

DODFORD WITH GRAFTON PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of the meeting of Dodford with Grafton Parish Council held on Thursday 24 September 2015 in Dodford Village Hall at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs Vicky Churchill (Chairman), Rachel Jennings, Alwyn Rea and David Valentine

In attendance: County Councillor Sheila Blagg, Clerk Kay Stone and five members of the public

1. Apologies

Cllr Christine Thomas and District Councillor Karen May, reasons for which were accepted.

2. Declarations of interest

- i. Cllr Valentine declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in item 6ii on the agenda.
- ii. None.

3. Dispensations

No requests received

The meeting was adjourned for members of the public to raise matters of interest / items for the next agenda:

- i. Only part of the new footpath in Priory Road has concrete backing with half remaining with wood. The resident who brought this up was advised that Worcestershire County Council (WCC) had said that concrete edges were only due to be installed where the embankment fell away from the back of the footway. This work has been completed and for the remaining section the timber edges will remain. This was reported back to the Parish Council and minuted at the June meeting. County Councillor Sheila Blagg explained how the delay in repairing the footway was due to intervention by the District Conservation Officer with regards the kerb stones.
- ii. Severn Trent had recently been working in Priory Road by Waterfalls and it was reported to the Parish Council that they had tarmaced to the edge of the road and had not replaced the kerb stones. The Parish Council instructed the Clerk to write to Severn Trent insisting they restore the footway back to its original condition.
- iii. The Clerk was asked to write to residents at The Coach House in Priory Road asking them to cut their hedge back as it is encroaching on the footway.
- iv. A member of the Village Hall Committee explaining that following the 'examination' of Dodford Village Hall's information on the Charities Commission webpage, a rumour has started as the information displayed has been misunderstood and misinterpreted. The Charities Commission webpage shows the annual income and expenditure for each year. In recent times, due to improvements and restorations having been carried out, and money being used from their restoration account to fund this, the figures for some years show the expenditure to be in excess of the income. This has wrongly been interpreted as the village hall being 'in the red' and 'going bankrupt', and the Village Hall Committee wished to assure the Parish Council that grants they have received from them are being used wisely and they are not in trouble with their finances. A set of accounts will be available at the Dodford Village Hall AGM towards the end of the year.

The meeting was reconvened as follows:

4. Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 July 2015

Cllr Alwyn Rea's apologies were not recorded in these Minutes and after this was amended, approval of the Minutes was proposed by Cllr Rea, seconded by Cllr Jennings, agreed by all and then signed by the Chairman as being a true record.

5. Reports

- i. The September report received from County Councillor Sheila Blagg had been received and already circulated to Parish Councillors with copies being made available at the meeting. County Councillor also reported on:
 - a. the success of the recent Basketball Championships held in Worcester;
 - b. electrical recharging points for vehicles within the County;
 - c. the delay to the building of Bromsgrove train station, and
 - d. the consideration by the Environment Agency for an Environmental Permit for an incinerator bottom ash recycling facility at Sandy Lane. After a great deal of discussion Cllr Alwyn Rea proposed, Cllr David Valentine seconded and all approved of the Parish Council writing to the Environment Agency by 30 September objecting to this Permit Application.
- ii. District Councillor Karen May had not submitted a report but had notified the Clerk that she was still working on environmental / enforcement issues within the Parish.
- iii. Report on CALC Area Annual Meeting held on 9 September had previously been circulated to Parish Councillors with Cllr Vicky Churchill highlighting:
 - a. the Police Commissioner is looking at the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme;
 - b. the planning application for the Perryfields Road housing has not been submitted yet. Cllr Valentine had spoken about potential education issues if this application is granted by Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) and the Head of Planning replied she is happy to meet with the Parish Council to discuss this further when the planning application is received, and
 - c. that Parish Councils can request an extension to a planning consultation expiry date but although BDC are willing to grant the extension, they state it is down to the individual developer as to whether the request is granted.
- iv. Cllr Thomas had submitted a report on the BDC Planning Department and Parish Councils meeting held on 15 September which had previously been circulated to Parish Councillors. British Heart Foundation has a grant system for the provision of defibrillators and the Clerk was asked to put this item on the October agenda for further discussion.
- v. The Clerk reported that:
 - a. she is still waiting to hear back from Lloyds Bank regarding challenging the overdraft fee;
 - b. a resident has reported fly tipping at the top end of Snake Lake Lane to BDC. The Clerk had sent a poster to the resident to be used in the area if necessary;
 - c. she has advertised the Tree Warden and Footpath Warden vacancies in the parish magazine, on the council website and notice board;
 - d. in the July minutes the Clerk was asked to circulate minutes from the CALC Parish Conference held on 4 June 2015 when available and the Clerk informed the Parish Council that there are no minutes from these conferences.
 - e. in the July minutes the Clerk was asked to find out about how Clent Parish Council runs their Junior Council. The Clerk would like to point out that this had been done in May and had circulated the information (hard copy) at the June meeting. As a result the Clerk was asked to circulate details to the Parish Council by email and to put a piece in the Parish Magazine asking for expressions of interest – all of which were carried out. It was also suggested that a leaflet drop be made to residences where it is known there are children aged 11 to 17 but no decision was made at the June meeting;
 - f. in the July minutes it was recorded that the Parish Council should consider allocating resources for a Neighbourhood Plan in next year's budget. The Clerk informed the Parish Council that there is already £500 in the budget for this;
 - g. there has been cross over with reporting to WCC between District Councillor, Parish Council and County Councillor. This could cause confusion and it was agreed that future minutes would state clearly who would take ownership of reporting issues;

