

DODDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

**Meeting of the Parish Council held in The Church Rooms, New Street on
Wednesday 8th April 2026 at 7.00 pm.**

Present: Cllrs R Hufton (Chair), R Hopkins, J Jolley, R Mason and I McNulty. Cllrs M Davis (FDC representative), M Fisher (CCC Representative) and the Clerk, Roger Wilkin were present.

1. Apologies: - Apologies were received from Cllrs H Fisher, J Shepherd, D Slade, J Welcher and D Connor (FDC Representative).

2. Open Forum: - The contractor who undertakes the grass cutting and hedge trimming around the Abbey Recreation Ground was present. He gave a presentation on creating a nature walkway through the grounds tree boundary. Members thanked him for his presentation and agreed to consider the matter later in the meeting.

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

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 11th March 2026: - Cllr Mason proposed and Cllr J Jolley 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 and funding has been secured to install Wi-Fi in the church rooms.

b) The Cambridgeshire Community Foundation / Burnt House Wind Farm Grants. The Clerk reported that the scheme had been reported in the Doddington Diary and on the Parish Council Facebook page. As at the date of the meeting, 10 requests for application forms had been actioned resulting in 5 applications being received totalling £2,250. These had been referred to Cllrs McNulty and Slade for vetting to ensure that they were within the conditions of the grant scheme. Members agreed to approve payment to 4 of the applications totalling £1,750 but agreed that it was more appropriate to make payment to the remaining application via its powers under section 137.

c) "Love It or Hate It questionnaire. The results from the questionnaire had been circulated to members who noted that its findings were not dissimilar to the village questionnaire, circulated by the Neighbourhood Plan Group. A number of points were made that would be considered by the Parish Council if they were within its powers.

6. Administrative Matters:-

a) Appointment of new Clerk to the Parish Council. Members were updated on arrangements for the appointment of a new Clerk. The position is currently being advertised and interested parties will be sent a job specification. The closing date for receipt of applications is 29th April 2026. Members approved a suggestion that the new Clerk is paid a starting salary based on the Local Government Services (LGS) Pay Agreement 2025/26 in the scale range of points 16-21 for 12 hours work per week. The job would be subject to a six month's probationary period. The Council would provide the new clerk with a suitable computer, A4 printer and lockable 4 drawer filing cabinet.

The existing clerk would become the Councils Responsible Financial Officer upon the appointment of a new clerk and would retain his existing terms and conditions including current pay, based on the LGS Pay Agreement 2025/26 for a period of six months after which his hours of work would reduce to 5 hours per week.

- b) Local Government Reorganisation. Members were reminded that the period of consultation for the reorganisation of Local Government covering Cambridgeshire and Peterborough closed on 26th March and that our preference, which was for option D, had been submitted within the time scale. Fenland DC had also opted for option D in their submission.
- c) Annual Assembly. Members were reminded that the Annual Assembly was scheduled to take place on 30th April 2026 in the Methodist Hall commencing at 6.30pm. The Chair proposed that the format this year should be aimed at thanking the volunteers that supported the many clubs and groups within the village. Consideration may be made to comment on items such as speeding, the Neighbourhood Plan and displaying of photos. Light refreshments would be supplied by The Copper Cup. Members approved the suggestion.

7. Police Matters:-

- a) No meetings between the Police and PC representatives have taken place.
- b) It was reported that a new law came into force last month that strengthens protection for livestock from dogs.
- c) The new Chief Constable for Cambridgeshire is now in post

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

- a) CCC have rolled out a new initiative – ‘Nature Recovery from the Ground Up’. The Chair and Clerk had attended a Teams meeting at which this was explained and will attend a face to face meeting on May 15th.

9. Highway Issues: -

- a) General maintenance.
 - i. Manor Estate was due to be closed during the period 12th to 16th April for highway repairs and maintenance.
- b) The Clerk reported that CCC had issued four draft “Intend Notices” relating to different Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTRO). Each of them involved different roads within the village being closed at the same time with conflicting diversion routes. The draft notices made no reference that the proposed dates for closure were not confirmed and could be revised. A formal complaint has been made to CCC who have indicated that final notices could be issued taking into account that works could be spaced out.
- c) MVAS system. No statistics were available.

10. Fens Reservoir Project: -

No further updates had been received.

11. Planning: -

- a) New planning applications:
 - i. F/YR26/0174/F Retention of 29 x monitoring boreholes and their associated headworks at Land North of Chatteris, North of A142 and East of A141 Isle of Ely Way Chatteris
Members raised no objection to the application.
 - ii. F/YR26/0226/F Erect a general storage barn, including the change of use of land from agricultural and the formation of an access and erection of a 1.2m high post and rail fence and gate
Members supported the application in principle but requested a condition be included in any approval that at no time should the general storage barn be used for residential use.

- b) Appeal:
 - i. The Appeal that had been lodged under section 78 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 against FDC's refusal to grant planning permission on application number F/YR25/0424/F Construction of a new 2 storey commercial building, parking and 2m high fencing on Land south of the Quadrant, Primrose Hill Doddington had been dismissed.
- c) Other Planning Matters:
 - i. Planning Monitoring Report. Members noted the current report.
 - ii. FDC Local Plan known as Fenland 50. Following the Governments new Local Plan rules, Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2026, FDC have updated their Local Plan Timetable.
 - iii. Doddington Neighbourhood Plan. Following the public consultation arrangements are planned to incorporate a number of comments received into the final document.

12. Abbey Recreation Ground: -

- a) A complaint had been received that one of the rubbish bins on the ground was overflowing. The Chair had taken this matter up with FDC.
- b) Communal walkway. Members formally considered the suggestion raised during the open forum. Cllr Hopkins proposed, and Cllr McNulty seconded that that an estimate of possible works be obtained. This was agreed by the meeting.

13. Benwick Road Cemetery: -

- a) The repair work to the damaged fence had taken place and an insurance claim submitted to the Council's insurance company.

14. Street Lighting: -

Nothing further to report

15. Village Maintenance: -

- a) New bus shelter in Benwick Road. The location of the bus shelter has been agreed with GLP Installations, and work on its installation should commence later this month.
- b) Telephone Box (book swap). It was agreed to investigate siting the telephone box near to the bus shelter in the High Street
- c) Replacement public seats throughout the village. Members agreed to purchase additional fixing clamps for the public seats.

16. Website and Communications: -

No updates reported.

17. Financial Items: -

- a) The Clerk presented the draft year end accounts for 2025/26 which would be the subject of inspection by the Internal Auditor on 24th April 2026. Members approved the draft accounts.

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
Npower Business Solutions	Street lighting power March 2026	426.32
Eon Next	Electricity Pavilion March 2026	31.84
R Wilkin	Clerks net salary April 2026	1,043.54
HMRC	Income Tax on Clerks salary	254.38
Craft Group	Community grant via sec 137 (item 5b above)	500.00

Payments made during the month for goods/services previously authorised:

JC Gardens & Landscaping	Laying concrete & fixing new seats	3,100.00
Odd Job Ben	Repairing broken fence at cemetery	950.00
D&M Pest Control	Pest control – Bier House	80.00

Payments made from the Community Living Room Grant:

St Mary's Church	Room Hire March 2026	120.00
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Payments made from the Cambridgeshire Community Foundation / Burnt House Wind Farm Grants:

Payments made to 4 approved applications (item 5b above)	1,750.00
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18. Correspondence:-

Citizen Advice Rural Cambs. A request had been received for financial support to maintain their existing rural services either by making a general donation or funding a weekly or monthly drop-in service in the village. Members declined the request as a weekly service was provided in March.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.35pm