

**Draft Minutes of the Meeting of Doddinghurst Parish Council held at 20.00 on Thursday
16th January 2020, Parish Rooms, Adjacent Village Hall, Church Lane, Doddinghurst, Essex.**

Present: Cllrs Mr G. Smith (Vice Chairman), Cllr. Mrs D. Dicker, Mrs J. Le Plage, Mr A. Oliver, Mrs D. Rogers Harrison, Mr A. Smith, Mr A. Farrow, and Brentwood Borough Councillor Mr C Poppy

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllrs Mr M. Capon, Mr D. Potter, Mr P. Arnell, Brentwood Borough Councillors Mr R. McCheyne, Mr K. Parker, Essex County Councillor Lesley Wagland
2. 🖐️ **Resolved.** Minutes of the meeting held on the 7th November 2019 approved and signed.
3. **Declaration of Interests** from Members of any item(s) on this agenda. None.
4. **Information:** Clerk's report back on progress and from decisions taken at prior meetings:
 - a) Burials - Re-open ashes 2, New ashes 1, no full burials.
 - b) Allotments – 2 full plots and 6 half plots available
 - c) Children's Play Area – Broadmead Leisure will be repairing the wet pour around the roundabout when the weather improves.
 - d) Risk assessments are all completed.
 - e) Emergency lighting unit in Parish Corridor failed the 2hour test and has been replaced together with the emergency lighting test switch in the Parish room.
 - f) Fire Inspection/maintenance was completed in November
 - g) The DPC Winter Newsletter was published in the December Link with the first article inviting Parishioners to meet the Councillors and advertising re -election in 2020.
 - h) DPC Facebook Page is now available and Clarrie and I have met with Richard Pond, administrator of Doddinghurst FB Discussion Page to explore the best approach to advertising for the forthcoming election. Richard is happy to share items that we publish on our page with the Discussion Page to get us a wider audience.
 - i) After spending some time exploring options for a replacement website provider, we were eventually informed by Cambridge Open Systems and EALC that DPC website content could be transferred from essexinfo.net to e-Voice.org.uk by Cambridge open systems who hosted essexinfo.net and a number of other websites. The transfer has been completed but we now have work to do on customising the logo etc before putting the redirection in place. Apart from that it is a straightforward transfer at no cost to DPC other than the time involved.
 - j) The Police meeting and Christmas buffet on 5th December was well attended.
 - k) Refurbishment of Parish Office Toilets – meeting of the working group also took place on 5th Dec and Roger has now drawn up an invitation to quote – See Agenda item
 - l) To comply with a request by the Pensions Regulator every 3 years we have to reinstate any employees that are eligible to be enrolled in our pension scheme, NEST. These Pension letters have now been sent and we must notify the Pensions Regulator of compliance by 1st June 2020.
 - m) Annual Tree Survey has been completed – see Agenda item.
 - n) The Village Sign requires attention as it is rotting at the base. The company that originally installed the sign working was Mabbitts who are now part of Bakers of Danbury. They have provided a quote – see Agenda item.
 - o) The NATS team is in at beginning of February.
5. **Information:** Schedule of correspondence received up to 31st December 2019 -noted
6. **Financial Reports and Minutes and Feedback from Committees.**
 - a) **Information:** Noted: Financial Reports for November /December 2019 including RFO Report:
 - Barclays Bank account cash funds on 31/12/19 stood at £104,615.48p with unreconciled pending payments for £640.39. In addition, there is £18,106.96 held in the Santander Bank and £59.05 held as petty cash making £122,781.49 in total (this excludes any accrued VAT refund). Overall, the funds are down by £3962.48 from £126,743.97 on 29th Oct 2019.

- The F&R meeting was held in November to review the 2020/21 budget and precept. A cash increase of 3% (£2158) of the 2019/20 precept, raising it to £74,072, was approved for referral to the Full Council. Subsequently, the 2020/21 Council Tax Base for Doddinghurst was advised by BBC on the 8th January 2020 as being 1203, a 1.4% increase over the prior year. This has the effect of reducing the proposed effective increase of 3% cash, when applied to the A to E property bands, to 1.5%.