- h. before the new bench is ordered, the supplier needs an address to deliver it to for the Lengthsman to collect and site. Cllr Valentine offered to receive the bench;
- i. she will be attending two upcoming Clerks gatherings organised by CALC – 12 October on Transparency Code and 21 October on the new Pensions Regulations and will report back at the October meeting, and finally
- j. Grant Thornton has returned the audited and signed Annual Return with the following comment for the Parish Council's information:
"In 2013/2014 Bromsgrove District Council paid the full precept for 2013/2014 but also paid half of the 2014/2015 precept. The precept shown in Box 2 for in the 2015 column appears low as it shows only half of the precept for 2014/2015. The precept shown in Box 2 in the 2014 column appears high as it includes the whole of the 2013/2014 precept plus half of the 2014/2015 precept."

6. Planning

- i. Approval of the Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 14 September were proposed by Cllr Churchill, seconded by Cllr Rea, agreed by all and signed by the Planning Committee Chairman as being a true record.

Planning Committee Chairman Cllr Valentine left the meeting after declaring a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in the next item and Cllr Churchill chaired the discussion

- ii. Planning application 15/0752 – Greenhill Farm, Kidderminster Road - Proposed general purpose agricultural and livestock housing building.
 The Parish Council has no objection and if the District Council is minded to approve the application this should be subject to the National Trust being consulted regarding the Covenant on the land and the District Council should take into account the appearance of the building in relation to the view and ask for suitable screening.

At this point Cllr Valentine returned to the meeting and resumed his role as Planning Committee Chairman for item 6.

- iii. The Clerk reported that BDC had
 - a. refused the planning application for a new dormer style bungalow in Fockbury Road;
 - b. granted the proposed ménage on land adjoining Lawnswood in Warbage Lane, and
 - c. granted Listed Building Consent to replace the existing modern open gas fire with a brick built extension to the chimney breast at Dodford Priory.
- iv. No planning appeals had been received.
- v. Enforcement/Environmental issues:
 The Clerk had receiving notification from a resident that the conditions set out in the Certificate of Lawful Use / Development for Yarnold Lane Cottage were not being taken notice of and that the resident had made District Councillor May aware of this.
- vi. There were no other planning issues.

7. Highways and footpaths

- i. Update on damage to residents' hedges in Victoria Road by lorries turning in from Warbage Lane – The Clerk reported that the resident hasn't had anything of note happen recently but they will record anything else that may happen in the future.
- ii. Update on possible purchase of dog waste bins – The Clerk to apply to BDC for a dual bin to be installed near the new bench at Niblett's Hill.

