

DODFORD WITH GRAFTON PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of the meeting of Dodford with Grafton Parish Council held on Monday 25 June 2018 in Dodford Village Hall at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs Lynne Griffin, Rachel Jennings (Chairman), Rory Lydon and Alwyn Rea

In attendance: Clerk Kay Stone and nine members of the public

1. Apologies

County Councillor Shirley Webb, and Cllr Scottie Sanderson gave their apologies, reasons for which were accepted. District Councillor Karen May sends her early apologies due to being at another Parish Council meeting but was hoping to attend later.

2. Declarations of interest

- i. None
- 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.

Members of the public expressed interest in items 8iii and 14 and the Chairman agreed to adjourn the meeting at these points.

Residents have received consultation letters from Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) regarding the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan but had noticed that there has already been a change to the boundary. There are to be two daytime consultation meetings organised by Mary Worsfold, Conservation Officer at BDC on 2 July and 25 July in Dodford Village Hall where plans and proposals will be available.

The meeting reconvened as follows:

4. Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 May 2018 (the agenda shows 22 May which is an error)

Approval of the Minutes was proposed by Cllr Lydon and seconded by Cllr Griffin, agreed by all and then signed by the Chairman as being a true record.

5. Councillor co-options

Two applications have been received but one applicant does not qualify. Jonathan Shapiro introduced himself to the meeting, after which Cllr Jennings proposed, Cllr Rea seconded and approved by all that Jonathan Shapiro should be co-opted on to the Parish Council. He then signed his declaration of office which was countersigned by the Clerk.

6. Reports

- i. No report had been received from County Councillor Shirley Webb.
- ii. District Councillor Karen May to attend later in the meeting.
- iii. No-one had been able to attend the CALC Area meeting on 13 June, so no report.
- iv. The Clerk reported that
 - a. at the May meeting the Parish Council agreed that Cllr Rea should pull together a response to the Woodland Management Plan which the Clerk then circulated to Parish Councillors for approval. This was done to meet the end of May deadline set by the

Woodland Management team. A response was received back from David Banks and the Parish Council's comments and David Banks' responses are attached at the end of these Minutes;

- b. Bournheath Parish Council has requested a meeting with Dodford with Grafton Parish Council to discuss HGVs in the villages. The Parish Council are happy to meet with Bournheath Councillors but would also like to include speed and safety issues with them. Clerk to get suggested dates from the Bournheath Clerk;
- c. a complaint has been received about hedges and verges being cut when birds are nesting and before wild flowers have seeded. This is an annual problem and Worcestershire County Council (WCC) say they are responsible for the safety of the roads and that verges and hedges need to be cut back if they present a danger to traffic and non-traffic users by having to go in the middle of the road to avoid the hedges. This was acknowledged by the Parish Council;
- d. branches had fallen in Fockbury Road the previous weekend which had been reported on Facebook. The Clerk had asked the Lengthsman to clear these away which he did the same day;
- e. a complaint had been received about the verge not being cut at the corner of Woodcote Lane and Kidderminster Road which was presenting a safety hazard. The Clerk had asked the Lengthsman to trim the verge which he did the same day and also offered to monitor the situation through the summer; and
- f. Parish Councillors have training schedules in their folders and the Clerk asked them to let her know if they wished her to book a place for them.

7. Planning

- i. Planning application 18/00631 – School Cottage, Fockbury Road – Single storey rear extension. The Parish Council has no objection but note there was not a Design and Access Statement supplied by the Agent.
- ii. 16/1090 – Coach House, Priory Road – Proposed two storey extension to the northern elevation. Approved by BDC. The Clerk was instructed to ask BDC to respond to the Parish Council's comments in the consultation as it would appear these had not been mentioned in the Conditions.
- iii. No planning appeals or decisions received.
- iv. No enforcement updates had been received although the clerk had requested an update the week before. The Clerk was instructed to write to BDC, copying in MP Sajid Javid and District Councillor Karen May to say the Parish Council are concerned about the lack of funding for the planning department. When nothing seems to be happening with enforcement issues, the Parish Council feel it causes them problems addressing resident's issues. (See explanation later in the Minutes from District Councillor Karen May when she was able to join the meeting after item 15)
- v. It was noted that as from 1 June 2018 BDC has extended the consultation period to 24 days from 21 but if additional time to submit the views of the Parish Council beyond the 24 days, by contacting the Case Officer, BDC will do their best to accommodate additional time.
- vi. The forthcoming consultation on the Bromsgrove District Plan Review – Issues and Options has had to be rescheduled.

The meeting was adjourned at this point to allow members of the public to comment on 8iii

8. Highways and footpaths

- i. Work is ongoing to apply to modify the Definitive Map and Statement. Some members of the public are reluctant to sign witness forms as they understand the form will be in the public domain once received by WCC. The Clerk was instructed to ask WCC if this was still the case after GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations).
- ii. Some stiles and gates are not easily accessible. It was suggested that residents report these stiles and gates to the Parish Council and then the Parish Council will see if they can help

landowners with the cost (match funding) of repairing them. It would help the Clerk if residents could provide a photo and exact point of where the stiles and gates are. The match funding would come out of the contingency budget for 2018/2019. It was suggested that in the first instance the Clerk would ask WCC to look at the stiles and gates with regards to health and safety and find out what financial help WCC would provide. The Clerk was instructed to put this information on Facebook, Parish Council web site, Parish Magazine and residents email distribution list. To be discussed further at next meeting.