Now we know the actual tax base for 2020/21 the Council should consider the 3% increase at the new Tax Base when applied on the property Tax Bands A to H – to provide the A to H rates (as agreed at the F&R meeting) which leads to a precept of £75175, (an increase of £3261 (4.5%)) from £71914.

- The budget forecast for 2020/21 is attached to the meeting pack FYI. There are three assumptions to note in particular, one is a fund of £4500 to pay for the VED day celebrations in 2020, the second is an estimate of £20,000 for toilet refurbishments (to merge the existing ladies and referee room to provide a unisex disability toilet), and thirdly a 3% precept increase (at a Tax Base of 1186) for 20/21. With these assumptions in place 2020/21 would see a balanced budget that financial year.

b) 🖐️ **Resolved:** Approved the Schedule of Payments for November/ December 2019

c) **Information:** Planning Applications to 31st December 2019 noted. Councillors asked the Clerk to enquire about a Training Course on planning for all Councillors as it is sometime since DPC planning process was reviewed and particularly as the latest LDP is imminent. All Councillors to notify the Clerk with any comments they have on any of the pending planning applications as listed.

d) **Information:** Noted: Draft Minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee of 19th November 2019.

e) **Information:** Feedback from Members relating to Committees attended since last meeting. Cllr G. Smith gave an update on the last BBPCA meeting and a meeting of the Essex Council for Voluntary Youth Services.

- Information:** Councillors discussed the precept for 2020/21 as recommended from the F&R committee at £74,072 and the revised figure of £75,175 based on the newly revised tax base as detailed in the RFO report above section (b)
- 🖐️ **Resolved:** Council accepted the revised precept of £75,175 (based on new tax base and 3% increase for bands A-H)
- Public Participation:** Brentwood Borough Councillor Mr C Poppy gave an update on the Local Development Plan which is going to Full Council this week and King Georges Playing Field Redevelopment going to Planning Committee with development of Brentwood Centre following in the future. There are plans to split recycling into two and fly tipping continues to be a big problem in Navestock and Days Lane.

Reverend Ann Coleman thanked everyone for their support at the Remembrance Sunday service; was pleased that over 100 people attended the carols in the village hall at Christmas and thanked the Clerk for assistance in organising a funeral for 2nd January at very short notice.

There is also an ongoing problem with dog fouling around the village recreation area which is difficult to enforce.

- Information and 🖐️ Resolved:** Council agreed to the Toilet refurbishment paper Issue 1B and the adoption of the scheme for implementation in July/ August 2020.
- Information and 🖐️ Resolved:** Council discussed and agreed to the quote from Prince Tree Surgery for maintenance of trees around Budgens Fields and the Village Hall Car Park. The Clerk will explore if the cost of maintaining T1 can be recouped from the Electricity Board as it is actually adjacent to the substation.
- Information and 🖐️ Resolved:** Councillors discussed the need for maintenance of the Village Sign and agreed to the quote from Bakers of Danbury (who have a specialist department, formerly Babbett's who installed the sign originally) to remove the sign, repair the post and reset in a concrete base at a cost of £900 plus VAT subject to a final review of the condition of the frame.

- 13. Information:** Council discussed Cllr. Capon's paper following his attendance at the Stonley Festival Planning meeting. Reverend Ann was able to update the Council on progress with organising the Stonley Festival in June confirming that the Festival will be fully insured as an event and all companies involved also having their own insurance. The next meeting will be on 29th January in the Rectory and 12th February in Priests House. The festival has received a grant from Brentwood Borough Council and may approach DPC for a specific donation in the future when more detail is known.
- 14. Information:** Cllr Le Plage gave an update on the VE Day Afternoon Tea planned for 8th May 2020 and agreed to circulating a full plan at the next meeting in March. Caterer and choir are booked, 50/60 people will be invited and the event will be advertised to the Church and the Friday Coffee morning with Cllr Dicker taking the telephone bookings.
- 15. Information:** Other urgent information not requiring a resolution: Councillor Alan Farrow explained that he has written to Budgens regarding the lorries that are destroying the green verges in All Saints Close.

The meeting closed at 21.45

Minutes signed:

Date: 5th March 2020