

DODDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

**Meeting of the Parish Council held in The Church Rooms, New Street on
Wednesday 11th March 2026 at 7.00 pm.**

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

Prior to the start of the meeting, the Chair advised members on the content of conversations that had taken place with the Clerk. The Clerk had indicated that he wished to relinquish the role of Clerk but would be prepared to retain the duties of Responsible Finance Officer if that was agreed with the Parish Council. Members noted the reasons behind the request and as he would be available to assist and support a new Clerk, unanimously agreed with his request. Arrangements would be made to advertise the position.

1. Open Forum: - No members of the public were present.

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

3. Declaration of Interests: - Cllrs Jolley and H Fisher declared an interest in a planning application that was to be heard later in the meeting.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 11th February 2026: - Cllr Mason proposed and Cllr H Fisher seconded that the minutes be approved. These were agreed and were signed by the Chair.

5. Matters arising from previous minutes: -

- a) Community Living Room. Attendances remained at high numbers. Cambridgeshire Acre have confirmed that the current grant arrangements covering the weekly room hire costs will be extended for a further year until 31st March 2027.
- b) The Cambridgeshire Community Foundation via the Burnt House Wind Farm Grants have finalised the arrangements for local Parish Councils to offer small grants up to a maximum value of £500 to charitable groups within the Doddington area. The Parish Council have received £3,000 as an initial sum on which to make these grants available which would take effect from 1st April 2026. Cllrs McNulty and Slade agreed to vet applications and make appropriate recommendations to the Parish Council.

6. Administrative Matters:-

- a) Parish Council Policies. The existing Code of Conduct Policy is a copy of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct developed by The Local Government Association (LGA). The Chair advised members that the LGA had made no changes to their existing published model and therefore suggested that our existing policy is confirmed with a review in 2027. Cllr Mason proposed and Cllr McNulty seconded that the existing policy be adopted for a further year. This was agreed by the members present.
- b) Local Government Reorganisation. At the last Parish Council meeting, members agreed to consider submitting a formal response, at this meeting, on the proposals for Local Government Reorganisation in Cambridgeshire & Peterborough. Four proposals had been received by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government and the chair briefly outlined the “pros and cons” of each proposal. Option D proposed three councils, one based around Peterborough, a second central area covering Fenland, Huntingdonshire and East Cambridgeshire and thirdly a Greater Cambridge area. Members considered that for rural areas, particularly in the central area, the proposal would have a council focused on

largely rural and market town communities meaning rural issues such as transport, access to health services, affordable housing and support for farming and land based businesses would be more central to their decision making. Cllr McNulty proposed that the Parish Council favours option D. This was seconded by Cllr Shepherd and subsequently agreed by the members present.

7. Police Matters:-

- a) No meetings between the Police and PC representatives have taken place.
- b) It was reported that a quantity of led flashing had been stolen from the roof of the Hospital. The matter had been reported to the police.

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

No specific matters had been received from FDC or CCC.

9. Highway Issues: -

- a) General maintenance.
 - i. Parts of the road surface of Wimblington Road are breaking up.
 - ii. Cooks Green and Ingles Lane have a number of bad potholes.
 - iii. A yellow road information sign is lying against the wall in front of the Scout Hut.
- b) MVAS system. February's traffic statistics were circulated to members

10. Fens Reservoir Project: -

No further updates had been received.

11. Planning: -

- a) New planning applications:
 - i. F/YR26/0117/F Change of use of existing outbuilding to stables for domestic use, and erection of a detached building for dog grooming, training and agility services at Ivydene, Beezling Fen Drove Chatteris.
Members supported the application.
 - ii. F/YR26/0137/F Erect an agricultural building at Delfland Nurseries, Benwick Road Doddington.
Members supported the application.
 - iii. F/YR26/0150/PIP Permission in Principle for 2 dwellings at land north of Norbrown, Hospital Road Doddington.
The Parish Council objected to the application on the grounds that its is infill development along a roadway that is unfit for the volume of traffic that currently uses it. Whilst the Parish Council acknowledges that planning permissions have been granted along Hospital Road, clauses within those approvals require significant improvement to the road to take place before any occupation takes place. As this application is a Planning in Principle application, the PC would like to see this application refused pending the roadway being brought up to standards required to meet the traffic usage.
 - iv F/YR26/0152/F Erect a single storey rear extension to existing dwelling at 1 Manor Estate Doddington.
Members supported the application.
 - v. F/YR26/0176/PIP Permission in Principle for up to 4 dwellings at Land east of 24 Eastmoor Lane Doddington.
The Parish Council objects to this application on the following grounds:
 - a. The condition of Eastmoor Lane eastwards from Peyton Close is no more than a narrow dirt track that is incapable of allowing meeting traffic to pass safely. The comments made in the architects planning statement make no mention of the condition of Eastmoor Lane other than to suggest that the lane would be widened where the proposed development would take place.
 - b. The existing hedge along the front of the proposed site would be lost.

