

DODDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

**Meeting of the Parish Council held in The Church Rooms, New Street on
Wednesday 10th July 2024 at 7.00 pm.**

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

1. Open Forum: - No residents were present.

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

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

4. Minutes: -The minutes of the meeting held on the 12th June 2024 were approved following three alterations. In item 5 the word “be” needed to be inserted in the third sentence after the word “would”. In the last sentence of item 7 the words “and Juniper Close” be added after the words “Hospital Road”. In item 10, second sentence, the typo letter “c” is removed. The minutes were then signed by the Chair.

5. Co-option arrangement to fill the vacancy on the Council:- The Clerk reported that public notices had been posted inviting applicants to fill the current vacancy on the Parish Council. Three residents had expressed an interest in becoming a parish councillor. Members agreed to invite all three residents to meet with the Parish Council on Wednesday 17th July. The Clerk would make the necessary arrangements.

6. Matters arising from previous minutes:-

a) In view of the co-option arrangements above together with the various project matters that the Parish Council needs to monitor, members agreed that we hold a formal Parish Council meeting in August 2024. The date would be 14th August 2024.

b) Community Living Room. Cllr Fisher updated members on the steady number of visitors to the Friday sessions and that during June they had over 70 residents making use of the facilities. They had also received visits from external organisations. The additional grant money had been received and 4 of the 6 volunteers had completed the Food Hygiene training course with the remaining two expected to undertake their course shortly.

c) Commemorative Planters. The two olive trees for the planters in the cemetery had been delivered and a quantity of compost together with several lavender bushes had been purchased. This would complete the cemetery planters. Various herb bushes had been identified for purchase which would complete the two planters near the village flagpole.

d) Scout Hall trustee position. The Clerk informed the meeting that he had chased the Scout Group for a response over our offer on the trusteeship.

7. Police Matters:

The next meeting of the Police & Councillor meeting was due to take place tomorrow.

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

- a) No routine matters were raised by representatives from FDC or CCC.
- b) FDC had issued a press release seeking residents views on its Homelessness Strategy and had copied it into all Parish and Town Councils. Members asked that the press release be circulated to them in order that individuals can pass any comments back to FDC.

9. Highway Issues: -

- a) The following maintenance items were raised:
 - i. The hedge in Ingles Lane needs cutting back by the owner
 - ii. Trees and bushes along the boundary of Doddington Hall in Church Lane need cutting back
 - iii. Some trees within the Church yard need trimming.
- b) LHI 2023/2024. CCC is still to advise on the start date for works to resurface the footway in Benwick Road scheduled for September 2024.
- c) LHI 2024/2025. CCC have advised that any official notification on this application will not be circulated until after the September meeting of the Highways & Transport Committee.
- d) Application for 20mph funding. CCC have advised that any official notification on this application will not be circulated until after the September meeting of the Highways & Transport Committee.
- e) Road closure in Bury. CCC had circulated a proposed road closure in Bury and its diversion route was to take traffic along Primrose Hill, through Doddington onto the A141. Representations have been made to CCC suggesting a change in the diversion route that does not involve traffic travelling through the village.
- f) Grass cutting.
 - i. Following an exchange of emails with idverde on their poor cutting of the grass verges in the village, members agreed to cancel the arrangements with the company and to award the contract to John Cutteridge at a cost of £780 plus VAT per cut. This would cover the cut undertaken by him at the end of June 2024 to ensure that the village looked its best for the Annual Carnival.
 - ii. The Chair and Cllr Connor had been pressing CCC over the overgrown condition of footpaths within the village and had suggested to them that the Parish Council may consider cutting certain paths themselves if the costs were reimbursed by County. In this respect, the circular walk was in such an overgrown condition as to make it impassable. Since this walk was advertised on the council's website, members agreed to accept a quotation from J C Gardens & Landscape in the sum of £800 to cut back its overhanging growth and grass. Other walks, including Manor Farm, may be considered subject to receiving agreement from County.

10. Fens Reservoir Project:-

- a) Several members had attended the open public consultation session held in the Village Hall on Saturday 15th June 2024 and made comments that would be included in the Parish Council's official feedback. A briefing session, open to representatives of the Liaison Committee was scheduled to take place in Chatteris on 15th July and Cllr Mason, the Chair, and Clerk were hoping to attend.

