

# DODDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held remotely via Zoom on  
Monday 13 July 2020

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

Also present was County Councillor Andrew Bowles, Ward Member David Simmons and one member of the public.

## 1. APOLOGIES

Cllr Coates welcomed everyone to the meeting.  
All Members were present.

## 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 8 JUNE 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

### The Chequers Inn - Asset of Value to the Community

Cllr Coates reported that the application to relist The Chequers Inn as an Asset of Value to the Community has been submitted and thanked Cllr Shaw for her sterling work. The application has been discussed with the new landlord who is very supportive of it.

### KALC Swale Area Committee meeting

Cllr Coates provided a short update to Members about his attendance (via Zoom) at the Swale Area Committee meeting. These meetings usually clashes with the Parish Council meetings. One area of interest was that there was a general concern about the performance of Swale Borough Council Planning Enforcement. Cllr Jeff Tutt, Vice Chairman, asked for examples of issues with Planning Enforcement to be forwarded to him.

*ACTION: Clerk to forward the response regarding The Retreat, Elverland Lane to Cllr Tutt.*  
Cllr Coates said there was also some concern about the Parish Highways Improvements Plans in relation to the funding of schemes.

## 6. COMMUNITY WARDEN REPORT

Cllr Coates said that whilst the Community Warden has not attended the last few meetings, the section for this report should remain for the time being. Community Wardens are currently heavily involved with giving COVID-19 support more widely.

## 7. NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH REPORT

The Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator has informed the Council that there have been no issues.

## 8. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No matters were raised.

## 9. PLANNING MATTERS

### i. Ref: 20/502641/FULL

Address: Victoria Bungalow The Street Doddington Sittingbourne Kent ME9 0BH

Proposal: Demolition of garage and erection of detached garage.

Councillors considered the application and had no objections to the proposal.

### ii. Ref: 20/502846/FULL

Address: 6 The Retreat The Street Doddington Sittingbourne Kent ME9 0DB

Proposal: Erection of detached garage

Councillors considered the application and had no objections to the proposal.

### iii. Any other planning matter received by 13 July 2020

Ref: 20/501763/FULL Address: Ellens Court Lady Margaret Manor Road Doddington ME9 0NT

Proposal: Retrospective application for installation of a heat pump.

Cllr Coates informed Members that the application has been permitted.

## 10. FINANCE

### i. Annual Governance Statement

Cllr Coates informed Members that the dates for the Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been extended due to the lockdown.

Councillors considered the Annual Governance Statement and **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept it. The statement was duly signed by Cllr Coates and will also be signed by the Clerk.

### ii. Annual Return for the Year Ended 31 March 2020

Councillors considered the Annual Return and **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept the accounting statement, this was duly signed by Cllr Coates and will also be signed by the Clerk.

### iii. To Certify exemption from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015.

Councillors **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to certify exemption from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015. The certificate was duly signed by Cllr Coates and will also be signed by the Clerk.

Cllr Coates said the Independent Internal Auditor had sent his report which has been circulated.

Cllr Attwood said that it has been suggested that there should be quarterly finance reports, the Parish Council has never done this before.

Cllr Coates **PROPOSED** that there should be a six-month finance report: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Cllr Coates said the Independent Internal Auditor has raised that there is no finance information for the year 2019-20 on the website but this is usually posted after the internal audit.

The Clerk said that it was also suggested that payments should be recorded in a table in the minutes, sometimes there is only one payment and a table might seem excessive.

Councillors agreed that they were happy with the current format.

iv. To consider internet banking

Councillors discussed the benefits and disadvantages of internet banking and agreed to maintain the status quo.

v. Councillors Expenses

There were none.

vi. Clerk's Salary and expenses April- June 2020

Councillors **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to pay the Clerk £919.80, being quarterly salary and expenses (cheque no 1128)

Councillors **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to pay HMRC £49.60 being PAYE (cheque no 1129).

vii. Invoices for Payment

a. Subscription to the Kent County Association of Playing Fields

Councillors **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to pay the subscription of £20.00 (cheque no 1230)

viii. To consider request from Swale Citizens Advice for a grant

Cllr Fraser **PROPOSED** to give a grant of £100 (cheque no 1231) to Swale Citizens Advice Bureau; **SECONDED** by Cllr Cuthbert: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

ix. Internal Auditor's Invoice.

Councillors considered the invoice for £250 from the Internal Auditor which is an increase of £100.

The Clerk said the increase was due to the internal audit being conducted remotely. It was **AGREED** to ask for justification of the increase.

**11. DEFIBRILATOR**

Cllr Coates reported that the defibrillator has been checked regularly and that there were no issues.

**12. SPEED WATCH**

Cllr Fraser informed Members that it has been approved for the Speed Watch sessions to be held at two sites in the village. Initially the numbers of vehicles recorded as speeding had increased but the figures have now fallen to the number pre- lockdown.

Cllr Coates said that Kent Police have sent the Speed Watch co-ordinators a questionnaire and Cllr Fraser will complete this.

**13. PLAYING FIELD**

i. Cllr Duckworth's monthly report

Cllr Duckworth reported that the grass cutting has continued as usual. Cllr Duckworth is working with Cllr Fraser to trim back the bushes and shrubs at the top end of the site. New signs have been put up at the play area following the re-opening of play grounds.

