



Dodington Parish Council

MINUTES of the Meeting of the **Community Leisure & Environment Committee** held at Dodington Parish Hall (Council Chambers) on **Monday 4th December 2023 at 7.30pm.**

PRESENT: Councillors David Fitt, Louise Harris, Paul Hulbert, Sarah Hurley, Adrian Hutton, Paul Hulbert, Sandra Jee, Laura Pearson-Tong, Jean Thomas and Chris Zapata (Chairing the meeting).

Also present: Hannah Saunders – Clerk to the Council – Clerking the Meeting

Prior to the meeting starting – Chair asked for 2 minutes silence, one to mark the sudden death of Ruth Davis (wife of Tony Davis who had been Dodington Ward Councillor prior to Cheryl Kirby) , and one to mark the death of John Davis (who had been a Dodington Councillor for 20 years before stepping down in 2019 due to ill health).

1. Apologies for absence and request for approval

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Christine Howard and Richard Evans.

2. Declarations of Interests Under Localism Act 2011 and Requests for Dispensations

Cllrs David Fitt, Adrian Hutton and Chris Zapata declared an interest in Item 8.1. Cllr Jean Thomas declared an interest in Item 12 and Cllr Adrian Hutton declared an interest in Item 13.1. They will refrain from comment.

There were no requests for dispensation.

3. Public participation

There were no members of the public in attendance.

4. Approval of Minutes and matters arising from the previous meeting on 30th October 2023

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes, as printed and circulated, be confirmed as a true record. Cllr Chris Zapata signed a copy of the minutes.

Matters arising – Clerk explained that insurance company had sent a Leak Detection company to survey the issue with Velux windows in hall. Report has been received and repairs won't be covered by insurance as damage is down to wear and tear. NKS are going to look to do repairs when they carry out work in the New Year.

The confidential minutes were also reviewed (as no members of the public were present) and were duly approved and signed by Cllr Chris Zapata.

5. Consultations to note and respond if necessary:

- Waste Less, Recycle More – consultation was duly discussed, and it was agreed that members complete in a personal capacity. No need for Dodington to respond – as it doesn't affect them as waste services are bought in from Great Western Recycling Ltd.
- Car Cruise Activity – Public Open Spaces Protection Orders. Members discussed the consultation – and stated that it would push the problem somewhere else. However, they understood that with all neighbouring authorities having adopted POSPO – South Gloucestershire was vulnerable. It was agreed there was no need for Dodington to respond – members to respond in a personal capacity if they wish to.
- Library Savings – Clerk questioned the savings that they would make with the reduction in hours suggested – and felt that they must be making other cuts as well. With part of parish being in priority neighbourhood area, members felt strongly that Childrens Reading Challenges shouldn't not be compromised in anyway. Cllr Louise Harris thought savings would come from not buying new stock as well. It was duly agreed that Clerk respond on behalf of Dodington asking for reassurance that Reading Challenges not be included in any budget cuts.

6. Localism – to agree buy back contracts 2024 onwards

Clerk had received details regarding buy back contract for grass cutting, bin emptying from SGC. They are looking at 3 year contracts now.

After due consideration – it was noted that couldn't get the work carried out for any less by taking in house or getting a different company involved (as this had been researched previously) and parish council know where they are with SGC doing this work.

As such it was unanimously **RESOLVED** to sign contract for next 3 years.

7. Live Labs Trial – to agree way forward 2024

Cllrs Paul Hulbert, Jean Thomas, Chris Zapata and Adrian Hutton had sat in on recent meetings regarding Live Labs Trial and reported back to council.

Whilst they supported the concept – hearing the issues that Yate has run into – members feel that the same problems would occur in Dodington and that ultimately, we couldn't offer then enough grass.

Clerk along with a couple of the councillors had started to look at the maps of area's that had been suggested by agency Metis – and it had quickly become evident that the area's weren't suitable.

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to respond to Chris Harris / Matthew Lipton stating that at the moment – Dodington Parish Council don't wish to be considered for next stage of trial in 2024.

8. Grants to consider

Cllrs D Fitt, C Zapata, and A Hutton – refrained from comment whilst members discussed grant award for Dodington Allotment Association. Cllr J Thomas took the chair.

- Dodington Allotment Association – Clerk informed members that there was £600 in budget for the Allotment Association – and that the Parish Council had supported them in the past with prizes for their AGM. There was some concern over the increase in cost of the prizes (previous years have seen between £200 and £260 spent – this year it was over £450 – and a breakdown hadn't been included). Whilst the money was in budget the objective was not just to support prizes but to be able to help towards other projects / items that the Association may need. There was also a query over the accounts.

After due consideration – it was agreed to award the Association £300 subject to a satisfactory breakdown of costs being sent through to the office. Clerk to explain that they could put in a further application for funding if they needed to.

Cllrs D Fitt, C Zapata and A Hutton returned to meeting. Cllr C Zapata took the chair again.

- Yate Town Council – Warmer Spaces – Clerk informed members of remaining budgets for grants. Between F&GP and CL&E there was approx. £1200, plus Clerk reminded members that they also had access to Community Engagement Money – which this project would tick boxes for. Dodington Parish Council agreed in September not to actively take part in Warmer Spaces – but that they would support Yate Town Council in the initiative – hence the grant application.

It was proposed by Cllr Jean Thomas that Dodington grant the full amount requested of £1200 to YTC, because so many of our residents benefit from the services that they offer. It was unanimously RESOLVED to grant £1200.

9. Wapley Bushes

Members received report from Estates officer regarding Wapley Bushes – and the Ash Dieback work – which is very nearly completed. All that is left for the contractor to do is stump grinding – and this will be carried out later in week. Contractor has chipped up as much of the smaller logs / brash and distributed this around the woodland or taken away. There are some larger tree trunks that can't easily be moved from the woods without causing damage – so these are left currently – and question to members is what they would like to see done with these.....