- iii. County Councillor Shirley Webb had reported to the Clerk "We will be monitoring my whole division over the next couple of months and collecting the data. I anticipate the public meeting to be in August. I will of course keep you posted". The Clerk was instructed to request the speed monitoring takes place outside school holidays to give a true picture. After discussion the Clerk to suggest that the speed strips are put in Warbage Lane after Chapel Gate and before the top of the hill going towards Belbroughton; in Yarnold Lane between Saltbay and the Red House and in Priory Road and Fockbury Road. It was agreed that because of safety issues as well as speeding road signs to warn of sharp bends would be favourable. A suggestion was made that the village becomes a 'zone' where vehicles are timed in and out, giving an average speed, as happens through Motorway roadworks. A resident pointed out that the School had sent a letter asking the Parish Council to reduce the speed and the Parish Council had refused as they didn't want signs. The Clerk could not recall this but was asked by the Parish Council to investigate and report back.
- iv. The Clerk was instructed to make representation to Google, TomTom and Garmin to say lanes in Dodford are not suitable for HGVs.
- v. The Clerk was instructed to contact Midland Connect, who wish to resurrect the Western Orbital Motorway, and ask them to keep the Parish Council updated.

The meeting was reconvened as follows:

9. Footpath Warden and Tree Warden Officer

There are currently vacancies for these roles and the Clerk to advertise them with more information on Facebook, Parish Magazine and Residents' email address list. A suggestion was for the Clerk to write to Pershore College to see if they had a student studying land and forestry management to volunteer for this role for hands on experience.

10. Phil Richardson Community Award

Four nominations have been received. Closing date 30 June 2018. The Clerk has put a reminder on Facebook. The Award to be discussed at the end of next month's meeting in a closed session. The Clerk to ask organisers of the Dodford Show for permission to present the Award at this event as happened last year.

11. Standing Orders

Acceptance of the new Model Standing Orders as set out by NALC to incorporate or reference new legislation regarding GDPR was proposed by Cllr Lydon, seconded by Cllr Rea and agreed by all.

12. Bromsgrove District Council – Gambling Act 2005

The Clerk was instructed to respond by asking for restrictions to be placed on the number of Betting Shops in Bromsgrove High Street as this could be ruining the character of the town.

13. Lickey and Blackwell Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan

It was agreed that Parish Councillors read through this Plan and feed comments back to the Clerk by 15 July to meet the consultation deadline of 16 July 2018.

The meeting was adjourned to allow members of the public to comment on item 14.

14. Dodford with Grafton Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan

15 years ago, when the Parish Plan was put together 56% of the residents replied to the survey but the issues that were highlighted were just the same as now – speeding, parking and general road safety. The Plan then put forward included going along with WCC's Think Campaign about safety, such as traffic calming measures, sharp bend signs, priority give ways and quiet lanes to encourage growth of trees and hedges to reduce lanes to a single lane but none of this has taken place. It was agreed that the major issue is the ongoing increase of traffic particularly with the proposed developments at Perryfields and Whitford Road. The Parish Council will approach BDC through Cllr Karen May, to push for the Western by-pass although it was felt that the funding is to go to the Eastern side – the A38. (See Cllr May's comments after agenda item 15) This topic to be kept on the agenda for next month.

The meeting was reconvened as follows:

15. General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

- i. It was noted that Parish Councils do not have to appoint a Data Protection Officer and may process personal data by relying on the "legitimate interests" condition in addition to the five existing conditions they can rely on.
- ii. The Privacy Notice and Consent Form to be used by the Parish Council were discussed. The Parish Council did not agree with the points A-E ways of keeping in touch on the Consent Form and instructed the Clerk to ask CALC if items B, C and D had to be included. The Parish Council agreed to A – receiving communications by email and E – receiving communications by post. They did not agree with the option of receiving communications by telephone, mobile phone including text messages or social media. It was noted by the Parish Council that the new legislation will entail more work for the Clerk particularly with data records needing to be kept.

At this point District Councillor Karen May joined the meeting.

- i. The Parish Council expressed concern that the proposed development of Perryfields will make Dodford a 'Rat Run'. Cllr May assured the Parish Council that she has highlighted to BDC that no building traffic should come through Dodford. There are still lots of questions to be answered before planning permission is given and Cllr May assured the Parish Council that she would keep them updated. The Western by-pass has been thrown out by WCC as not being feasible. Money is being spent on updating the A38 by making it a dual carriageway between the two motorways through most sections except for where there are old buildings.
- ii. The Parish Council asked if local Parish Councils had undertaken Neighbourhood Plans and one is being put forward to Cabinet next week and Cllr May will update.
- iii. The Parish Council expressed their concern about lack of funding for the planning department with regards ongoing issues with enforcements. Cllr May replied that due to legal issues with many cases, updates are not publicly known and sometimes it is legal departments that hold up enforcement issues. Cllr May asked the Clerk to let her know the outstanding issues Dodford has.

