

# DODDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held remotely via Zoom on  
Monday 8 June 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 and two members of the public.

<p><b>1. APOLOGIES</b> Cllr Coates welcomed everyone to the meeting. KCCLlr Bowles is at another meeting and hopes to join later for highways matters.</p>
<p><b>2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> None were declared.</p>
<p><b>3. TO DETERMINE WHETHER ANY ITEMS SHOULD BE DISCUSSED IN CLOSED SESSION</b> None were identified.</p>
<p><b>4. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 11 MAY 2020</b> It was <b>AGREED UNANIMOUSLY</b> to accept the minutes as a true record of the meeting and that Cllr Coates will sign the minutes as a correct record when physical meetings of the Council are permitted again.</p>
<p><b>5. MATTERS ARISING</b> There were none.</p>
<p><b>6. COMMUNITY WARDEN REPORT</b> Cllr Coates said there had been no report from the Community Warden. <i>ACTION: Cllr Coates to contact the Community Warden.</i></p>
<p><b>7. NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH REPORT</b> Cllr Coates said that the co-ordinator had informed the Council that there was nothing to report.</p>
<p><b>8. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME</b> <i>The meeting was adjourned for the Public Question Time</i></p> <p><i>A resident raised concerns about the long-term prospects for The Chequers and asked if there were any plans for the Parish Council to look at the pub as a community asset.</i> Cllr Coates said The Chequers was designated an Asset of Community Value by Swale Borough Council in 2014 and the Clerk has identified that this needs to be renewed. Cllr Coates said that Asset of Community Value status is given to land or buildings nominated by a local voluntary or community group and which the Borough Council decides meets the requirements to be listed as an asset of community value. Whilst on balance it is a good thing to have the pub listed, it is not necessarily a total defence to protect it in the future. Shepherd Neame has indicated that the new tenants have been interviewed and if references are satisfactory, they will take over on 26 June.</p>

Cllr Attwood said the Asset of Community Value status needs to be maintained. Having new tenants is a positive thing.

The Parish Council recognises the importance of The Chequers within the community and councillors agreed unanimously that an application should be made to extend Asset of Community Value status.

Cllr Coates thanked the residents for attending and raising the matter.

*The meeting was reconvened.*

## **9. PLANNING MATTERS**

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

Proposal: Retrospective application for installation of a heat pump.

Cllr Coates informed Members that a decision is yet to be made.

Cllr Coates asked if there has been an update on The Retreat.

The Clerk said she has received no update.

*ACTION: Clerk to contact Planning Enforcement for an update.*

## **10. FINANCE**

### i. Councillors Expenses

There were none.

### ii. Invoices for Payment

a. It was agreed to pay Mrs W Licence £48.00 reimbursement for moss killer.

b. It was agreed to pay Doddington Village hall £54.00 for hall hire January – March 2020.

## **11. DEFIBRILATOR**

Cllr Coates said there were no issues to report.

## **12. SPEED WATCH**

Cllr Fraser said that Kent Police is reinstating Community Speed Watch sessions from 15<sup>th</sup> June, having suspended them in March due to the Covid-19 crisis.

## **13. PLAYING FIELD**

Cllr Duckworth reported that he had used the last of the moss killer on the surfaces and this has been effective. The new supply of moss killer has been received.

Cllr Fraser said there has been confirmation of the Government's guidance that play areas must be kept closed. Cllr Fraser thanked Cllr Attwood and the Clerk for supplying signage for the play area.

Cllr Coates said the play area cannot be re-opened due to the risk of spreading the virus on the hard surfaces, the Council will keep this under review and the play area can be opened quickly when permitted.

Cllr Duckworth asked if the Doddington Fete will be held this year and whether the summer port-a-loo will be provided.

Cllr Coates said the Fete will not be held in its previous format, the Committee is considering holding something low key such as a picnic and possibly some music. The toilet is usually provided for the summer holiday and it will need to be ascertained whether this is permitted.

