



# Dodington Parish Council

**MINUTES** of **Full Council Meeting** of the Parish Council held in Council Chamber adjacent to Dodington Parish Hall on **Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024** at 7.30pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Richard Evans, David Fitt, Bob Graham, Christine Howard, Paul Hulbert, Adrian Hutton, Laura Pearson-Tong, Jean Thomas and Chris Zapata (chairing the meeting)

**ALSO PRESENT:** Hannah Saunders Clerk to the Council – Clerking the Meeting, Pip Tymon – Deputy Clerk, Ward Councillor Cheryl Kirby and one member of public

## **258/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs Sandra Jee, Sarah Hurley, Louise Harris and Ward Councillors Marilyn Palmer & Ben Stokes.

## **259/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION**

Cllr Laura Pearson Tong declared an interest in Item 7 (Grant Applications) as she is on Green Community Transport Committee – she will refrain from comment.

## **260/24 PARISHIONERS QUESTIONS**

Member of public mentioned the overgrown hedge over some of the pathways between Slimbridge and Littledean (this has been reported to Streetcare previously and will be again). Cllr David Fitt had been asked to mention the faded road markings (zig zag no parking) outside Raysfield school – and ask that these be repainted (particularly with barrier installation). Clerk to liaise with school on this matter.

## **261/24 TO APPROVE MINUTES OF FULL COUNCIL MEETING**

It was resolved that the minutes of Full Council Meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024 as printed / circulated were a true record – and they were duly signed by Cllr Chris Zapata.

Matters Arising that won't be covered off during course of agenda:-

- Cllr David Fitt was pleased to see the repairs carried out at Westerleigh Road Roundabout – but wondered if a different mix of tarmac / road surfacing was used – as it seemed different to what had been used previously on Rodford Way and Shireway – which was deteriorating even more. Clerk reported that she had written to SGC via the ward councillors with both Cllr David Fitt's photo's and comments and Sarah Hurley's comments but hadn't heard back. Email was forwarded again to ward councillor Cheryl Kirby.
- Clerk informed members that she has heard nothing further from RWE regarding Mousewell Farm Solar plans. They are still to come back to DPC with answers to

various questions.

- Clerk also informed members that the barrier to site will go live in next 2 weeks (after halfterm break). All fobs have been received and are in the process of being allocated.
- There have been more than 100 responses to the traffic survey – Clerk and project assistant will analyse during June.
- It was agreed that the APM was a good meeting – well attended – Cllr Chris Zapata thanked Cllr Jean Thomas for standing in at last minute.
- The blocked drain at Allotment Site 1 has been dealt with – and all appears to be in order.

## **262/24 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM WARD COUNCILLORS**

### **Cllr Cheryl Kirby:-**

Encouraged members to report issues around parish to SGC via their website and the Report It link.

CK congratulated Cllrs Chris Zapata and Adrian Hutton on being elected Chair / Vice Chair of DPC and reminded everyone that the following day she would be retiring as Mayor of Yate. CK mentioned the matter of crossing on Westerleigh Road by Rodborough – that Cllr David Fitt had brought up. It is down to budgets – but Cllr Chris Wilmore is looking into matter – as it is appreciated how busy this road is and that getting to bus stops can be tricky – particularly with the age demographic of people that live nearby.

CK thanked Dodington Parish Band for playing in Kingsgate Park the previous day – they were excellent.

On behalf of Cllr Louise Harris CK reported that the Climate and Nature Emergency Action Plan has been given the go ahead by SGC, and Louise has been to Wapley Bushes as part of the partnership working between SGC and organisations. Louise would remind members that NO MOW MAY is currently underway – and it isn't about saving money...and also SGC are becoming a lot sharper about areas that they will and won't cut. (ie if the land doesn't belong to them in some way – they won't cut it going forward).

## **263/24 PLANNING MATTERS**

Applications considered can be viewed in Appendix 1 attached to these minutes.

