

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Doddinghurst Parish Council held on Thursday 11th May 2023
at 19.30 in the Village Hall, Church Lane, Doddinghurst, Essex, CM15 0NJ.**

**Present: Cllrs. Mrs D. Dicker, Mrs D Rogers-Harrison, Mrs. J Le Page, Mr G Smith, Mr A. Smith,
Mr D. Potter and Mr R. McCheyne.**

**Also Present: Borough Cllr. K Parker
County Cllr. L. Wagland
Mrs C Fuller – Clerk/RFO**

The Chairman welcomed those present and reported that Cllr. Katie Pond had tendered her resignation as Parish Councillor by email. An official letter is awaited. The Parish Coronation Event was a wonderful day which went really well. The new Deputy Clerk, Aimi Davies, was unable to attend tonight's meeting due to an arrangement made before her appointment.

1. 🖐️ Election of Chairman and completion of Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr. Dicker was nominated by Cllr. A. Smith and seconded by Cllr G. Smith.

Resolved unanimously to elect Cllr. Dicker as Chairman for the civic year 2023-24.

Cllr. Dicker signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Cllr. Dicker reminded those present that next year will be an election year and she will have served 30 years on the Parish Council. She feels that more needs to be done to promote the Parish Council, improve its image and attract new people. She suggested an informal meeting to discuss this issue.

2. Apologies for Absence Apologies received from Cllrs. M. Capon (unwell) and P. Arnell (work).

3. Declaration of interests in items arising on the agenda

None.

4. 🖐️ Appointment of Vice Chairman Resolved to appoint Cllr. G. Smith as Vice Chairman.

5. 🖐️ Minutes of Parish Council Meeting on the 2nd March 2023 Approved and signed as a correct record.

6. Public Participation

Cllr. Wagland reported:

- The booking system for waste recycling is a success. The Mountnessing site is a tenancy and ECC renewed with a small increase in cost. Since the introduction of the booking system ECC had received far fewer complaints from the landlord and a new tenancy was granted. The scheme is still a pilot until the autumn. Cllr. G. Smith reported that same day bookings can be made.
- ECC is struggling with pothole repairs due to the weather. Holes at the sides of roads are a bit problem but all those that damage the white lines should be reported to ECC and Cllr. Wagland. Large defects require a road closure which takes time to organise.
- Recent repairs to Doddinghurst Road cost £25,000. A further £14m has been allocated to road repairs.
- The Local Highways Panel manages pavement defects.

Cllr. Dicker reported that grass verges are looking bad and a danger to sight lines as they are

not being cut.

Cllr. G. Smith reported that temporary signs often block sight lines for drivers. Cllr. Wagland asked that examples are sent to her.

Cllr. Parker reported:

- Grass verges are cut by Brentwood Council's contractor. Cut grass is not removed. ECC pay for two cuts per year and BBC top this up by a further four cuts. This costs BBC £600,000. Cllr. McCheyne reported that some verges are not cut because of birds and pollinators and Cllr. Wagland stated that dandelions are considered crucial for improved biodiversity.
- He had visited a resident following complaints about weeds growing at Waterworks Spring Farm. He reported that the development is completely financed and conditions are to be applied before the first occupation. The developer has applied to put foundations on one side of the site when cleared, and then clear the other side. This should shorten works by six months. A large number of lorries has been removing bad spoil and ECC has been asked to close the road, or make it one-way, during construction. The developer is keen to get moving – the ancient woodland is deteriorating fast. The more trees are saved, the less there will be to plant. Passing places on Dagwood Lane exist and a further six are planned.

Cllr. Potter stated that the residents and Parish Council are concerned that development will stall. It would be courteous of the developer to talk to the Parish Council and update us with their difficulties.

Cllr. Dicker reported that numerous vehicles are parked at the top of Lime Grove on either side, on double yellow lines. Cllr. Wagland offered to take up the matter.

7. Clerk's Report

- Total funds held as at 4th May 2023 = £175,811.58
- Bank signatory changes for Barclays and Santander are still pending.
- Burial Ground – new stone plinths have been installed ready for brass plaques.
- Office phone and broadband has been renewed for a further 24 months.
- Parish Office – new smoke alarms fitted, and a second quote for the gents' toilet refurbishment is being sought.
- Risk Assessments – all except footpaths have been completed and submitted to the Deputy Clerk.
- Recreation Ground – cross trainer has been installed. Zip wire seat has been replaced. Top of the 'hump' has been filled with topsoil. Two new notice boards have been fitted to the gates. Rospa inspection is scheduled for May.
- Tree survey has been carried out by Prince Arboriculture Ltd and will be reported to the General Purposes Committee.

8. Constitution of Committees and Appointments to Committees

Resolved to approve the Constitution of Committees as previously circulated.

The committee membership was established as follows:

- General Purposes Committee: Cllrs G Smith, Mrs J Le Page, Mrs. D Rogers-Harrison, D. Potter and R McCheyne.
- Planning Committee: Cllrs Mrs. Dicker, M Capon, A. Smith, D. Potter and R McCheyne.
- Finance & Resources Committee: Cllrs Mrs. D Dicker, G Smith, J Le Page, M Capon, and A Smith.
- Allotment Committee: Cllrs Mrs. D Dicker, Mrs. J Le Page (plus three allotments holders).

It was noted that Cllrs. Arnell, Capon and Brooks were not present at the meeting so their committee membership would be established at the next Council meeting.

9. 🖐️ Appointment of Key Council Representatives.

Resolved to appoint as follows:

- BBPCA – Cllr Dicker
- Village Hall Committee – (tbc)
- BBC Parish Liaison Cttee – Cllr Dicker
- Village Bus Club Chairman – D. Schuster
- Bus & Transport – Cllrs Dicker & Capon
- BBC Planning Committee – to be decided on an ad hoc basis by DPC Planning Committee.
- Health Matters - Cllr Le Page
- Police Matters - Cllr G Smith
- Dagwood Trust - Cllr Potter
- Tree Warden - Gail Farrow
- Highways – Cllrs Capon & G Smith
- Footpaths and PROW's – Cllr Capon

It was noted that Cllr. Arnell was not present at the meeting so his appointments would be established at the next Council meeting. Cllr. Capon had indicated the above in his absence.

10. 🖐️ Financial Reports

Noted and approved:

- a) Financial Reports for March and April 2023
- b) Schedule of Payments for March and April 2023

11. 🖐️ Calendar of Meetings for 2023/24

Resolved to approve.

12. 🖐️ Internal Auditor for 2023/24

Resolved to appoint Michael Raistrick.

13. Planning Update

Circulated at the meeting and noted.

14. Feedback from Committees

- a) Planning Committee – 30th March 2023
- b) Planning Committee – 27th April 2023 – did not take place (inquorate)
- c) General Purposes Committee – 19th April 2023 – did not take place (inquorate)
- d) Doddinghurst Bus – the Clerk updated those present

15. 🖐️ Insurance

Information on the Council's insurance policy with BHIB was circulated with the agenda. The current policy expires on 31/5/23.

Resolved to renew with BHIB from 1/6/23. Total premium £1,254.57.

16. 🖐️ EALC/NALC Annual Subscription

Resolved to renew for 2023-24 for the total cost of £638.19.

17. 🖐️ Chairman's Allowance

Resolved at £500 for 2023/24.

18. 🖐️ Clerk's Emergency Fund

Resolved at limit of £1,000 for 2023/24.

19. 🖐️ Access to Wi-Fi

Request received from the Dagwood Trust. Resolved to grant access to the pre-school to the Parish Council's internet wi-fi so that they can run i-pads for children's development, on the understanding that permission is removed if any security issues occur.

20. 🖐️ Frog Street Pond Land Registration

The Clerk reported that Leonard Gray Solicitors had reviewed the paperwork on the matter and had concluded that the Parish Council would have very little chance of success in registering the land as it could not prove ownership or adverse possession, nor had it maintained the pond. It was agreed to drop the matter and the Clerk will retrieve the paperwork from the solicitor and write a letter of thanks. It was noted that the solicitor had not charged for this work.

21. 🖐️ New Noticeboard

Resolved to purchase a replacement noticeboard for outside the old post office in Doddinghurst Road for £1,038.84 plus VAT and fitting.

22. Other Urgent Information

None.

The meeting closed at 21.15

Minutes signed:

Date: 8th June 2023