

**Meeting of Doddington Parish Council held on Wednesday 11th March 2020
in the Church Rooms, New Street, Doddington at 7.00p.m.**

Present: -Cllr. R Hufton (Chair), Cllrs I Gowler, A Harrison, L Howard, K Presland, J Shepherd and J Welcher. Cllr D Connor (District and County Councillor) and the Clerk Mr R Wilkin were present.

1. Open Forum: - Representatives from the Ely Diocese were present and updated members on their latest thoughts regarding affordable housing in the village.

2. Apologies: - Apologies were received from Cllrs H Fisher, R Mason and M Davis (District Councillor).

3. Declaration of Interests:-

Cllr I Gowler declared an interest in two planning applications that were to be considered later in the meeting.

4. Minutes: -The minutes of the meeting held on 12th February 2020 were agreed and signed by the Chair as correct.

5. Matters arising from previous Council discussions: -

- a) Members were advised that difficulties were being experienced on creating generic email addresses on the Council website. It was agreed to seek external assistance on the matter but in the meantime agreed that personal email addresses should be removed from the website.
- b) Members were advised that discussions were ongoing on the creation of an Age UK Community Warden arrangement within the village.

6. Police Matters: -

- a) The Fenland Neighbourhood Policing Team Monthly report for February 2020 had been circulated.

7. Highway Issues:-

- a) The following highway defects were reported:-
 - i. The tarmac near Ingles Lane was breaking up.
 - ii. It was reported that a fence along the cut through from Wood Street to Cedar Avenue had been damaged. However as it was a private fence this was not a matter that the Parish Council could action.
- b) The meeting with a representative from CCC Highways on traffic parking issues along Benwick Road had taken place and a number of possible solutions had been floated. The Chair requested quotations from CCC for both projects.

8. Fenland DC, CCC and external organisation reports: -

- a) No reports were received.

9. Planning:-

a) New Applications:-

- i. F/YR20/0117/F Erect single storey side and rear extensions to existing dwelling at Springfields Benwick Road Doddington.
Cllr Gowler declared an interest. Members supported the application.

ii. F/YR20/0153/F Erect single storey rear extension and conversion of garage to form 1 bedroom annexe to existing dwelling at 25 Wood Street Doddington.

Members supported the application.

iii. F/YR20/0182/O Erect up to 2 dwellings (outline application with matters committed in respect of access) at land south of Norbrow, Hospital Road Doddington.

Cllr Gowler declared an interest. Members supported the application.

b) Pre Application Consultation:-

Following the observations made by members at the last meeting, Morton and Hall, have responded and their comments were noted. Members who agreed to defer making any further comments until any formal planning application was made.

c) Fenland Local Plan:-

Members were advised that a sub committee had met and considered 18 possible sites that had been suggested by landowners. The Council made a number of observations and these will be forwarded to FDC for their consideration.

10. Street Lighting:-

a) The Chair updated members on the current position regarding the maintenance of the parish street lights. A quotation had been received from Cable Test which was based on a call out charge of £38.00 for attendance within 14-28 days plus cost of replacement parts. Emergency call out arrangements were available at a higher rate. Wimblington PC had obtained a similar quote from Cable Test and for comparison purposes has received quotations from Westcotec and CU Phosco. Both of these companies made an annual charge based on the number of street lights to be covered. Westcotec charge £5 per unit so for Doddington this would equate to £390 per year plus cost of parts. CU Phosco's annual charge had a considerably higher unit charge than Westcotec. Members favoured taking out a contract with Cable Test.

b) The Clerk updated members on the ongoing discussions that he was having with FDC over their contribution of £7,102 towards the replacement of the parish cat 2 units. FDC were claiming that in order to qualify for the full amount all cat 2 units should have been replaced rather than some units being upgraded and not fully replaced.

c) The Chair and Clerk advised members of meetings that they, and Wimblington PC, had with officers and members of FDC. In addition, our FDC councillors Cllrs Connor and Davis had been pressing FDC for a resolution to the inequality that existed between Parish and Town Councils on the cost of upgrading their street lights. FDC had now agreed to make a significant financial settlement to the Parish Councils to resolve this matter. In Doddington's case this will amount to:

- A one off payment of £24,090 towards the cost of past, current and future renewal of parish lights,
- An increase in our current Concurrent Functions Grant from £5,353 to £7,494 as a contribution towards energy and maintenance costs,
- For the next three financial years an additional £1,000 where all or almost all of the Parish lighting stock has been converted to LED.

