

DODDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

**Meeting of the Parish Council held in The Church Rooms, New Street on
Wednesday 11th June 2025 at 7.00 pm.**

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

1. Open Forum: - One member of the public was present. Members welcomed Cllr Michael Fisher, the newly appointed Cambridgeshire County Councillor for Whittlesey South, who was introduced to Members and gave a brief resume of himself and his wish to serve the constituents of both town and villages in his Ward.

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

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

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 14th May 2025: - Cllr Mason proposed and Cllr Slade seconded that the minutes of the meeting held on the 14th May 2025 be approved. These were agreed by the members which were then signed by the Chair.

5. Election of Committees and Prime responsibilities:

- **Planning:** Cllrs Fisher, Hopkins, McNulty & Shepherd
- **Street Lighting:** Cllrs McNulty & Slade
- **Abbey Recreation Field & Pavilion:** Cllrs Fisher, Hufton, & Mason
- **Skate Park & Outside Gym:** Cllrs McNulty & Shepherd
- **Village Maintenance:** Cllrs Fisher, Hufton & Mason
- **Benwick Road Cemetery:** Cllrs Fisher, Hufton, Mason & Welcher
- **Public Noticeboards:** Cllr Hopkins
- **Flag:** Cllr Welcher
- **Village Clock:** Cllrs Mason, McNulty & Shepherd
- **Website & Facebook Page:** Cllr Hopkins & the Clerk
- **MVAS Systems:** Cllrs McNulty & Slade
- **Defibrillators:** Cllr Slade
- **Risk Assessment:** All members

6. Election of representatives on other bodies: -

- **Burnthouse Wind Farm Fund:** Cllr Hufton
- **Ransonmoor Wind Farm Fund:** Cllr Shepherd
- **Eleemosynary Charity of Nicholas Spencer:** Cllrs Hufton & Welcher
- **Doddington Neighbourhood Plan Group:** Cllrs Fisher, Hopkins & Hufton
- **Fens Reservoir Liaison Group:** Cllrs Mason, Shepherd & Hufton
- **Community Living Room Group:** Cllr Fisher

7. 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. The possibility of hosting film shows was being considered and the first grant payment towards room hire had been received.

- b) The Annual Assembly took place on May 22nd at the Methodist Chapel and a number of residents and representatives from clubs and groups in the village were present. This enabled a significant amount of networking and interaction to take place. A splendid buffet was provided for the attendees which was very popular. Members agreed that the arrangement be repeated next year.
- c) Training. Cllr Jolley reported that he had attended the CAPALC New councillor training session in Littleport and had found it very useful.
- d) Pride in Fenland Awards 2025. The Chair reported that she had submitted four village nominations for an award.

8. Police Matters:

- a) No meeting between the Police and PC representatives had taken place.

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

- a) No updates were available from FDC or CCC.

10. Highway Issues: -

- a) The following existing issues are outstanding together with a number of new items:
 - i. The shrubs and trees on Church Lane were overgrowing onto the footpath and needed cutting back.
 - ii. Trees in the church yard, which are maintained by FDC, need pruning.
 - iii. A lavender bush from a property in High Street is encroaching over the footpath and needs cutting back by the owner.
 - iv. The road surface near the doctor's surgery is in a bad condition and has a number of pot holes.
 - v. The hedge along Ingles Lane needs cutting back by the owner.
 - vi. The Askham Livery hedge needs cutting back from the main road.
 - vii. There are reports of a missing footpath sign on the Circular Walk.
 - viii. Surface water from the road surface near Shenandoah, Benwick Road flow into the grounds of this property.
 - ix. There is a large raised area, in the layby near the entrance to the Pocket Park that is a trip hazard.
 - x. The concrete base under the fencing outside Benwick Road electric substation has tipped towards the footpath and is a danger to pedestrians.
- b) MVAS system. Cllr. Slade circulated copies of the latest statistics from the units in the village.
- c) Road Closure Order Forty Foot Bank. This RCO enabled CCC to undertake some patchworking activities but the road was still in a dangerous condition, the sunken Cambre of the roadway causing vehicles, especially HGV's, to swing dangerously towards the river bank.
- d) Proposed Road Closure Order Newgate Street. This closure is scheduled to take place from 18th June 2025 for approximately 8 days. CCC to be asked to indicate the exact part of Newgate Street that is to be closed rather than putting up vague signs indicating a forthcoming closure, and to inform local businesses that may be affected.
- e) LHI application for 2025/26. CCC have advised that our application for white lining to be renewed within the village will be considered at the October 2025 meeting of their Highways & Transportation Committee. As our application is classified as a "Non-Complex" application, there is no need for the Parish Council to make a presentation to the CCC Councillor Scoring Panel.

