

Draft minutes subject to acceptance at the next meeting.

DOULTING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 12th MARCH 2025 AT DOULTING VILLAGE HALL COMMENCING AT 7.30pm.

Present: Cllrs Sarah Goff (Chair), Jan Crewe, Simon Baker, John Shepherd, Bruce Yoell and Les Greaves; also in attendance Alan Butcher (Clerk)

2503/1 - Apologies for absence. None received.

2503/2 - Declarations of Interest: No declarations were made.

2503/3 - Public Forum:

The Chairman will adjourn the meeting and allow a maximum of 15 minutes for public participation on matters included on the agenda only. Two members of the public were present.

- i) Matters on the Agenda including planning – no matters were raised.
- ii) Discussion requested by a member of the public regarding parish newsletters. A member of the public spoke about ideas to revive parish newsletters which included combining existing publications from several parishes. There was a need to improve content, which could include a parish council resume and welcome pack for new villagers, and to recruit volunteers to edit and distribute the publication. The question of the cost of producing a newsletter and the logistics of distribution were discussed and suggestions including the payment of a subscription and raising revenue by advertising were put forward. Cllr Goff was happy that the Parish Council supported the newsletter but did not think that the council could offer financial support. She asked for a proposal on the future format and circulation of the improved newsletter and for costings before the Parish Council could make any decision on future support.
- iii) Somerset Councillors reports – circulated.

2503/4 - Confirmation of the Minutes of previous meetings:

- i) That the Minutes of Meeting held on 19th February 2025 be agreed and signed as a true record. This was so agreed and the minutes were signed by the Chairman.

2503/5 - Parish Council Response to Planning Applications:

- i) 2025/0256/APP - Approval of details reserved by condition 4 (Materials) of planning permission 2019/1369/FUL (Demolition and replacement of poultry buildings and associated infrastructure.). Clover Farm Merryfield Lane Doultong Shepton Mallet Somerset BA4 4RF. Councillors had no comments on the application.
- ii) 2025/0319/AGB - Application for prior notification of agricultural development for a proposed building. Land At 364065 143946 Bodden Lane To Chelynch Road Doultong Shepton Mallet Somerset. Cllr Crewe advised that there was a footpath in the vicinity of the proposed development. It was agreed to note this as a comment otherwise councillors had no comments on the application.

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- iii) Doultong Stone Quarry. Initial draft of submission to Planning Ombudsman; summary to be sent to Somerset CE and MP.
- The clerk had prepared a summary of the application and the planning process between 21st September 2023 when the consultation request was received by the Parish Council and 4th July 2024 when the approval was given under delegated powers to the surprise of the Parish Council and objectors who had been denied the opportunity to speak on the matter at the planning board.
- The summary highlighted the fact that the ward councillor, Cllr Clarke had responded with his support for the application on the 21st September 2023, the day that the Parish Council had received the consultation request. Despite the large number of objections from parishioners and the Parish Council he had, apparently, not deemed it necessary to change his view or support for the application.
- The clerk had reviewed the planning process set out in section D8 of the Somerset Constitution in which para 5.2-5 seemed to indicate that an application such as the extension to Doultong Stone Quarry including a new access road should not be determined under delegated powers but decided by the planning committee. This had not been the case leaving Doultong Parish Council suspicious of the validity of the decision.
- Given the above, the Clerk felt that there could be a matter if interpretation as to whether para 5.2-5 applied in this case although it seemed perverse to exclude it. The clerk advised the likelihood of a disappointing outcome of a submission to the Planning Ombudsman. Cllr Shepherd felt that the matter should not be pursued further but other councillors wished to proceed with the proposed submission. It was proposed Cllr Yoell, seconded Cllr Baker that the clerk prepare a draft of a submission to the Planning Ombudsman outlining the points noted above.

2503/6 - Parish Council Matters.

