

Minutes of the Meeting of Doddinghurst Parish Council General Purpose Committee held at 20.00 on the 25th April 2018, Parish Room (adjacent the Village Hall), Doddinghurst Road, Doddinghurst.

Present: Cllrs: Alan Farrow (Chairman), Gerry Smith, Diane Rogers-Harrison, David Powell and Julia Le Page.

1. **Apologies for absence.** Cllr Phil Arnell
2. **Declaration of Interests relating to items on the agenda** - None declared.
3. **Resolved:** Approved, the minutes of the GP meeting on the 22nd February 2018.
4. **Information:** Update on activities undertaken since last meeting:
 - a. Vandalism to Parish Council property - under-croft door kicked in, Notice Board by small car park pulled over and contents of litter bins strewn around. Problems occurred late at night over two weekends. The metal liners to the litter bins were deliberately left in the middle of Church Lane to create a hazard to cars. The large basket swing had also been dismantled and a tree at the back of the Village Hall field felled. The matters had been reported to the Police with no feedback. The under-croft door frame has been repaired and the notice board salvaged but not refitted at this stage. The new caretaker to the Village Hall kindly cleared up the litter that had been widely strewn around the centre of the village.
 - b. New Clerk Recruitment - Mrs Ann-Marie Smith had been appointed and commenced on the 4th April 2018 to work in tandem with the existing Clerk during an induction process.
 - c. Notices of Deposit by Essex County Council had been extended by Scott Norris to more of Cowes Farm property to ensure that in future the general public had walking rights limited to definitive footpaths and to, inter alia, expunge footpaths shown on ordnance survey maps that had not been established as definitive footpaths.
 - d. Teen Shelter remedial works. Sutcliffe Play had replaced the two centre posts for the Teen Shelters, corrected the fitting of the fixing nut cap covers and buffed smooth the outer support frame galvanising. Broadmead leisure had visited to repair soft ground damage incurred during installation works and completed the cap cover replacement exercise. The 20% retention payment to Sutcliffe Play will now be processed for payment.
 - e. Kicking Goal artificial grass and goalmouth. The contractor is to carry out a pre-install inspection 8th/10th May with installation to commence on the 11th June 2018. The socketed goal post has yet to be purchased. When this is all completed the ECC CIF grant of £20,000 may be claimed.
 - f. Parish Room convector heater. One unit had to be replaced following its total failure. This involved replacing the mesh cage as the replacement heater is larger and has the controls in a different place. The new cage alone cost £180.
 - g. Bus Shelter by old Post Office, has been repaired with loose weatherboarding re-attached and the whole exterior treated with a modern wood preservative/ dark oak stain.
 - h. GDPR - release of information by SLCC had been received but no decision on the ability of a Parish Council to appoint a member of staff as the Data Protection Officer had been made by Government. The Privacy Notice discussed at the last F&R meeting would need to be approved prior to the 25th May and had been re-issued with an amendment about the length of time the Council would retain personal data.
 - i. External Audit - Intermediate level. The auditor had advised that Doddinghurst had been selected for an intermediate level audit but this did not pose a significant burden as the information had to be available to the internal auditor in any event. The internal audit would be 2nd to 9th May 2018. The external audit had to be signed off by full Council at its meeting on the 7th June. The RFO would be away from the 14th May to the 31st May 2018 so the F&R meeting scheduled for the 16th May would be moved to the hour before the Annual Parish Council meeting on the 10th May 2018 - see below.

5. Play Area - Various Remedial Works - Proposals and Quotes

There were a number of remedial works recommended for the Play Equipment due to wear and tear and a specialist Play Equipment contractor had been asked for quotes:

The company quoting for the repairs worked on the Teen Shelter installation and is a fairly local family business. They have demonstrated a good working knowledge of play equipment repairs and safety requirements. The quotes received cover:

- Basket Ball Boards - replacement of the backboards
- Spinner bearing - freeing of top bearing
- Basket Swing - replacement of support “ropes” with stainless steel chains.
- Wicksteed “mats” by large slide - relaying a small number of mats to remove trip hazards
- Small Car Park, work to minimise “ponding” by the double gates

The Clerk also recommended Jet-washing the area in front of the basket-ball wall and teen shelter concrete base to remove accumulated mud following the very wet previous 4 months that has led to extremely muddy conditions.

Councillors discussed the need for competitive quotes but the sums concerned fall below the £2000 threshold that requires multiple quotes and they recognised the difficulty finding local contractors with the necessary expertise. Work on the car park, at £850, could not be done until the Kicking Goal contract had been completed and would be a separate order. The total for the four play area repairs came to £1380 so should go ahead without delay before the contractor becomes fully booked with work for the summer period.

6. Peartree Field - vulnerabilities. A number of “gaps” existed in the hedgerow bordering Peartree Field, one along Days Lane and one by the large Oak Tree where a five bar gate, used as a piece of fencing by Scott Norris, has been pushed over. Both “gaps” are protected by field-side mounds. Councillors asked the Clerk to obtain quotes to remedy the weakness in the hedgerows.

7. Large Lorries in Church Lane prohibition campaign. Noted the hazards created by large lorries manoeuvring and driving along Church Lane. Budgens had promised to address the issue by not delivering to its store during the school rush period. Scott Norris had also promised to ask his tractor lorry drivers to not pass down Church Lane at these times. A response from Cllr Wagland is awaited over what action ECC can take to minimise the risks to pedestrians.

8. Any Other Urgent Business - for information only

Date of Next meetings: Finance & Resource to be at 19.00 on the 10th May 2018 (revised form the 16th May); AGM Full Council to be at 20.00 on the 10th May 2018; June Full Council meeting is the 7th June and next GP is on the 20th June 2018. Insurance Quotes for 18/19 are being obtained as the current policy expires at the beginning of June 2018. Following the announcement of a Local Government pay settlement Revised Pay Scales effective wef 1st April have been received and a Parish Council NEST pension scheme account will need to be opened following the appointment of a new Clerk, who will be auto enrolled by the Pension Regulator.

The meeting was attended by no members of the public

The meeting closed at 22.00

Signed:

Dated: 20th June 2018