

## **DODFORD WITH GRAFTON PARISH COUNCIL**

### **DRAFT Minutes of the meeting of Dodford with Grafton Parish Council held on Monday 26 November 2024 in Dodford Village Hall at 7.30pm**

**Present:** Cllrs Scott Fuller, Lynne Griffin, Rachel Jennings (Chair), Scottie Sanderson, Jonathan Shapiro and Jenni Schuett

**In attendance:** Clerk Kay Stone, Chris Roberts, Chief Officer of Citizens Advice Bromsgrove and Redditch and 3 members of the public

#### **1. Apologies**

County Cllr Shirley Webb, District Cllr Kit Taylor and Parish Cllr Rory Lydon (Vice Chairman) for reasons given which were accepted by the Parish Council.

#### **2. Declarations and Register of interest**

- i. None.
- ii. None.

#### **3. Dispensations**

No dispensation requests received.

The meeting was adjourned to allow members of the public attending the meeting to raise matters of interest.

- i. A resident requested the conservation double yellow lines in Priory Road be extended.
- ii. A resident mentioned the difficulty and danger of vehicles passing round the bend by Sumach due to the height of the kerbs, particularly lorries.
- iii. A resident reported that there was a strange smell on this bend and could something be done about the flooding issue on the Sumach side of the road.
- iv. A resident reminded the Parish Council that if there are any funds left over from the Memorial Garden budget, the Parish Council would consider grants to the Village Hall and the School.

#### **4. Parish Council Grants**

Chris Roberts, Chief Officer, Citizens Advice Bromsgrove and Redditch gave a presentation on the work of the Citizens Advice mentioning that last year the volunteers had helped 10,000 people by giving advice and assistance. Their work is growing with the increase in rural poverty and grants are welcome. After the presentation, Cllr Griffin proposed, Cllr Sanderson seconded, and all approved a grant of £500 to be sent to Citizens Advice.

#### **5. Meetings**

- i. Cllr Lydon chaired the October meeting and would need to sign the minutes once approved. As Cllr Lydon has given his apologies for the November meeting, this agenda item to be deferred to the January meeting.
- ii. After discussion on the Government's consultation on remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings, it was agreed by the Councillors that although they felt it beneficial to meet face to face they would appreciate the flexibility of being able to attend remotely as and when necessary. The Clerk to complete and submit the consultation document although Cllrs could also respond to the consultation on a personal basis if they so wished.

#### **6. Reports**

- i. County Cllr Webb had sent a brief report to the Clerk prior to the meeting:  
"The only thing I was going to mention was Alfred's well. I am still waiting for the bollards to go up, but I am going to ask for white lining around the junction. I think this was suggested anyway but they haven't done it. I really don't know what else we can do to that area to be honest, but I have asked traffic management to take another look."
- ii. District Cllr Taylor had sent a brief report to the Clerk prior to the meeting:

“There has been some flooding due to the tremendous rain we have had, and I have put in a request for some drains to be checked as the leaves off the trees have done a good job in blocking everything. The Road sweeping schedules are currently under some pressure as there has been a considerable amount of council absenteeism due to illness. Planning is ongoing as normal, but following some recent requests some more incidents are now being checked out by Enforcement”

- iii. Nothing to report on social media.
- iv. The Clerk reported that:
  - a. the defibrillator sign on the sign post at the entrance to the Village Hall car park was broken and some kind person has repaired it. But it is temporary and only faces one way. A new sign like the old one would cost £9.95 plus VAT. Cllr Shapiro proposed, and Cllr Jennings seconded, and all approved the expenditure to replace the sign;
  - b. the old rail left at the bridge on Church Road has been reported to Shirley and she is looking into it with Worcestershire County Council (WCC);
  - c. she had received a complaint from a resident about both Alfreds Well and the junction with Fockbury Road were blocked on Friday morning with a soil delivery (which was dumped in the road) to Quinneys, and
  - d. the resident at the top of the hill had her wall knocked down again on the same morning by a lorry. The lorry that knocked the wall down carried on without stopping but the second lorry stopped, and the resident is hoping the wall will get sorted.

