


Minutes of the Meeting of Doddinghurst Parish Council General Purpose Committee held at 7pm on the 29th April 2021 via zoom video conferencing

Present: Cllrs. Alan Farrow, Gerry Smith, Julia Le Page, Phil Arnell, Diane Rogers-Harrison, David Potter

1 Apologies for absence: None


2. Declaration of Interests relating to items on the agenda. Cllr Farrow declared an interest in Item 11 as his wife is the DPC Tree Warden.


3.  Resolved: Approved, the minutes of the 11th February 2021


4 Information: Update on activities undertaken since last meeting:

- a) The Clerk and Deputy Clerk have continued to work from home following Government guidelines.
- b) Parish Room. The creche returned on 2nd February 2021. Room was cleaned before they returned.
- c) Children's Play Area – After checking with DPC Insurers who confirmed that a weekly Parish Council and an annual ROSPA inspection is required, notice was given to Brentwood on the 6 weekly PI inspections which have now ceased. Broadmead Leisure have been asked to carry out bi-monthly inspections and the first one was completed on 13th April 2021. The play area remains open and is still being cleaned on a weekly basis. DPC have received 2 complaints since the last meeting. The first regarding the cross trainer received on 8th March and the second regarding poor surface maintenance around the zipwire received on 8th April have both been discussed with DPC Insurers and the latter one is under further investigation. All equipment has been inspected by Broadmead. See agenda item.
- d) Burials – very quiet at the moment. No new burials.
- e) Allotments – Allotment renewals are complete. Currently 3 half plots left in the shade so possibly not able to let. We are holding a small waiting list. The allotments were broken into over the weekend of 10th April and again on 14th April to gain access to storage containers on the farm. The repair to the gate lock and weld the hinges to make it extra secure is £360 plus VAT and will take place next week.
- f) Office Refurbishment. The builder started the refurbishment of the Ladies toilet on 20th January 2021, and there is a final push to complete the work now. The floor has now been laid, plumbing completed and fixtures being fitted. There was a supplier delay with the door and delays due to slow drying plasterwork.
- g) Annual Tree survey. The Tree work was completed mid March but Prince were not able to complete the green waste clearance in the burial ground as the debris damaged their equipment and they removed the cost from the invoice. The Clerk is now seeking alternative quotes- see agenda item
- h) Pear Tree Field. An email has now been received from our insurers regarding help with carrying out a risk assessment re the digging out a trench at the rear of Pear tree field which was discussed at Full Council. Cllr Gerry Smith and the Clerk have an action from Full Council to research local solutions to this problem.

- i) Pear tree pond area. A flowering Cherry tree that a resident kindly offered to buy to replace the one cut down last year was planted on 9th March thanks to the help of Cllr Farrow and Gail Farrow. The vandalised Holm Oak was checked and it is growing back well albeit as a shrub at present.
We are also in dialogue with the Ehren family about refurbishing the bench (agreed by the GP committee) and replacing the plaque in memory of Eileen, a former DP Councillor who passed away before Christmas – see agenda item. The contractor will complete the refurbishment once the weather improves.
- j) Footpaths. The enquiry from a resident regarding the ownership of the pond adjacent to the entrance on Frog Lane of Restricted Byway 36/Footpath 21, was passed to ECC PROW is now back with the resident who is happy to pursue further through Highways records. Peter Fisk has reported a fallen tree on Footpath 4 which we are progressing.
- k) Highways. Limited news on logged highway issues including the Budgens issue. It has been confirmed that the pavements in the The Gardens will be repaired in 2022/23 highways budget. Rubbish clearance of the Z bends on Doddinghurst Road was completed by a resident.
- l) Scribe Accounts. The Clerk, deputy clerk and RFO have completed the initial training on the Scribe Cemetery package – see agenda item
- m) Risk Assessments. The Parish Office risk assessment will be completed after the toilet refurbishment is finished because of building work and covid restrictions
- n) Football contract negotiations have been on hold because of lockdown. There are still some football items to be cleared from the Parish Office now the referee’s room is being refurbished. The question regarding the reinstatement of the kissing gate was taken away by Cllr Wagland at the last Full Council Meeting and no reply as yet.
- o) The Brentwood Community Connect Hub - (Trailer) visited Doddinghurst Friday 16th April 2021.
- p) We have received a Freedom of Information Request on Litter and Fly Tipping on 16th April 2021

5. Information and  Resolved: The Councillors discussed the recent Inspection report from Broadmead Leisure carried out on 13th April 2021 and the quote to maintain the items identified as requiring attention. They also discussed the recent incidents both of which occurred outside the gated area of the Children’s playground which Broadmead were asked specifically to inspect. All items identified for maintenance except a trip hazard around the roundabout (medium risk) were shown as low risk. It was agreed to go ahead with all items except the quote for capping the surface around the slide which will be discussed further with Broadmead when they are next on site. It was also decided to ask Broadmead for their advice on signage for the area outside the gated children’s play area when they next visit.

6. Information and  Resolved : The Burial Board agreed to accept the quotation from Scribe for the Cemetery package.

7. Information and  Resolved: It was agreed not to increase the Parish Room and Burial Ground fees for 2021/22.

8. Information and 🖐️ Resolved: The quote for chipping and spreading the green waste in the burial ground was agreed as it will help suppress the weeds.

9. Information and 🖐️ Resolved: The refurbishment of the benches at Peartree Pond and Field agreed at the last meeting will start at beginning of May. It was suggested that the offer of a donation in memory of Eileen Ehren be accepted and put towards the planting of two more cherry trees on Peartree green.

10. Information and 🖐️ Resolved: The Councillors considered the request for a memorial bench and agreed that it could be installed in Peartree field as there is only one there at the moment.

11. Information and 🖐️ Resolved: The Councillors considered the request from the DPC tree warden to plant two cherry trees in the village park as a sign of hope during the pandemic and agreed to the £200 cost which they suggested could come out of the already agreed budget for updating the Nature Trail in the park as this is all in the spirit of improving wellbeing.

12. Information and 🖐️ Resolved: The Councillors reviewed the current DPC litter bin locations and emptying schedule and discussed replacing the rusted open litter bin in the play area. It was agreed to get quotes to replace the open bin with a covered bin.

13. Information and 🖐️ Resolved: Cllr Smith updated the committee on progress with renewed negotiations with Blackmore Youth Football Club who have resumed play recently and started practicing mid week on the DPC football fields following the change in government covid guidelines. The frequency and number of people attending is currently exceeding what was previously agreed and car parking is a problem. It was proposed by Cllr Gerry Smith that he and maybe Cllr Alan Smith together with Alan Farrow representing the Village Hall meet with the Football Club representatives to outline the potential future agreement for future consideration by Full Council. This was agreed.

14. Information and 🖐️ Resolved: The arrangement to read the metre to measure the Parish office electricity usage ceased during lockdown so it was agreed that this would resume and the spreadsheet updated to show the cost vs the amount of money paid by DPS for village hall grass cutting. This can then be reviewed at the next meeting.

15. Information: The request for Brentwood Borough Council to hold a Fun Day on 23rd July 2021 was noted.

13. Any Other Urgent Business:

Meeting closed at 9pm

Signed: G Smith

Dated: 17th June 2021