

PARISH OF RADNAGE

A MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL WAS HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11th JANUARY 2012 AT 8 PM IN RADNAGE VILLAGE HALL

Present: Councillors: Chairman Mr Robin Fawell, Vice Chairman Ms Elizabeth Fynn, Mrs Sue Jones, Mr Lew Perring, Mr Roy Pitcher and Mr Tim Tordoff and Clerk Mrs Gill MacKenzie.

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, including the Chairman of the Board of Governors and the Headteacher for Radnage School and members of the Dodwell family. Twelve members of public were in attendance. Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Blakstad (ill health).

MEETING CLOSED FOR PUBLIC SESSION

Mr Phil Cole, Chairman of the School Governors gave a short presentation on the proposals for increasing the school intake. He explained changes which would make a combined school consisting of 8 year groups with an increase of pupils from 66 to 120, on a gradual basis from 2013 to 2016. He advised that the proposal had 5 distinct stages, the first being a consultation on initial plans which ended in late January 2012 when a formal proposal would be submitted. Part of the proposed changes include the suggested use of the village recreational area alongside the village hall for use by the older children for sports activities twice a week, and the suggested use of the village hall car park. Traffic congestion, parking and access along Green Lane and other surrounding roads were amongst the concerns expressed by those present. Following a brief discussion, the Chairman of the Parish Council, supported by members of the Parish Council and members of the public present, suggested that the School Governors should hold a public meeting, widely advertised, to enable all interested villagers to have the opportunity to attend and so that the views of the villagers could be understood more properly by members of the Parish Council.

A representative from the Dodwell family presented a case, asking that the Parish Council re-consider the family's request for an appropriate and acceptable memorial to their mother to be permitted within the Parish Burial Ground. The Chairman suggested that although they would not be able to comment further, they would be welcome to remain for the duration of the Parish Council meeting as the request was due to be discussed further during the meeting.

MEETING REOPENED

2. Declarations of any personal or prejudicial interests and return of any outstanding formal declarations.

No declarations of personal or prejudicial interests in the agenda items were made.

3. Acceptance and signing of minutes of Meeting of the Parish Council held on 14th December 2011.

It was proposed by Cllr Jones, seconded by Cllr Perring with all in favour that the minutes of the previous meeting be accepted as a true and accurate record. The Chairman signed and dated the minutes.

4. Report on progress on items in the previous minutes.

Any items outstanding from the previous minutes were included in the reports as agenda items at this meeting.

5. Correspondence - at the Chairman's suggestion this item was taken out of order as a courtesy to the Dodwell family.

a) A letter of thanks to the Parish Council had been received from Mr Peter Seabrook for their help with the complications he had experienced over the purchase of his property 3 Rose Cottages, Radnage Common Road.

b) A further request for a memorial in the memory of the late Ellen Dodwell had been received, which was the same as the original request submitted in late October 2011. The Chairman asked the Clerk to give a brief report on the latest information available which was relevant to this request.

In short, the Clerk reported that St Mary's PCC appreciated the diligence of the parish council in applying the diocesan guidelines which extend to the burial ground. Having rechecked the guidance with Revd Lacey, the church view was that the dimensions were acceptable and that non-polished grey granite was also acceptable, as was white lettering. However, the picture of cows was not acceptable according to Diocese regulations and that it might help if an alternative to this could be found – perhaps a sympathetic verse relating to cattle or dairy farming? The clerk summarised by advising that the design was not acceptable to the Diocese as the burial ground is adjacent to the churchyard which is covered by Diocese. If the PC was to adopt the strict adherence of the Diocese

regulations, then the decision should be not to permit the picture. The church could be approached for faculty and asked to make an exception where a request involved actual church fabric but the parish burial ground, although covered by the Diocese, did not come under this same guidance. This would not preclude the family from seeking a review of the Parish Council decision – although it was considered unlikely to be successful. Alternatively, should the Parish Council agree to a design, the Parish Council would need to seek the same from Diocese; again, the chances are that this too would be unsuccessful and could take some time to gain a response. In all cases, the Parish Council should convey their decision to the stonemasons (in this instance ‘Creative Memorials’), whose responsibility it would be to advise the family.

The clerk further advised that as a procedural matter and as per Standing Orders, it was not recommended that the parish council burial ground guidelines be reviewed at this time as they had only been agreed the previous month.

There followed a very lengthy and heated discussion about the whole matter of the request being considered, and the existing Diocesan regulations and the Parish burial ground guidelines, with strong opinions from members of the Parish Council being voiced. Several suggestions and proposals were put forward during discussion, many of which were not pursued or concluded however, it became obvious that many councillors considered that the Dodwell family had submitted their request during a period of change and that this should be taken into consideration when a decision was made.

Parish Councillors agreed that once this particular request had been completed, that the Parish Council should adopt the strict adherence to the Oxford Diocese Burial Ground regulations and that they should not have their own or separate guidelines. All agreed that this should be reviewed at a future meeting.

Once this had been agreed, councillors made a series of decisions which were only being agreed to for this particular request:

It was proposed by Cllr Fawell, seconded by Cllr Jones and agreed by 3 others councillors that the use of unpolished grey granite stone with a curved top of the size requested, was acceptable to the Parish Council. Proposal carried. It was further agreed that the lettering requested was acceptable to the Parish Council.

A motion to accept the design as requested was defeated.

It was proposed by Cllr Fynn, seconded by Cllr Jones with 2 other councillors in agreement that a smaller picture could be acceptable in this case and that a revised application should be submitted to the Parish Council for consideration. To clarify, it was agreed that a design no larger than 8” x 4” would be acceptable to the Parish Council and that once received, the Parish Council would support this request and forward it to diocese, for a faculty as it was not within the gift of the Parish Council to authorise this. Proposal carried.

