

**Minutes of the Meeting of Doddington Parish Council General Purpose Committee held at 7.30 pm on the 14<sup>th</sup> October 2021 in the Parish Room, (adjacent Village Hall), Church Lane, Doddington, Essex, CM150NJ**

**Present: Cllrs. Gerry Smith (Chairman), Julia Le Page, Diane Rogers-Harrison, Katie Pond, Trisha Brooks, Roger McCheyne.**

1. **Apologies for absence.** Cllr. Phil Arnell had sent his apologies (work commitments).
2. **Declaration of interests relating to items on the agenda.** None declared.
3. **Resolution:** To approve minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021. Minutes approved and signed.
4. **Information:** Update on activities undertaken since 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021 meeting.
  - (i) **Play Area:** Various small faults had been identified and most had been attended to by Broadmead Leisure, including new pneumatic closures on gates. One outstanding issue is with the cross trainer which would be considered separately in the meeting.
  - (ii) **Zip Wire Accident:** A thorough investigation into the accident had been carried out by the Parish Council's insurers, who were satisfied with the safety surface and the inspection regime. The insurers have defended DPC's position in Court and the outcome is awaited. Broadmead Leisure have been asked to deal with additional repairs to the rubber gaiter that encloses the zip wire seat support chain because the existing one is distorted and has been torn and also to replace a damaged fixing spike that helps retain the leading edge of the safety matting next to the "launch" ramp.
  - (iii) **Burial Ground:** No interments in the first quarter of the financial year, but since the last meeting there have been two full burials, one burial re-open, four new ashes interments and one ashes re-open. New members were advised of the Parish Council's fee policy, whereby any person may apply to purchase a plot, but residents of Doddington receive a preferential rate as they are precept payers to the Parish.
  - (iv) **Tree Planting:** Mr & Mrs Farrow (village tree wardens) plan to plant two cherry trees to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee next year. Cllr. McCheyne informed members that the best time to plant trees is before March.
  - (v) **Parking:** A major issue related to parking developed on Sundays when Blackmore Youth Football Club were using the village football fields free of charge. The number of matches being scheduled with both parallel games, and games in series, resulted in a surge in the number of families trying to access the village by car which created a chaotic parking situation. In consequence, DPC has called a halt to football being played on its pitches until such a time as car parking, and an agreement with the club(s), can be resolved. The Clerk had issued a statement setting out the position on social media and on behalf of the Committee Cllr. Smith thanked him for a measured and informative statement which seems to have solved the issue. It was understood that the football clubs have moved their venue to neighbouring parishes who can provide more parking. The club has not contacted the Parish Council over the parking problem. It was noted that Cllr. Dicker had raised the issue at the BBPCA and she reported that this is a problem across the Borough – the number of cars associated with football matches simply cannot be accommodated.
  - (vi) **Pond Area:** (Junction of Days Lane and Doddington Road) It was noted that marker posts have been replaced and vegetation cut back. A contractor had been to visit the pond to advise on its ongoing maintenance but this was not his particular area of interest.
  - (vii) **Risk Assessments:** One was awaited and is being chased.
5. **Information and Resolution:** Mr Peter Laing had requested a memorial bench in the Burial Ground. It was noted that the Council had resolved that there was no room for more memorial benches in the Burial Ground and had referred this matter back to the Committee for resolution. A position on Peartree Field had been rejected as a position with a view of the church steeple was requested. After discussion it was resolved to offer Mr Laing a bench in the playground, made from recycled plastic. This would be in view of the steeple and also benefit the residents. Mr Laing's decision to be brought back to a future meeting. The Clerk reported that she is drafting a revised Memorial Bench Policy and this will also be brought back to a future meeting for approval.

6. **Information and 🖐️Resolution:** The cross trainer is for adults, but there is a potential hand trap for children due to loose bearings and general wear and tear. The equipment had been well used for the last 3-4 years. Broadmead Leisure have had trouble trying to fix it. It was resolved unanimously to take it out of service immediately and get quotes for repair and replacement so that a way forward can be considered.  
It was agreed to alter the order of the agenda as Cllr. Pond needed to leave the meeting.
7. **Information:** It was agreed that the surface condition of the Small Car Park needed repairs and the Clerk was asked to obtain quotes for raking off the loose surface and laying self-binding gravel material during dry conditions. This to include the 'no mans land' between the car park and the pavement.
8. **Information and 🖐️Resolution:** It was noted that Prince Tree Surgery carries out the annual tree survey, free of charge, and identify and quote for any works required. Resolved to instruct them to carry out this year's survey.  
Cllr. Pond left the meeting. X
9. **Information and 🖐️Resolution:** Maintenance works of the Parish Room, external doors, main corridor and gents' toilets. Mr Blake tabled the Stage 2 Scoping Document. Following a discussion on the background of the ownership of the Village Hall and the Parish Office, along with suggested improvements to the outside appearance of the building, it was resolved to obtain quotes for Stage 2 and bring them back to the Committee. Consideration in the quotes to be given for insulation/thermal efficiency.
10. **Information and 🖐️Resolution:**  
(i) Denied - request from a resident purchase a full burial plot for the interment of ashes only.  
(ii) Noted – there are 56 loose ashes plot headstones. Matter still under consideration.
11. **Any Other Urgent Business strictly for information only:**  
Half and one-acre plots of land at Eagle Field and Doddinghurst Common (both outside the Parish boundary) have become available for lease for agricultural use. A resident has emailed DPC proposing that DPC lease a plot for use by local families to learn about trees, plants and wildlife. The Clerk will forward the email to the Committee for future consideration. Cllr McCheyne advised members of the committee that the same landowner had recently purchased a field off Dagwood Lane.
12. **🖐️Resolution:** Agreed to accept the quote and purchase 12 mounting blocks for the memorial area in the Burial Ground at a cost of £70 each. Total cost £840.00 plus VAT.

**The meeting closed at 21.00**

**Meeting signed:**

**Date: 16<sup>th</sup> February 2021**