

DODDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

**Meeting of the Parish Council held in The Church Rooms, New Street on
Wednesday 12th February 2025 at 7.00 pm.**

Present: Cllrs R Hufton (Chair), H Fisher, R Mason, D Slade and J Welcher.
The Clerk, Roger Wilkin, was present.

1. Open Forum: - One resident was present for the Forum and made a presentation supporting the idea that the Parish Council should seek a 20mph speed limit throughout the village.

2. Apologies: - Apologies were received from Cllrs Hopkins, McNulty and Shepherd. Cllr D Connor (FDC and CCC Representative) and Cllr M Davis (FDC representative) were absent.

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

4. Minutes: - The Chair advised the meeting that a sentence in item 5a had been amended to read "A Wi-Fi facility is being investigated." Cllr Slade proposed and Cllr Mason seconded that the amended minutes of the meeting held on the 8th January 2025 be approved. These were agreed by the members which were then signed by the Chair.

5. Matters arising from previous minutes: -

- a) Community Living Room. Members were advised that the weekly Friday sessions were very popular with a steady number of visitors attending. An additional volunteer had joined the team and a water (tea) urn had been purchased.
- b) FDC had advised that as they had not received any call from residents to fill the current vacancy by election, the task of filling the councillor vacancy will now be undertaken by co-option. The Clerk advised the meeting that appropriate notices had been placed on noticeboards throughout the village and on the council website and face book. The closing date to receive resident's interests was 17th February 2025.
- c) The Chair advised the meeting that Wimblington PC had provided details of their arrangements for archiving their minutes and historic paperwork through Cambridgeshire Archives in Ely. It was agreed to approach them to ascertain costs and procedures.

6. Administrative Items: -

- a) Members considered adopting updated versions of the Child Protection Safeguarding Policy and Home Working Policy. The adoptions were proposed by Cllr Welcher, seconded by Cllr Slade and unanimously agreed by the members. Arrangements would be made to upload the approved policy documents onto the Council's website.

7. Police Matters:

- a) Members were updated on the significant number of arrests linked to hare coursing and violent disorder that had occurred in the area. To date 10 people had been arrested and a number of vehicles seized.
- b) The Chair advised members that she had received information from the Cambridgeshire Police Shrievally Trust on The Bobby Scheme. It was agreed to review this scheme at the next meeting.

8. Fenland DC, CCC and other external organisations: -

- a) No reports were received from FDC or CCC
- b) Members were reminded that the Citizens Advice Bureau provide a drop in facility in Wimblington which Doddington residents can use, and is charged for proportionate with the number of residents from each village. In the 9 month period April to December 2024, 13 people used the service of which 3 came from Doddington. Wimblington PC are currently reviewing the arrangement as the service which is currently provided in March is available to residents from surrounding villages including Wimblington and Doddington. Members agreed to await Wimblington's findings and decision on this matter.
- c) The Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough has announced that the Combined Authority have taken the decision to introduce bus franchising throughout the area and will be engaging with local communities and bus operators to ensure a smooth and effective rollout.

9. Highway Issues: -

- a) The following works were reported:
 - i. Sunken potholes in Newgate Street (near no.7) and on New Street from The Three Tuns towards policeman's corner need attention as they alter the camber of the roadway.
- b) LHI 2023/2024 Footway resurfacing along Benwick Road. CCC have announced provisional dates for these works as 24th February to 19th March 2025.
- c) LHI 2025/2026 Repainting white line at 3 junctions within the village. The only progress is that our application has been received.
- d) 2025/2026 20mph funding programme is now open. Members agreed to consider the format of its application at next month's PC meeting.
- e) Grass cutting. The Clerk reported that CCC had refunded the Parish Councils costs of £800 in cutting the circular walk.
- f) FDC Infrastructure Delivery Plan. FDC have asked for thoughts from Town and Parish Councils on improvements that could be considered to the infrastructure within their area. The current Fenland Infrastructure Delivery Plan was carried out in 2016 and they wish to update this alongside the emerging Local Plan. They will also consider if suggestions could be financed through Section 106 Agreements. Members suggested two changes to speed limits within the parish: a) reducing the existing 40mph speed limit on Wimblington Road between Doddington and Wimblington to 30mph, b) re-evaluate the speed limits on Primrose Hill into the village so that the 40mph limit starts outside number 22 and then becomes 30mph where it is presently 40mph. Incidents of road flooding on Wimblington Road, Wood Street and near the Church would be reduced if gulley cleaning was undertaken on a regular basis. On the education front, as the primary school is near capacity the CCC should be asked to ensure that Doddington residents have a priority at intake times.
- g) CCC have published a Doddington to March travel and safety consultation that shows possible areas along the Wimblington Road, High Street, New Street and the Benwick Road/High Street junction that could be improved and made safer. Members commented on the suggested sites as follows:
 - Wimblington Road. No comments on the proposed shared footway but would like the existing 40mph speed limit reduced to 30mph. The suggested construction of a central island near the current layby was questioned as it was too close to the entrance to Beech Avenue and the road width at the proposed site may be too narrow.
 - High Street. Question why a proposed uncontrolled crossing is needed near Ingles Lane as it is likely to interfere with the current puffin crossing.
 - New Street. Suggest that the proposed uncontrolled crossing together with double yellow lines is moved to an area south of the junction with Church Lane. The suggested site is outside a stretch of properties where residents have no driveways and park their cars at this point in New Street.
 - Benwick Road/High Street junction. Members supported these proposed improvements.

h) MVAS system. Details of a possible android mobile phone to aid the downloading of data from the units was announced. Proposed by Cllr Fisher, seconded by Cllr Welcher and agreed by the meeting that a Samson Galaxy A55 be purchase at a cost of £245 plus vat. SWARCO had advised the Chair that they do not accept the old MVAS units or spare batteries as a trade in against a new unit.