- c. The proposed development is outside of the village envelope and, we would suggest, that the planning statement is misleading to suggest that application F/YR21/1072/FDL extends the Doddington area eastwards. That approval is between the built up areas of Bevills Close to the west and Childs Lane and the Manor Estate to the east.
 - d. The site abuts the natural boundary of the village footprint and from that point southwards there is open countryside south of Eastmoor Lane with extensive views over open countryside. The proposed development is not in keeping with the form of settlement at that end of the village and will adversely harm its character and appearance.
 - e. The open countryside making up this site provide an extensive natural habitat for birds, animals and insect life. This development would have a detrimental effect on the ecological benefits of the area.
 - f. This planning application conflicts with policy LP3 in the current 2014 Fenland Local Plan which classifies Doddington as a Growth Village stating that development takes place within the existing urban area or small village extension. This applications location falls into neither of those classifications and therefore falls into open countryside. Development in open countryside would "need to be fully justified by special circumstances" and none have been provided with this application. In addition, this planning application conflicts with the policy LP12 (Rural Areas Development Policy) in the current 2014 Fenland Local Plan.
- b) Appeals:
- i. An Appeal has been lodged under section 78 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 against FDC's refusal to grant planning permission on application number F/YR25/0537/F Erect a hay store with roller shutters, plant room, solar PV panels and concrete apron, stable, 1.5m high (max) weld mesh fence, 1.2m high (max) post and rail and 1.2m high (max) slatted boundary fence (part retrospective) on land south of Swan Cottage Benwick Road accessed from Dykemoor Drove Doddington.
 - ii. An Appeal has been lodged under section 174 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 against an enforcement notice, number ENF/095/24/UW, issued by FDC on 1st October 2025 in respect of land south of Swan Cottage Benwick Road accessed from Dykemoor Drove Doddington regarding an alleged construction of a building.
- The Parish Council noted that the above two appeals are due to be determined on the basis of written representations.
- c) Other Planning Matters:
- i. Planning Monitoring Report. Members noted the current report.
 - ii. FDC Local Plan known as Fenland 50. As part of the production of the Fenland 50 Local Plan, FDC are launching a "Call for Sites" and "Local Green Space designation". This consultation that runs until 30th April 2026.
 - iii. Doddington Neighbourhood Plan. The public consultation period is currently taking place and responses received are due to be considered at the next DNPG meeting on 17th March.

12. Abbey Recreation Ground: -

a) FDC had reported that within the Governments "Pride in Place Impact Fund", FDC would be entitled to receive £1.5m funding for play equipment and that £500k of that funding is to be made directly available to parishes. The Chair had contacted the FDC Councillors handling the allocation pointing out play improvements that could benefit from receiving part of that allocation.

13. Benwick Road Cemetery: -

The alleged owners of the motor van and the driver involved that caused damage to the wooden fence on the front boundary of the cemetery have been identified and a claim to

cover the repair costs will be submitted to our insurance company. The repair work is due to take place on 23rd March.

14. Street Lighting: -

Streetlight FPC20 outside 45/47 Newgate Street is not working. This will be reported to our contractor.

15. Village Maintenance: -

- a) New bus shelter in Benwick Road. The location of the bus shelter has been agreed in principle and a site meeting is to be arranged with GLP Installations, the company that has built the shelter.
- b) Telephone Box (book swop). A site visit is to be arranged between Cllrs H Fisher, Mason and Shepherd to verify that the box can be safely installed at the preferred location.
- c) Replacement public seats throughout the village. Work is due to commence on 23rd March for the installation of the new benches.
- d) Rose bushes around the War Memorial. FDC have removed all of the existing rose bushes and plan on replacing them with fresh stock. They have also indicated that they will be responsible for watering and maintenance.

16. Website and Communications: -

No updates reported.

17. Financial Items: -

- a) The Clerk advised members that the Internal Audit of the current years financial records is due to take place on 24th April 2026

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 Business Solutions	Street lighting power February 2026	436.60
Eon Next	Electricity Pavilion February 2026	30.98
Anglia Water	Water supply Cemetery Dec 25 – Feb 26	22.81
CAPALC	Membership, CAPALC NALC & DPO	745.81
D&M Pest Control	Pest control Bier House	80.00
R Wilkin	Clerks net salary March 2026	1,011.92
HMRC	Income Tax on Clerks salary	246.48

Payments made from the Community Living Room Grant

St Mary's Church	Room Hire Dec 2025	150.00
Andrew Dockerill	Artist fee	66.60
J Holding	Refreshments	100.00
J Wheeler	Refreshments	100.00

18. Correspondence:-

Textile Recycling Banks. FDC has advised that following changes in the market value of textiles, the Salvation Army have decided to reduce the number of locations where it offers textile recycling. New companies, Pink Elephant or the Fire Fighters Charity have agreed to supply banks, collect the materials and recycle the textiles.

19. Any Other Business:- The Annual Parish Assembly will be taking place in the Methodist Hall on 30th April 2026. Posters etc will shortly be prepared.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.50pm