*Cllr Laura Pearson Tong left room.*

## **264/24 GRANT APPLICATIONS TO CONSIDER**

Members considered the application from Green Community Transport for help with their advertising for the forthcoming year (£336 for 1 year in Boundary Magazine).

It was unanimously RESOLVED to grant full amount to GCT – who provide an excellent service to the local community.

*Cllr Laura Pearson Tong returned to the room*

## **265/24 STANDING ORDERS & FINANCIAL REGULATIONS TO REVIEW**

It was recommended by Clerk that Standing Orders come back to Full Council in June for final approval and Financial Regs to Finance & General Purposes in June – once she and deputy have had a chance to double check with newly published NALC documents – to see if any amendments required.

This was agreed.

**266/24 TO NOTE NO CONFLICT of INTEREST with BDO**

It was confirmed that non of the officers / councillors at Dodington Parish Council had a conflict of interest with LLP BDO (who will be carrying out external audit). Chair – Cllr Chris Zapata and Clerk duly signed form.

**267/24 TO APPROVE INSURANCE RENEWAL 24/25**

Clerk confirmed that Parish Council were about to enter final year of LTA with Zurich Municipal. The premium had increased by £300 for the year – and although still need to inform them of some changes to asset register prior to renewal – this will have little (if any) impact on premiums. Council continue to receive excellent service from Zurich.

Renewal prior to 1<sup>st</sup> June 2024 was unanimously RESOLVED.

**268/24 TO APPROVE SLA WITH SGC HR DEPT FOR 24/ 25**

Despite increase in hourly cost for any HR work (up to £78 from £71.50) members still felt it was good value to have access to advice / help from SGC and as such it was unanimously RESOLVED to approve SLA for a further year.

**269/24 APM – TO NOTE / AGREE ANY ACTIONS FROM MEETING**

As per earlier comment – it was noted that the Annual Meeting went well....the presentations were interesting and relevant and people were happy to network at the end.

Members discussed donations to groups that gave presentations (Yate Community Bike Hub and Bat Conservation Group) and also to Mafeking – so that they can do something to remember 1<sup>st</sup> Raysfield Scout Group.

It was unanimously RESOLVED to donate £100 to each group. Cllr Jean Thomas will let everyone know how she gets on with Rusty Riders that she is attending later in the week.

Only other matter that came up at meeting – was regarding the planting of hedge adjacent to fence surrounding Tern Inn Car Park. Clerk had stated that it would be unlikely that anything would be planted in 2024 – and was keen to get a plan in place for this.

Members agreed that it wasn't right time to plant now – and that in Autumn they would need to inspect and possibly feed the soil – so realistically earliest time to plant would be Feb 2025. Clerk will work on this plan.

**270/24 RISK ASSESSMENTS & SAFETY PLAN**

Clerk thanked deputy Clerk and Cllrs David Fitt, Bob Graham and Richard Evans for their time spent reviewing the risk assessments – and updating the safety plan earlier in month (they were reviewed 3<sup>rd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> May 2024).

The training section of Safety Plan needs to be looked at – and this will be considered at Staffing Committee. Officers will carry out HSE assessments when settled in new office to see if any adjustments to desks / work stations are required.

It was noted that the introduction of Peoplesafe devices has helped with loan working.

## **271/24 PUBLIC OPEN SPACES - ALLOTMENTS**

Clerk updated members regarding gate to Woodchester toddler play area – it shuts too quickly – and the spring mechanism can not be tightened any further – plus it has become loose in ground. It is beyond repair. Cost of new gate and delivery is £960.

It was duly agreed to purchase / install new gate as soon as possible.

Cllr Jean Thomas and Clerk reported on the excellent work carried out by DofE students at both Lilliput Park and Wapley. Boules court is looking much tidier and more colourful.

Cllr Richard Evans gave members updates following a recent allotment meeting....

