

DODFORD WITH GRAFTON PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the meeting of Dodford with Grafton Parish Council held on Monday 19 June 2023 in Dodford Village Hall at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs Scott Fuller, Rachel Jennings (Chair) and Rory Lydon (Vice Chairman)

In attendance: County Cllr Shirley Webb, District Cllr Kit Taylor, Clerk Kay Stone, and fifteen members of the public.

1. Apologies

Cllrs Lynne Griffin, Scottie Sanderson, Jenni Schuett and Jonathan Shapiro

2. Councillors Fuller, Sanderson and Schuett Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Scott agreed to continue in office and signed his declaration with the Clerk adding her signature. As Cllrs Sanderson and Schuett had extended their apologies, signing of their declarations will be added to the next agenda.

3. Declarations and Register of interest

- i. None.
- ii. None.

4. Dispensations

No dispensation requests received.

The meeting was adjourned to allow members of the public attending the meeting to raise matters of interest and for the presentation from Spring on the proposed solar project at Foxwalks Farm, Grafton Lane.

Directors Hugh House and Liban Elmi gave a 10 minute presentation on their proposed solar farm development which followed with questions and answers for 30 minutes from residents. One resident asked the Parish Council if the presentation would be recorded in the minutes and the Clerk explained that the open session of a Parish Council meeting is not recorded in the minutes verbatim but as an aide memoir. The resident asked if he could record the meeting and the Clerk explained that seven days' notice would have been required. The resident offered to make notes and circulate to other residents. Spring has yet to send in their planning application to Bromsgrove District Council (BDC), which they hoped would be by the end of June, and the Chair asked Hugh if the Parish Council could be notified by Spring to enable the Clerk to notify the residents. The Chair also asked Hugh if the Parish Council could receive a copy of his presentation and slides. When received the Clerk will attach them to the Minutes. Residents were mainly concerned about the noise nuisance level of the pile drilling, the amount of heavy lorries and health and safety of residents.

There were no other items raised. The residents (all bar one) left, and the meeting continued as follows:

5. Meetings

Cllr Lydon proposed, Cllr Jennings seconded, and all approved the minutes for the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on 18 May 2023. The minutes were signed by the Chair as being a true record.

6. Reports

- i. County Cllr Webb reported that
 - a. there will be a PACT (partners and communities together) meeting on Thursday 22 June on the Village Hall car park at 11am where residents can meet with the Police and Worcestershire County Council (WCC) Highways to discuss any issues,
 - b. and that the speed signs that had been put up on Grafton Lane had been taken down by the owner of Grafton Manor who was not happy they had been put up. Cllr Webb is still talking to the owner of Grafton Lane and Highways to try to reach a solution on how to

control traffic going to and from the Motocross and the potential increase in heavy traffic should the solar panel farm development be permitted.

- ii. District Cllr Taylor reported that
 - a. he would meet with the previous District Councillor and Phil Thomas on what was previously discussed regarding the pre application advice for the proposed solar farm project, and
 - b. he would ask Regulatory Services about lorries still delivering soil to a property in Priory Road. The Clerk to send past correspondence to Cllrs Taylor and Webb.

At this point the Clerk was asked to notify Upton Warren Parish Council about the proposed solar farm project and the noise of the pile drilling should the application be approved.

Cllr Taylor then left the meeting.

- iii. Cllr Fuller gave his report on the recent CALC Area meeting where the guest speaker was from Bromsgrove and Redditch Partnership. He was thanked by the Chair for attending and taking the time to report back. No actions needed from Cllr Fuller's report.
- iv. The Clerk reported on a recent post on Dodford Residents Facebook page where the resident was uncomplimentary about the Parish Council. The Clerk had responded to the resident's question on SmartWater kits:

As Clerk to the Parish Council, I am clarifying your question about how much residents paid for the SmartWater kits which were given free to residents who requested them. The Parish Council bought 162 kits and the Police bought 54 kits which cost the Parish Council £1,441.70. At no time did residents pay anything extra for these kits. The Parish Council is a tier of Local Government and each year requests a Precept from the District Council. In 2018 when these kits were purchased, the portion of Council Tax for the Parish Council was £28.34 per household. There has been no payment for the disposal of out of date kits. SmartWater advised the Parish Council the out of date kits were to be disposed of in the waste to landfill receptacles at the household waste site.

The Clerk commented that as social media is instant it is hard to give an up to date report on social media but was asked to keep this on the agenda for future reference should a posting need to be referred to the Parish Council.

- v. The Clerk reported that as from 1 July the revised rate for groups using the Village Hall on a monthly basis is to be at £35 per session, subject to future evaluation. The Clerk was asked to report back to the Village Hall Committee that the group in the small hall did not finish until 8.15pm and were loud whilst a presentation was taking place.

7. Membership of Committees and Organisations

Cllr Fuller was happy to continue as the Parish Council representative for Worcestershire CALC meetings and was thanked again by the Chair.

