



Dodington Parish Council

MINUTES of a meeting of the **Community, Leisure & Environment Committee** held in Council Chambers adjacent to Dodington Parish Hall on Monday 25th September 2023 at 7:30pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Richard Evans, David Fitt, Paul Hulbert, Sarah Hurley, Adrian Hutton, Sandra Jee, Jean Thomas and Chris Zapata (Chairing Meeting).

Also Present: Clerk to the Council – Hannah Saunders (Clerking Meeting), and Adam Mills (until 7:50pm).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- Received from Cllrs Christine Howard, Louise Harris and Laura Pearson Tong.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS UNDER LOCALISM ACT 2011 AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

- There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensation.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- There were no members of public at meeting.
- Clerk mentioned that numerous emails have been received over last week regarding parking on Heron Way / Robin Way with the work at Tern, and Cllr Jean Thomas mentioned that parking is no better around Abbotswood / Culverhill School.
- Adam Mills gave members an update on how Summer Playscheme 2023 had gone and suggestions for 2024. Highlights were the visits from Police, Fire Brigade and entertainers. The Pool Table came in handy for the 3rd week when there were some older children – and they enjoyed arranging pool tournaments amongst themselves. Films weren't as popular as in the past – with a lot of the younger children not wanting to sit for 2 hours – so this may be something to change. It was Adams first year as leader (he has been deputy for number of years) and there were a lot of new staff – which made first week more challenging – but by Week 2 and 3 staff were settled and knew what was required. Feed back from parents / carers and children had been positive – and everyone that applied for playscheme was offered a space in the end. More than 160 children attended over the course of the 3 weeks. Adam was grateful for the support of councillors who popped in to help – and to office staff / Daniel for administration beforehand and sorting out the Tuck. There was some discussion about whether to opt for just 2 weeks (and take more children each week) as Week 3 was harder to staff and there were fewer children (a lot of no shows – or people pulling out) however, this did enable those on the waiting list to get offered / take up places.
- Adam was thanked for his time – and suggestions going forward. Adam left meeting.

4. MINUTES OF, AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS CL&E COMMITTEE MEETING 21st AUGUST 2023

- It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes, as printed and circulated, be confirmed as a true record.
- Cllr Chris Zapata signed the minute book.
- Matters arising – not covered during course of agenda:- NONE

As no members of public present the confidential minutes from 21st August 2023 were circulated for members to read – and it was RESOLVED that they were an accurate record – and Cllr Chris Zapata duly signed them.

5. CONSULTATIONS

- Protecting and enhancing The Common, Yate. Consultation being run by SGC and open for comments until 3rd November 2023.
- Clerk had contacted Yate TC to see how they are responding and they are asking people to complete in a personal capacity and are pushing the consultation via their social media channels so public are aware of it.
- Members agreed that this was the best way forward – and no need for it to be included on future agenda.

6. PLAY AREA'S & PUBLIC OPEN SPACES

- Project Support Assistant had reported the following:-
 - GOLDCREST – looking for a replacement pedestrian gate – current one in poor condition (metal bent and unable to tighten spring meaning gate closes too quickly). Also getting quotes in for replacement rocker. Whilst undertaking weekly checks evidence of substance abuse was found – and reported to the Police.
 - LILLIPUT – Caloo have undertaken the annual maintenance of the outdoor fitness equipment, painted and made any necessary repairs. Project Officer received positive comments about the equipment when undertaking weekly checks. Bench is to be painted by Culverhill School Children as part of their DofE over the next couple of weeks (down at compound) and then Chris Belcher will install at Lilliput.
 - There have been complaints about grass cutting – which Deputy Clerk has taken up with CPS – who have admitted struggling to keep up due to unprecedented growth of grass this season and staff illness. They did go back and tidy up where they had missed taking cuttings away (Lilliput Play Area).

7. QEII

- Members had all received a copy of report compiled by Project Support Assistant regarding the Community Consultation Results about the proposed exercise path at QEII.

