

DODDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

**Meeting of the Parish Council held in The Church Rooms, New Street on
Wednesday 9th April 2025 at 7.00 pm.**

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

1. Open Forum: - No residents were present. The Chair formally welcomed Cllr Jason Jolley to the meeting as our new member of the Parish Council.

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

3. Declaration of Interests: - The Chair declared an interest in planning application 11a.ii that will be discussed later in the meeting.

4. Minutes: - Cllr Hopkins proposed and Cllr Slade seconded that the minutes of the meeting held on the 12th March 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. 27 people attended an Easter Fish & Chip lunch. New grant arrangements were agreed with Cadent Gas that would cover the hire of the rooms for meetings during 2025/26.

b) Local Government Reorganisation. The Chair advised members of the content of a letter that the Leader of Fenland DC had sent to the Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution outlining the District Council's position on plans to move towards a new system of local government.

c) Training. The Chair informed members that she, together with the Clerk, had attended the zoom FDC planning training session on 25th March 2025.

Cllr Jolley was advised that a Councillor Training course was being organised by CAPALC and taking place on 17th May in Littleport.

6. Administrative Items: -

a) Annual Assembly. The Chair advised members that this years Annual Assembly would be held in the Methodist Hall on 22nd May 2025. Cllr Hopkins agreed to provide a short update on the Neighbourhood Plans' progress.

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

No updates were available.

9. Highway Issues: -

a) The following issues were reported:

- i. The shrubs and trees on Church Lane were severely overgrowing the footpath and need cutting back.
 - ii. Forty Foot Bank is now very dangerous and urgent repairs are necessary.
- b) LHI 2023/2024 Footway resurfacing along Benwick Road. These works have now been completed and an onsite meeting has taken place between CCC and the Parish Council when photos were taken. The Clerk had been pressing CCC for their invoice in order that we could make our financial contribution of £30,000 before year end. Unfortunately, this did not take place by 31st March but their invoice, dated 31st March was sent by post, arriving on 4th April.
- c) LHI 2025/2026 Repainting white line at 3 junctions within the village. No further progress received on our application.
- d) 2025/2026 20mph application for funding had been made but no further progress had been received on our application.
- e) FDC Infrastructure Delivery Plan. No further progress received on our application.
- f) CCC Doddington to March travel and safety consultation. No further progress received on our suggestions.
- g) CCC Capital Highway Maintenance Programme 2025/26. CCC had circulated their Highway Maintenance Programme for the current financial year that had been approved by their Highway and Transport Committee. The programme for the whole of the County totalled almost £60 million; Fenland's share amounted to almost £11 million. Floods Ferry Road was to receive £1million of improvements and Manor Estate, Newgate Street, High Street and New Street were to receive surface treatments.
- h) MVAS system. Cllr. Slade circulated copies of the statistics downloaded from the MVAS units for March 2025.
- i) Dog fouling posters. The Chair informed the meeting that the posters had arrived.
- j) Proposed Road Closure Order Newgate Street. CCC had published a proposed RCO affecting Newgate Street which members noted and requested that when the programme of works was finalised, that CCC ensured uninterrupted access was available for the two community events in July 2025.

10. Fens Reservoir Project: -

The Clerk reported that the Fens Reservoir team had requested a meeting with the Parish Council to discuss the project and answer any questions that we may have. Members were very enthusiastic about the idea and requested that a special face to face meeting be held on 7th May at the Church Rooms.

2. The suggestion that a pedestrian access from the site to the High Street via Sutton Way has caused alarm to the residents of Sutton Way in that visitors and deliveries to the 9 bungalows in the proposed development may choose to park in Sutton Way and walk to their destination rather than take the longer drive down Wood street and Juniper Close. Any parking of these vehicles would cause significant problems and issues for the Sutton Way residents.
 3. As Doddington is shown to have a housing land supply in excess of 6 years, which is in excess of the Governments 5 year calculation, there is no need to approve the proposed planning application. The village housing threshold has already significantly exceeded the requirements.
 4. Despite the various arguments put forward in the agents "Design, Access and Planning Statement" and its "Amendment Statement", any development on this site will still result in the loss of an open meadow from the centre of the village which is adjacent to the Village Conservation Area and a windmill which is a grade II listed building. The reasons given for the District Council's refusal on a previous application (number F/YR23/0500/F) are still valid.
 5. There have been two earlier applications for the development of this site, each of which have been refused.
 - iii. F/YR25/0250/F Erect a single storey rear extension, changes to fenestration and installation of black composite cladding and 4 roof lights at 22 Eastalls Close Doddington.
- Members supported the application.

b) Other planning matters:

- i. Members noted the latest copy of the Planning Monitoring Spreadsheet.
- ii. FDC Local Plan. Despite the delays that have occurred in the publication of the new local plan it is believed that the Plan will continue to fruition.
- iii. Doddington Neighbourhood Plan Group. The public consultation open events are being planned for late May. The Clerk had arranged the refund of unused grant by 31st March.
- iv. Notification had been received that an appeal had been lodged with The Planning Inspectorate against FDC's refusal to grant planning permission on application F/YR25/0010/O Erect 2 self-build/custom dwellings on land east of 26 Turf Fen Lane Doddington.

12. Abbey Recreation Ground: -

- a) With the completion of the refurbishment of the Pavilion and the installation of white goods, tables and chairs, Cllrs Hufton and Hopkins would commence arrangements for the marketing of the Pavilion and recreational facilities within the grounds.
- b) Notification had been received that a safety inspection had been scheduled to take place on the skate park equipment later in the month.
- c) Under the Doddington Neighbour

14. Street Lighting: -

No matters to report.

15. Village Maintenance: -

- a) The Chair had received confirmation that the directors of the local management committee of the Crossway Wood & Pond were still interested in the woodland and pond areas being improved. There was a tree preservation order in place covering the whole of the woodland and an approach would be made to the FDC Tree Preservation Officer for advice.
- b) Members agreed to seek quotations for a bus shelter to be installed on the grass area between the roadway to the hospital and the boundary of the doctors surgery.
- c) Members agreed to investigate the installation of a red phone box within the village to be used as a book swap facility.
- d) It was agreed to seek agreement from FDC for the installation of a dog bin on the public footpath that runs from Benwick Road to Pocket Park and is adjacent to the Benwick Road Recreation ground.

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) Year-end accounts and internal audit. The Clerk had circulated a briefing note on the Year End accounts for 2024/25 which included a copy of the unaudited accounts. Members noted the draft accounts which would be subject to an internal audit on 30th April.
- b) A request had been received for financial support for the Ely Food Bank that operated 8 food banks within the County including ones in Chatteris and March. Members agreed to give further consideration to the request at their May meeting.
- c) 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 March 2025	433.12
Eon Next</		

18. Any Other Business: -

- a) To consider seeking a meeting with Anglia Water regarding possible sewage issues in Benwick Road.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.45pm