

DODDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

**Meeting of the Parish Council held in The Church Rooms, New Street on
Wednesday 8th November 2023 at 7.00 pm.**

Present: Cllrs, H Fisher, L Jolley, R Leonard, R Mason, I McNulty, J Shepherd and J Welcher. Cllr D Connor (FDC and CCC Representative) and the Clerk, Roger Wilkin, were present. In the absence of the Chair, Cllr Fisher took the chair.

1. Open Forum: - The Council heard from Mr Rushmer of Fitnessrush on his plans to create a permanent location where residents can use fitness equipment on a 24 hour basis, seven days a week and invited him to return once he had a potential agreement on a site and possible funding in place.

2. Apologies: - Apologies were received from Cllrs R Hufton (Chair), R Hopkins and Cllr M Davis (FDC representative)

3. Declaration of Interests:- No declarations were received.

4. Minutes: -The minutes of the meeting held on 11th October 2023 were approved and then signed by Cllr Fisher.

5. Updates and matters arising:-

a) Cllr Fisher update members on progress for the creation of a “Community Living Room” (formally called Warm Hub). The Church rooms had now been booked, the volunteers were due to receive further training and in conjunction with the Clerk an application for a grant of £2,500 had been submitted to Cambs Acre which had been approved.

b) Members were informed that the Christmas Lights Committee had been advised that the fixing of rope lights on the edging of the clock tower could cause the brickwork to crack or chip. Consultations had taken place between the Clock Tower Committee and Cllr Mason and a satisfactory solution had been agreed.

6. Coronation Commemorative Planters:-

Members agreed to arrange for two Commemorative Planters to be sited on the garden space near the flag pole and Bier house. The remaining planters would wait in storage until the internal roadway at the cemetery had been finalised.

7. Police Matters: -

a) There was no routine report from the police but members were advised that the Methodist Hall appeared to have been broken into but nothing was stolen. Incidents of hare coursing had been noted.

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

a) Cllr Connor updated members on the following matters:

- i. He had invited the CCC Chairman and the Chair of the Highways Committee to join him on a tour of the village roads.
- ii. CCC had resolved to reinstate the application of weed killers on the village highways in the next financial year.
- iii. CCC had made financial facilities available to undertake “slurry” repair work in Wood Street in the next financial year.

9. Fens Reservoir Project:-

- a) Cllrs Shepherd and Mason had attended the first meeting of the proposed Community Liaison Group of the Anglia Water Fens Reservoir Project and gave a report of the proceedings.
- b) The Clerk advised the meeting that the Fens Reservoir Team are creating a Property Support Scheme to assist owners whose property will be affected by the development.

10. 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. Pot holes were located near The Three Tuns
 - iii. An area of tarmac in Wood Street was missing
 - iv. There was a discarded damaged brown bin which was overflowing and leaking.
- b) Cllr Leonard advised the meeting that the MVAS units had been delivered and checked. Arrangements would be made to install them in their permanent locations.
- c) LHI 2023/2024. The Clerk informed the meeting that the Assistant Project Manager CCC had advised him that work was taking place on preparing initial drawings and costings for the Benwick Road improvements.
- d) LHI 2024/2025. With the recent opening for CCC to receive applications for submission of schemes, members agreed to submit a need for footway improvements on the north side of High Street.
- e) The Clerk reported that Forty Foot Bank would be closed from Carter Bridge to Puddock Bridge for the period 15th January to 15th March 2024 for the relaying of a water main. The diversion from Carter Bridge will bring traffic through the village onto Benwick and then via Ramsey Forty Foot and visa versa.
- f) Doddington and Wimblington Speedwatch. The Community Speedwatch is in the need for additional volunteers. Members agreed to post a suitable notice on the PC Website and Facebook page and the Clerk will include a note in the monthly report for the Doddington Diary.

11. Planning:-

a) New planning applications:

- i. F/YR23/0820/F Change of use from office to 1 dwelling (2 storey 3 bed) at 26 High Street Doddington.

