

DODDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

**Meeting of the Parish Council held in The Church Rooms, New Street on
Wednesday 14th August 2024 at 7.00 pm.**

Present: Cllrs R Hufton (Chair), H Fisher, R Hopkins, L Jolley, I McNulty, J Shepherd and D Slade. The Clerk, Roger Wilkin was present.

1. Open Forum: - No residents were present.

2. Apologies: - Apologies were received from Cllrs J Welcher, R Mason, Cllr D Connor (FDC and CCC Representative) and Cllr M Davis (FDC representative)

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

4. Administrative Items:-

- a) The Chair welcomed Cllr Darren Slade to the Parish Council following the co-option arrangements on 17th July. Cllr Slade had signed the Declaration of Acceptance and had completed a Statement of Interests prior to the issuing of the agenda for this meeting.
- b) Revised updates to the Councils Standing Orders and a new Biodiversity Policy had been circulated to members. The Chair proposed the adoption of these documents which was seconded by Cllr McNulty and unanimously agreed by the members. Arrangements would be made post the documents on the Council's website.
- c) The Chair advised members that copies of the Council's historic minutes, legal documents supporting the Council's assets, and some historical files would be better protected if they were stored in fireproof cabinets. It was proposed by Cllr Shepherd, seconded by Cllr Slade and agreed by members that two suitable cabinets be obtained. Cllr Slade agreed to investigate the feasibility of microfilming the historic minutes.

5. Minutes: - Cllr Jolly proposed and Cllr Hopkins seconded that the minutes of the meeting held on the 10th July 2024 be approved. These were agreed by the members which were then signed by the Chair.

6. Matters arising from previous minutes:-

- a) Community Living Room. Cllr Fisher updated members on the steady number of visitors attending the Friday sessions. He also advised the meeting that Tesco, through their Community Book Sale facility, had offered £294 to the Community Living Room and arrangements were being made to pass over a cheque. Cllr Fisher also informed the meeting that they were proposing to install WiFi in the building and purchase a projector.
- b) Commemorative Planters. The two olive trees had been positioned in the planters in the cemetery together with a quantity of lavender bushes. Various herb bushes had been identified for purchase which would complete the two planters near the village flagpole.
- c) Scout Hall trustee position. The Clerk informed the meeting that the Scout Group leader was hoping to provide a response shortly.
- d) The Clerk had circulated an update from the Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Service on the future of the Manea Fire Station which included encouraging more local people to become volunteer firemen. They were also undertaking several trials on moving vehicles around the stations and that they were unlikely to make a final decision on the station's future until at least the summer of 2025.

7. Police Matters:

The July presentation from the Neighbourhood Police unit had been circulated although a meeting had not taken place. No matters were raised by members,

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

a) No routine matters were raised from representatives from FDC or CCC.

9. Highway Issues: -

a) The following works had been completed:

- i. The hedge in Ingles Lane had been cut back
- ii. The surface of Primrose Hill had been improved
- iii. The badly damaged grate opposite the Bier House had been replaced

The following works need attention:

- i. The road surface of 40 ft Bank and the road between Doddington and Benwick are getting extremely bad and dangerous
- ii. Trees and bushes along the boundary of Doddington Hall in Church Lane need cutting back and some trees within the Church yard need trimming
- iii. Some of the route on the Circular Path appears to have changed and we need to obtain a definitive line of the route.
- iv. The Childs Lane road sign is missing.

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 and application for 20mph funding. CCC have advised that any official notification on these applications have been further delayed until after the October meeting of the Highways & Transport Committee.

d) Road closure in Bury. The Clerk reported that our representation to CCC on its diversion route going through Doddington had been upheld and changed so that no traffic will need to travel through the village.

e) Grass cutting. The Chair and Cllr Connor were still pressing CCC over the overgrown condition of footpaths within the village including reimbursing the Parish Council for any costs incurred in cutting certain paths within the village.

10. Fens Reservoir Project:-

a) The Clerk reported that, on behalf of the Parish Council, he had completed and submitted a feedback form to the Fens Reservoir Team following their second public consultation exercise. The feedback form presented issues and suggested some solutions for vehicles and pedestrians from the village in reaching the suggested access points into the site from the A141.

11. Planning:-

a) New planning applications:

i. F/YR24/0548/O Erect 2 x self-build/custom dwellings (outline application with matters committed in respect of access, landscaping and layout) at land east of 6 May Meadows Doddington.

Members resolved to make no comment on the application.

ii. F/YR24/0551/O Erect up to 3 x dwellings (outline application with matters committed in respect of access) at land south of 34A to 34H Newgate Street Doddington.

Members raised objections to the application on the basis that the site is located in Flood Zone 3 on the Environment Agency Flood Risk Extract Map and that despite the agents comments in their Flood Risk Assessment no consideration appears to have been given over the very soft and boggy ground conditions following a period of rain.

iii. F/YR24/0557/F Erect a hay store, 1.5m high weld mesh and 1.8m high close board boundary fencing (retrospective) at land south of Swan Cottage Benwick Road accessed from Dykemoor Drove Doddington.

Members resolved to support the application but asked that a caveat be included in any approval that the hay store would at no time in the future be converted or used for residential accommodation.

iv. F/YR24/0634/F Erect a single-storey front extension to existing dwelling at 7A Wimblington Road Doddington.

