

DODDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held remotely via Zoom on
Monday 12 October 2020

Present: Cllr Steve Coates (Chairman), Cllr Jones (Vice Chairman), Cllr Kevin Attwood, Cllr Graham Cuthbert, Cllr Peter Duckworth, Cllr Kevin Fraser and Cllr Alison Shaw: and Mrs Wendy Licence (Clerk).

Also present was Ward Member David Simmons and one member of the public.

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr Coates welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies had been received from County Councillor Andrew Bowles (holiday): apology noted.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were declared.

3. TO DETERMINE WHETHER ANY ITEMS SHOULD BE DISCUSSED IN CLOSED SESSION

None were identified.

4. MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 14 SEPTEMBER 2020

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept the minutes as a true record of the meeting and that Cllr Coates will sign the minutes as a correct record when face-to-face meetings of the Council are permitted again.

5. MATTERS ARISING

Telecoms mast – Down Court Farm

Cllr Coates reported that Graham Thomas, Area Planning Officer, Swale Borough Council, had been contacted and asked for an update on this matter. He advised that he will respond as soon as possible. The resident has been kept informed.

The Chequers – Asset of Community Value (ACV)

Cllr Shaw reported that applying to re-list The Chequers Inn as an ACV to the Community has been a long process. The application has now been sent to the legal department and a decision should be made within the next two or three weeks. The landlord has been updated on a weekly basis.

PROW ZR281

Cllr Coates informed Members that the Council's response has been submitted to KCC Public Rights of Way and thanked Cllr Cuthbert and Cllr Attwood for their contribution to the response.

6. NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH REPORT

Sally Mills, neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator, had submitted the following report.

During September there has been limited Neighbourhood Watch activity.

On 21 September, a resident in Doddington reported that a greenhouse window had been smashed and a ball bearing found inside the greenhouse, leading to speculation as to whether a BB gun had been used. The resident reported the incident to the Police.

Obviously this was an upsetting act of vandalism for the resident and an appeal was made for any information.

Cllr Coates thanked Sally Mills for her report.

7. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The meeting was adjourned for the Public Question Time

A resident said that he was concerned about the noise of the emergency generator at the BT telephone exchange, the generator powers up during a power cut or low feed. The exhaust for the generator is adjoining the fence and it is at head height, it creates a lot of exhaust when it fires up. On the hottest day in June, the generator was on for three or four hours which meant the he could not go in the garden and had to keep doors and windows shut. There was a power cut in the village on Thursday and the generator was on and off during the day. Yesterday the generator was on and off all day. BT has been contacted. This has also been reported and Clare Lydon, Swale Environmental Health Team, has agreed that it is an environmental problem. The exhaust has no baffles. The matter has been logged as a statutory nuisance and the Environmental health Team is in contact with BT.

Cllr Coates thanked the resident for informing the Parish Council of the problem.

SBCllr Simmons asked for the resident's address so that he could follow up the matter.

The meeting was reconvened.

8. PLANNING MATTERS

i Ref: 20/503695/TPOA

Address: Little Lodge Church Hill Doddington ME9 0AZ

TPO application to fell one Ash tree and replant with Wild Cherry (Prunus Avium) within 3m of current position.

Application permitted

ii. Any other planning matter received by 12 October 2020

Ref: 18/504562/FULL

Address: Ellens Court Lady Margaret Manor Road Doddington ME9 0NT

Proposal: Alterations and extensions to existing residential care home to provide 12no. bedrooms and 2no. self contained two bedroom units with associated facilities. Erection of a single storey building to provide 4no. supported living self contained apartments, a new work shop building and associated landscape works

Cllr Coates said the application is going to Planning Committee on 15 October. The Parish Council has objected to the proposal and the Planning Officer is recommending approval subject to the views of the Climate Change Officer and conditions. There is a material error in the Officer's report which states in 1.4. *Bus Services serve Doddington Village which also connect to the train stations at Teynham and Faversham.* This is a material inaccuracy. The report does not cover the distance to Doddington

Cllr Attwood said the Parish Council did request a site visit; we need to ascertain if the Planning Committee is conducting site visits during this current pandemic.