Following completion of work Estates Officer / PSA are going to have a walk around – members are welcome to join (day / date TBC).

The area that is earmarked for replanting in the New Year has been cleared by Chris Belcher – and whilst it is an improvement – Estates Officer / Clerk and Chris Belcher don't think it is ready for planting yet – and that further clearing is required. It was agreed that this should be carried out.

Estates officer also reported on the DofE work that he had been undertaking this term with Culverhill School Children, sadly the last few weeks it has been too wet to get them up there.

Clerk has spoken with Chris Belcher regarding footpath through centenary wood / jubilee walk – and this can be done – but again not until weather is better next year. There is sufficient monies in EMR to cover this – so no need to increase budget.

With regards getting large logs sorted – it was agreed that they weren't in the right places to stay where they were (for seats, etc) plus because they are ash and diseased this isn't ideal. Best option would be for someone to chain saw them down to smaller pieces and remove with least damage. It was agreed that this would be the best way forward – and Estates Officer had a couple of people in mind that he would approach.

10. Play Areas and POS

No issues to report within POS / Play Area's. All the items that were agreed at last CL&E Meeting have been ordered and are in process of being delivered, so should be installed by New Year at latest. Expecting Annual Inspection Reports through anytime – so this will enable PSA to draw up schedule of maintenance works required in 2024.

Following members comments regarding Play Panels for Lilliput Toddler Play area at last meeting – PSA has highlighted a few different panels that offer more than the dinosaur one. She wanted to point out to members though that the children had wanted to see a dinosaur theme. The panel had regrettably been delayed due to vandalism....but DPC in a position to proceed now as have funds.

Matter was duly discussed – with Clerk highlighting issues with the panels that offer more play value (in that the moving parts can be easily pulled off – and this makes the panel useless until such time as it is repaired)...

After consideration it was unanimously agreed to bank the monies – and look for an alternative next year.

Clerk reminded members that they had some Sec 106 monies available for work to what was the Boules court.....this matter had previously been looked at and members couldn't come to a decision....so bed has been left – and recent remedial work has been carried out to make it safe as some of the wooden sleepers had rotted away.

Members discussed various options (other than planting / and surfacing for gym users to stretch etc – area is sited inbetween the adult fitness equipment)....and Clerk urged caution – as she didn't feel that the 106 funds could be spent on that sort of thing – plus the council didn't have funds.

No decision taken at this stage.

PMN – Clerk confirmed that Climbing Pods installed by Sodbury Town Council at Ridings had cost £30k, and that reason fitness equipment had been placed on that side of the park – was because it was away from the play area so there wouldn't be a conflict. Clerk forwarded members recent photo's of the boules court so they knew what the area was currently like. PSA reiterated exactly what the funds could be spent on (email from Ian Davey at SGC who is responsible for Sec 106 funds and monitoring.

11. QEII

Clerk updated members on recent discussion that she had had with Brighter Places (following contacting SGC Housing Enabling Officer).

BP had confirmed that action taken by DPC to date had been correct – and she explained more fully why the housing association couldn't realistically get involved. The Housing Officer is happy to facilitate a joint agency meeting in the New Year.

One useful item that came out of discussion – which Clerk is looking into actioning is that with complaints procedure – ensuring it is all inclusive – as not everyone would be able to attend a meeting – so DPC need to offer up alternatives (to accommodate all).

Clerk and Estates officer still need to go to site now that most of the leaves are off hedge and assess the situation – so can decide if further planting would be of benefit.

Cllr J Thomas refrained from comment during next item.

12. License for Hedge / Verge adjacent to Tern Inn Car Park

Clerk informed members that she had received draft license for the verge adjacent to Tern Inn Car Park from SGC – and whilst she is pleased that it has been actioned swiftly – she wouldn't recommend members agreeing to it / signing it just yet – as there are some parts that need re-wording / clarifying.

It was agreed that Clerk discuss this with SGC and bring matter back to either Planning or Full Council Meeting.

Cllr J Thomas returned to the room.

13. Budget 2024 – 2025 (incl reviewing YTD spend and EMR funds 2023 – 24)

Members reviewed spend YTD against Budget – all in order and on target. EMR funds were also checked.

Members reviewed the first draft of budget with figures – and after due consideration agreed that they couldn't cut back on anything – and felt that the increase of 6% given what committee does for the community was reasonable.

It was unanimously APPROVED to recommend budget of £103, 250 to Full Council.

Meeting went into Closed Session for next item due to commercial sensitivity – and Cllr A Hutton left meeting (9.30pm).

Minutes are recorded confidentially.

14. Items to report

1. Cllr David Fitt reported that he was concerned about the resurfacing that had been carried out on Rodford Way / Shireway earlier this year – and that it wasn't up to standard. He requested that matter be included on a future agenda for further discussion. Clerk agreed to put on Planning agenda along with unresolved issues in Littledean, Lilliput and Gullivers.

2. Cllr Paul Hulbert reported that the next phase of investigatory work on the underpass just off Rodford Way would start on 11th December for 5 days.
3. Clerk reminded members of meeting schedule for rest of December (Planning on 11th and Full Council on 18th). Christmas get together is on 7th starting at 7pm, and next week see's Dodington Parish Band Christmas Concert / Carols. If members could arrive at 7pm to help set up that would be great 😊. Finally Clerk gave members a brief update regarding Bus Shelters / Zurich Claim.

The next meeting for the Community Leisure & Environment Committee **Monday 5th February 2023 (Foxall Powell Room)**

As there was no further business – the meeting was closed at 9.45 pm with Chair thanking Everyone for their time.

Signed Committee Chair

Date