11. Fens Reservoir Project: -

- a) The Clerk reported that the Fens Reservoir Project has now formally been classified as a nationally significant infrastructure project (NSIP) by the Environment Secretary and as such will be treated separately from local authority planning processes.
- b) Further land surveys are due to take place between the summer and autumn periods.
- c) Manea Parish Council have written to the local Parish Councils affected by the reservoir project, suggesting that they meet as a group in order to agree common areas of interest that can be presented to the Project Team. Whilst members were not averse to attending a group meeting, they would restrict their support to matters directly affecting Doddington and would make their own representations on these matters directly to the Reservoir team.

12. Planning: -

a) New planning applications:

1. F/YR25/0406/VOC Variation of conditions 5 (highway improvement works), 6 (access track), 7 (soft landscaping), and 10 (refuse collection strategy) of planning permission F/YR23/0070/O (erect up to 5 x dwellings including highway works (outline application with all matters reserved) including demolition of stables and hay store). To allow reserved matters applications to be separated by plots and access road at land east of The Hollies Hospital Road Doddington.
The Clerk advised that he had sought clarification from FDC on the reasons for this application as the approved outline application showed the proposed layout of the site was separated by plots and an access road.
2. F/YR25/0407/F Erect a first-floor extension to front of existing dwelling at 28 Cedar Ave Doddington
Members supported this application.
3. F/YR25/0415/TRCA Works to 6 x Yew trees and 1 x Holly tree within a conservation area at 9C Benwick Road Doddington.
Members supported this application.
4. F/YR25/0423/RM Reserved Matters application relating to detailed matters of appearance, landscaping and scale (plots 2, 3 & 4 only) (3 x dwellings) pursuant to variation of condition 16 (list of approved plans), relating to planning approval F/YR23/0539/O (Erect up to 4 x dwellings (outline application with matters committed in respect of access and layout), involving the demolition of existing dwelling and storage buildings) relating to changes to layout of plots 2, 3 & 4, roadway and trees.
Members noted that the first floor windows of plot 4 that overlooked the adjoining properties were to be fitted with frosted glass
5. F/YR25/0424/F Erect a commercial building and parking area with 2m high (max) boundary fence involving demolition of existing building.
As this application was for a new build, a question was raised on whether its plans showed them to comply with Building Regulations.

b) Other planning matters:

- i. Members noted the latest copy of the Planning Monitoring Spreadsheet.
- ii. FDC Local Plan. No further information has been circulated.
- iii. Doddington Neighbourhood Plan Group. FDC have provided their initial comments on the draft neighbourhood plan which are due to be reviewed by the DNPG at their meeting on 1st July. No revised dates for the public consultation open events have been arranged.

