

DODFORD WITH GRAFTON PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the meeting of Dodford with Grafton Parish Council held on Monday 14 April 2025 in Dodford Village Hall at 7.30pm

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

In attendance: District Cllr Kit Taylor, Clerk Kay Stone, and 8 members of the public

1. Apologies

County Cllr Shirley Webb, Cllrs Lynne Griffin and Jenni Schuett gave their apologies 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.

- a. Residents attending the meeting expressed their concerns about the Dodford Inn application to Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) to change their licensing hours. Whilst they support the Dodford Inn, they do not want the hours to be longer than they already have permission for.
- b. The rubbish bins in the village are all full and have not been emptied for about a month. The Clerk to report this to Bromsgrove District Council (BDC).

The meeting continued as follows:

4. Meetings

Cllr Shapiro proposed the approval of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 24 March, Cllr Fuller seconded and all agreed. The minutes were then signed by the Chair as being a true record.

5. Reports

- i. County Cllr Webb did not have anything to report when she sent in her apologies but is available if she can help.
- ii. District Cllr Taylor reported that the sweeper had cleaned the lanes and reminded everyone that the County Council elections are taking place on Thursday 1 May 2025. There is still uncertainty about the Devolution White Paper and Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) has asked for a South and North Worcestershire divide.
- iii. Nothing to report on social media.
- iv. The Clerk reported that:
 - a. she has received communication from a concerned resident bringing the Parish Council's attention to the new license application to increase the hours of The Dodford Inn. Having heard the concerns from residents in the adjournment it was agreed that the Parish Council will write to Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) to defer their decision until certain concerns are answered.
 - b. Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) has announced their Community Infrastructure Grant is now open for applications – closing date 16 May. This is for public spaces (inside and outside) The Clerk has received an application form and after discussion it was agreed that a grant should be applied for to pay for the information board on the Memorial Garden. The Clerk to complete the form and circulate to Parish Councillors for input.
 - c. The Clerk has applied for and received 50 free books from Worcestershire Libraries and Once the Clerk has them she will circulate the information in the usual way to encourage

residents to attend the Annual Parish Meeting on 6 May and to collect a free book on a first come first served basis.

6. Planning

- i. The Parish Council planning committee meeting did not take place on 31 March 2025 as the Parish Council were not quorate.
- ii. No planning decisions received.
- iii. No planning appeals or appeal decisions received
- iv. No update on current enforcements.
- v. Parish Council planning committee meeting to be held on 15 April to discuss the consultation for an extension at The Children's Holiday Farm.

7. Highways and footpaths

- i. No update on the solar light on the island at the top of Alfreds Well.
- ii. No applications have been received for the Footpath Warden role.
- iii. The footpath from Brook Cottage to the Kidderminster Road is dangerous and Cllr Taylor will report it. There is a smashed fence on the footpath at the back of The Dingle.
- iv. No other Parish Council has responded on how they deal with fly tipping and this to be now taken off future agendas.

8. Moving Parish Council to a .gov.uk domain

The new Practitioners Guide has been published and it has set out that there will be a new assertion on the Annual Governance and Accountability (AGAR) for the next financial year 2025/2026 where every authority must have a generic email account hosted on an authority owned domain. The Worcestershire County Council (WCC) MyParish web site is likely to be closed down in May 2026. The Clerk to provide three quotes from Web Site Registrars for the Parish Council to consider. Cllr Sanderson offered to help the Clerk over this issue. Cllr Fuller brought to the attention of the Parish Council that the Council will need an IT Policy document. The Parish Council discussed the benefits of having a gov.uk domain and it was proposed by Cllr Sanderson, seconded by Cllr Fuller and all agreed to give the Clerk permission to start work on this.

9. First Aid Training

The cost is £440 for Barn.org.uk to run a first aid training course for 16 people in Dodford Village Hall. Residents will be charged a non-refundable fee of £10 and it was proposed by Cllr Jennings, seconded by Cllr Sanderson, and agreed by all that the Parish Council will contribute £280 for this course to go ahead. The course will take place on Saturday 7 June in the morning.