6. Planning.

The following planning applications had been received and the Parish Council agreed that they had no objection to either of them.

- a) 3 Rose Cottages, Radnage Common Road: Householder application for demolition of existing rear extension and construction of new single storey rear extension with inset dormer window to roof.
- b) Three Names, Bottom Road: Householder application for the construction of a single storey rear extension.

ACTION: Clerk

7. Finance

a) The Clerk reported that as at 30 December 2011, the current account stood at £11,026.80 and at 9th December the deposit account had a balance of £21,554.26 which represented interest of 76p. The budget summary as at end December 2011 had been circulated and there were no questions raised.

b) To Payments for January 2012 were agreed and Cllrs Perring and Tordoff signed the cheques. Salaries totalled £ 601.91, expenses and purchases totalled £277.43 and the quarterly tax return totalled £273.

c) It was agreed to defer the consideration of a payment of a grant under Section 137 of LGA 1972 to the next meeting.

ACTION: Clerk

c) It was proposed by Cllr Jones, seconded by Cllr Fawell and agreed by all to approve the payment of the Clerks annual Working from Home Allowance - £500.

d) To review the hours and salaries of the clerk, cleaner and lettings officer (to be considered in a closed session following this meeting).

8. Village Hall update

a) An update was received from Cllr Jones who advised that she had met with the contractor who has agreed to install the tracks to the required measurements and resite the cord terminals. The curtain material has arrived and the curtains should be installed by 29th January.

There had been interest in our advert in Contact magazine for a Lettings and Maintenance Co-ordinator and two candidates had been interviewed and had presented very well.

In an attempt to create more storage space, the ownership of the bowls and bowls mat had been traced and it was recommended that as the mat was in no fit state to be used that it should be disposed of. This had been done. The bowls have been given to our fundraising group with the intention of selling them to raise some money. It was proposed by Cllr Jones, seconded by Cllr Fynn with all in favour that the table tennis table could be offered to Julie Bailey for 'recycling' as no other village organisation had shown any interest. The old pool table was also not fit for purpose and had been taken to the tip. As a result of all this, the Toddlers cupboard can adequately house their toys as well as the contents of their "Art" cupboard in the small hall, thus freeing up some extra storage. Storage boxes and Christmas tree bags had been purchased and the Christmas decorations are now stored in the loft and the Clerk was in the process of storing the oldest of the archive material in boxes which will also be stored in the loft. As some storage space has been made available we await a more detailed response from a potential new hirer for a pre-school group, to see if the hall can accommodate her needs.

The use of key safes has been welcomed by the regular hirers who have agreed to report any difficulties that might arise in their use. Following the introduction of the key safe system, it was proposed by Cllr Jones, seconded by Cllr Fynn with all in favour that regular hirers would be allowed to hold a gate key to the village hall car park for ease of access.

The dishwasher has now been repaired and is in working order. Some extra trays have been ordered together with another filter to help to prevent a recurrence of the problem.

New doors have been fitted to front of building and quotes are awaited for installation of an up to date fire detection system. The investigation into which licences are needed for the Village Hall was ongoing. The table trolley purchase is also in hand.

b) The decision on the pay and conditions for the new post of 'lettings and maintenance co-ordinator' role was deferred to the closed meeting held after the ordinary meeting.

9. Open Spaces.

a) The councillors were asked to consider revised charges for re-issue of grazing licences due in March and April 2012. The Clerk advised that she had used maps and also paced all three 'allotment' paddocks currently used for grazing under licence and reminded councillors that the fees were traditionally based on the allotment rather than commercial rates. The Chapel paddock fees had been raised consistently with the size of field and the allotment fees however, the Green Lane paddocks had not been subject to increase for many years. It was proposed by Cllr Pitcher and seconded by Cllr Perring that the Chapel Pasture annual rental be increased to £350 when issued in April 2012, that the Green Lane Paddock 1 annual rental be increased to £300 with immediate effect for the issue of the licence due Dec 2011/Jan 2012, and that the annual rental for the Green Lane Paddock 2 be increased to £310 when issued in March 2012.

ACTION: Clerk

10. Risk Management.

A review of the January elements of the Risk Register was made and action recorded as appropriate.

11. Clerks Matters.

The Clerk reported that Mr Bill Pilbeam had requested permission from the Parish Council to submit an application for the village to have a beacon lit within the children's playground area as part of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations. It was proposed by Cllr Fawell, seconded by Cllr Tordoff with all in agreement to support Mr Pilbeam for taking on this responsibility on behalf of the Parish Council and to agree to him pursuing this application further.

ACTION: Clerk

12. To receive Reports from Councillors on meetings that they have attended.

No meetings had been attended.

13. Forthcoming Meetings and Attendees.

The clerk advised that a Buckinghamshire Fundraising Fair was being held at the Clare Foundation, Saunderton, on Thursday 16th Feb 2012 from 1pm- 6 pm. It was agreed that the information be passed to Cllr Jones with a suggestion that a representative from the Village Hall fundraising team might like to attend. **ACTION: Clerk/SJ**

14. Date of Next Meeting: The next Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council would be held on 8th February 2012.

The meeting closed at 2210 hours.

PUBLIC SESSION

A further public session was held. Karen and Catherine Smith advised that Mr Bill Guidery had a collection of horseshoes that he would like to offer to a good home and that these were being offered to the Parish Council or would welcome any suggestions for housing this collection. It had been noticed that the newly planted Radenac tree was suffering in the windy weather as it has not being staked. The Clerk agreed to ensure Mr Blaylock was made aware.

ACTION: Clerk

Chairman's Signature:

Date: