

**Minutes of the Meeting of Doddinghurst Parish Council held at 20.00 on Thursday  
18<sup>th</sup> January 2018, Parish Rooms, Adjacent Village Hall, Church Lane, Doddinghurst, Essex.**

**Present:** Cllrs. Mrs D. Dicker (Chairman), Mr A Farrow, Mr P Arnell, Mr M Capon, Mr. A Smith, Mr. G Smith, Mr. D Powell, Mrs. J Le Page, Mr. A Oliver and Essex County Cllr Leslie Wagland.

1. **Apologies for absence.** Cllrs D Potter and Mrs. D Rogers Harrison; Borough Councillors Mr Cliff Poppy, Mr Keith Parker and Mr Roger McCheyne
2. 🗳️ **Resolved.** Minutes of the meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2017 approved and signed.
3. **Declaration of Interests** from Members of any item(s) on this agenda. None declared.
4. **Information: Clerk's report back** on progress and from decisions taken at prior meetings.
  - a) *There was one new ashes interment and several burial related enquiries but currently there no pending ashes or burial interments.*
  - b) *All allotment plots are now currently leased. The 2018/19 lease renewal period starts soon.*
  - c) *The Budgens Field/Parrott Land wooden boundary fence replacement has been completed.*
  - d) *The Parish Council Newsletter was published in the Dec 2017/Jan 2018 edition of the Link.*
  - e) *The Scout Group were advised to obtain quotes for the repair of the reportedly faulty wiring to the path lights and to approach the Parish Council for a grant.*
  - f) *Fallen shrubbery (January 2018 gales) blocking the footpath adjacent the burial ground has been removed.*
  - g) *The Parish Council was awarded a CIF grant of £20,000 for the Teen Village and Kicking Goal which is valid to March 2019.*
  - h) *The Teen Shelter installation commencement date will be the 15<sup>th</sup> January 2018 and will take approximately one week to complete.*
  - i) *The new Parish Council website on the essexinfo.net host is in service and Clarrie Tremain trained to maintain updates.*
  - j) *Two replacement litter bins for the CPA have been installed by BBC.*
  - k) *Two applications for the position of Clerk, as advertised in the Link, have been received.*
  - l) *The external water tap by the Parish Room was torn off the wall just before Christmas, which broke the internal pipework and caused flooding of the toilets, corridor and office. Fortunately, the Parish Room had been booked from 20.00 and the users managed to turn off the water before any real damage occurred. The damaged tap has been removed. Over Christmas the plastic external rainwater downpipe next to the Parish Room was also vandalised by being torn off the wall and awaits replacement.*
  - m) *A new emergency light has been installed above the internal door between the Parish Room and the changing room as this is a fire escape route. The old unit failed its test due to a deteriorated battery and a new unit proved to be cheaper than a new battery.*
  - n) *The Pre-School team have now commenced a creche in the Parish Room and the Clerk and Deputy Clerk obtained enhanced DBS certificates – this is an Ofsted requirement for persons working in a building where there are children. The preschool paid the fees for the DBS checks.*
  - o) *The NAT's team planted bulbs and cut the Rectory Hedge in November. They also litter picked the "campsites" used by youths among the trees and bushes behind the Scout Hut field.*
  - p) *A BBPCA meeting was attended in November 2017. The BBPCA are reviewing their fees as the cost of the external secretary is proving more expensive than expected because new responsibilities are being given to the Secretary, such as managing meetings with the new MP. Due to difficulty in getting cost free accommodation Doddinghurst has agreed to host the next meeting in March 2018.*
  - q) *A community police meeting was attended in November. Notes of this meeting and a BBPCA item on Special Constables was circulated to Councillors.*
5. **Information: Schedule of Correspondence** received up to the 8<sup>th</sup> January 2018. Noted.
  - (a) Scout Path Wiring – re item 4e above. The Clerk had been in further conversation with Karen Powell of the Scouting Team. Following discussion, Councillors asked the Clerk to re-write to the Scout Group giving explicit permission for them to seek quotes for the work and to confirm that they are empowered to order the fault diagnosis, repair and re-commissioning of the power supply to the outside lights, subject to compliance with current UK electrical regulations. As a footnote, the minutes of the 11<sup>th</sup> May 1994 full council meeting stated that the Parish Council "will not contribute to the costs of electricity and general maintenance of the outside lighting but would consider an approach for assistance in the event of a high exceptional cost".
6. **Financial Reports and Minutes and Feedback from Committees.**
  - a. Information: Noted: Financial Reports for November and December 2017.
  - b. 🗳️ **Resolved. Approved** the Schedule of Payments for November and December 2017.
  - c. Information and Noted: Planning Application status for November and December 2017 and a recently released schedule of planning enforcements. It was also noted that the Borough Council has signed off the latest consultation document for the Local Development Plan following an appraisal of the Green Belt. The

Borough Council had inadequate levels of land to meet government driven targets for housing in the Borough and had to resort to the conversion of Green Belt land to housing land to meet the target for growth up to 2033. The latest development plan land allocations had been informed by a revised Sustainability Plan, also released in January 2018. The documents revealed that there were no shortage of land owners offering their Green Belt land for sale as development land for houses.

- d. Information: Noted: Draft Minutes of the Finance and Resource meeting of the 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2017.
- e. Information: Feedback from Members relating to Committees attended since last meeting. Notes of meetings with the Police on 27<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> November covering Community Policing in Doddinghurst and Essex Police recruitment of Special Constables, had been circulated. A discussion on Special Constables is to be scheduled for the March meeting. Cllr Adrian Oliver attended a newly established independent police advisory group meeting where community agents liaise with the police on policing matters. Meetings are held quarterly.

7. **Information: Precept for 2018/9 - recommendation of the F&R committee.** Having agreed the budget for 2018/19, the precept recommendation for 2018/19 was £69,820 (£60.02 a year for a Band D property (based on a 17/18 Tax Base of 1163.20). In agreeing a £3500 increase in precept ((5.27%) Councillors took account of the loss of the remaining discretionary grant at £4300 plus the loss of the LCTS Grant at £3500 all against a background of CPI running at 3% (£2000), so overall the spending power of the Council will be effectively reduced by £6300 per annum despite a 5.27% increase in precept.
8. **Resolved: Approved:** Doddinghurst Parish Council's precept for 2018/19 to be £69,820. This is £58.87 a year for a Band D property as the tax base has risen to 1186.10.
9. **Information: Update on the provision of the New Teen Shelter.** Work on the installation of the new shelter commenced on the 15<sup>th</sup> January 2018 with the contractor's arrival on site and the commencement of groundworks. The timescale for installation is set at 2 weeks but subject to weather conditions. The small car park has been closed for the duration of the work.
10. **Information: Update on the provision of a kicking goal and artificial surface.** Difficulty in getting companies to quote remains a problem. Of three asked to submit a price only one responded. This one quote is being re-affirmed and a fourth company has been asked to quote. Meanwhile, with so much wet weather in the past few weeks the ground conditions are very poor and will need time to dry out, so no activity is anticipated on site until the end of March - assuming a suitable contractor can be found.
11. **Resolution to agree action on Kicking Goal etc. None required at this time**
12. **Resolved: Approved action on repairs to grass verges in All Saints Close.** The Clerk is to prepare a letter to Essex Highways Cabinet Member seeking a remedy to the verge problem in All Saints. The issue has been reported a number of times but no action taken by the County Council.
13. **Other urgent information** (No council actions/letters/undertakings permissible on this item). Noted a clash of meetings between the next GP meeting scheduled for the 21<sup>st</sup> Feb and a NHS public consultation at Brentwood Community Hospital, (NB now agreed that the GP meeting is to be deferred by one day to 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb). The next Full Council meeting is on the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

### The meeting closed at 22.00

Minutes signed:

Date: 1<sup>st</sup> March 2018

Comments in public session:

Cllr Wagland:

- (a) advised that Essex County Council had agreed a 4.99% precept increase for 2018/19, which is below the government threshold upper limit, and of which 2% was being allocated to social care.
- (b) £3m had been allocated for highway pothole repairs in the County.
- (c) Cllr Wagland suggested that she would like to discuss with Councillors, outside the formal council meeting, highways issues and requested a copy of the letter relating to the damaged verges in the village – re All Saints letter.
- (d) The idea of devolution was being reconsidered.
- (e) How Essex responds to Planning Applications was under review.

The meeting was attended by 1 member of the public.