

**Minutes of the Meeting of Doddinghurst Parish Council held on Thursday 25th July 2024 at 19.30
in the Parish Room, Church Lane, Doddinghurst, Essex, CM15 0NJ.**

Present: Cllrs. Mrs D Dicker, Mr A Smith, Mr G Smith, Mr P Arnell and Mr T Lockhart

Also Present: Borough Cllrs. R McCheyne, C Poppy and K Parker

Mrs C Fuller – Clerk/RFO

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from County Cllr. L Wagland.

2. Declaration of interests in items arising on the agenda

None.

3.  Minutes of Parish Council Meeting on the 13th June 2024

Approved and signed as a correct record.

4. Public Participation

- Cllr. Parker reported on Waterworks Spring Farm. Dagwood Lane is due to be closed in August/September for installation of passing points. The developer says that all houses will be up by Christmas. Phase One is up already, and Phase Two is advanced. Landscaping will be completed before the first occupancy. In response to a question from Cllr. G. Smith Cllr Parker offered to check where the path from the development will join with the path to the village, and whether any funding is forthcoming to help the Parish Council complete its Nature Trail project. He will contact either the director or Will Russell.
- Cllr. McCheyne reported that the house at Swallows Cross has been demolished in preparation for the construction of nine new houses.
- In response to a question from the Chairman, Cllr. Poppy reported that clearing overgrown vegetation around the bus stop in Doddinghurst Road (towards Brentwood, past Mountnessing Lane) is the responsibility of Essex County Council, but he would ask whether Brentwood BC's contractors would clear it.

The Chairman reported that the new bus company (Nibs) will not be able to run their buses through the double bends on Doddinghurst Road unless overgrown vegetation is cut back.

5. Clerk's Report

- Play Area - Broadmead Leisure Ltd have been asked to address any issues identified in the RoSPA report. It was noted that they had replaced the gate closure mechanism, and repaired an area of wet pour surface.
- Burial Ground – the pathway leading to The Gardens is overgrown and has been added to the list for the NATS team for clearance. The office had arranged for the grass in front of and behind the church to be cut by Brentwood Council, which is their responsibility but had been omitted from a recent job sheet.
- Open Spaces – new hard surface at the entrance to Budgens Field, plus bollards, are awaited. Extension to matted area in front of the goal has been completed in May, but unfortunately the turfed edges did not take and have been filled with topsoil and seeded.

- Nature Trail – the office staff are seeking help with mapping the area and advising on surfacing. Cllr. G. Smith asked Cllr. Parker to ask Will Russell for assistance with the project.
- Councillor Emails – all now up and running and to be used for all Parish Council correspondence.
- Allotments – meeting of the committee is due to be arranged.
- Tesco Lorries – Damaged kerbs and verges have been repaired.
- Community Bus – Trip to Walton on the Naze on 19th June was over-subscribed and a second trip for the waiting list has been arranged for September. Trip to Southend on Sea took place on 10th July. Monthly trips up to December will be advertised in The Link. Cllr. McCheyne reported that the Clerk at Blackmore Parish Council has confirmed that drivers up to the age of 79 are insured to drive the Blackmore Community Bus. Cllr. G. Smith stated that he would like to volunteer as a driver.
- British Telecom – the office phones went digital on 18th June and all calls are now made over the broadband line. All seem to be working well, but an answerphone is still awaited.

6. Financial Reports

- a) Resolved to approve the Bank Reconciliation for June & July 2024.
- b) Resolved to approve the Schedule of Payments & Receipts for June & July 2024.

7. Feedback from Committees & Other Meetings Attended

Resolved to note the following:

- a) Planning Committee meeting held on 11th July. Draft minutes and Planning Update were tabled. It was noted that three planning applications had been recently received and it was agreed to hold a Planning Committee meeting on Thursday 1st August at 11am. Agenda to be circulated tomorrow.
- b) BBPCA meeting held on 10th June. Attended by the Chairman and Clerk.
- c) BBC Parish Planning Forum held on 9th July. Attended by the Chairman and Clerk. The Chairman reported that planning officers reiterated housing numbers and provision for jobs in the Local Development Plan, although it was unclear where these jobs would be provided. Cllr. Poppy outlined a list of employment locations, all identified in the LDP. Cllr. Lockhart stated that he had attended the BBC Planning Meeting at which the Alexander Lane/Chelmsford Road development in Shenfield was refused planning permission.

8. Councillor Vacancies / Co-Option Update

It was noted that two people have expressed an interest in being co-opted onto the Parish Council. Both have been sent an application form. One has completed it and was invited to this meeting but unfortunately could not attend, and neither can they attend the next meeting on 5th September. The other person has not yet returned the form. It was agreed to invite the first candidate to the October meeting.

9. Litter Station

Members considered purchasing a 2-Minute Litter Pick Station to encourage members of the public to pick up litter. The idea was broadly welcomed but it was considered too expensive and a cheaper alternative should be sought.

10. 🖐️ Watering Village Planters

It was noted that one of the volunteers, who waters four planters, is unable to do so currently and members considered a quote from IDC Greenscapes Ltd. At £16.50 per planter per visit this was considered too expensive, and the planters should continue to be watered by office staff and the Chairman until the volunteer is able to return.

11. 🖐️ Grant Application from REACH - £350.00

Resolved to grant the sum of £100.00 to the organisation for the purchase of a new storage shed.

12. 🖐️ Defibrillator

The defibrillator on the Tesco building is approaching eight years old and it is advisable to replace them at eight years. Members considered three quotations and resolved to purchase one from The Defib Store for £1,289 + P&P + VAT. Installation to be arranged separately.

13. 🖐️ Deal Tree Health Surgery Car Park Extension

Resolved support Kelvedon Hatch Parish Council's call for the surgery to increase the size of its car park to accommodate additional patient numbers due to growing population.

14. 🖐️ Refurbishment of Directional Finger Post

Resolved to accept quotation from Keep Me Handy (painter/decorator) to refurbish the finger post at the junction of Doddinghurst Road/Mountnessing Lane as per quotation dated 23rd July 2024 for the sum of £300.00. Also to purchase six place name plates in aluminium at £15.08 each.

15. 🖐️ Bank Reconciliation Verification

Resolved to appoint Cllr. A. Smith to verify bank reconciliations quarterly and at year end (Financial Regulation 2.6).

16. 🖐️ Start Time of Meetings

Resolved to start future Parish Council meetings at 7pm.

17. Resignation of Groundsman

Noted that Patrick Maher has resigned. His last day of work will be 10th August. Members expressed their thanks to him – he has worked for the Parish Council for 20 years.

18. 🖐️ Covering the Groundsman's Duties

So that the Groundsman's duties are covered after he has left and until a decision has been made on whether to employ a replacement or take on a contractor, it was resolved that IDC Greenscapes covers the duties for a period of twelve weeks from 10th August as per quote.

19. Playground Inspection Report

The bi-monthly report from Broadmead Leisure Ltd. was noted.

21. Other Urgent Information

To note that the next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on 5th September 2024.

The meeting closed at 21.05

Minutes signed:

Date: 5th September 2024

