

Minutes of the Meeting of Doddinghurst Parish Council held at 20.00 on Thursday 4th April 2013, Parish Room, (adj. Village Hall), Church Lane, Doddinghurst.

Present: Cllrs. Mrs D Dicker (Chairman), Mrs D Rogers-Harrison, Mr. A Farrow, Mr A Oliver, Mrs J Le Page, Mr. D Potter, Mr P Arnell, Mr G Smith and Mr A Smith. County and Borough Councillor Ann Naylor; and Borough Cllr. R McCheyne

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr C Enderby, Mr. G.W. Bateson, Borough Cllr. K Parker.
2.  **Resolved:** Minutes of the meeting held on the 7th March 2013 approved and signed.
3. **Declaration of Interests:** from Members of any item(s) on this agenda. None declared.
4. **Noted:** Clerk's Report back on progress following the previous meeting.
 - i. Quotes for repairs to Scout Path Lights obtained.
 - ii. A review of the burial ground fees completed.
 - iii. Parish Council bylaw sign for main play areas erected.
 - iv. Allotment renewals underway - almost completed.
 - v. Neighbourhood plan environmental draft report completed - issued for comment
 - vi. Chairman's laptop was causing difficulties. Its hard disc was de-cluttered and defragmented. A backlog of 143 windows XP system updates installed, plus BT supported antivirus software and peripheral system drivers. System scanned and malware removed. The system is now working on highly secure wi-fi link via one of the latest BT hub routers and is performing normally.
 - vii. Letters to: John Jowers re Essex flood management; Alison Crowe re Double Taxation and the Brentwood Partnership Agreement; Ian Churley re Donkey Derby and Regal Busways re 261 service, issued.
 - viii. Paperwork for the Annual Parish Meeting (18th April @ 19.30) issued.
 - ix. BBPCA minutes issued and guest speaker for next meeting arranged.
 - x. Several ashes re-opens/ new burials and interments organised, activities that included deed of grant revisions.
 - xi. Bus Club financial report prepared and meeting held.
 - xii. Web site updating problem encountered and resolved. Website updating in progress.
 - xiii. Tax Return for 2012/13 completed.
 - xiv. 2012/13 External Audit papers received and notice of audit posted.
5. **Noted:** Schedule of correspondence received up to the 27th February 2013. Noted the correspondence received.
6. **Financial Reports and Minutes and Feedback from Committees.**
 - a.  **Resolved** Approved the Financial Reports for March 2013.
 - b.  **Resolved** Approved the Schedule of Payments for March 2013.
 - c. Information: Planning applications - update: .Rosemary, 1 Days Cottages, Days Lane, Application for garage to residential accommodation conversion refused and appealed.
 - d. Information: Noted the GP meeting of the 20th March 2013 including requirement for making long term funding provision for Burial Ground maintenance.
 - e. Information: Feedback from Members relating to Committees attended since last meeting Cllr G Smith gave feedback on the volunteering event in March.
7.  **Resolved:** Brentwood Parish Liaison meeting - proposed agenda item Double Taxation The Clerk issued a paper setting out the current position on double taxation in terms of the total precept for the 9 parishes of Brentwood which has risen over 20% in one year due to the pressures of inflation and discretionary grant reduction and the failure of Brentwood Borough Council to implement its promised Partnership Agreement for the past 2 years. The position now is that the parishes raise £298,000 per annum in precept and receive £112,000 in grant, causing the Parishes to subsidise the unparished areas of the Borough by up to £186,000 per year. The matter is on the agenda of the parish liaison meeting with Brentwood Borough Council on the 8th April 2013. **Approved** an outline statement on Double Taxation and that Councillors G Smith and the Chairman would attend.
8.  **Resolved:** Approval of the letter on highway issues. Approved for issue to the senior members and officers of Essex County council as personally addressed letters.

9. Information: Comparison of Parish Precepts. Noted the table of Parish Precept increases from 2012/13 to 2013/14. The average increase was over 20% with one council increasing its precept by 100%. The increase for Doddinghurst was 2%.

10. Discussion: Future Issues facing the Parish Council. Councillor engagement and meeting management. The Chairman offered the opportunity to councillors to identify issues they want to see addressed in terms of meeting management and encouraging all councillors to comment equally during meetings. Whilst some external matters were raised - e.g. presence of Borough Councillors in village, Police attendance at meetings and how the council could have having a bigger voice in challenging the decisions of others no internal matters were raised.

11. Information: 261 Bus operational issues. A copy of the new timetable (effective from the 7th May 2013) was discussed. Whilst it was felt that a 90 minute service could cause inconvenience for many, it was recognised that this was a proposal to deal with operational problems Regal Busways had found running a commercial service. The new service would be monitored for user feedback.

12. Information: DOFC statement of expenses. Noted the total expenditure on football field maintenance in 2012/13 had been £2144. This had been an unusual year with many normally scheduled activities abandoned due to adverse weather.

13. Information: Calendar of meetings for 2013/14. Noted the main PC meeting dates. The May Finance and Resource meeting is to be rescheduled due to a clash with allotment meeting. Deputy Clerk to amend the schedule and reissue.

14. Other urgent information (No council actions/letters/undertakings permissible on this item). Cllr Farrow is to meet with Mr R Parrot, the new landowner of land bordering Budgens Fields, to discuss the boundary between the two properties and other issues arising from the fencing off of this strip of property that runs from "Lorro Park" to the field adjacent St Margaret's Hall.

A demonstration of the proposed 50w LED floodlights for the scout path was given.

Councillors were reminded of the Annual Village meeting to be held on the 18th April in the Parish Room at 19.30.

The meeting closed at 22.10

Comments in the public session:

Concern over a number of footpaths was expressed for a variety of different reasons, viz: because the land had been ploughed and left impassable; the land had become a muddy quagmire; a footpath was been encroached upon by new fencing.

Neighbourhood Watch minutes are now available on the Doddinghurst Community website, eg. <http://www.doddinghurst.org.uk/nhw/MinsMar13.pdf>

On Monday 29th April, 6:30 – 8:30 pm, Nick Alston, the new Police and Crime Commissioner, is holding an open meeting at Brentwood County High School. All are invited to attend.

Minutes signed:

Date: 2nd May 2013