

DODDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in Doddington Village Hall on
Monday 5 June 2023

Present: Cllr Steve Coates (Chairman), Cllr Kirsty Clark, Cllr Graham Cuthbert,
Cllr Kevin Fraser and Cllr Linda Lumsden and Mrs Wendy Licence (Clerk).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Cllr Colin Jones (holiday) and Cllr Kevin Attwood (work); apologies accepted.

Apologies had also been received from County Councillor Rich Lehmann (holiday); apology noted.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Clark declared an interest in item 11b, being a member of the Village Show Committee.

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

None were identified.

4. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 15 MAY 2023

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept the minutes as a true record of the meeting. Cllr Coates duly signed the minutes as a true record.

5. MATTERS ARISING

All items covered on the agenda.

6. NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH REPORT

7. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No members of the public were present.

8. HIGHWAYS

i. To receive an update

Cllr Fraser reported that there has been a sudden increase in HGVs with convoys of FGS Agri lorries. The demolished repeater sign has been reported to KCC Highways and an acknowledgement received.

ii. Drainage and Flooding

Cllr Jones had sent the following update on the Old Lenham Road drain cleaning.

Obviously, it is critical to our flood mitigation measures that the existing drainage system functions properly and is well maintained.

In the event KCC only carried out a partial cleansing on 2 June due to what they describe as an 'internal miscommunication'. We have been assured they will be back to finish the work as soon as possible, hopefully within the next week.

Cllr Coates said a couple of drains in Chequers Hill need cleaning and this will be reported. Cllr Cuthbert informed Members that he had reported drains on either side of Down Court Road, but nothing had been done yet.

9. PLANNING MATTERS

i. Ref: 23/502418/LBC

Address: Homestall Farm Homestall Road Doddington Sittingbourne Kent ME9 0HF

Proposal: Replacement windows more sympathetic to the building.

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

ii. Any planning matter received by 5 June 2023

Councillors discussed the invitation to nominate for the Swale Local Heritage List and considered that most of the buildings of interest in the village were listed.

ACTION: Clerk to obtain schedule of listed buildings.

10. FINANCE

i. Councillors Expenses

There were none.

ii. Invoices for Payment

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to pay Mr L Robbins £90.00 for the Independent Internal Audit (cheque no 1334).

iii. To consider Independent Internal Auditor Report 2022-23

Councillors discussed the internal audit report and noted its contents. The Clerk was thanked for facilitating the audit.

iv. To consider request for grant from Doddington & District Village Show Committee

Cllr Clark did not take part in the discussion or vote on this item.

Councillors considered the request for a grant and agreed that this was an important feature of the year and that it benefits a wide range of residents.

Cllr Coates **PROPOSED** that a grant of £100.00 be made to the Show: **SECONDED** by Cllr Fraser: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** (cheque no 1335).

11. SPEED WATCH

Cllr Fraser reported that Speed Watch continues and is having good results with the focus being on education. There is a need for volunteers.

Cllr Coates said three of the team are co-ordinators inputting the data and liaising with Kent Police. There was a meeting last week, there are 1300 volunteers in the County; 7% of passing vehicles are speeding; 20's Plenty has been discussed but not suitable for Doddington; nuisance motor bikes are a problem across the county; there was a presentation on the new kit which is available.

12. PLAYING FIELD

i. Cllr Fraser's monthly report

Cllr Fraser reported that the grass cutting continues, the minor tree work and moss control is ongoing. Young people are using the basketball net now the overgrowth has been cut back. The equipment is checked daily.

Cllr Coates thanked Cllr Fraser for his report.

ii. To consider quotation for Summer port-a-loo

Cllr Coates **PROPOSED** to accept the quotation of £205 from Four Jays, being no increase from last year: **SECONDED** by Cllr Fraser: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**. The port-a-loo to be from 1 August.

