

## **DODFORD WITH GRAFTON PARISH COUNCIL**

### **DRAFT Minutes of the meeting of Dodford with Grafton Parish Council held on Monday 23 June 2025 in Dodford Village Hall at 7.30pm**

**Present:** Cllrs Scott Fuller, Rachel Jennings (Chair), Rory Lydon (Vice Chairman), Jonathan Shapiro, and Jenni Schuett

**In attendance:** County Cllr Mark Dunkley, District Cllr Kit Taylor, Clerk Kay Stone, and seven members of the public

#### **1. Cllr Lynne Griffin's Declaration of Acceptance of Office**

Cllr Griffin was not at the meeting to do this.

#### **2. Apologies**

Cllr Scottie Sanderson gave his apologies for reasons given which were accepted

#### **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.

A resident brought to the Parish Council's attention concerns over a footpath from Woodland Road to Big Wood where a new stile has been erected which is not accessible to the less able. The footpath has been diverted to the right to meet the new stile. Cllr Fuller spoke about when he was the footpath warden for the parish and that stiles are the responsibility of the landowner and not Worcestershire County Council (WCC) and he suggested the resident spoke to Patrick White at WCC and also the landowner. Cllr Fuller also explained that the definitive map is not relevant as to where the footpath actually is, it is in an original written document. After a great deal of discussion, the Clerk was asked to ascertain from WCC the wording of where the footpath should be.

The meeting continued as follows:

#### **5. Meetings**

Cllr Shapiro proposed the approval of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 19 May, Cllr Jennings seconded and all agreed. The minutes were then signed by the Chair as being a true record.

#### **6. Reports**

- i. Cllr Dunkley reported that
  - a. he had been in contact with a resident who lives on the Kidderminster Road and also Paul Whitehouse who is the Traffic Management Adviser for West Mercia Police about the resident's concerns regarding speeding on the Kidderminster Road outside the resident's property up to The Crossroads coming from the Kidderminster direction. There has already been a reduction in speed from 60mph to 50mph and it is unlikely that the limit will be reduced again. They will be looking at improving the signage approaching the bridge to slow vehicles down;
  - b. he had been in contact with Cllr Karen May regarding the parking of vans on the M5 bridge on Stourbridge Road which is causing an obstruction at the junction with Claypit Lane and they are working on getting them removed and also considering having double yellow lines painted on the road to make it illegal to park on the bridge, and
  - c. the new WCC Highways Engineer is an ex Police Officer, Colin Bell.
- ii. District Cllr Taylor reported that

- a. the island at the junction of Fox Lane and Worcester Road will not be completed until Summer 2026 and there has been a variation on the planning approval so some houses on the Whitford Road estate can be occupied;
- b. BDC Cllrs have voted to put through the public consultation on the District Plan to include 9,000 new homes to be built by 2043. The consultation will commence on 30 June for 12 weeks and he urged all residents to individually respond, and
- c. BDC Cllrs are still unsure of how a new unitary authority will work.
- iii. Nothing to report on social media.
- iv. The Clerk reported that On 18 June BDC held a presentation on Devolution for Chairmen and Clerks of Parish Councils. Neither Cllr Jennings nor the Clerk could attend but the Parish Council has received a set of slides from the meeting which have been shared with the Parish Councillors. Following on from this there are focus group being formed which are open to residents and businesses, voluntary and community and public sector meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> July at 6pm in Parkside and 7<sup>th</sup> July at 6pm in Arrow Valley Countryside Park, Redditch. The Parish Council has also received a questionnaire which needs to be sent back by 8<sup>th</sup> July. Parish Councillors to send their answers to the Clerk by 2 July for collating a response.

POST MEETING – The Clerk discovered the questionnaire was relating to participants attending the focus group meetings and emailed Councillors to cancel the request to complete the questionnaire.

## **7. Planning**

- i. The Clerk reported that there had been no response from Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) on the adhering of the Dodford Inn Noise Management Plan but read out the response from BDC. 2If the Parish Council consider the applicant is not operating in accordance with he Statement of Use Noise Management Plan then they should report this to WRS” Cllr Taylor informed the meeting that he is attending a WRS meeting on 26 June.
- ii. Planning decisions received.  
4 applications have been granted by BDC:
  - a. Sumach, Priory Road - Importation of materials and re-profiling of land-retrospective
  - b. Sydenham , Victoria Road - Extension to rear with master bedroom located within the roof space.
  - c. Parkgate Nurseries - Proposed demolition of existing agricultural building and construction of new dwelling in lieu of Class Q Prior Approval
  - d. Stone House, Cockshutt Lane - Proposed rear/side two storey extension and single storey rear extensions
- iii. No planning appeals or appeal decisions received.
- iv. The enforcement case for the importation of materials and reprofiling of land has now been closed.
- v. There will be a Parish Council planning committee meeting to be held on Tuesday 8 July to discuss two consultations received:
  - a. Garden shed at The Priests House Stables in Grafton Lane, and
  - b. Removal of condition 2 in order to change the finishing of the elevations from brick to render at Monsieurs Hall Farm.