Members considered that the FDC offer should be accepted. They recorded their thanks to the Chair, Clerk and Cllrs Connor and Davis in resolving this long standing issue.

11. Local Highway Improvement Initiatives:-

a) The Chair reported that mixed messages were being received from CCC on the maintenance issue reported in the Project Feasibility Summary for a pedestrian crossing near the primary school. It was agreed to seek a clear written decision from CCC.

Members wondered if a "Lolly Pop Lady" would still be needed when the crossing was installed or whether the Parish Council could pay for this service to continue.

In the meantime, steps would commence on approaching companies and organisations on the

feasibility of seeking grants to pay for the installation works. An approach would be made to the Mick George Community Fund for £20,000.

b) The Clerk reminded members of the new arrangements for the receipt of applications for LHI funding for the financial year 2021/22. It was agreed to consider at the next meeting whether further footpath improvements should take place or whether we would be in a position to use that years allocation as a contribution to the school crossing project.

12. Abbey Field/Skate Park:-

a) The Chair advised members that she was awaiting a decision over the grant application for £10,000 from Amey to pay for the installation of CCTV facilities to cover the pavilion and skate park.

b) The Chair reported that Brian Elmore had quoted £200 to repair the damaged side panel on one of the skate park ramps but as further damage had taken place the final cost would be higher.

13. Benwick Road Cemetery:-

a) The Chair advised that arrangements to remove the surplus gravel from the cemetery car park was in hand.

b) The Clerk advised that arrangements would be made to place the approved Rules and Regulations on the Parish Council website.

c) The Chair and Clerk advised members that a member of the public had recently visited the Parish Church cemetery and had noticed that the memorial on the family grave had a FDC safety notice posted on it. Upon making enquiries with FDC she had been advised that the matter would be dealt with by the Parish Council which was incorrect. The Clerk had advised the family member of action that she should take to ensure that the memorial was safe and FDC had confirmed that they are responsible for the safety of a “closed churchyard”. In that respect FDC also advised that they would be undertaking a safety assessment of the walls surrounding the churchyard and if necessary would undertake repairs.

14. Allotments:-

The Chair advised members that she was awaiting the promised plan from the agent.

15. VE Day:-

Members agreed that the new bench, currently on order, should be sited in the area near the village flag pole. Members also agreed that they would not be organising a community village event.

16. Connections Bus Project:-

The Chair updated members on suggested arrangements for holding youth events as follows:

- Summer Term 2020 (20 April to 20 July) 1.5 hour youth bus sessions on the football ground car park,
- Autumn Term 2020 (Sept – Dec) 10 week generation game course at Askham Village
- Winter Term 2021 (Jan – March) 10 week babysitting course to be held in The Church Rooms

Members confirmed their agreement to these arrangements.

17. Operation Bridge:-

The Chair updated members on the meeting that she and the Clerk had attended.

18. Annual Assembly:-

Members considered arrangements for holding this years Annual Assembly. It was agreed to change the format and not have any group reports read out other than the Parish Council report.

It was agreed to seek a feedback from residents present on their thoughts over the school crossing and options to improve the safety of Benwick Road. It was also agreed to provide light refreshments. A provisional date to hold the meeting in the Church Rooms was fixed for 23rd April 2020 subject to the room being available.

19. Financial Items:-

- a) Clerks annual review. The Clerk left the room whilst this matter was discussed. Members recorded their satisfaction with the work that the Clerk had undertaken over the last year and voted to increase his salary the two incremental points on the NALC salary scale with effect from 1st April 2020.
- b) The Chair advised members that a number of the published policies on the website needed updating. She agreed to arrange for revised policies to be published and encouraged members to acquaint themselves with the new wordings.
- c) The Chair circulated samples of possible wooden bus shelters which received the tacit approval. The Clerk advised members that the Councils insurance company required a quotation for the rebuilding of the damaged bus shelter which could be compared with the purchase of a new wooden shelter. The Chair agreed to arrange for a quotation to rebuild be obtained.
- d) Payments:

Doddington Scouts	Litter collection Abbey Field	100.00
Fenland DC.	Election costs	291.08
CAPALC	Subscription	625.75
House of Flags	New Flags	624.31
A Harrison	Web Site	84.00
EON PLC	Street Lighting Electricity	115.98
R Wilkin	Net Salary	678.50
R Wilkin	Petty Cash	26.50
HMR&C	Income Tax – Clerk Salary	169.62

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.50pm.