13. CORRESPONDENCE

1. 17.05.23- NALC newsletter

2. 18.05.23- NALC CEO report
3. 22.05.23- SBC: policy round-up
4. 23.05.23- KCC Highways: Urgent Road Closure - Frangbury, Doddington - 30th May 2023
5. 25.05.23- NALC newsletter
6. 25.05.23- NALC CEO bulletin
7. 26.05.23- Faversham Town Council: KCC's Proposal to close Faversham's Waste Recycling Centre
8. 26.05.23- KCC Highways: Urgent Road Closure - Old Lenham Road, Doddington - 2nd June 2023
9. 30.05.23- SBC: policy round-up
10. 01.06.23- KALC conferences
11. 02.06.23- NALC CEO bulletin

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

i. To consider monthly Parish Council surgery

Cllr Coates introduced this item and asked that it be dealt with as two topics, the Kent Karrier bus and a potential "surgery".

Cllr Clark said there could be a monthly surgery on Wednesday morning when the Craft Club is meeting, the surgery could be held in the kitchen and could have information regarding the Kent Karrier bus service. The surgery would be publicised by word-of-mouth, a lot of older people are not on Social Media.

Cllr Lumsden said people do not read minutes on the website, there could also be copies of this as well as the Newsletter available at the surgery.

Cllr Clark said there will be three hundred less people receiving the Newsletter as it will not be delivered to residents not renewing their subscription.

Cllr Coates said the bus service was an agenda item in January and in the February Newsletter; Cllr Fraser was the Council's nominated representative on the Faversham Town Council Group.

The Clerk informed Members that one of the conditions of the KCC grants which Faversham Town Council obtained was that it should go out to villages which have lost their bus service. The Kent Karrier runs on Tuesday and Thursday and it is anticipated that the new service to Faversham will run on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. It is possible that this will be free for those with passes but the Town Council has yet to make a decision.

With regard to the surgery aspect, Cllr Coates said the Council fulfils its legal obligations by putting minutes and information on the website and there is a link from the Village website to the Council one. For important items we put a link on the village Facebook page to the website. We are obliged to publicise our work but unfortunately we cannot make residents read items. Residents do attend Council meetings and questions are also raised either through the Clerk or directly with Councillors. Cllr Coates expressed grave concerns about one councillor holding a surgery as there was a personal physical risk and they could easily be mis-quoted, particularly about complex issues such as planning. An occasional surgery would be a good idea to brief residents on specific topics, such as the one we held to discuss flooding, but this should not replace the public forum at the monthly meetings where questions from the public can be debated by the full council.

Cllr Cuthbert said residents on Social Media could inform people they know, who do not have access, about news and events. Cllr Cuthbert also reiterated the dangers of "predetermination" where, in an informal situation, Councillors could offer an opinion which then prevents formal comment.

Cllr Lumsden said a surgery is a good idea however lone working issues are important. The Council could have a stall at the fete to inform residents about the Council.

Cllr Coates said the Council has held surgeries on specific topics and a fete stall is a good idea.

Cllr Clark said a separate article about the bus could be included in the Newsletter and all said this was a good idea. Cllr Coates asked Mrs Licence to inform Cllrs Lumsden and Clark when new Councillor training opportunities were available.

ACTION: Cllr Clark to draft and circulate to Chairman and Clerk for submission to Newsletter.

Cllr Coates informed Members that he attends the KALC Swale Area Committee meetings and that he has put himself forward to be the Police & Crime Commissioner delegate.

ii. Proposed closure of KCC Household Waste Recycling Centre at Faversham

Cllr Coates reported that Faversham Town Council has set up a petition; should the Council get involved in the campaign or should Councillors respond individually?

Cllr Cuthbert said all sites should be kept open and be made easier to use. There is a cost to Councils if people are unable to use the tip as fly tipping increases. Also residents are unaware that companies disposing of rubbish must have a waste carriers licence or the person will be fined if their rubbish is fly tipped. If the sites are closed waste will be dumped in rural lanes and on private property.

Councillors agreed that they would like to be kept updated by Faversham Town Council on the campaign.

Date of next Meeting:- Monday 10 July 2023

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.35pm

Signed as a true record of the meeting

Chairman

Date: 10 July 2023