- iii. To discuss a dog register to be kept in the village – Cllr Jennings reported that the PCC are looking at starting up a Facebook page which could incorporate her idea of lost dogs being identified and will report back to the Parish Council after she has attended the PCC meeting next month.
- iv. Update on WCC response to the Lengthsman unable to clear grips in Bungay Lake Lane – This had been covered at the July meeting and had been left on the agenda in error.
- v. Update on trip hazard in Alfred's Well – It was reported to the Parish Council that the rope between the logs has now been removed.
- vi. Update on two new drives at Alfred's Well – The Clerk reported that BDC enforcement have confirmed this is Permitted Development but one entrance has gates too high and BDC have requested they be reduced.
- vii. Update on damage to resident's hedges during recent Worcestershire County Council verge cutting - WCC is adamant that this has not been done by WCC Contractors and therefore is a private issue. It was agreed that until a resident gives the Parish Council more details on who is doing this, there is nothing more the Parish Council can do.
- viii. Update on surface of Church Road – The Clerk to take photos and report this to WCC.
- ix. Update on parking restrictions in Priory Road – After discussion it was agreed that Cllr Valentine, in his role as a School Governor, would ask the School and Nursery to remind parents in their newsletters of the parking restrictions.
- x. Update on A448 grass cutting – This has now been completed.
- xi. Update on A448 speed restriction consultation. There is a Public Notice on display on the Parish Council web site, notice board and in local newspapers. Any objections / representations should be made to WCC by 30 September.
- xii. Update on the edges / verges of Bungay Lake Lane and Timberhonger Lane – Repairs to the edges of the carriageway has been completed and the verge has been cut and grips are easily visible.

8. The Safe Place Initiative for vulnerable adults

No further information forthcoming and so will remain on the next agenda.

9. Junior Parish Council

As no expressions of interest have been forthcoming, it was agreed that an article on this will appear in the Annual Report to be sent out in April / May 2016.

10. Broadband

The Chairman suspended standing orders at this point to enable a resident attending the meeting to speak. The resident told the Parish Council that Dee and Keith Hirst were project managing this initiative with help from the Clerk and asked the Parish Council to send out a newsletter giving more information on this initiative together with the questionnaire to all the households in the Parish.

After much discussion it was agreed to keep this item on next month's agenda and invite Dee and Keith Hirst to attend the October meeting so that the Parish Council can be more informed as to what is involved with regards the Voucher Scheme and also how this initiative will help residents who are not operating businesses from home. The Clerk had provided estimated costs to send out a newsletter but no decision was made as to whether this would go ahead.

11. Dodford with Grafton Neighbourhood Plan

It was agreed that work would not commence on a Neighbourhood Plan until BDC publish their District Plan. This item to remain on forthcoming agendas.

12. Neighbourhood Watch

As already mentioned in the CALC meeting report (item 5 iii a) the Police Commissioner is looking into the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme and CALC are proposing to have a meeting about this later in the year. In the meantime the Clerk is to meet with the Bournheath Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator and will report back at the next meeting.

13. Pensions Regulations

The new legislation was noted and the Clerk will report back to the Parish Council after the Clerk's Gathering on 21 October.

14. Proposed Combined Authority in the West Midlands

After much discussion it was agreed that Cllr Rea will draft and circulate the Parish Council's objection to this proposal and the Clerk will submit the objection to BDC.

15. Finance

- i. Acceptance of the 1st quarter reconciliation as at end of June 2015 was proposed by Cllr Valentine, seconded by Cllr Churchill and approved.
- ii. Deposit account as at 30 August 2015 - £10,908.88
Current account as at 30 August 2015 - £376.59
Payments - Acceptance proposed by Cllr Valentine and seconded by Cllr Rea:
 - a. Clerk's salary (July, August and September) - £901.75
 - b. Expenses - £108.11 (Use of telephone and internet line (July, August and September) £15; Storage (July August and September) £15; Travel 62 miles @ 45p/mile £27.90; Postage £8.75 and Stationery £41.46)
 - c. HMRC - £225.20
 - d. Allen Farnsworth (Lengthsman duties for August plus petrol) - £202.00
 - e. Worcestershire CALC (Chairman training for Cllr Churchill) - £30.00
 - f. Bromsgrove District Council (costs associated with uncontested election) - £72.98
 - g. For information only – Direct Debit to Public Works Loan Board - £833.62

14. Councillor co-option

No applications received and this item to remain on the next agenda.

15. Correspondence received – for information

Items of correspondence received since the last meeting were noted and it was agreed that Cllr Rea would respond to the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner Annual Survey.

16. Councillors items

Cllr Thomas had sent her Councillor items to the Clerk prior to the meeting:

- i. There is an interest in dog waste bins in the village, particularly along Woodland Road.
- ii. She had been approached by a resident to see if there was anything the Parish Council could do about the increased air traffic noise. The Clerk reported that she had sent Cllr Thomas the Civil Aviation Authority leaflet which states that this is not considered to be a Statutory Nuisance in the UK and so nothing can be done about it.
- iii. Suggestion for a gate at the entrance to the walk close by the Church Road / Woodland Road junction. It was agreed that this item should be included in the next agenda.

The meeting closed at 9.45 pm

Signed.....Chairman