


**Minutes of the Meeting of Doddinghurst Parish Council held on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2023 at 19.30 in the Village Hall, Church Lane, Doddinghurst, Essex, CM15 0NJ.**

**Present: Cllrs. Mrs D. Dicker (Chairman), Mrs J. LePage, Mr M. Capon, Mr P Arnell, Mr G. Smith, Mrs D. Rogers Harrison, Mrs T. Brooks, Mr D. Potter and Mr R. McCheyne.**

**Also Present: Mrs C Fuller – Clerk/RFO  
Mrs C Tremain – Deputy Clerk  
Borough Councillors C. Poppy and K. Parker  
One member of the public**

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Apologies received from Cllr. A. Smith and K. Pond
2. **Declaration of interests in items arising on the agenda.**  
None.
3.  **Minutes of Council Meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2022**  
Approved and signed by the Chairman

**4. Clerk's Report for January 2023**

a) Funds held at end of December 2022

Barclays Bank	£138,812.87
Petty Cash	£245.85
Santander	£18,190.47
Barclaycard	£0.00
Sub-total	£157,249.19
Less unrepresented payments	£0.00
Total	£157,249.19

- b) Santander – the application to add Cllrs. Capon and LePage is still ongoing.
- d) Burial Ground Update – nothing since last meeting.
- e) Allotments Update – meeting of the Committee being arranged.
- f) Christmas Lights- It was not possible for the power supply to be run from Budgens or Kirvan Kitchen. Lights to the trees in front of the Village Hall, Priests House and the shops were provided by HiHo Workshops. A letter of thanks to be sent to them.
- g) Office BT & Broadband – both were out of order between 18<sup>th</sup> October and 10<sup>th</sup> November. A complaint was lodged and apology received along with agreement to rebate the rental for the fault period and, as compensation, 2 months rental paid. This has not happened and the Clerk has raised a further complaint which is being processed.
- h) Office mobile phone has been purchased with a sim-only deal at £9 per month for unlimited minutes/texts/12GB data. The number is 07871 346448.
- i) Parish Council Building. Gutters were cleared and additional heater installed in the office. A revised quote for the external doors is awaited, along with a visit from a plumber to quote for the gents' toilet works.
- j) Winter Salt Scheme. 40 bags of salt were supplied by Essex County Council and are stored at Cllr. McCheyne's property. Three volunteers have been recruited and received a supply of salt. Cllr. McCheyne also re-filled the grit bin in the village hall car park.
- k) Risk Assessments have been completed and submitted to the Deputy Clerk, except footpaths.

## 5. **Financial Reports**

Noted and approved

- a) Financial Reports for November and December 2022.
- b) Schedule of Payments for November and December 2022.

The Clerk was asked to investigate investing the Parish Council's funds into an account which paid a better rate of interest.

## 6. **Feedback from Committees**

- a) Finance & Resources Committee – 16<sup>th</sup> November. Minutes and actions were noted.
- b) Planning Committee – 24<sup>th</sup> November. Minutes and actions were noted. Members noted the report on applications decided, pending decision, and new applications, which was tabled at the meeting.
- c) Community Bus Meeting – 21<sup>st</sup> November. The Clerk attended and reported on upcoming trips.
- d) BBPCA AGM – 1<sup>st</sup> December. The Chairman and Clerk attended.

## 7. **Public Participation**

Cllr Poppy reported:

- on the redevelopment of the Baytree Centre over four years, to include a cinema. It is hoped that planning permission will be granted in February/March
- on football at the Brentwood Centre.
- Essex County Council has withdrawn the funding for rangers.
- BBC will be marking the King's Coronation with an event in place of the Strawberry Fayre.
- the bin lorries are short-staffed but despite this staff did an excellent job over the Christmas period.
- A public inquiry is going ahead on a 5-acre farm at Warley.


Cllr. Parker reported:

- New sheltered housing in Pilgrims Hatch is going through.
- No disruption to businesses is planned during the Baytree redevelopment.
- Local Plan is in place and reviews already underway. No call for sites yet.
- The delay in the Horsemanside traveller site is due to the travellers' QC being disbarred. The process has had to start again.

Cllr. Smith reported that he had written to County Cllr. Wagland about the new Thoby Lane junction at Mountnessing with recommendations to improve its safety: road to be narrowed, hatchings to be replaced with solid lines, two no entry signs, and a keep left sign on the bollards. The Clerk was asked to make a Freedom of Information Request to ECC for Road Safety Audits 3 & 4.