- i) Somerset Council Highway Service Devolution proposals:
- a. Highway works commissioned by the Parish Council – Schedule of works to be prepared. This was in hand with councillors.
 - b. Highways Working Group. No further information had been received.
- ii) Somerset Council matters
- a) LCN meeting – 3rd March 2025 – Cllrs Baker and Crewe had attended. The meeting was mostly concerned with the new Local Plan; it was noted that a general Highways meeting is being arranged.
 - c) Litter and dog bin charges. Quotation received from Somerset (circulated). A quotation for £2028 including VAT (£1690 net) had been received from Somerset for weekly bin collections. After discussion it was proposed Cllr Goff, seconded Cllr Crewe and the parish council accept the quotation for a one year period and take time to review options in the intervening period. This was agreed unanimously.
 - d) Following a discussion at the last meeting it was agreed to order 10 dog fouling signs (yellow type as selected) for £69 plus VAT.

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- iii) Highways and traffic –
 - a) Doultling Hill drainage and signs. There had been no further action on these matters.
- iv) Parish Paths Liaison Officer report. Cllr Crewe had complained at the LCN meeting about problems with the approval of volunteers.
- v) Speedwatch. Volunteers had re-applied and would be undertaking training shortly.
- vi) SID's information, requirements, grant and letter from Somerset Council. Cllr Greaves had been in discussion with Traffic Safety and passed the clerk a new MOU for signature and return to Somerset.
- vii) Village Hall matters: Cllr Baker reported that new trustees had been appointed and that there was a meeting with the school being planned.
- viii) Flood and Emergency Plans. Cllr Crewe had attended an emergency plan meeting with Somerset and was seeking volunteers and also updating the vulnerable persons list.
Cllr Crewe suggested that a "Bleed Kit" be ordered and placed next to the defibrillator.
- ix) Somerset Local Plan. Further consultations awaited on the plan.
- x) Trees on Parish Council land at Well Lane and in the Glebeland. Recommendation from Glebeland Committee circulated for final agreement.
The clerk reported that two competitive quotes had been received for the tree works at The Glebeland, a third had been discounted as being incomplete. The lowest quote was for £1450 and the second quote was for £1480 both excluding VAT which is reclaimed. The Glebeland Committee had recommended that the lowest quote be accepted, this was agreed. Clerk to place an order.
The two quotations for the works at The Well had not been submitted using the same criteria, one had included the felling of an Ash Tree. The clerk was checking whether this work was required.
- xi) Bus Service Improvement Plan. No further information had been received.
- xii) Annual Parish Meeting arrangements. This would take place before the Annual Parish Council meeting on 21st May 2025.

2503/7 - Matters relating to The Glebeland:

- i) Replacement/repair of storm damage. Cllr Shepherd was still sourcing the proposed panels.
- ii) Cllr Shepherd had removed the brash from the recent hedgelaying. Councillors thanked him for his efforts.
- iii) Cllr Baker gave a brief report on the recent meeting and confirmed that the padlocks on the Glebeland gates had been changed for coded locks. The access number had been circulated. He noted that amendments to notice boards could be required.
- iv) There was a brief discussion about access into the skate park from the village hall car park which would help to facilitate disabled access. Additionally, refurbishment proposals were discussed including the possibility of replacing existing the equipment with a bump track. Further research and costings were required.

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2503/8 - Matters relating to Padfield Green.

- i) Confirmation of Elite Playgrounds inspection contract for 2025. This was agreed in the sum of £95 per inspection.
- ii) Cllr Crewe reported that the new hedge had now been staked.

2503/9 - Matters relating to Prestleigh, Bath and West Showground and Waterlip.

- i) Prestleigh Hill speeding and enforcement. There was no further action on this matter.
- ii) Licensing application for Bath and West – Extreme Events Ltd – circulated. Councillors had no comments on the application.

2503/10 - Financial:

- i) Payment of Clerks Salary and expenses. £536.29. This was agreed and a cheque raised.
- ii) Payment of HMRC Tax. £110.60. This was agreed and a cheque raised.

2503/11 - Matters of Report

Cllr Crewe requested volunteers to assist with the plant sale preparation. She also noted a litter pick on 15th March 2025.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.55pm

2503/12 - Date and Time of future Parish Council Meetings

Wednesday 9th April 2025 at Doultling Village Hall @ 7.30pm

The Annual Parish Council meeting will be on Wednesday 21st May 2025.

**Alan Butcher,
Parish Clerk,
18th March 2025
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