- The Allotment Association have a new secretary.
- Due to some items that have recently appeared on plots – they are looking at their policies and letting agreements – and may make some amendments to these later this year.
- Plot inspections are all up to date and plots are being tidied up.
- They have a new (second) container now and as mentioned earlier – the blocked drain issue has been resolved.
- Clerk is still chasing maps from SGC regarding where the drains run under the allotments, and clerk is also looking into whether Allotment Module can be added to the RBS software package for treasurer to use.

## **272/24 TERN INN**

Clerk informed members that lease for car park is currently being reviewed by solicitors – as the draft lease that was attached to the agreement to lease needed some amends.

They are aware that Parish Council are seeking to employ a Car Park Management Company and will ensure that lease allows for this.

Clerk has been in touch with Mark Lewis – and plans are progressing for the café. He is keen to know of any grant funding available.

With regards the tidying of area outside the shops – Mark Lewis has suggested some of the students at farm get involved with making up planters – so that there is a nice link with the Café....members okay with this in principle – just need to agree size / design, etc.

## **273/24 COUNCIL CHAMBERS / OFFICE RE-ORDERING**

Cllr Chris Zapata and Clerk had met with contractor and architect in last week to go over snagging / outstanding works.

The electric works are all completed – ready for swap from single phase to 3 phase – just waiting on Octopus and National Grid....

Window in Clerks office needs replacing as one installed doesn't open outwards – so no means of escape – new unit on order. Other than that it is touching up / rubbing bits down / filling last holes and another coat of paint.

IT cabling will be completed later in week and aim is to move back into Office end of week and for FP Room to be deep cleaned and reinstated as a meeting room the following week.

Final bill not received yet...as works not quite complete.

PMN – Cllr Paul Hulbert sent email stating how impressed he was with works.

**274/24 FINANCE MATTERS**

Payments received / made in April were reviewed. All in order.

Bank reconciliation for March / April was received by members and approved / signed.

Members were reminded of Year End / Audit Dates. Internal Auditor is due in on 21<sup>st</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> May 2024.

**275/24 ITEMS TO REPORT**

- Clerk informed members that had received a complaint regarding grass cutting being carried out at 7am in the morning at QEII. Clerk speaking with contractor regarding this.
- Clerk handed out details of international tribute to be read at forthcoming D-Day event....Cllr David Fitt gave apologies but will be busy at beginning of June and not able to help.
- Cllr Chris Zapata expressed concerns regarding overgrown hedge at QEII Memorial Garden – and that this could lead to antisocial behaviour (as can't be seen from road). He confirmed that grass was being cut very early in the morning.
- Cllr David Fitt stated that a couple of residents had approached him and had been complaining about the parking by Witches Hat (on hatched lines)....It was noted that this was in Yate – not Dodington (just over border) and Clerk would write to YTC Clerk making them aware of issue.
- Cllr Adrian Hutton reported that the hedge up Besom Lane (that borders Wapley Common) was becoming very overgrown and was scratching cars. (PMN – this has been addressed – and trim by hand carried out – but in Autumn will need to look at getting cut right back.

Monday – 20/5/24 – Staffing Committee Meeting

Monday – 27/5/24 – Bank Holiday – no meeting

Monday – 3/6/24 – Finance & General Purpose Committee Meeting.

As there was no further business the meeting was closed at 9.00pm – with Chair thanking everyone for attending.

Next meeting of Full Council – 17<sup>th</sup> June 2024

Signed .....Chair

Date 17<sup>th</sup> June 2024

## **Appendix 1**

Planning Applications Considered at Full Council Meeting 13/5/24

### **P24/00994/TRE**

Works to various trees as defined in the Arboricultural Report cover by TPO 49 dated 09/02/1977

Ancient woodland North of Wapley Common, Besom Lane, Westerleigh, S Glos. BS37 8RJ

*Clerk informed members that this application was in readiness for Ash Dieback tree work that council were looking to carry out later in the autumn.*

*No issues.*