

DODDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

**Meeting of the Parish Council held in The Church Rooms, New Street on
Wednesday 11th October 2023 at 7.00 pm.**

Present: Cllrs, H Fisher, R Hopkins, R Leonard, R Mason, J Shepherd, J Welcher and the Clerk, Roger Wilkin, were present. In the absence of the Chair, Cllr Fisher took the chair except for those items where he declared an interest.

1. Open Forum: - Three residents were present, two of whom addressed the meeting about a planning application being heard later in the agenda. The third resident asked a question over the approach that the Council were adopting over a suggested 20mph speed limit that had been floated by CCC. Cllrs Fisher and Hopkins declared interests in the planning application discussion. Cllr Welcher took the chair for this item.

2. Apologies: - Apologies were received from Cllrs R Hufton (Chair), L Jolley, I McNulty, Cllr M Davis (FDC representative) and Cllr D Connor (FDC and CCC Representative)

3. Declaration of Interests:- Cllrs Fisher and Hopkins declared interests in a planning application that was to be considered later in the meeting.

4. Minutes: -The minutes of the meeting held on 13th September 2023 were approved and then signed by Cllr Fisher.

5. Updates and matters arising:-

a) Members received an update on the creation of a “Community Living Room” (formally called Warm Hub). Cllr Fisher advised that the three volunteers who helped last winter on the Warm Hub facility were prepared to assist and that funds were now available to help with room hire and cost of refreshments if necessary. Members gave their full support to the scheme which Cllr Fisher would now follow up on.

b) Members considered inviting a guest speaker to address the Council on creating a “Community Wellness Hub” and agreed to invite a representative from Fitness Rush Community CIC to attend the November 2023 meeting.

c) Members were informed that the Chair was awaiting information from the Christmas Lights Committee on the specific additions that they wished to make to decorate the Clock Tower and in particular what additional lighting sockets that may be needed.

d) Anglia Water Fens Reservoir Project. The Clerk informed members that the first meeting of the proposed Community Liaison Group would be taking place on 7th November 2023. Cllrs Shepherd and Mason offered to attend on behalf of the Parish Council.

6. Coronation Commemorative Planters:-

Cllr Fisher confirmed that arrangements would be made to move the planters into their new locations when they would then be filled with compost.

7. Police Matters: -

a) It was noted that there had been an incident of an attempted break in to a private car. The matter had been reported to the police.

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

a) No updates were available from FDC and or CCC.

9. Highway Issues: -

a) The following maintenance items were raised:

i. The hedge between Cedar Ave and Wood Street needs cutting back. Cllr Mason

agreed to arrange its trimming

ii. The footway opposite The George was very uneven

iii. There is a need of a waste litter bin to be sited near the fish shop in High Street

iv. A resident had commented that an overhanging tree at the pond on Primrose Hill was affecting the telephone wiring

b) The County Council had circulated a survey form to all Town and Parish Councils to ascertain the issues that their weed spraying policy had in the area. Members listed a number of examples that the Clerk would incorporate into the survey reply.

c) The Clerk advised members that Swarco had indicated that the delivery of the MVAS units was expected in early November.

d) LHI 2024/2025. Members were reminded that CCC were planning on opening the period that applications for submission of schemes would start at the end of October. Members suggested possible footway improvements were needed in Wood Street and High Street.

10. Planning:-

a) New planning applications:

i. F/YR23/0404/RM Reserved Matters application relating to detailed matters of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to outline application F/YR22/0017/O to erect 2 dwellings and the formation of an access at land east of 6B Primrose Hill Doddington. A revised scheme has been submitted.

Cllr Fisher declared an interest and stood down from the chair. Cllr Welcher took the chair for this item. Cllr Hopkins declared an interest.

Members considered the revised plan for this development and voted to support the application with the proviso that the existing hedge at the front of the site remains in place and is kept at a height that shields the development from the roadway.

ii. F/YR23/0794/F Insertion of dormer roof extensions to north and south slopes of existing building and ancillary annexe (to enable loft conversion) Somerset Bungalow Floods Ferry Road Doddington

Members supported this application

iii. F/YR23/0807/O Outline application to erect up to 4 dwellings on land west of 27 Benwick Road

Members objected to this resubmitted application on the grounds that the site is outside the footprint of the village and contravenes clauses in policies LP12 and LP16. It is also a non designated heritage site in that it contains evidence of ridge and furrow use and there is evidence of two ancient wells on site. The current land supply exceeds the national policy for a five year supply without having to develop this site.

b) Other planning application matters:

- i. Section 106 money. The Clerk advised members that he had attended a meeting with Fenland DC's Planning Director on 9th October during which the director agreed to ascertain that the contributions allocated for leisure activities within the village totalling £49,552.86 were still available and could be used to improve and /or finance new facilities. The contributions received for affordable housing totalling £391,461 can be used anywhere within FDC's area.
- 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 been completed and that work on the response from the Housing Needs Survey forms that had been distributed to each household in the village was underway. There was the possibility that funding for the plan may be available.