SBCllr Simmons said Swale Planning Committee is having site visits. If possible, it would be helpful if a Parish Councillor could register to speak as it was referred to Committee because of the Parish Council's objections. Also, Colin Prescott, the former Ward Member, has requested the matter go to Committee. It is important for a statement to be read out to give the reasons for refusal and also to ask for a site visit.

Cllr Attwood said the proposal is a near doubling in size, it is a substantial increase in mass and in other circumstances the Officer would be recommending refusal due to the location in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It would be appropriate for the Planning Committee to have a site visit.

SBCllr Simmons said that he will seek to propose a site visit to the Planning Committee.

ACTION: Cllr Coates to draft statement for the Planning Committee.

9. FINANCE

i. Councillors Expenses

There were none.

ii. Clerk's salary and expenses

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to pay the Clerk's salary and expenses £904.31 (cheque no 1236).

Cllr Jones informed members that there was an annual salary adjustment for the Clerk's pay scale.

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept the NALC National Salary Award.

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to pay HMRC, PAYE, £109.40 (cheque no1239).

iii. Invoices for Payment

a. It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to pay Upchurch Parish Council £8.33 being share of Clerks' Conference (cheque no1238).

b. It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to pay Royal British Legion a donation of £35 for the poppy wreath (cheque no 1237).

Cllr Coates said that it is unclear as to what will happen for the Armistice Service because of COVID-19 and Government restrictions

c. Any invoice for approval received by 12 October 2020

Cllr Coates said the Clerk has written to the Internal Auditor twice and there has been no response. It was agreed to wait until a response is received.

iv. Finance report- half year

Cllr Coates said the Council's budget reserves are quite substantial and a good reason is needed for this, one obvious reason for this was that COVID-19 has impacted on the Council's activity this year.

Cllr Attwood said that this has been an exceptional year but when a surplus has arisen in the past the Council has been able to make grants to the Village Hall or the Church.

SBCllr Simmons said the Village Hall might wish to consider WiFi provision.

Cllr Cuthbert said this could be a bonus to the Parish Council.

10. DEFIBRILATOR

Cllr Coates said that there was nothing to report.

It was agreed to remove the item from the agenda and deal with issues by exception.

11. SPEED WATCH

Cllr Fraser reported the Speed Watch sessions are continuing and that over the past month twenty-one vehicles were reported to Kent Police for speeding. There have been one or two sessions each week. There have been quite a few repeat offenders and one driver is on active watch by the Police.

Cllr Coates thanked Cllr Fraser for his report and also thanked Mr Thompson for providing the Speed Watch statistics.

12. PLAYING FIELD

Cllr Duckworth said that as previously, the climbing frame has a bolt missing. The company has requested a photo which was provided by Cllr Fraser, and the bolt has been identified. It will cost approx £10 plus VAT and will be ordered. A seat in the park has had a piece broken off and this has been repaired by a resident.

Cllr Duckworth asked for an update regarding the ivy on the trees in the Playing Field.

It was agreed for Cllr Duckworth, Cllr Cuthbert and Cllr Jones to have a site meeting at the Playing Field.

Cllr Duckworth reported that Cllr Fraser has moved an iron pole from the old goal post to the side of the field.

Cllr Coates thanked Cllr Duckworth for his report.

13. HIGHWAYS

Parish Highways Improvement Plan

Cllr Cuthbert informed Members that there had been a meeting of the Working Party to consider the responses of the consultation. There were ten responses, some from people outside the village regarding the road between Stapleton and Doddington. Comments were received regarding Brewster Road and this has been added to the plan. There is a general issue of the fading white lines throughout the village; late Friday evening there were two vehicles refreshing some of the white lines however they were not all refreshed.