Members resolved to support the application.

v. F/YR24/0638/A Display of 1 x externally illuminated fascia sign, 3 x window graphics and 3 x frosted door/window vinyl at 41A High Street Doddington

Members resolved to support the application but asked that two matters be included in any granting of planning permission, namely that when the shop is closed that the illuminated fascia sign is automatically switched off so that residents opposite the shop are not disturbed by strong lighting illuminating their properties and that consideration be given that the window graphics show healthy food rather than alcohol.

b) Other planning matters:

i. It was reported that a large caravan unit had been positioned on land at 9 Cooks Green without planning permission.

ii FDC Local Plan. No further information had been received from FDC

iii. Doddington Neighbourhood Plan Group. No report as no meeting had taken place during July and August.

iv. Members considered a suggestion that arrangements are made to monitor progress of planning application with the results circulated to the Parish Council. It was agreed that a spreadsheet be created to assist in this exercise.

12. Abbey Recreation Ground:-

a) Refurbishment of the Pavilion:

i. Electrical rewiring. Quotations had been received from 4 electrical contractors and following a general discussion it was proposed by Cllr Hopkins, seconded by Cllr McNulty that the quotation from SWA Electrics in the sum of £8,950 be accepted. A question had arisen on whether we need to install an automatic fire alarm system at an additional cost. The Clerk to seek advice from the Council's Insurance Company.

ii. Following a site meeting, attended by several councillors, it was agreed that quotations be obtained for the following additional works:

- Internal storage units – remove/reposition
- New units for the kitchen
- New flooring
- Internal decorations
- Replace fascia, soffits and barge boards
- Install guttering and downpipes
- Replace the broken surrounding slabs and pressure hose the outside walls

b) Additional recreational facilities. Following a detailed discussion on providing additional facilities, it was agreed that a public consultation exercise be arranged via an article on the Council's web site and face book page inviting comments from residents over installing an outside gym and a trim trail within the grounds. It was agreed that consideration be given to felling the large tree that overhangs the goal on pitch number 1. The managers of the two football groups had been kept informed over the refurbishment of the pavilion and possible areas to be utilised for the additional facilities.

c) The Chair updated the meeting on the recent online meeting that she had attended regarding the FDC/Peterborough City Council CCTV hub including a report being made that the CCTV system in Abbey Rec had picked up an incident taking place in the car park. Whilst no arrest was made at the scene, car registration numbers were passed to the police.

13. Benwick Road Cemetery: -

It was agreed that JC Gardens & Landscaping should be instructed to carry out additional weed spraying around the paths and cremation slabs.

14. Street Lighting:-

Lighting unit FPC6 outside 11A Benwick Road was not working. This would be reported to our lighting contractor.

15. Village Maintenance:-

- a) Works to finalise the replacement of the rotten wood in the roof and installation of guttering at the Bier House was in hand.
- b) The Chair advised the meeting that the contractor was due to commence the painting of village assets later this month.
- c) It was agreed that the two items on the agenda ie Crossway Wood & Pond and the approach received from The Woodland Trust should be deferred to the next meeting.

16. Website and Communications:-

Following advice from the Government, that had been circulated to all Town and Parish Councils, to update website addresses and official email addresses to read .gov.uk, the Chair had obtained a quotation from our web master in the sum of a one-off migration charge of £65 together with a new domain annual charge of £80. These costs were proposed by the Chair and seconded by Cllr McNulty and agreed by the meeting.

17. Financial Items:-

- a) The Clerk reported that the External Auditor's Report and Certificate for the financial accounts 2023/24 had been received which stated that the information provided within sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR report was in accordance with proper practices and there were no matters to which the auditors wished to draw the attention of members to. Members noted the report, a copy of which would be posted on the Council's web site.

b) Payments:

The Clerk reported that he had received a letter of thanks from the Lay Chairperson of the St Mary's Church thanking the Parish Council for their financial contribution and support. It was agreed that on-line BACs transfers be made on the schedule prepared by the Clerk and certified by two authorised bank mandate members of the Parish Council:-

Doddington Scout Group	Litter picking	100.00
Npower Commercial Gas Ltd	Street lighting electricity	323.92
Eon Next	Abbey Pavilion electricity	176.27
JC Gardens & Landscaping	Grass cutting Cemetery & Abbey	450.00
JC Gardens & Landscaping	Grass cutting Circular Walk	800.00
Land Registry	Search	17.94
PKF Littlejohn LLP	External Audit fees 2023/24	504.00
Hilton Fisher	Compost & plants for Planters	23.99
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	Hire of Church Rooms	240.00
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18. Correspondence:-

A request had been received from the Secretary of the Christmas Lights Committee seeking Parish Council approval to make four modifications to the routes through the village of the Christmas lights as follows:

1. Extend the lights along Benwick Hall to the Village Hall which would require drilling a small hole through the brickwork of the Clock Tower to enable a new power socket to be installed,
2. To run a string of lights from 1A Benwick Road around the communal garden where the bus stop and flagpole were sited,
3. A new Nativity Scene which normally sits to the front of the communal garden needs to be replaced which may require one or more new poles sited within the garden,
4. Would there be any objection to decorating the flagpole.

The Parish Council supported the suggested works in items 1 to 3 but could not support item 4 in case at any time during the Christmas lighting period there was a need to fly a flag.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.55pm.