10. Memorial Garden

- i. Cllr Shapiro had circulated information on QR codes to the Parish Council prior to the meeting.
- ii. Cllr Jennings confirmed the Church are happy for the Parish Council to piggy-back on to their web site but this may not be needed as the Parish Council is to organise their own web site this year.
- iii. Cllr Griffin gave a list of suitability of suggested plants and bulbs to the Chair prior to the meeting.

11. Parish Council Grants

The Parish Council will keep the current rules in place and this item to be taken off the agenda.

12. Annual Parish Meeting – Tuesday 6 May 2025

The Clerk gave an update on speakers and was asked to invite the Police and Crime Commissioner, and a member of the Bromsgrove History Society to give a talk on A E Housman. It was agreed that refreshments should include coffee and tea, cake, and biscuits and as the Annual Parish Meeting is not a Parish Council business meeting two bottles of red and white wine should be available this year.

13. Annual Report

The Clerk had previously circulated the draft Annual Report and as some Councillors had not had chance to review the Report, the Clerk asked if Councillors could give her their comments by the end of

the week to meet her deadline of having the document printed and sent out to households prior to the Annual Parish Meeting.

14. Lengthsman Scheme 2025/2026

The Agreement between WCC and the Parish Council was noted and it was proposed by Cllr Jennings, seconded by Cllr Sanderson, and agreed by all that the Clerk should sign the WCC agreement and sign the contract with the Lengthsman.

15. Dodford Village Hall

- i. The Village Hall Committee agree with the portrait of HM King Charles III being displayed in the Village Hall and it was suggested by the Parish Council that this could be hung in the small hall beneath the light.
- ii. The Village Hall Committee do not have any stake in the visual equipment in the hall and the Clerk to ask the Film Club and the Fairbourne Didders if the Parish Council could use this equipment when needed with suitable training.
- iii. The Village Hall Committee are not against the display of historical documents and wished to know what type of historical documents they were considering. The Parish Council decided not to proceed with this and for this item to be removed from future agendas.
- iv. The Clerk to ask the Village Hall Committee if they would consider motion sensor lighting in the car park.

16. Finance

- i. It was proposed by Cllr Shapiro, seconded by Cllr Lydon, and agreed by all to approve and sign the external Auditor's Certificate of Exemption – AGAR 2025/2025.
- ii. The final quarter reconciliation as at the end of March 2024 had been circulated prior to the meeting. After Cllr Sanderson had checked and agreed the figures, he proposed, with Cllr Shapiro seconding and all approved acceptance.
- iii. The April Financial Report:
Deposit account as at 31 March - £17,198.88
Current account as at 31 March - £37.34
Payments to be made by bank transfer on 25 April – Proposed by Cllr Lydon and seconded by Cllr Jennings:
 - a. Clerk's salary - £642.62
 - b. Clerk's expenses - £146.51 (Travel 22 miles @ 45p per mile £9.90; Storage £5.00; Use of telephone and internet line £25.00, heating £17.50 and colour and black printer ink £89.11)
 - c. HM Revenue and Customs - £160.60
 - d. Dodford Village Hall for hire of hall on 24 March - £35.00

For information:

- a. Payments made on 25 March:
 - a. Dodford First School Parish Council Grant as approved at the 24 March meeting - £600.00
 - b. Gardening Club Parish Council Grant as approved at the 24 March meeting - £200.00
- b. Payment made on 28 March to the Clerk for the cost of postage stamps for the Annual Report mailing as approved at the 24 March meeting - £282.20

Cllr Shapiro asked if anyone oversees the Clerk's expenses which needs to be discussed at a future meeting.

15. Correspondence received – for information

None other than already discussed in the meeting.

16. Councillors items

- i. Cllr Fuller reported that Worcester Middle Severn Catchment Based Approach (CaBA) had not come back to him.

- ii. Cllr Fuller reported on his discussions with Citizens Against River Pollution (CARP) and will be offering his services to help out with water testing on the River Severn between Stourport on Severn and Worcester. Cllr Jennings to join Cllr Fuller as and when she can.
- iii. There appears to be a new steel building at Sumach and Cllr Taylor offered to check with planning as this may be permitted development.

The meeting was closed at 9.21 pm.

Signed..... Chair