8. Planning

- i. Cllr Lydon proposed, Cllr Jennings seconded, and all approved the minutes of the planning committee meeting held on 23 May 2023, after which they were duly signed by the Vice Chairman.
- ii. Cllr Jennings proposed, Cllr Lydon seconded, and all approved the minutes of the planning committee meeting held on 13 June 2023, after which they were duly signed by the Vice Chairman.
- iii. No planning decisions received.
- iv. No planning appeals or appeals decisions received.
- v. Enforcement / Environmental issues:
 - a. The Clerk reported that the planning application for Westlea did not mention relandscaping and this is not mentioned in the approval document. It was noted that there are still lorries with soil going down Woodland Road and the Clerk was asked to request WCC Highways survey the damage to the side of the roads in Woodland and Victoria Road.

- b. The Clerk had received a full update from BDC on potential breaches which has been shared confidentially with the Parish Councillors prior to the meeting.
- vi. No other planning issues.

9. Memorial Garden

- i. Cllr Webb confirmed that Jo Rengger's mother wishes to continue.
- ii. After much discussion it was decided to simplify the garden plan with the approval of the working party to get things moving. Ideas such as bulb planting and allowing a natural wild flower patch to grow.
- iii. The Parish Council are not happy about the proposed wording by the family on the bench as the idea was more for a contemplative space. However, they are still happy for an information board with a QR code to give the history of the site supplied by Jo Rengger.
- iv. Clerk to obtain costings (bound resin path and railings) to see if the project, as per the current plan, is viable going forward.
- v. To be discussed once there are answers to the four points above.
- vi. Prior to the present garden design WCC had offered to put up wooden posts to prevent vehicles parking on the grass. Cllr Webb was asked to see if this offer is still available with posts at one end removable for hedge cutting purposes.
- vii. The Clerk informed the Parish Council that it is not within the Lengthsman's duties to cut the grass. Cllr Webb informed the Parish Council that the District Council can cut the grass, but this will need to be paid for by the Parish Council. The Clerk was asked to confirm the annual budget for the upkeep of the garden and report back at the next meeting.

10. Highways and footpaths

- i. The tree is still down on the footpath from Rose Lane to Alfred's Well. The Clerk has photos which she will forward to Cllr Fuller.
- ii. After discussion on the village signs proforma, it was agreed that the cost of the additional signs was too expensive. This item to be removed from future agendas.
- iii. The Clerk still to ascertain if BDC will put a rubbish bin on private property.

11. Grants

- i. No further information from Dodford PCC.
- ii. The Parish Council received a request from Dodford Village Hall on 18 June which has not given the Parish Council time to absorb and discuss the information supplied. This to appear on the next agenda and the Clerk to inform future requests for agenda items or grants should be given seven days ahead of a meeting.

12. Training

Cllr Shapiro to write about his diversity and ethnicity training information for the Clerk to forward on to BDC to request training from them.

12. Dodford Village Hall

- i. No updates.
- ii. As item 6v, the Clerk to give the Village Hall Committee an update on hall sharing.

14. Local Government Boundary Commission

As the closing date for the consultation is 24 July, the Clerk was asked to keep this on the agenda but in the meantime take a look online to see if the consultation should be completed by individuals or the Parish Council as a whole.

15. Finance

- i. The appointment of a Parish Councillor to oversee the bank reconciliation on a quarterly basis to be postponed to the next meeting in the absence of four Councillors.
- ii. The Parish Council is unable to approve the 2023 Council's Annual Review of Financial Management as it is unable to be approved until a named Parish Councillor is appointed to oversee the bank reconciliation.

iii. The June Financial Report:

Deposit account as at 31 May 2023 - £21,979.36

Current account as at 31 May 2023 - £193.91

Payments to be made by bank transfer on 20 June – Acceptance proposed by Cllr Jennings and seconded by Cllr Lydon:

- a. Clerk's salary - £569.50
- b. Clerk's expenses - £110.11 (Travel 20 miles @ 45p per mile £9.00; Storage £5.00; Use of telephone and internet line £5.00; heating £10.00, and Black and colour printer ink £81.11)
- c. HM Revenue and Customs - £142.20
- d. Lengthsman duties for May - £101.70
- e. Dodford Village Hall – hire of hall for meeting on 23 May 2023 - £30.00
- f. Dodford Church – hire of Church for meeting on 18 May 2023 - £30.00

For information purposes:

- a. Clementine Kear - Transfer of County Cllr Webb's village fete grant to Clementine Kear (direct in and out) - £500.00
- b. Lorraine Smith – Top up Coronation Street Party Grant (approved 24 April agenda item 11a) paid 25 April - £200.00
- c. Clementine Kear – Village Fete Grant (approved 24 April agenda item 11b) paid 25 April - £500.00
- d. Dodford Holiday Farm – Grant (approved 17 April agenda item 10i) paid 24 May - £250.00

15. Correspondence received – for information

- i. An email from Lorraine Smith with a breakdown of costs for the Coronation Street Party which will be kept on file.
- ii. An email from Clementine Kear thanking the Parish Council for the grant of £500 towards the Village Fete.

20. Councillors items

No Councillor items.

The meeting was closed at 9.40pm.

Signed.....Chair