*8.28pm KC Cllr Bowles joined the meeting.*

Cllr Fraser said that a neighbour who works for a cleaning company in Sittingbourne, which has kindly donated a back pack sprayer and sanitiser, and the neighbour is going out every morning and spraying the equipment.

*ACTION: Clerk to write a letter of thanks.*

Cllr Coates said that play areas have been permitted to re-open and it had proved difficult to stop the play equipment being used by members of the public. The Council is taking a pragmatic approach and needs to ensure that the Risk Assessment is up to date. A neighbour is spraying the equipment.

Cllr Cuthbert said the Risk Assessment needs to be specific for COVID-19.

*ACTION: Clerk to update the Risk Assessment.*

ii. To consider request from Fete Committee to allow dogs on the Playing Field at the summer event

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to allow dogs on the playing field during the event under the conditions pledged by the committee and also that the Committee comply with any Government guidelines at the time.

iii. To consider whether to have a summer port-a-loo and to consider the quotation

Councillors considered the quotation and discussed the issue of cleaning a port-a-loo during the summer.

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** To accept the quotation from Four Jays of £35.00 per week with haulage of £18.00 each way plus VAT.

#### **14. HIGHWAYS**

1. To Receive an update

Cllr Cuthbert said that a resident had reported a lorry getting stuck in Old Lenham Road and they have been asked to keep a log of incidents.

Cllr Coates said the of signage for HGVs had been discussed previously but that road closure signs being left out after the work had finished may have contributed to this problem which had also affected other villages in the area

KCCllr Bowles said that he will contact KCC Highways regarding the late removal of road closed signs.

*ACTION: KCCllr Bowles*

ii. Parish Highways Improvement Plan

Cllr Coates thanked Cllr Cuthbert for his sterling work on the Parish Highways Improvement Plan.

Cllr Cuthbert said that different authorities are responsible for different areas of the parish.

Cllr Attwood said that there are a range of different subjects on the plan and some matters, such as refreshing the white lines would be easy to achieve.

Cllr Fraser said that state of the signs in the village would also be easy to resolve, some need cleaning and some need replacing.

Cllr Jones said it is envisaged that the plan will be a consultation in the village and the Council needs to obtain feedback from residents. It is also important to manage expectations and prioritising does not mean that everything is high.

Cllr Cuthbert said that it is a Risk Assessment so some matters are a high priority.

KCCllr Bowles said that when the first list is submitted, KCC Highways will come back with a list of who should pay for each item. It is a living document and will always grow.

Cllr Coates said the plan sits behind a consultation with residents, Councillors need to give feedback on the document to Cllr Cuthbert. A consultation document will be drawn up and put on the noticeboard, website and social media. The Council must consult with residents and gain views. The costs and additional information will be added to the plan.

*ACTION 1: Councillors to give feedback to Cllr Cuthbert.*

*ACTION 2: Consultation document to be agreed by email.*

#### **15. CORRESPONDENCE**

1. 11.06.20: SBC- Code of Conduct consultation
2. 11.06.20: NALC e-briefing seeking evidence to support submission to the Labour Coronavirus & the future of Local Government commission on Local Government Housing & Transport.
3. 12.06.20: Consultation regarding Faversham Town Council application to Swale Borough Council to designate a neighbourhood area
4. 12.06.20: NALC Newsletter
5. 12.06.20: KCC Highways pot hole/ patching report
6. 15.06.20: NALC Chief Executive Bulletin

7. 17.06.20: KALC CEO Bulletin
8. 18.06.20: New tenant at the Old School  
Cllr Coates said the new tenant has given a helpful clarification of what it being done with the school and that it is positive to see the school being developed in line with its previous role.
9. 18.06.20: KCCLlr Bowles's newsletter
10. 19.06.20: KCC Highways pot hole/ patching report
11. 22.06.20: KCCLlr Bowles- copy of the report for Highway Flooding & Storm Response on the agenda for KCC Cabinet meeting 22 June 2020
12. 22.06.20: Letter from Cllr Roger Truelove, Leader Swale Borough Council
13. 24.06.20: Email regarding Broadband coverage in Seed Road (out of Parish)  
Cllr Jones said the resident wants the issue to be publicised to obtain support.  
*ACTION: Clerk to suggest an article be included in the village newsletter.*
14. 29.06.20: KALC Newsletter
15. 30.06.20: Came & Co advice on the reopening of playgrounds
16. 01.07.20: Produced in Kent- Support Your Local campaign
17. 03.07.20: Kent Police Rural Task Force Report
18. 10.07.20: resident email regarding cutting the ivy on the trees in the playing field  
Cllr Attwood said the resident has been informed that the arboricultural report recommended the removal of the ivy to protect the trees. Other issues raised by the resident, such as the trimming of verges, were not a matter for the Parish Council.

#### **16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Cllr Jones asked if there can be a regular agenda item for village news, it usually comes up under Any Other Business about it could be formalised. It could also be included in the Parish Council report.

Cllr Fraser said news is published in the newsletter.

Cllr Shaw said that not everyone receives the newsletter and if the information is not contributed it is not included.

Cllr Coates said that much of the information is on Social Media but not everyone uses this. There is limited space in the Parish Council report for general news items. In conclusion, there was little appetite for this to be added as an agenda item.

SBCllr Simmons said that Swale Planning Enforcement had informed him of unlawful development at Snips Cottage, Church Hill.

**Date of next Meeting:- Monday 14 September 2020**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.27pm

Signed as a true record of the meeting:

Chairman  
Date: 14 September 2020