11. Doddington Scout Group:

- a) Trusteeship Issue. The Clerk advised the meeting that he had asked Bowers to ascertain if the additional documents that had come to light had changed the original opinion that they had provided.

12. Abbey Recreation Ground:-

- a) Since the last meeting, the Clerk had approached 4 contractors to provide quotations for the routine cutting of grass on the recreation ground. The results had been circulated to members on a round robin basis and the majority decision was that the contract should be awarded to Jared Cornhill of JC Gardens & Landscapes who had quoted £320 per cut.
- b) The Clerk advised members that he had not received any enquiries from clubs to use the facilities currently available at the recreation ground. He had however received an enquiry from an organization called Starie Outdoors asking if they could have permission to take small groups of walkers around the recreation ground on a wild plant foraging experience. Members sanctioned the request.
- c) The Clerk informed members that he had obtained quotations for the preparation of drawings to cover the boundary of the recreation ground plus quotations for additional drawings and ground engineering and survey works to extend the existing car park. Members considered that as it had not been possible, at this stage, to find sports clubs wishing to use the facilities there was no immediate need to extend the car park and therefore they decided not to proceed with the work.

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.

b) Since the last meeting, the Clerk had approached 4 contractors to provide quotations for the routine cutting of grass in the cemetery. The results had been circulated to members on a round robin basis and the majority decision was that the contract should be awarded to Jared Cornhill of JC Gardens & Landscapes who had quoted £130 per cut.

c) Now that the grasscrete units have been lifted and cleared of soil, quotations have been invited from contractors to resurface the internal road. Members had previously been asked for their preference on the format of the resurfacing work. Members chose the reusing of the grasscrete units and to fill them with shingle.

Five quotation invites were sent out and by the closing date of 10th October four of the five contractors had supplied a quotation. Members considered the results but felt that they needed clarification on the experience of the lowest priced quote before making a decision. The Clerk agreed to speak to the contractor and to report back as soon as possible in order for members to finalise the matter.

14. Street Lighting:-

a) The Clerk informed the meeting that he had made contact with the lighting contractor recommended by Wimblington and he was able to undertake routine repairs and maintenance for Doddington on the same rates as he was charging Wimblington. He was, however, unable to undertake “knock downs” or new installations and therefore we still needed to keep Cable Test on hand. He has been very prompt in attending to calls but where work needs to be undertaken by UKPN he leaves the authority with the task of instructing that organisation.

The Clerk updated members on the status of outstanding street light repairs.

15. Village Maintenance:-

a) It was reported that the bollards outside the Village Hall appeared to be in need of repainting. It was agreed to report the matter to the Village Hall committee.

b) The two public benches near the flag pole by Bier House needed cleaning and re-varnishing. It was agreed that an inspection should take place of all of the Council’s street furniture.

c) It was suggested that the public seat near Doddington Hall, which was not being used as it was susceptible to bird droppings, be moved to one of the play areas on Abbey Rec.

d) Members agreed to purchase two more defibrillators; one to be sited on the Abbey pavilion and one to be sited along Primrose Hill if a suitable site can be found.

16. Website and Communications:-

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

17. Financial Items:-

a) The Clerk advised members that the new bank account with Lloyds Bank was now operational as was the on-line facility. Members agreed to transfer an initial sum of £50,000 into the new account from the Council’s existing bank account and to retain the NatWest saving account.

b) The Clerk had circulated the Council's half year financial summary which showed an analysis of payments made during the period 1st April 2023 to 30th September 2023 plus an estimated summary of expected transactions for the second half year. The overall position for the financial year showed a saving against budget. Members noted the report.

c) Payments:

It was agreed that on-line BACS transfers be made for the following items:

Doddington Scout Group	Litter picking	100.00
Npower Commercial	Street lighting electricity	327.35
JC Gardens & Landscaping	Strimming, Abbey Rec & Cemetery	260.00
Andy Muskett Ltd	Street Lighting repairs	205.44
NALC	Training course	117.66
CAPALC	Training course	50.00
R Wilkin	Clerks net salary & expenses	868.05
HMR&C	Income Tax on Clerks salary	213.51

18. Any Other Business:-

a) Members agreed to purchase a wreath for use at the Remembrance Day service and sanctioned the purchase of flowers for the Chair who was recovering from Covid and whose partner was in hospital.

b) Members agreed to hold its Annual Dinner on a Thursday during January or February. The Clerk would make arrangements.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.30pm.