Cllr. Slade circulated copies of the statistics downloaded from the new MVAS units for the period September 2024 to Jan 2025. He also suggested sites where the existing units should be moved to. It was agreed that these suggestions be taken up with CCC. Cllr Slade was thanked for his work on this project.

i) The Chair reported that John Cutteridge had verbally advised her that there would be no change in his charges for cutting the village grass verges and costs would remain at £780 plus vat per cut. The number of cuts would be dependant on weather conditions and speed of grass growing.

10. Fens Reservoir Project: -

The Fens Reservoir Team had provided thanks and feedback on our response to their phase two consultation and their Scoping Opinion provided to the Planning Inspectorate. They also indicated that they are proposing to hold an additional non statutory consultation before the time set for their next formal consultation session.

11. Planning: -

a) New planning applications:

i. F/YR25/0010/O Erect 2 x self-build/custom dwellings (outline application with matters committed in respect of access and layout) at land east of 26 Turf Lane Doddington.

Members objected to the application as the proposal can be classified as back land infill development and as such would have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside and farmland contrary to policy LP12.

The proposal is partially sited in the flood plain and access appears to be via a private road.

b) Other planning matters:

i. Members noted the latest copy of the Planning Monitoring Spreadsheet.

ii. FDC Local Plan. FDC have launched a consultation on their Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report. Members were very pleased to note that the FDC report mirrored many points being made in the draft neighbourhood plan.

iii. Doddington Neighbourhood Plan Group. The Regulation 14 Consultation document had been published on the PC web site, but the group were still waiting for FDC to pass comments on the draft plan before any formal public consultation period can start.

12. Abbey Recreation Ground: -

a) Refurbishment of the Pavilion:

A quotation for the deep cleaning of the pavilion had been obtained. Cllr Fisher proposed, and Cllr Mason seconded and it was agreed by the meeting that the quotation from Dream Clean Services Ltd in the sum of £465 plus vat be accepted.

Members also agreed that a refrigerator, microwave, tables and chairs be purchased and a wall cupboard to store plates, cups, mugs etc be installed.

b) Our existing contractor. JC Gardens & Landscaping, who cut the grass, had provided a revised quotation for grass cutting during 2025 at a cost of £350 per cut. Cllr Welcher proposed, Cllr Mason seconded and members agreed to accept the quotation.

c) Additional recreational facilities:

It was agreed to hold the provision of any additional recreational equipment or any possible improvements to the area until availability of grants and finance become available in the next financial year.

13. Benwick Road Cemetery: -

Our existing contractor, JC Gardens & Landscaping, who cut the grass, had provided a revised quotation for grass cutting during 2025 at a cost of £150 per cut. Cllr Welcher proposed, Cllr Mason seconded and members agreed to accept the quotation.

14. Street Lighting: -

There are currently two faulty lights in the village that had been referred to UKPN as our lighting contractor had diagnosed that they had a “dead” supply. The lights are: FPC6 outside 11A Benwick Road and FPC20 Outside 45/47 Newgate Street

15. Village Maintenance: -

- a) The Chair is still awaiting an update on a further meeting with the directors of the local management committee of the Crossway Wood & Pond.
- b) A request had been received from a resident that a bus shelter be installed at the hospital bus stop in Benwick Road. Cllr. David Connor, CCC representative, had approached the residential home who claimed that they owned the land in question but they would not agree to a bus shelter being erected there. Members considered investigating the feasibility of installing a shelter on the grass area between the roadway to the hospital and the boundary of the doctors surgery.

16. Website and Communications:-

Members were still reporting issues with email on the .gov facility which need to be discussed with the Administrator.

17. Financial Items:-

a) Payments:

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 Feb 2025	510.78
Andy Muskett Ltd	Street lighting repairs	253.44
Wimblington & Stonea PC	CAB service for Doddington residents	165.00
John Cutteridge	Grass cutting – road verges (4 cuts)	3,744.00
R Wilkin	Clerks net salary March 2025	1,011.92
HMRC	Income Tax on Clerks salary	246.48

Payments made from the Community Room Grant

Parish Church	Room Hire (November & December)	240.00
J Holding	Refreshments & purchase of tea urn	180.00

Payments made from the Doddington Neighbourhood Plan Grant

Parish Church	Room Hire (April to January)	300.00
Cambridgeshire ACRE	Consultancy support (tasks 1 & 3)	2,616.00

18. Any Other Business: -

- a) Letters of thanks were agreed to be sent to Lyn Frankland and Jane Archer for the work that they undertake in keeping the Church grounds tidy.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.30pm