- They were encouraged by the number of responses received (more than 150) and that there is support from the local community for this project with some good suggestions of ways to enhance the design. 89% of respondents liked the design with 67% saying that if installed they would use exercise path (with 18% stating they might do).
- Members noted that a couple of complaints had been received from individuals – not happy with the proposals. In essence they didn't feel there was sufficient room for pathway and had concerns over the proximity of pathway to the football pitches.
- Clerk had gone back to the Landscape Architect at SGC who had been involved in the designs and was reassured by his response (which will be forwarded to individuals that have complained) that there is enough run off space between pitches and proposed path.
- It was unanimously agreed to take recommendation of Project Support Officer and move forward by way of applying to SGC for Planning Permission.
- Members also noted that a further complaint had been received that morning following FOI request had been received regarding crime / security at QEII. Clerk was handling this – had spoken with Police already, and is trying to get in touch with the housing association (who have said they are willing to facilitate a discussion between the parties).

8. WAPLEY BUSHES

- Cllr Paul Hulbert gave a brief report on Wapley following the Conservation Group meeting on 21st September 2023.
 - There is a significant amount of cutting back to do – some bits quite tricky....area's needing to be cut back – tree planting location of 300sq metres, middle part of stream, all pathways need to be kept under control and area for planting of woodland plug plants (this is quite easy).
 - *Thinking is to see if contractor can help with clearing the trickier area's and cost be split between DPC and the Conservation Group.*
 - At last work morning – the volunteers worked on clearing stream bed – they did the top and bottom of stream (couldn't do middle part noted above) and so went on to clear invasive blackthorn on the Common.
 - The Common and Orchard guided walks had been undertaken to launch the Jubilee Walking Routes.
 - Group wanted to remind PC about wheelchair friendly picnic table that was budgeted for in 2023 – 24 budget.
 - Next work morning is scheduled for Sunday 26th November 2023 at 10am.
 - Cllr Paul Hulbert is doing 4 x slide shows / talks about Wapley between now and Christmas – to local groups as a fundraiser for the conservation group.
 - Finally, Cllr Paul Hulbert had been looking into a complaint made by resident on Wapley Rank who stated that people had been gathering plums from the Orchard for the Future – and these were claimed to be for 'Residents Only'. SGC have confirmed there is no restriction on who can pick the fruits.
- The subject of working group for Wapley Bushes was duly discussed, Cllr Hulbert wanted to try and understand rationale behind it – as he hadn't been at August's meeting. It had been suggested in August – as Wapley Bushes is an important open space in the Parish and it was felt that an agenda item on CL&E couldn't give the time required to subject....as such a suggestion about extra CL&E meeting – with one item agenda was made....it was also suggested that the conservation group be involved in the meeting. After due consideration it was agreed that a meeting be arranged for all parties involved with Wapley to get around table, and look at plan (who responsible for

what, etc). It needn't be a Working Group – but a bit of a brain storming / Q&A / looking at budgets, etc.

- A question was put to Cllr Hulbert regarding number of volunteers at work day's and how many work day's per year....(on average 11 volunteers and 6 work days / year at Wapley).
- Clerk confirmed that 2 new drop down bollards have been installed by the Besom Lane entrance to Wapley.

9. ASH DIEBACK DISEASE

- Clerk updated members regarding Ash Dieback work – removal of the infected trees has started, the plan is to remove all of the ash trees from the ancient woodland first as these are more weather dependent. This will be followed by trees in the lower wood with the two trees on the common being dealt with last.
- Phil Dye of Wotton Tree Consultancy has undertaken a new Ash Dieback Survey to identify any changes since the survey carried out in 2022 and if there is anything requiring urgent attention.
- Clerk confirmed that this report had just been received (start of meeting) so would forward out to necessary parties the next day.