Cllr Coates said that other issues raised were speeding traffic; quad bikes and motor bikes; the volume of traffic; the road surface; Brewster Road; a request for a mirror at the junction of Chequers Hill/ Sharsted Road; and cyclists shouting to each other. A Wychling resident asked for Speed Watch to be extended to Wychling and they have received a written response. The Working Party identified priorities being road surface; white lines and drains. It was recognised that road surfacing was the top priority for residents but also that there might not be funding for this.

Cllr Duckworth suggested that the Parish Council use some of its money towards refreshing the white lines.

Cllr Coates said that he is concerned that only half the village has had the white lines refreshed.

Cllr Duckworth asked if the Ringlestone Road could be added to the plan. KCC Highways should be contacted to see what funds might be available.

ACTION: Clerk to add to plan.

Cllr Attwood said the issues are the responsibility of different departments in Kent County Council with different budgets; some will be capital expenditure and some Maintenance. KCC Highways has made a start on refreshing the white lines and the Parish Council should lobby to get this completed. Brewster Road will need to be dealt with.

Cllr Fraser said KCC Highways could be asked to complete the white lines. There are pot holes in The Street and at the entrance of the village. There are also long dangerous cracks in the road and this is a danger to cyclists and motor bike riders.

SBCllr Simmons said that Gary Gibbs, KCC Highways Steward, might be able to help progress matters such as pot holes.

Cllr Attwood said the problem is more extensive than patching and if there is a danger, especially for cyclists, it should be dealt with as a priority by KCC Highways.

Cllr Cuthbert said one respondent felt there has been a significant increase in the volume of traffic in the last eighteen months, this is difficult to ascertain without a traffic survey. Newnham Parish Council has commissioned a traffic survey and this could be considered for Doddington.

SBCllr Simmons said that he would be willing to release grant funding for a survey.

Cllr Jones said that there are already figures available from Speed Watch which gives a snap shot of vehicle numbers.

Cllr Attwood said that a survey during the current time would not give a true figure and would be unreliable.

SBCllr Simmons said that there is historical data from the traffic calming installation.

Councillors agreed the priorities as set out in the draft Parish Highways Improvement Plan with the addition of Brewster Road.

ACTION: Cllr Cuthbert, Cllr Coates and the Clerk to meet to take the plan forward.

14. CORRESPONDENCE

1. 17.09.20- Kent Police & Crime Commissioner: survey on roads enforcement and safety

2. 22.09.20- KCC Highways- pot hole update
3. 22.09.20- Pillory barn: developer-led consultation on Highsted Park
4. 23.09.20- KCCllr Bowles: September newsletter
5. 28.09.20- KALC SAC: draft minutes
6. 29.09.20- SBC: Swale Eastern Area Committee meeting
7. 01.10.20- Copy of resident email to KCCllr Bowles regarding Brewster Road
8. 06.10.20- MHCLG / NALC: Right to Contest survey
9. 06.10.20- KALC: Newsletters
- 10.09.10.20- Copy of resident email to KCCllr Bowles regarding Brewster Road

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS –

Cllr Jones reported that he had spoken to the Head Teacher of Infiniti School, which has taken over the old school building. The school opened on 1 October and is waiting for students to be referred, the school is a special needs school for young people aged 11-19 years old. All pupils are referrals from the Local Authority, currently there is one confirmed student and possibly a further ten by Christmas. The school has a capacity for thirty-two pupils. The head Teacher is keen for community involvement and will write an article for the Newsletter, village website and Facebook. There may be an open day. Openings for staff and volunteers will be advertised locally.

Cllr Coates said the War Memorial Risk Assessment has been updated, at the church's request, to include COVID-19.

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to adopt the updated Risk Assessment.

Cllr Coates thanked the Clerk for her work on this.

Cllr Coates thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Date of next Meeting:- Monday 9 November 2020

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.44pm.

Signed as a true record of the meeting:

Chairman

Date: 9 November 2020