Lane and Lake End Road will be part of Contract 1 so the works fit in timewise with Contract 2. The start date for Contract 1 is late summer and rebuild of Marsh Lane bridge will start winter/spring of 2019 and the works will last for 15 to 18 months. We are trying to work closely with the School to draw up a School Travel Plan during these works. We hoped by now to have an Exhibition to show and explain the design process but can't do this just yet as the Development and Control Order still have some conditions to be signed off.

Nick Atkinson asked how would the local residents like to be kept in touch? By newsletter, drop-in centre (although this would not be in 'Dorney) or email?

There is a period when the M4 is closed and traffic diverted. If the A4 is blocked then the traffic will be diverted through Dorney but hopefully the total closures will be relatively few and short (at week-ends) and only about 4 weekends. He will take the extra traffic caused by Taplow Car Boot sales in to consideration.

Steve Foxley added that during the lifting of the new bridge across Marsh Lane the River Thames will be closed as well.

Concern was raised about noise reduction? Mat Orchard responded that the Noise Barrier will be raised from 8 to 9 ft right up to Marsh Lane Bridge and Lake End Bridge. The original fence will be raised in height or replaced. Also low noise surfacing will be applied

At this stage no alterations to the design will be made so any suggestions of a Slough to Maidenhead by-pass will not take place.

It was suggested that there should have a dedicated web site and this was agreed.

Matt Orchard said there will only be Monday to Friday plus some Saturday working during the construction works with the occasional night time and week-end working.

The tow path will remain open apart from the occasional closure for exceptional works such as lifting of heavy equipment/structures.

There will be no pedestrian crossing along Marsh Lane bridge.

Trumpers Field will be used on a temporary basis but only a small area will be closed off.

Bucks CC Cllr Dev Dhillon added:-

- (i) He can reassure the Dorney School that BCC are ensuring a route to school will be maintained for everyone.
- (ii) He will look to provide assistance for the elderly/disabled if there is restricted travel time.
- (iii) Regards the Car Boot sale, he will ensure a reduction in opening times if required.
- (iv) Looking to help with any clean-up of the Village.

Nick Atkinson went on to report:-

- (i) He had a good meeting with BCC and Dorney School regards the travelling to and from the school. Traffic modelling by Bucks CC is the same as Highways England predicted but if there are any problems there will be a rethink.
- (ii) Dorney School – Cllr Purdie asked if there is any compensation for the school if pupils move away because of the disruption? Nick Atkinson responded that if they know where the children are coming from (and they have the post codes) they will ensure the children are able to access the school.
- (iii) Cllr Purdie said that might be ok in the short term but there may be repercussions in the long term with parents avoiding using this school due to hindered access which may affect the numbers. Nick Atkinson responded that if they can get the access right then parents will perceive bringing their children to school is not hindered at this time. However compensation has been included in the plan as a serious risk.
- (iv) Cllr Kittel pointed out that school children need to travel out of the village to get to school as well, which has not been considered. School children use the cycle path to Taplow Station and private school buses enter and leave the village. The School Walk to School survey shows there is no safe travel route over the Jubilee or Dorney Lake. Nick Atkinson responded that he hadn't forgotten outward movements and he will look at making cycle/walking routes attractive and minimise difficulties for school buses.
- (v) Peter Bowman responded to the question of communications that 50% web site, emails, newsletters and the parish magazine would be the best means.

#### **7. TVPA – A written report was presented by Sgt Walker from the TVPA.**

The crime figures from April 2017 to April 2018 show that there has been no serious offences, 6 burglary dwelling, 8 burglary non-dwelling (sheds/garages), 15 theft from vehicles, 10 criminal damages. Although there appears to be a slight increase in reported incidents Dorney still remains one of the lowest crime area within Chiltern and South Bucks. Cllr Kittel commented that there was a burglary last week in Meadow Way whilst the home owners were still in the house. There appears to be a lot of white vans circling around the area so a good idea to record their registration numbers.

**8. Village Hall Update** - Cllr Easton reported that the Village Hall continues to be well used by regular users and ad hoc parties. Recently the walls have been painted and the floor polished. Dorney residents get discounted rates for hiring the hall. Any profit made during the year is saved to be used towards the cost of future refurbishment. Recently 2 people on the Management Committee have left, one being the Booking Secretary, so looking for replacements if there are any volunteers out there?

**9. Youth Club and Playground** – Cllr Kittel reported that the Playground Committee have had another successful year raising £10k in grants and £2.5k by fund raising. The priority this year was replacing the rubber chippings with a permanent surface which costed £9k and there has been £1.5k of playground repairs. The Committee now look after the tennis court which is left open for users and no fee is charged. Just about to erect a notice asking users to have 45 minute time slots. The net is about to be replaced and there is now a Tennis Pro who gives adult and children lessons. The Youth Club is going from strength to strength with 15 volunteers, 7 Committee members. 30 children attend the Youth Club on a weekly basis and family events are organised to involve all of the community.

**10. Best Kept Village Competition** – Cllr Foxley explained the inexplicable comments made by the judges last year, such as the noise from the M4 and the muga being obtrusive. In light of these comments it was agreed not to enter the Best Kept Village competition this year but to continue with the clean-up week-end which Nick Teale started as this is a valuable asset for the village. It was agreed to have a ‘Village Pride Week-end’ on the second week-end in June and Cllr Foxley will provide more information nearer the time.

