

DODDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

**Meeting of the Parish Council held in The Church Rooms, New Street on
Wednesday 13th September 2023 at 7.00 pm.**

Present: Cllrs, R Hufton (Chair), H Fisher, R Hopkins, L Jolley, R Leonard, R Mason, J Welcher. Cllr M Davis (FDC representative) and the Clerk, Roger Wilkin, were present.

Open Forum: - No residents were present.

2. Apologies: - Apologies were received from Cllrs I McNulty, J Shepherd and Cllr D Connor (FDC and CCC Representative)

3. Declaration of Interests:- No declarations were made

4. Minutes: -The minutes of the meeting held on 12th July 2023 were approved and then signed by Cllr Fisher.

5. Updates and matters arising:-

a) Anglia Water Fens Reservoir Project. The Clerk informed members that he was awaiting information on when the first meeting of the proposed Community Liaison Group would be taking place. In the meantime he had been advised that the Fens Reservoir Team would be flying drones for the next two weeks in order to obtain overhead land surveys.

6. Coronation Commemorative Planters:-

The Clerk informed the meeting that the 4 Coronation Planters from Plaswood had been delivered on 4th August 2023. Members agreed to seek assistance from Delfland during October on the supply of herbs, shrubs and bulbs for the planters.

7. Police Matters: -

a) The minutes of the meetings the August and September meetings of the Police and Councillors Forum had been circulated. It was reported that police speed checks had taken place on Primrose Hill.

b) It was reported that the police were organising “Meet and Greet” sessions in various locations in order that residents can talk freely to the local police representatives.

8. Fenland DC, CCC and other external organisation matters:-

a) Cllr Davis gave a brief update on progress being made on the March town centre improvements.

9. Highway Issues: -

a) The following maintenance items were raised:

i. The hedge near the Doctors surgery needs cutting back

ii. Works to the area near the rear entrance into 10 Askham Row is encroaching onto Hospital Road. Talks have taken place with the owner of the property to ensure that clear access along the roadway is maintained.

- iii. There is a large bump near the entrance into Beech Road
- iv. The area near the public seats by the flag pole need clearing of weeds
- b) The County Council have published their weed spraying policy and in view of the quantity of complaints that have been submitted from residents and parish councils throughout the district they will be reviewing the impact in both rural and urban areas, seeking their views, by way of a survey.
- c) Moveable speed warning signs. The Clerk advised members that the Swarco Contracts Controller had been in contact informing him that he would be the main contact managing the order for us. He had also provided links to their support site for access to manuals and software. The Clerk will forward the link to Cllrs Jolley and Leonard for their use.
- d) Cllr. Shepherd had circulated the July and August MVAS statistics for New Street which had been sent to the Police Speedwatch unit. However he has been asked to stop sending the data through to them while the unit is reviewing their processes. The Chair agreed to raise the matter at the Police and Councillors Forum.
- e) An issue had been raised with Cllr Connor over alleged speeding on Church Lane. It was agreed to investigate if it was possible for a MVAS unit to be sited in that area.
- f) LHI 2023/2024. The Clerk informed the members that our successful bid for funding the resurfacing of phase one of the footway from Askham House to Hospital Road had been assigned to a project manager within the CCC Highways Projects Team and he had written to the project manager seeking clarification that the design team would be producing drawings covering the full length of footway and not just the first 50m.
- g) LHI 2024/2025. CCC Highways had announced that the LHI 2024/2025 application round would be opening at the end of October and in advance of this they were inviting expressions of interest from parish councils if they were proposing making an application. Members agreed that they would be taking up the option to submit an application. The Clerk therefore asked members to be in a position to suggest possible schemes for consideration at the October meeting.

10. Planning:-

a) New planning applications:

- i. F/YR23/0665/F Insertion of dormer roof extension including raising roof height of garage (to enable loft conversion for the creation of additional living accommodation) to existing dwelling at 1 May Meadows Doddington.
Members voted to support the planning application.

b) Other planning application matters:

- i. Section 106 money. Fenland DC had published the holding balances of section 106 monies by location as at 25th May 2023. In Doddington's case there were 4 contributions; 2 were to provide leisure activities within the village totalling £49,552.86 and 2 were affordable housing commuted sums in lieu of on-site provisions. No locations were defined. Members agreed that the Chair and Clerk should seek a meeting with FDC Planning to obtain a clear understanding of how the section 106 monies could benefit Doddington.
- ii. FDC Local Plan. No further information had been received from the District Council.

- iii. Doddington Neighbourhood Plan Group. Cllr Hopkins, addressed the meeting and informed members that the “Green Spaces Exercise” had commenced and the Housing Needs Survey form had been distributed to each household in the village.
- iv. National Association of Local Councils (NALC). NALC were organising an on-line training session on “Making the Planning System Work for Local Councils” at a cost of £39.22 (inc VAT) per attendee. It was agreed that the Chair, Clerk and Cllr Fisher can attend.

11. Doddington Scout Group:

- a) Trusteeship Issue. The Clerk reported the content of the reply that Bowers had provided in respect of the Parish Council’s position as a trustee of the Doddington Scout Group and its registration as owner of the land and hall as recorded in the Land Registry files. Following a general discussion it was agreed that Bowers be approach to provide an opinion on additional documents that had come to light.
- b) Community work undertaken by the Scout Group in Benwick Road Cemetery. Members expressed their thanks to the Scout Group for the excellent work that they had undertaken in lifting the grasscrete units from the internal roadway and resolved that a donation of £400 be made to the Groups funds.