Members supported this application

- ii. F/YR23/0886/F Erect a dwelling (2 storey 5bed) with detached 2 storey triple garage involving demolition of existing dwelling at Swan Cottage Benwick Road Doddington.

Members supported this application but made a request that should FDC grant planning permission that they include a clause within the decision that at no time in the future will the 2 storey triple garage be allowed to be used for living purposes.

b) Appeal made against FDC's refusal to grant planning permission:

- i. F/YR22/0345/F Erect 3 dwellings (2 x 2storey 3 bed and 1 x 2 storey 4/5 bed), a 2.1m, high wall, and widen existing access involving the demolition of outbuildings and front boundary brick piers within a conservation areas land west of 27-35 New Street Doddington

The Clerk advised the members that the appeal will be determined by written representation. Members agreed to reaffirm their objection to this planning application to the Planning Inspectorate.

c) Other planning application matters:

- i. FDC Local Plan. No further information had been received from the District Council.
- ii. Doddington Neighbourhood Plan Group. Members were informed that the Clerk and Mr Brand, from the Neighbourhood Plan Group, had worked together to submit a claim form for funding. The claim had been successful and a grant of £3,125 would shortly be received by the Parish Council.

12. Doddington Scout Group:

a) Trusteeship Issue. The Clerk advised the meeting that the additional documents passed to Bowers for comment had not changed the original opinion that they had provided. Members agreed to seek an assurance from the Scout Group that if they should agree to pass the trusteeship to the National Association that should at any time in the future that the local Group ceases to exist that the land and building will be passed back to the Parish Council.

13. Abbey Recreation Ground:-

- a) The Clerk advised members that he had not received any enquiries from clubs to use the facilities currently available at the recreation ground. However, he had received a request from the Doddington Football Club that at the start of the 2024 winter season, the club would need to move from its current junior pitch to a full size pitch. This is because the children would have reached an age when match play under Football Association regulations required them to compete on a larger pitch. Members noted this requirement when they came to consider any future usage of the recreation ground.
- b) Members discussed preliminary thoughts on future uses of the grounds including multi use pitches and tennis courts. The Clerk advised that in November 2023, the National Lottery Awards were doubling the grant available to £20,000 that could be used on playground or outdoor fitness provision. It was agreed to explore this matter further.

14. 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) Further to the decision made at the last meeting for the relaying of the internal roadway, the Clerk had spoken to the proposed contractor and had reported that conversation back to members who had confirmed that they were happy to award the contract to JC Gardens and Landscaping at a price of £3,800. Work was scheduled to commence by the end of November 2023.

c) Members reviewed actions necessary to enable the cemetery to become operational and in addition to the items listed in a) above, agreed on the following actions:

1. As the fixing of internment plot numbers had not been fully successful, it was agreed that the width edging of each plot should be clearly marked.
2. Double grave depths would be permitted and no specific area allocated for childrens graves.
3. Fees for all cemetery charges would follow those charges set by Wimblington PC.

15. Street Lighting:-

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

16. Village Maintenance:-

a) With regards the purchase of two more defibrillators, Cllr Jolly agreed to speak to a contact in Kingsland Close to see if a defibrillator could be fixed to their front garden wall.

17. Website and Communications:-

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

18. Financial Items:-

a) Payments:

The following payments have been made since the last meeting in accordance with decisions made at the last meeting:

Royal British Legion	Wreath for Remembrance Day service	23.98
White September Florist	Flowers for Chair	35.60

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	382.11
EonNext	Abbey Pavilion electricity	24.32
JC Gardens & Landscaping	Grass cutting, Abbey Rec & Cemetery	450.00
Andy Muskett Ltd	Street Lighting repairs	192.00
SWARCO	Purchase of three MVAS units	10,774.80
Cambs ACRE	Membership	60.00
Recreation & Sports Cttee	Recycling credit paid over	283.46
R Wilkin	Clerks net salary & expenses	854.05
HMR&C	Income Tax on Clerks salary	213.51

19. Any Other Business:-

a) The Clerk informed members that the Parish Council Annual Dinner would be held on on a Thursday 8th February 2024.

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