10. ALLOTMENTS

- The Allotment Association (AA) had held their AGM the previous week. Cllr Richard Evans was re-elected as Chairman of the allotments – and he gave the following update:-
 - AA have 134 plots – there are currently 21 people on waiting list. It was agreed at AGM to increase plot rents to £50 (full plot) £25 (half plot). There has been no increase since 2019 – and looking at charges locally – this is still very reasonable.
 - AA have introduced a £50 returnable deposit scheme. This is due to fact that they have had some plots left in such a state it has taken days to clear them and get rid of the scrap.
 - They are also introducing a year's probation as according to NAA 70% of new plot holders taken on and do nothing in first year.
 - They are continuing with plot inspections. They have had some mower problems this season – and grass cutting has taken up a large amount of time (as it has for everyone). They are currently getting quotes for hedge cutting.
 - Following on from suggestions made by members at previous years AGM they have worked on clearing culvert on Site 2 and have added more water troughs and drinking water tap to both sites.
 - Following photos taken by drone – new plans of both sites have been drawn up and marked – and Cllr Richard Evans gave copies of these to Clerk for file.
 - The accounts for 22 – 23 were agreed at the AGM (and a copy of these was given to Clerk for file).

11. D DAY 80 CELEBRATIONS

- Members had received a guide to D Day 80 Anniversary – and outline of what is being proposed by Bruno Peeke (Pageant Master). Date is Thursday 6th June 2024 (falls after half term – so is a school day).
- Clerk has spoken to neighbouring councils to find out what plans they have. Yate TC are looking to light the Beacon up at Tylers Field, Brimsham and will possibly have

some activities up there (and it is anticipated Heritage Centre will have special event). Clerk at Sodbury is anticipating that the Beacon on Ridings will be lit – but that is down to Towns Land Trust. As a council they haven't made any decisions and neither have Westerleigh PC.

- Members would like to try and find out if Paul's Place would return Beacon (from Shireway Community Centre) although they don't know where they could install it.
- It was agreed that event needed to be commemorated....to be discussed further when looking at Budgets (and Clerk has contacted Paul's Place / Band / Schools).

12. REMEMBRANCE 2023

- It was confirmed that Cllr Chris Zapata & Jean Thomas would represent Dodington at Yate Town Council (morning) and Sodbury Town Council (afternoon) parade on Sunday 12th November 2023.
- Cllrs Paul Hulbert and Christine Howard will attend St Peter's at Wapley on evening of Sunday 12th November. Cllrs Chris Zapata and Sandra Jee will join them.
- Clerk to check that Cllr Louise Harris happy to do St Nicks at 10:30 on the Sunday.
- Wreaths to be ordered accordingly, and uniformed brigades will be decorating the hall.

13. FINANCE MATTERS

- Committee spend YTD compared to Budget was reviewed. In month 6 (halfway through year) and 44% of budget spent. So the committee is on target. Playscheme came in just under budget.
- Clerk also took members through monies granted YTD. Of the £6900 budget £1723 has been paid out so far.
- Clerk reminded members of Budget Meeting on 9th October 2023 – when begin discussing objectives for 2024 – 25.

14. ITEMS TO REPORT

- Cllr David Fitt reported that some neighbours have mentioned overgrown / high hedges – he will take a look and report accordingly via SGC website. Cllr Fitt also reported that he has received complaints about vehicles parking on footpaths (Rodborough / Witcombe) making it difficult for people to get past if they are in wheelchairs.
- Cllr Sarah Hurley reported that cycle path along Rodford way is still in a bad condition with pot holes and loose chippings, making it difficult and dangerous for cyclists. It would appear that nothing has been done since last complained. Cllr Hurley also queried the signs on some of the SGC litter bins (by Lilliput)....Clerk will ask question of Streetcare.
- Cllr Paul Hulbert reported that work requested of Streetcare (tidying up path along Blaisdon) hasn't been carried out.
- Clerk mentioned Green Highstreets Grant information that had been received – and stated would include on Planning Agenda for following week. Dodington Parish Band are looking at booking hall for an event that they will be running themselves – as and when confirmed – Clerk will let members know. Still awaiting information from Heron Grill re Christmas. Il Gusto confirmed not doing a special Christmas menu – however Italian at White Lion will be doing a Christmas Menu and they can host parties. Clerk will be doing pay run on Thursday so looking for 2 councillors to do authorisation please (Cllr Chris Zapata / David Fitt confirmed they could do this).

The date of the next CL&E Committee meeting – Monday 30th October @ 7:30pm

As there was no further business – the meeting was closed at 9:15pm and Chair thanked everyone for their time.

Signed:..... Committee Chair

Date:30th October 2023