12. Abbey Recreation Ground:-

- a) All internal repairs to the Pavilion, identified when an inspection took place following the termination of the lease by Benwick Athletic Football Club, have been completed and costs recharged and paid in full by the football club. As the football club was responsible for the routine cutting of the grass, arrangements are now in hand to seek a contractor to take on this task.
- b) A new lease has been agreed with the Doddington Football Club which covers their exclusive use of the junior football pitch plus having access to the pavilion in conjunction with other agreed users. The lease had been signed by the clubs chair and secretary and was countersigned at the meeting by the PC chair and clerk. There have been no other approaches from clubs to use the remaining pitches.
- c) Members agreed to seek quotations for the preparation of drawings to cover the boundary of the recreation ground in order to ascertain if a relocation of football pitches will provide the opportunity to introduce other activities within the grounds. It was also agreed to seek quotations for the preparation of drawings to extend the existing car park.
- d) The clerk advised the meeting that Eon Next, the suppliers of electric power to the pavilion had submitted an invoice to cover the cost of electricity from the date that the PC assumed responsibility. The Clerk was seeking a change in tariff as currently the invoice was being costed on the most expensive rate.
- e) The Clerk informed members that a safety inspection on the skate park had taken place in accordance with the contract that we have with Sovereign and the equipment was rated as being in good condition and was being rated as having a low risk factor.
- f) The Chair and Clerk informed the meeting that discussions had taken place with the Village Hall and the Recreation Committee to ascertain who provides a fire extinguisher service for them. Bridges Fire & Security undertake is service and will maintain the extinguisher in the Pavilion for a cost of £45 plus VAT. This compares with the charge that we paid last year of £80 plus VAT. Members agreed to change supplier.

13. Benwick Road Cemetery:-

a) Following the completion of the major construction works the following minor actions are outstanding:

1. The existing grasscrete roadway was to be covered in gravel to match the car park area.
2. The water connection needs to be finalised and a push down water tap to be installed.
3. A combination lock needs to be purchased to secure the main gates which in turn required some minor repairs to correct a bent rod.
4. Replanting of some hedging saplings is required.
5. Numbering of plots and row names needs to be finalised.
6. Arrangements to inform the local undertakers would be made when we were in a position to become operational.
7. Arrangements would be made to source a suitable notice-board that could be fixed near the cemetery entrance.
8. It was agreed that “Reserving of Plots” would be allowed but would be restricted to those rows identified for immediate use. The Rules and Regulations would be updated to take this into account.
9. Consideration to be given to create a new page on the Council website where Rules and Regulations, charges and official forms can be posted.

Members recorded their thanks to the Doddington Scout group for the excellent work that they had done in lifting the grasscrete units, shaking them free of soil stacking them for use elsewhere. Members agreed to make a financial contribution to the Groups funds of £400. It was agreed to seek quotations for the resurfacing of the roadway to take place.

Arrangements are in hand to seek a contractor to maintain the grass areas in the cemetery.

14. Street Lighting:-

a) The Clerk informed the meeting that Cable Test had still not provided any quotations for re-programming the drivers on each lighting unit to remove any pre-set dimming feature, undertake an electrical testing and cleaning of each unit or undertake a survey of our current lighting locations to ascertain where additional lighting could be placed. Cllr Davis stated that Wimblington PC had also received a lack of service from Cable Test and they were using a new contractor details of which would be passed to the Clerk.

15. Village Maintenance:-

- a) The Clerk informed members that the posts and rails, damaged in a road accident, had been repaired.
- b) Discussions have been held with idVerde on extending the cutting of verges to cover additional areas not shown on the original maps.
- c) The Chair advised the meeting that preliminary discussions were taking place between a local resident and FDC to create a community garden in Walden Close Doddington. Members noted the idea and thought that the Street Pride or the Horticultural Society may be in a position to add their support.
- d) The Chair advised the meeting that Cambs ACRE had announced a funded opportunity to open a “Community Living Room” in the village this autumn. Members agreed to explore this suggestion in more detail.

16. Website and Communications:-

Routine updates were being made to the website and face book page.

17. Financial Items:-

a) The Clerk advised members on the progress of the updates to the mandates on the Council's bank accounts.

b) The Clerk informed the members that the PKF Littlejohn had published its external audit report on the accounts for the financial year 2022/2023 and a copy would be posted onto the council's website.

b) Payments:

It was agreed that cheques be drawn for the following items:

Doddington Scout Group	Litter picking & donation	600.00
Npower Commercial	Street lighting electricity	220.82
Eon Next	Abbey pavilion electricity	74.01
Alan Mason	Grass/hedge cutting	980.00
GLP Installations	Repairs to Abbey pavilion	328.13
B A Baker	Repairs to posts and chains	790.00
Narked Ltd	Web domain subscription	24.00
Cambridgeshire CC	LHI contribution	5,012.01
PKF Littlejohn	External audit fee	378.00
R Wilkin	Clerks net salary & expenses	2,110.82
HMR&C	Income Tax on Clerks salary	427.02

18. Correspondence:-

The Chair advised members that the Christmas Lights Committee had requested permission to increase the number of Christmas lights on the Clock Tower this year and she was seeking clarification on how many additional power sockets may be required,

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