11. Planning:-

a) New planning applications:

- i. No new applications had been received since the last Parish Council meeting.

b) Other planning matters:

- i. FDC Local Plan. No further information had been received from FDC
- ii. Doddington Neighbourhood Plan Group. The Chair of the DNPG, Cllr Hopkins, advised the meeting that the group were now drafting various sections on the first version of the Neighbourhood Plan. The amended application for a 2024/2025 grant in the sum of £5,507 had been agreed and payment was expected within a few days. The Parish Council website had been updated with several background documents.
- iii. Members considered a suggestion that arrangements are made to monitor progress and the result of planning applications circulated to the Parish Council. It was agreed that a spreadsheet be created to assist in this exercise.

12. Abbey Recreation Ground:-

a) The electrical testing report on the Pavilions wiring system showed a considerable number of non-compliant issues, some of which are quite serious. PAT testing had been carried out. Members agreed that rather than tackle the wiring issues on a piece meal basis, the opportunity be taken to seek quotations for a total rewire of the building. Cllr McNulty agreed to become Project Manager and a site meeting with members is to take place to agree the extent of other works that may be required. Quotations would be sought for the works. In the meantime quotations received for the “Last Man Out” switch and the installation of combined intumescent strips to the fire doors would be deferred.

Following advice received from the CCTV Manager for Peterborough & Fenland District Council, members agreed that no action take place to instal a lightning protection system on the CCTV equipment.

b) Confirmation had been obtained from FDC that £42k of section 106 monies had been spent by FDC on the refurbishment of the juniors play equipment in the recreation ground. Members expressed their surprise and anger that FDC had used s106 monies in this way, without advice to the Parish Council.

Loss of this funding would mean that members will have to reassess what exercise and play facilities they can now install on the Abbey field.

c) The two new picnic tables had now been installed.

d) The current Compliance Inspection contract with Sovereign Play on the skate park equipment was due for renewal and their quotation of £399 plus VAT to renew the contract for a twice yearly maintenance inspection for the next five years was accepted.

13. Benwick Road Cemetery: -

a) A composite quotation for hedge trimming at the cemetery and around the car park at the Abbey Recreation ground had been submitted by JC Gardens & Landscapes at a cost of £1,400 which was accepted.

b) Members were advised that FDC had increased its cemetery charges for the current year. Our Terms & Conditions state that our charges have regard to those made by FDC and other local parishes. Members agreed to make no changes to our charges.

14. Street Lighting:-

a) The lighting issue with one of the lanterns on the Clock Tower had been corrected.

15. Village Maintenance:-

- a) Works to finalise the replacement of the roof wood and installation of guttering at the Bier House was in hand.
- b) A list showing the village public seats, external doors to the abbey pavilion, front doors to the bier house and wooden bollards on the grass verges near the Clock Tower that all needed painting and refurbishing had been sent to the contractor for a quotation.
- c) FDC had confirmed that they will replace the contaminated soil and all the rose bushes around the War Memorial by October 2024. Special thanks were passed to Cllr Davis for taking the matter up with FDC.

16. Website and Communications:-

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

17. Financial Items:-

a) Payments:

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

Doddington Scout Group	Litter picking	100.00
Npower Commercial Gas Ltd	Street lighting electricity	315.77
JC Gardens & Landscaping	Grass cutting Cemetery & Abbey (2 cuts)	900.00
Spalding Farm Shop	Olive trees for cemetery	200.00
Imperative Training (defib)	Replacement defib pads	71.94
EG Electrical Services Ltd	Various works in the Abbey Pavilion	1,068.00
EG Electrical Services Ltd	Repairs to Clock Tower lantern	102.00
Parish Online	Subscription to mapping service	134.40
Hilton Fisher	Compost & plants for Planters	46.97
R Wilkin	Clerks net salary	960.54
HMR&C	Income Tax on Clerks salary	240.14

The following payments had been made from the Community Room grant since the last Parish Council meeting:

Parish Church	Electric Kettle for Church Rooms	27.95
E Clapham	Microwave for Church Rooms	79.99

18. Correspondence:-

Safety of Lithium Batteries and e-bikes & scooters. A campaign has been lodged to support a Bill through Parliament to ensure greater safety in the use and disposal of lithium batteries. Members agreed to support the campaign.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.05pm.