13. Abbey Recreation Ground: -

- a) Following the Sovereign Compliance Inspection that took place in April, correspondence with Sovereign agreed that future inspections will not include the two children's play areas which are owned by FDC but will include all other pieces of equipment on the Recreation field. There will be no change in the charges currently agreed with Sovereign.
- b) Members received a quotation from Doctor Tree Ltd for a tree survey to be undertaken at a cost of £865 plus VAT plus crown raising and dead wooding of two oaks on the ground at an additional cost of £250 plus VAT. Proposed by Cllr Hopkins, seconded by Cllr McNulty and agreed by all members that the two quotations be accepted.
- c) Grass cutting for Abbey Rec and Benwick Road Cemetery. The Chair updated members on discussions that she was having with Kingsfarming Ltd and her consultation with Mr. Alan Mason on best practice for keeping the Abbey field and the New Cemetery at optimum condition. Options were also discussed about the possible Parish Council purchase of a mower to cover the same project. Members consensus was not to purchase a mower but to consider a new cutting programme in a quotation from Kingsfarming Ltd for 3 cuts a month April to September, two cuts in March and October and 3 cuts November to March. Members agreed to continue discussions with Kingsfarming Ltd regarding their costs.
- d) Provision of additional recreational equipment on site. It was agreed that we retain the existing goal posts on site to be used as practice goals. They would also be available if the pitches should be let again to a football club. Additional play equipment was discussed and members agreed that the most popular items would be a zip wire and climbing wall. It was agreed that discussions be held with suppliers of these items to ascertain costs, time frames etc.

14. Benwick Road Cemetery: -

- a) Grass cutting. See above (item 13c).
- b) Members considered whether the Parish Council should increase its current charges in line with recent announcements on charges made by FDC and Wimblington Parish Council. It was proposed by Cllr Welcher, seconded by Cllr Shepherd and agreed by members that prices should be increased by 2.5% with effect from 1st July 2025.

15. Street Lighting: -

No matters to report.

16. Village Maintenance: -

- a) Bus shelter in Benwick Road. Members considered a quotation from GLP Installations, the company that had provided new or replacement shelters in the past, to manufacture, supply and instal a cedar bus shelter on a new concrete base at a total cost of £10,122 plus VAT. Proposed by Cllr McNulty, seconded by Cllr Hopkins and unanimously agreed that this be accepted.
- b) Second-hand telephone box. Following last month's agreement to purchase, Cllr Fisher advised members that he was seeking prices covering the installation and preparation of the base and fitting out with shelving.
- c) Public seats. Members considered replacing and or adding additions public seats around the village. Two new seats were suggested for use in Abbey Rec, 1 on Manor estate and 1 in the cemetery with the current metal one being relocated. Seats to be made from recycled material. Arrangements would be finalised next month.

17. Website and Communications: -

- a) Members were still reporting issues with email on the .gov facility which need to be discussed with the Administrator.
- b) The Clerk reported that following a request from a councillor he had redacted members telephone numbers on the documents published on the Council website.

18. Financial Items: -

- a) New laptop for use by Doddington Diary. During the last month, members were asked for their agreement to purchase a new laptop for use by the Doddington Diary team. Members had voted their agreement to the purchase as the magazine provided an integral service for the whole village. It will be financed from our provision under section 137.

- b) 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
Eon Next	Electricity Pavilion May 2025	35.31
JC Gardens & Landscaping	Grass cutting Abbey & Cemetery June 2025	500.00
Clear Ins Management	Local Council insurance renewal 1 st June 2025	4,574.72
Alan Mason	Grass cutting Abbey & Cemetery May 2025	485.00
Anglian Water	Water Charges Cemetery March/April 2025	22.97
R Wilkin	Clerks net salary June 2025 + petty cash	1,024.72
HMRC	Income Tax on Clerks salary	246.48

Payments made via PC debit card for goods previously authorised:

PC OK	New laptop for Doddington Diary	1,689.98
Emma Sheridan	Buffet for Annual Assembly	320.00
Methodist Church	Room Hire Annual Assembly	45.00

Payments made from the Community Living Room Grant

St Mary's Church	Room Hire April 2025	120.00
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19. Correspondence: -

- a) The March and District Museum had advised the Parish Council that the Victorian Bier that was on loan to the museum was due for renewal. Members agreed to extend its loan for a further 5 years to 2030.
- b) Members agreed to purchase a suitable flag to commemorate the VJ 80th anniversary on 15th August.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.35pm