## 7. Planning

- i. To consider planning application consultation received:  
**24/01155 – Haymakers Barn, Fockbury Mill Lane – Garage conversion to include self-contained living accommodation to be used as ancillary to the main property.**  
The Parish Council do not object in principle but has concerns about the fire safety issue of only having one door to be used for in and out. The Parish Council would also query the lack of additional car parking space and the fact that the garage to be developed is “en bloc” and separate from and outside of the curtilage of the applicant’s property.
- ii. Approval of the minutes of the planning committee meetings held on 17 September were proposed by Cllr Griffin, seconded by Cllr Shapiro and signed by Cllr Shapiro, who chaired the meeting, as a true record. Approval of the minutes of the planning committee meeting held on 30 September were proposed by Cllr Jennings, seconded by Cllr Schuett and signed by the Chair as a true record.
- iii. Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) has approved the application for a dog walking field at Warridge Lodge Farm in Timberhonger Lane and also the proposed change of use of potting shed to dwelling at Parkgate Nurseries, Kidderminster Road.
- iv. No planning appeals or appeal decisions received.
- v. The building work at Quinneys is being investigated by Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS).
- vi. The response from the Conservation Officer regarding adding hedges, streams, woodland and swimming pool is that the Local Heritage list comprises built structures of local interest and the Conservation Officer cannot add streams, hedges and areas of woodland. She suggests that if someone wants to nominate the swimming pool across the road from the Church then a nomination form needs to be completed. She did try to find this structure when she was working on the Conservation Area Appraisal, but only found a small stretch of wall. If that is all that remains, she doubts that it would meet the criteria for the list. The draft list for Dodford with Grafton is going to Cabinet for approval later this month, so any nomination for the swimming pool would be considered at a later date.
- vii. No other planning issues.

## 8. Highways and footpaths

- i. The installation of a solar light on the island at the top of Alfreds Well to be deferred to the January meeting.
- ii. No applications have been received for the Footpath Warden role.
- iii. No footpath or bridleway issues.

## **9. Worcestershire County Council Draft Streetscape Design Guide**

The clerk to inform residents about this via the usual channels.

## **10. Community Orchard and Mini Forest Funding**

The delivery of trees will be to a single drop off point for residents to collect from, such as the village hall car park. The trees have not been ordered yet but once ordered by WCC the nursery will dig them up, which is likely to be early in the New Year. 23 residents/properties have requested tree (s) (26 apples, 22 pears and 26 plums). The Clerk is waiting to hear from WCC whether this is possible or should it be one of each variety to the 23 residents or even just one tree to each resident.

## **11. First Aid Training**

The Clerk has written to her individual contact at AgeUK Hereford and Worcester as suggested by AgeUK centrally. Cllr Shapiro asked for the contact details. At this point in the meeting Cllr Jennings congratulated Cllr Shapiro on the appointment of his role as Chair of AgeUK BRWF.

## **12. The Local Government Boundary Commission**

The Clerk confirmed that the review does not affect the Dodford and Grafton boundaries and so there is no need to respond to the consultation.

## **13. Parish Council web site**

The Clerk is still to obtain all the quotations and asked for this to be deferred to the January meeting.

## **14. Memorial Garden**

After discussion it was agreed to accept the Corten Steel quote obtained by Cllr Lydon but as Cllr Lydon was unable to attend the meeting it was proposed that this item be deferred to the January meeting. In the meantime, a sub-committee of Cllrs Griffin, Jennings and Schuett will be set up to discuss content of the sign. As it was agreed there should be historical content, Cllr Griffin agreed to invite Lorraine Smith to join the sub-committee.

## **15. Dodford Village Hall**

- i. No updates on any issues raised
- ii. No issues to be raised for the next Village Hall Committee meeting.

## **16. Finance**

- i. The Clerk presented her draft budget. Cllr Griffin proposed, Cllr Jennings seconded and all agreed to increase the Precept request for 2025/2026 by 10% to £13,970.06

At this point in the meeting Cllr Schuett left the meeting.

- ii. The November Financial Report:  
Deposit account as at 31 October - £22,959.68  
Current account as at 31 October - £48.19  
Payments to be made by bank transfer on 26 November – Proposed by Cllr Jennings and seconded by Cllr Sanderson:
  - a. Clerk's salary - £642.62
  - b. Clerk's expenses - £97.95 (Travel 12 miles @ 45p per mile £5.40; Storage £5.00; Use of telephone and internet line £25.00; Heating £17.50, and Stationery – colour printer ink £45.05.)
  - c. HM Revenue and Customs - £160.60
  - d. Dodford Village Hall – Hire of hall on 28 October £35.00

## **17. Correspondence received – for information**

An invitation to the BDC Community Christmas Carol Service to be held at St John's Church, Bromsgrove on Wednesday 11th December 2024 at 6.30 pm.

**15. Councillors items**

- i. Cllr Griffin expressed disappointment at not being able to attend the Dodford Carol Service in aid of Dodford Holiday Farm as a result of the Parish Council being barred from the Dodford Inn. All agreed and the Clerk was asked to write to the Manager of the Dodford Holiday Farm to express the Parish Council's disappointment at being excluded from this village activity.
- ii. The Clerk was asked to find out when the BDC planning committee is being held to discuss the retrospective planning application at Sumach. Once known the Clerk to call a Parish Council planning committee meeting.

The meeting was closed at 9.08 pm.

Signed..... Chair