*ACTION: Clerk to ascertain whether a port-a-loo can be provided and what the hygiene measures are.*

Cllr Fraser said that he has pruned the top of the playing field. The grass is growing around the stump of the sycamore tree. It has been suggested that the area around the stump could be turned into a wild grass haven but as the wood chip has been laid this will cause

a problem as it takes the nitrogen out of the soil. The sycamore just to the left of the entrance close to the garage has a low branch.  
It was **AGREED** that Cllr Fraser remove and dispose of the branch.  
Cllr Coates thanked Cllr Duckworth and Cllr Fraser for their reports.

#### **14. HIGHWAYS**

##### Parish Highways Improvement Plan

Cllr Cuthbert said suggestions are needed for the Doddington Parish Highways Improvement Plan looking at general improvements.

Cllr Fraser said several residents have complained about the deterioration of the road surfaces in the village.

Cllr Attwood said that there are various areas where large areas are poor, the work needs to be prioritised.

Cllr Shaw said that as the roads are in a poor state, drivers veer into the middle of the road and this is dangerous when there is oncoming traffic.

Cllr Duckworth said the road surfaces are in a poor condition.

Cllr Coates said that plans from Upchurch Parish Council and Selling Parish Council, which could be used as a template for Doddington's Parish Highways Improvement Plan, highlight issues with speeding, parking and flooding and for Doddington it could include the road surfacing. Upchurch Parish Council carried out a one-page consultation document which was sent to residents; the Councillors highlighted what they thought were the key issues and asked residents for any additions. Doddington could be divided into four areas: The Street, Old Lenham Road, Chequers Hill and Northdown and Sunnyside. One example of an issue with the road layout was at Yew Tree Cottage where the road narrows and this might need to be included as several near misses had occurred there.

A list will need to be drawn up and then the Council will need to decide how it will consult, this can be done through the Parish Council website, the village website and social media and posters in The Chequers. The Newsletter is not being printed but the consultation could be printed off. The key element is funding and Ward and County Councillors could be approached. The Parish Highways Improvement Plans are very straight forward and residents need to be consulted.

*8.20- KCCllr Bowles joined the meeting.*

Cllr Coates said a working party could be set up to progress this.

Cllr Cuthbert asked that Councillors send suggestions to him and that he would be happy to walk the village with Councillors.

Cllr Jones said that he was concerned about residents' perception of the scheme and that expectations might be raised. Details of the funding must also be explained and residents should be asked if they were willing to pay extra precept for the work to be carried out.

KCCllr Bowles said that he would be happy to walk the parish. It is important that when a Parish Highways Improvement Plan is agreed that some quick remedies are carried out so that residents can see the Council is putting something into the community and this will give people confidence. If necessary, the precept can be increased to cover the work and this can be explained. If there is no plan then the work will not be carried out. Match funding is available from the KCC Members' Grant Fund.

*ACTION 1: Councillors to submit suggestion to Cllr Cuthbert for the consultation document.*

*ACTION 2: Cllr Cuthbert to draft the consultation document.*

#### **15. CORRESPONDENCE**

1. 11.05.20- KCC Waste Management: the reopening of Household Waste and Recycling Centres on Friday 15 May 2020

2. 14.05.20- Kent Police Rural Task Force: Rural Crime report and Rural Matters publication

Cllr Coates said that the Rural Police team is carrying out good work.

3. 18.05.20- Doddington Village Hall Trustees: letter of thanks for forwarding details of the COVID-19 small business grants available to us to village halls. £10,000 was awarded.

4. 27.05.20- KCC Highways updated notice of Temporary Road Closure – Various Road, Swale (Micro-surfacing)
5. 01.06.20- resident email regarding the Old Lenham Road and lack of cleaning and clearing away the spoil.  
Cllr Coates said the resident has complained again to Swale Borough Council and the Parish Council has raised this with the Borough Council.
6. 04.06.20- KALC Newsletter
7. 04.06.20- Request from the fete Committee to permit dogs on the playing field for the fete  
Cllr Coates said the request arrived too late for the meeting and will be on July's agenda for discussion
8. 05.06.20- KCC Highways pothole data

**16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Cllr Jones asked if there is any feedback regarding people seeking assistance from the Parish Council during the lockdown.  
Cllr Fraser reported that he has received two requests in the last three weeks.

**Date of next Meeting:- Monday 13 July 2020**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.37pm

Signed as a true record of the meeting:

Chairman  
Date: 13 July 2020