The meeting returned to the agenda as follows:

16. Grants for 2018/2019

Dodford Village Hall Committee are meeting the following evening and will consider their request for a Parish Council Grant.

17. Finance

- i. The Clerk left the meeting at this point to allow the Chairman and Vice Chairman to report to the Parish Council following their Appraisal meeting with the Clerk. When the Clerk returned

she was advised that Cllr Jennings had proposed, Cllr Lydon had seconded, and all had agreed unanimously that the Clerk should be given a pay rise to take her up to SCP – Spinal Column Point 27 from 23 as she had not had a pay rise for four years. This was to be backdated to the start of the financial year, 1 April 2018.

ii. Deposit account as at 29 May 2018 - £17,215.48

Current account as at 29 May 2018 - £550.30

Payments by bank transfer for June – Acceptance proposed by Cllr Jennings and seconded by Cllr Lydon:

a. Clerk's salary - £312.86

b. Clerk's expenses - £61.67 (Use of telephone and internet line for £5; storage £5 and travel 22 miles @ 45p/mile £9.90; Renewal of Data Protection Fee by credit card £40 and postage for sending Annual Audit to PFK Littlejohn £1.77)

c. HM Revenue and Customs - £78.00

d. Lengthsman duties for May - £215.00

e. Parish Magazine Printing – printing of 340 Annual Returns - £73.30

18. Correspondence received – for information

Correspondence received was noted and the Clerk was asked to put information about the petition to keep the Elgar archives in Worcestershire and the Basement Project's nomination by Sainsbury's Local on Stourbridge Road to be their Charity of the Year in the Parish Magazine and send to residents via the email address list.

19. Councillors items

i. The caravan parked in the layby on Kidderminster Road has been replaced by a Motorhome and has been there for three weeks. The Clerk was asked to report this to WCC via County Councillor Shirley Webb.

ii. The Clerk was asked to approach BT OpenReach to ascertain who is responsible for the fibre optic cable going through shrubbery as landowners might not be aware they could be responsible for the cable. Cllr May gave the Clerk a contact name and telephone number.

iii. The Clerk was asked to find out if Western Power are returning to Priory Road to finish cutting shrubbery now that the nesting season is ending.

The meeting was closed at 9.36 pm.

Signed.....Chairman

Dodford with Grafton Parish Council response to the Woodland Management Plan as presented by David Banks, on behalf of the Bibbey Family with his responses

1. There are concerns about the time extraction arrangements and heavy lorries access to Kidderminster Road and request a need for this to be programmed.

Response from David Banks – “I pointed out at the Parish Council meeting that we have made arrangements with Valid Farms for an extraction route over their land with a sufficiently large area of stoned parking and turning space to be provided within Valid Farms land so that lorries can come in to load up and turn round and go out forwards. We can certainly limit the access to be used in daylight hours only and if necessary “Lorries Turning” signs could be put on the highway.”

2. There is significant concern that damage is likely to be caused by large tracked vehicles, especially as the land is so very wet for large periods of the year – can this be kept to the minimum with serious consideration being given to using working horses to bring the timber to a suitable extraction point, thus causing minimum disruption to the bluebells and other wild plants and habitats, and not rut or obstruct the public footpaths?

Response from David Banks – “I am afraid I do not know of any working horses which could be made available but quite frankly, although a nice idea, it would be totally impractical. The majority of the timber will be extracted on forwarders which are mounted on very large wide tyres and which can also take chains for a better grip. I can appreciate that the wood can be wet, and the idea is to open up new rides which will then let in sunlight and which will help to dry out the extraction routes. Particular care will be taken not to rut or obstruct Public Footpaths and if weather conditions are unsuitable then extraction would cease until conditions are acceptable.”

3. The Eastern boundary of Highwoods borders the Dodford Conservation Area – can you please guarantee that no felling will be done along this border to preserve existing appearance of the wood?

Response from David Banks – “The Management Plan sets out what is envisaged in Compartments 2C,2D and 2G but I suppose it could be possible to leave untouched an outside 10 metre strip on the eastern boundary, albeit this is not necessarily what it best for the wood. In thinning areas only about 30% of the canopy is being removed and quite frankly the appearance of the wood will change little.”

4. Could the future management provide for the introduction of Forest Schools to encourage children to visit and learn about wildlife, tree types and conservation generally?

Response from David Banks – “I have tried on many occasions to promote educational visits in my own woodland on Woodbury Hill and it has not been very successful. I would be more than happy to arrange a vocational visit but the “interest” would have to be from the Local School.”

5. As you know there is concern about the timing of the felling and extraction and although it is acknowledged that felling and extraction will be weather and ground dependent, the Parish Council would request that prior warning could be given of when the work will be commencing so that residents who may be affected by this can be advised in advance.

Response from David Banks – “I can certainly monitor and advise you when work is about the start and the areas that will be worked at that time. I am sure we can all work together.”