Cllr. Potter informed the Borough Councillors that a new green metal fence erected at Swallows Cross is obstructing the sight line.

## 8. **Cross Trainer**

Members considered the quotations and  **resolved** to accept the quotation from the Great Outdoor Gym Company for £3,000 plus VAT to include delivery.

## 9. **Disabled Access into Parish Office & Parish Room**

The GP Committee has been considering ways of assisting disabled people up the external

steps into the Parish Office and Parish Room. A ramp is not practical as it would need to be very long and extend into the car park. An external lift may require planning permission for the construction works and would be vulnerable to vandalism. The Clerk was asked to investigate a 'stair-walker' which would assist wheelchair users up and down the steps. The Stair Climbing Company in North Essex gave a demonstration of their product on site: a portable re-chargeable unit onto which a wheelchair is fixed. The unit could be stored indoors when not in use. Staff would require training. Members considered the costs quoted for new and second-hand units (£5,680 plus VAT and £4,680 plus VAT respectively). After discussion it was 🖐️ **resolved** not to purchase a stair-walker but to formulate an Access Policy. The Clerk to draft a policy for consideration and adoption by the Parish Council.

#### 10. Triple Grave

A request for a triple grave has been received, however Cemetery Rules state that only two interments may take place per burial or ashes plot. It was noted that the Parish Council does not sell or allocate plots in advance of the first interment and therefore 🖐️ **resolved** not to grant this request now (as it may be many years before first interment) but to invite the family to make the request again when they wish to purchase a plot.

#### 11. Notice Boards

- a) The notice board near the old post office has gradually deteriorated despite being patched up. After discussion it was 🖐️ **resolved** to replace it with a man-made timber notice board from Greenbarnes at the cost of £919.19 plus VAT (supply & delivery only).
- b) New notices at the Recreation Ground (contact details, age of children, etc) to be referred to the GP Committee.

#### 12. New Trees

Cllr. Poppy has 21 trees to plant in the Brizes & Doddinghurst Ward and is suggesting that 7 are planted in each village. Members agreed to accept the trees and decide on their locations at a later date.

#### 13. Budget 2023/24

🖐️ Resolved to accept and adopt the budget for 2023/24 as recommended by the Finance & Resources Committee as amended by the full Council.

#### 14. Precept 2023/24

🖐️ **Resolved** to accept the recommendation from the Finance & Resources Committee to freeze the precept at band D at £63.39 for the financial year 2023/24, giving a precept amount of £77,400 (a cash increase of £1,586).

#### 15. Consultation

Brentwood Borough Council Draft Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document. Cllr. Potter will forward any comments to the Clerk for submission to BBC.

#### 16. Communications

The Deputy Clerk asked members for a short biopic, if they hadn't already supplied one, for publication on the new website. She hopes that the new website will go live next week.

#### 17. Bus Service/DigiGo

Cllr. McCheyne reported that, from his observations, the 61 bus has very few passengers and suggested that, to protect its viability, a smaller minibus might be more economic for the

operating company, as well as being safer on the road. Cllr. Dicker reported that a minibus is too small for the number of school children using the service, and also that the current service is signed up until July this year.

Cllr. Smith suggested that the Parish Council needs to identify exactly what service the village needs, taking wider issues into account such as ULEZ and access to NHS services.

It was agreed to set up a meeting of interested parties to discuss this further. The following expressed their interest: Cllrs. Dicker, Smith, Capon, McCheyne and LePage, and Bor. Cllr. Poppy. The Clerk will set up a meeting and circulate details of ECC's DigiGo service currently operating in North Essex.

**11. King's Coronation Event**

Cllrs. LePage and Dicker are booking companies to provide entertainments on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May and they will send an update to all Councillors in February. Help from Councillors will be needed on the day.

**14. Other Urgent Information not requiring actions**

- a) Cllr. LePage reported an accident on the bends towards Brentwood.
- b) The Deputy Clerk reported that a new battery for the defibrillator is being chased (put this onto GP agenda).
- c) The Chairman asked the Borough Councillors for an update on the Waterwork Springs development. Cllr. Parker reported that new hoardings had been erected as there had been considerable vandalism on site. Extra boreholes had been dug, and the cost to remove all the rubbish had increased considerably. However, the applicants are committed to the development and are going to ask the Planning Dept if they can start on the first half of the development to help them financially.

**The meeting closed at 21.30**

Minutes signed:

Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2023