**11. Defibrillator Update** – Cllr Foxley reported that there is now one installed in the Phone Box in Dorney and training will take place between 6.30 to 8.30pm on 24<sup>th</sup> April in the Upper Rooms at the Palmers Arms. Also looking at setting up a second defibrillator in Dorney Reach on the outside of the Village Hall or Harcourt Rd Telephone box and Cllr Foxley will look for more grants to fund this.

**12. Eton Dorney Centre** – Steven Rodgers reported that Eton Dorney Centre is now owned by Calcot Services which is a specialist residential school funded by Local Authorities. Calcot Services is Reading based and has an ethos to steer away from being institutionalised to providing quality homes. The children who come here are referred from all over the country. There are no plans to change the buildings but may replace some sheds. There is a vacancy for a Community Governor for the School if anyone is interested. Mrs Baker welcomed the School in to the Village and encouraged the children to be part of the community.

**13. Something New** – Mrs Tyler reported that this is a new group that has started in the Village thanks to Joy Richmond. It meets in the Village Hall on the third Tuesday of every month for coffee, cakes and a chat. They do have in-house speakers and after a talk by the Horticultural Society it was agreed to plant wildflowers along the edge of the Memorial Garden.

**14. South Bucks District Council Report** - Cllr Pepler reported that:- (i) During the past year the main concern has been the piles of waste at Orchard Herbs Farm. The Enforcement at SBDC are still dealing with this but it might disappear in the process of the Smartmotorway construction works. However the Animal Sanctuary has now gone; (ii) The main impact on district councils is that the Secretary of State is minded to approve a Single Unitary Authority. The 4 districts are campaigning for a 2 tier Unitary Authority as they believe it would best serve the communities rather than a single tier based in Aylesbury. It is not too late to change the decision of the Secretary of State and he would encourage people to respond by the closing date, 25<sup>th</sup> May.

**15. Bucks County Council Report** – Cllr Dev Dhillon reported that:- (i) For the last 6 years Bucks CC have received no government grant and this year the rates were increased by 2.99% which amounts to £1.40 for a Band D property; (ii) Cllr Dhillon is always trying to get funding for road repairs and has managed to get some jet patching completed in the village; (iii) He will be getting some LAF funding for a Vehicular Activated Sign to assist traffic calming in the village. Also funding for either bollards or railings for the corner of Court Lane to address the parking concerns at the entrance to the Rowing Lake, plus a new dog bin for Jubilee River car park. In addition he is hoping to get some funding for the wild flowers for the ‘Something New’ Group; (iv) Cllr Dhillon is a happy to be contacted at any time and always attends Dorney Parish Council’s meetings; (v) Regards Unitary authority he believes there will be less confusion if this does happen as there will then be one councillor responsible for everything and not split between County and Districts. There will be a reduction of councillors from 198 to 94 and savings of £84 per household. Also County already has the experience to look after Adult and Social Care. If Unitary does come in, parish councils will have the opportunity to take on more work. He would encourage everyone to respond to this consultation and would appreciate if he and the MP’s are copied in to these responses.

### **Matters raised**

- (i) Mr Bowman asked about the developments of the parish council’s web site. Cllr Foxley responded that the Council has received a grant to upgrade the computer with a printer and scanner to enable the Clerk to upload information straight on to the web.
- (ii) A query was raised about the plans for the pavements in Hardcourt Road? Cllr Dhillon responded that he only has funding for south of the road but may have some more later in the year. However need to get a balance as the tree roots will always cause problems unless all the trees are removed. Also if the pavement is renewed it will be with the new type of kerb stones and not the granite sets like those at present.
- (iii) A query was raised about the round robin email that has been circulated by the leader of the Dorney Traffic Working Group. Cllr Foxley explained that a Freedom of Information request has been received from Mr Dax regards Dorney Parish Council taking a loan to pay for some of the refurbishment works for the Village Hall. It was explained to him that a £80k loan was first sought from the Public Works Loan Board to cover these cost but subsequently £25k was paid back after savings had been made on the cost of the works and the VAT had been reclaimed. By doing so made a savings in the repayments over the long term. Under the terms of the PWLB this money could never be a loan to the Village Hall Committee.
- (iv) Mr Kittel was very concerned that a single individual could make such comments without evidence and without attend any Council meetings. The Parish Councillors receive no remuneration for all the work they do for Dorney Parish Council and was concerned that one individual could do so much damage and waste taxpayers money in the work that this causes. He has every confidence that Dorney Parish Council does a good job for the well-being of the community. After this statement there was a spontaneous round of applause from all those attending the meeting. Mr Kittel went on to say that he congratulated Dorney Village Hall and the Parish Council for completing the refurbishment of the Village Hall under budget. Cllr Foxley added to this that all the councillors, and those on the Village Hall Committee, are volunteers and such behaviour by one individual makes one feel undervalued. There are so many volunteers working for Dorney such as the Playground Group, Youth Group as well as all the Committees running the different clubs and associations, and all need a little bit of help. However the majority of time we do feel fine and will not let something like this spoil the good work being carried out in the community in Dorney.

No other business being raised the meeting closed at 9.45pm