


**Draft Minutes of the Meeting of Doddinghurst Parish Council General Purpose Committee  
held at 7pm on the 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021 via zoom video conferencing**

**Present: Cllrs. Alan Farrow, Gerry Smith, Julia Le Page, Phil Arnell, Diane Rogers-Harrison**


- 1 Apologies for absence:** Cllr. David Potter
- 2 Declaration of Interests relating to items on the agenda.** None
- 3  Resolved:** Approved, the minutes of the GP meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> October 2020.
- 4 Information: Update on activities undertaken since last meeting:**
  - a) The Clerk and Deputy Clerk have continued to work from home following Government guidelines.
  - b) Parish Room. The creche returned on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020 up to Christmas but because of covid have only returned on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021. Room was cleaned before they returned.
  - c) Children's Play Area – The play area was reopened on 23<sup>rd</sup> July in line with Government guidelines and can remain open during the current lockdown. Signs have been put up on the Outdoor Gym equipment as this is closed under current lockdown. It is still being cleaned on a weekly basis. A spreadsheet of Inspection findings/Action has now been produced by the Clerk to enable the GP meeting to more easily monitor progress. Quote has been received for an alternative Inspection contractor. See Agenda Item.
  - d) Rubbish /Litter. The contract for the 949 litre biffa bin was cancelled as agreed at the November 2020 Council meeting and credit note has now been received. The dog wastebin on Days Lane has been destroyed so we are waiting on a quote from Brentwood to replace. An offer has been received from two residents who would be happy to volunteer to litter pick when the groundsman is away.
  - e) Burials – 2 new ashes and 1 full burial re- open since our last meeting. A letter of response has been sent to the family following a complaint received before Christmas regarding the piling of soil on an adjacent plot by the grave digger from Bennetts. Further information has been obtained on trying to find a solution for fixing the ashes memorial tablets that are becoming loose. See Agenda.
  - f) Allotments – 1 allotment half plot relinquished since last meeting. Renewals are due in April 21.
  - g) Office Refurbishment. The builder started the refurbishment of the Ladies toilet on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and so far all going well with tiling now completed and sanitary wear to be fitted into the new space.
  - h) Annual Tree survey. Quote accepted by Full Council. Prince have now quoted to remove the existing piles of brambles and wood in the burial ground which can be removed when the tree work is completed in March 2021 – see Agenda Item
  - i) Pear Tree Field. Liaising with contractor re digging out a trench at the rear of Pear tree field GP Committee discussed the contractors request for a letter of instruction confirming that he will not be held accountable for any insurance claims in the future related to the digging of a trench. Future incursions will be monitored and Full Council will be consulted on this item.
  - j) Pear tree pond area. Cllr Dicker organised a survey of the pond which has not yet been received. I am liaising with Cllr Farrow on the planting of the replacement tree that a resident kindly offered to buy to replace the one cut down last year. We are also in dialogue


with the Ehren family about refurbishing the bench and replacing the plaque in memory of Eileen, a former DP Councillor who passed away before Christmas. See agenda item on bench refurbishment.


- k) Footpaths. The Clerk is investigating an enquiry from a resident regarding the pond adjacent to the entrance on Frog Lane of Restricted Byway 36/Footpath 21. They ask if the Parish Council have obtained a closure award for the pond area in the past. It is not shown on the deeds of either of the neighbouring properties or on the Parish Council Asset Register. Enquiries have been made with Brentwood Land Charges who confirm that Brentwood BC do not own the pond and have advised contacting ECC highways.
- l) Nature Trail. The Clerk has recently walked the Nature Trail and ideas will be sought for how this could be improved now that it is included in the budget for 21/22. The Kissing gate from Village Hall Footpath entrance that was in the Referees room needs to be removed from the Parish Office now the refurbishment is taking place.
- m) Highways. Logging highways issues on the ECC website portal continues. Councillor Wagland responded to the email sent regarding bin lorries destroying kerbs and verges in The Gardens as there are in excess of 35 logged items on the portal will be include in future routine maintenance as not seen as a priority. No reply on the All Saint's Close kerb / Budgens issue. Hugh Gorton is following through on Priory Mead parking issue with The Local Highways Panel. Rubbish clearance of the Z bends on Doddinghurst Road has been logged.
- n) Scribe Accounts. The Clerk and RFO have completed the initial training on the new accounts package Scribe and a demo of the related Cemetery package.
- o) Risk Assessments. The Parish Office risk assessment will be completed after the toilet refurbishment is finished because of building work and covid restrictions
- p) Freedom of Information Request regarding unmanned aerial vehicles was responded to within the required timescale.
- q) Football contract negotiations are on hold because of lockdown. There are still some football items to be cleared from the Parish Office now the referee's room is being refurbished.


**5. Information and 🖐️ Resolved:** The quote from Prince Tree Surgery to clear the deadwood and brambles in the burial ground when they complete the annual tree maintenance was accepted.

**6. Information and 🖐️ Resolved:** The Clerk circulated a spreadsheet of the latest Play Area Inspection Report Findings which were discussed. It was noted that since the online meeting with the manager responsible for open spaces and play areas at BBC there has been no response to their actions agreed at the last meeting, to compare the recent Brentwood Inspection Reports organised through PI, the Play Inspection Company, with the Annual ROSPA report received in June 2020. Cllr Farrow proposed that DPC cease using the PI/BBC 6 weekly inspections because of lack of consistency and detail on actions to be implemented leading to lack of confidence in the reports produced. Cllr Smith seconded the motion and it was agreed by all present.

**7. Information and  Resolved:** The quote from Broadmead Leisure to carry out bi-monthly play area inspections (which includes remedial maintenance) to replace the current 6 weekly inspections carried out by BBC (see item 6 above) was accepted subject to the Clerk checking with our insurers on frequency of Inspections required and clarification that Broadmead are permitted to do both maintenance and Inspections. (In phone call of 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021 and email of 2<sup>nd</sup> March DPC insurers have confirmed that apart from the weekly inspection that needs to be noted and annual ROSPA inspection, the Council can decide how frequently other inspections are carried out. It is ok for the same company to perform maintenance and inspections but any contractor carrying out works needs to have their own PL cover of no less than £5m)

**8. Information and  Resolved:** It was agreed to continue with the annual ROSPA Play Area Inspection subject to checking with the DPC insurers on what they require. (This has subsequently been confirmed by DPC insurers (email 2/3/21) as a requirement of the DPC Insurance Policy).

**9. Information and  Resolved:** The current Bench Policy was reviewed and the quote to refurbish the benches at Peartree Pond and Field that were identified in the latest risk assessment, was accepted.

**10. Information and  Resolved:** The problem of loose ashes memorial tablets was discussed and it was decided that the solution provided by R M Wilks Limited was preferable and that the Council would take him up on his offer to do the first one free of charge to see if it works. Councillor Smith proposed accepting the quote and Councillor Farrow seconded the motion which was agreed.

**11. Information:** The spreadsheet from ECC with information on bus stop ownership was noted.

**13. Any Other Urgent Business.** Cllr Smith updated the committee on his actions with highways/UK power networks regarding pavement repairs and removal of redundant electricity poles along Doddinghurst Road. Having met a local resident he also mentioned the need for a bin at the end of outings lane for dog poo which could be raised with Blackmore PC. The need to litter pick along Mounnessing Road and Doddinghurst Road was also mentioned. Cllr Farrow suggested that the Kissing Gate that was stored in the referees room could be replaced if a post was reinstated.

Meeting closed at 9pm

Signed:

Dated: 15<sup>th</sup> April 2021