## **8. Highways and footpaths**

- i. No applications for the footpath warden have been received.
- ii. Cllr Taylor is in touch with Cllr Dunkley regarding the new stile at the bottom of The Stable field which is inaccessible to less able people.

## **9. Moving Parish Council to a .gov.uk domain**

As May and June have been busy months the Clerk has not been able to move this item forward.

## **10. First Aid Training – 7 June 2025**

- i. The training session was a huge success which the 16 participants found helpful. The Clerk has received the certificates which will be forwarded on. The Clerk has now put instructions in the defibrillator cabinet on how to change the mode from adult to child. The trainer spoke to Cllr Jennings and the Clerk after the course and has offered to put on more courses at a much

reduced rate to the one paid for this session and has since been back in touch with the Clerk to offer a months Basic Life Support course for the community free of charge on a monthly basis as he would like to give something back to the community. The Clerk reported she has a waiting list of three residents for the next course. The Clerk was asked to respond to the trainer thanking him and because of the size of the village asking if he would be prepared to put on a course in September and March. After discussion, the Clerk was asked to find out if there are any computer and fraud awareness courses that could be arranged for residents.

- ii. It became clear at the training session that residents in Woodcote Lane would lose valuable minutes accessing the defibrillator at the Village Hall or the one in Chaddesley Corbett. Residents in Woodcote Lane attending the meeting offered to speak to neighbours to find a suitable location for a defibrillator and cabinet which would need a small amount of electricity to keep the device at the right temperature in cold climates. The cost to the Parish Council would be £1,451 + VAT for the defibrillator and £520 + VAT for the cabinet. Cllr Dunkley suggested the Parish Council look at hiring a defibrillator and Cllr Taylor suggested the Parish Council ask District and County Councillors for funding.

### **11. Memorial Garden**

Cllr Schuett reported that she has finished the copy but needs a photo of Fergus O'Connor and the QR Code.

### **12. Dodford Village Hall**

- i. No updates but the Village Hall Committee had thanked the Parish Council for sending information on the BDC Community Infrastructure Grant. They were successful in applying for a grant of 61% (£7,856.16) of the project cost to improve the disabled access to the hall by means of a stair lift sited at the front entrance.
- ii. No new issues to be raised for the Village Hall Committee.

### **13. Standing Orders**

To be rescheduled for the July meeting.

### **14. Finance**

- i. Cllr Jennings proposed, Cllr Fuller seconded and all approved the updated Financial Regulations as recommended by the Internal Auditor.
- ii. It was agreed that the Clerk should look at two authorisers for the online banking to safeguard the Clerk. It was further agreed that Cllr Sanderson should not be one of the authorisers as he oversees the financial reports prepared by the Clerk. Cllr Fuller offered to be a fourth signatory. The Clerk to report back after consulting with Lloyds Bank.
- iii. The Clerk reported that Worcestershire CALC had given the following guidance regarding the Parish Council using a balance sheet:

“Larger Councils do, those with £200,000 or more turnover. It is not required for the receipts and payments accounts Dodford is using”

After discussion, Cllr Shapiro proposed, Cllr Jennings seconded and all agreed to keep the financial keeping as it is.
- iv. The June Financial Report:

Deposit account as at 31 May - £20,466.49  
Current account as at 31 May - £256.35  
Payments to be made by bank transfer on 24 June – Proposed by Cllr Jennings and seconded by Cllr Schuett:

  - a. Clerk's salary - £642.62
  - b. Clerk's expenses - £154.35 (Travel 12 miles @ 45p per mile £5.40; Storage £5.00; Use of telephone and internet line £25.00, heating £17.50; refreshments for the First Aid Training Cours £5.45; Information Commissioner's Office GDPR Renewal fee paid for by credit card £52.00, and black printer ink £44.00)
  - c. HM Revenue and Customs - £160.60
  - d. Dodford Village Hall for hire of hall on 6 and 19 May - £70.00
  - e. Lengthsman's Duties for April 2025 plus mileage and VAT - £127.80
  - f. Lengthsman's Duties for May 2025 plus mileage and VAT - £230.40

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

- i. A resident has emailed the Parish Council updating the Parish Council on her conversations with the Traffic Management Advisor who has requested a databox to be installed on the Kidderminster Road. The Traffic Management Advisor requested the Parish Council contact Worcestershire County Council (WCC) Highways to request better signage and paint work approaching the bend towards the junction known as The Crossroads coming from Kidderminster direction. The resident has suggested replacing the 50mph sign at this bend to a Slow Down or Vehicles in Middle of Road or Restricted View. Also, a larger warning sign to denote The Crossroads. The Clerk was asked to contact WCC for them to review the situation.
- ii. New residents at Woodsend Lodge have contacted the Parish Council with concerns on the dangerous bend by their property. The residents have been referred to Belbroughton with Fairfield Parish Council.
- iii. An email from CALC advising that the Government is ending support and funding for Neighbourhood Plans. The Clerk advised that the Parish Council voted two years ago not to continue with the idea of a Neighbourhood Plan for Dodford and Grafton.

#### **19. Councillors items**

No Councillor items.

The meeting was closed at 9.13 pm.

Signed..... Chair