

Draft Minutes subject to acceptance at the next meeting.

DOULTING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE ZOOM PLATFORM ON THURSDAY 22nd APRIL 2021 COMMENCING AT 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs Paula Fidge (Chairman), Ros Wilkins Ann Crowcombe, John Shepherd, Sarah Goff, Jan Crewe; also in attendance Cllr Francis Hayden (part of meeting) and Alan Butcher (clerk)

2104/1 - *Apologies for absence.* Mary Newman.

2104/2 - *Declarations of Interest:*

Cllr Shepherd declared an interest in item 2104/5ii – planning application 2021/0788/AGB.

2104/3 - *Public Forum:*

One member of the public was present.

- i) Comments on planning applications. No comments received.
- ii) Matters on the Agenda. There were no comments.
- iii) Reports from District and County Councillors.
Cllr Hayden noted court action was taking place concerning the continuation of remote meetings. He had little else to report advising that the Mendip were in purdah. Cllr Fidge thanked Cllr Hayden for his help in supporting a vulnerable member of the public.
- iv) Report from the Police. Clerk to contact the police to request regular reports.

2104/4 - *Confirmation of the Minutes of previous meetings:*

- i) Minutes of Meeting held on 9th March 2021 were agreed and signed as a true record with a minor amendment to para 2103/6v . The chairman signed a hard copy of the minutes.

2104/5 - *Parish Council Response to Planning Applications*

- i) Application 2021/0591/FUL - Change of use from agricultural to facilitate the use as residential garden land and erection of garage and workshop at 2 Manor Farm Cottages Farm Road, Doultling, Shepton Mallet, Somerset BA4 4QG. Councillors agreed unanimously to support the application noting that the proposals would improve highway safety on the dangerous junction.
- ii) Application 2021/0788/AGB - Application for prior notification of agricultural development for a proposed building. Land At 364835 144763 Kings Road, Doultling Shepton Mallet, Somerset. At the request of the Chairman, Cllr Shepherd outlined the proposal for a building to house machinery on land he owned on Kings Road. This was a new farming venture and the building would reduce the need for agricultural vehicles to pass through the village. Cllr Crewe asked about the footpath which ran close to the proposed building Cllr Shepherd advised that the footpath would be well clear of the building. Cllr Shepherd left the meeting.
Cllr Wilkins expressed the need to support this venture and councillors noted the advised reduction in vehicles passing through the village. Councillors agreed unanimously to support the application noting the footpath issue and the perpetuation of farming in the area.

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- iii) Woolf Stone Quarry – query about planning. The clerk advised that he could find no conditions related to the original permission for a stone production facility at the quarry.

Parish Council Matters.

- i) Highways and traffic – SCC
 - a) Cllr Crewe reported advised that Highways would inspect Prestleigh Lane where remedial works were required.
 - b) She had arranged a meeting to discuss highway safety in Doultling.
 - c) Cllr Fidge reported that the rubbish had been removed from the top of Prestleigh Hill.
 - d) Cllr Shepherd advised that the drain near to his premises was blocked causing flooding
- ii) Parish Paths Liaison Officer report. Cllr Crewe reported further surveys works to stiles and a new fingerpost in Newmans Lane.
- iii) Speedwatch – this had restarted in Doultling recently. Cllr Fidge advised the need for the police speed camera in Prestleigh in the early morning to deter speeding vehicles.
- iv) SID's to Waterlip – the agreement had been signed by the clerk and returned to Somerset CC.
- v) Trees on Parish land including tree near The Well. The ash tree near the Well had been removed. The clerk had the matter of a specialist survey of all trees on Parish Council land in hand.
- vi) Doultling Village Hall update. Cllr Goff outlined recent correspondence with the school concerning a number of matters. She expressed her frustration at the seeming inability of the school to finalise matters concerning the licence with the village hall committee. She noted recent discussions concerning a covid clean and a fire risk assessment. Cllr Crowcombe outlined the situation as she understood it which to Cllr Goff offered an alternative view. Cllr Fidge commented that there was a need for compromise between the parties to finalise the agreement. Cllr Goff commented on the restricted use of the village hall when the school was closed and Cllr Wilkins noted that the village hall is a separate entity to the school. It was felt that the school did not appear to understand the situation which existed between the school and village hall. Cllr Goff had reviewed the documents in the village halls possession and advised that these appeared to be complete.
- vii) Climate and Eco Emergency actions:
 - Proposed litter pick. Cllr Crewe advised that this was taking place on 24th April. Littering from vehicles. Details was still being sought on this matter.
 - It was noted that the clearance of tree guards on the bund had been completed.
 - Thanks were given to the landowner for his help.
 - Cllr Fidge suggested that the proposed survey of parishioners about climate matters could be conducted using SurveyMonkey.
- viii) Somerset re-organisation – consultation runs until 19th April 2021. The response based on councillor's comments had been submitted before the deadline. The clerk noted that a poll organised by Stronger Somerset would take place from 18th May although this would be an indicative poll rather than a referendum.

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- ix) Remote meetings, Annual Parish and Parish Council meetings. The legislation enabling remote meetings ended on 7th May. There was some discussion about face to face meetings in the village hall but it was agreed that it was not feasible to hold such a meeting successfully under current covid restrictions. It was noted that court action to clarify the use of remote meetings had yet to be concluded. In order to comply with legislation, it was agreed that both Annual Parish Council Meeting and the Annual Parish Meeting should take place remotely on Tuesday 4th May. It was further agreed to hold another Parish Meeting after the lifting of restrictions on 21st June date to be agreed. The Chairman confirmed that the Annual Parish Meeting would be convened on Tuesday 4th May at 7pm; clerk to post Notice and Agenda on 23rd April.

2104/7 - Matters relating to The Glebeland:

- i) Proposed community event. Cllr Crewe advised that a plant and pickle sale was to be organised on 8th May 10 – 2 with proceeds going to the church. Attention was being paid to Covid restrictions and social distancing.
- ii) Repairs to western gate. The clerk will deal with this matter when he looks at the fencing.
- iii) Mary Newman on behalf of the Glebeland Committee had prepared a statement concerning the use of barbeques which was read by Cllr Crowcombe. In summary members of the committee were unhappy with the way the matter had been handled by the Parish Council without consultation and were opposed to the use of barbeques. They also commented on the use of barbeques during dry weather and the risk of fire.

The clerk advised that the restrictions agreed by the council at the last meeting which included con formation of the use of barbeques on legs would require a written request from three councillors for a motion to reverse this decision. Also, as requested he had posted a notice about barbeques which he had subsequently removed prior to the meeting.

Cllr Wilkins noted that the Glebeland was a public open space and Cllr Fidge commented on the relationship between the Parish Council and Committee noting that the decision about this matter was with the Parish Council.

Cllr Crowcombe proposed a meeting of the Glebeland Committee which was set for 10am on 13th May 2021 in the Glebeland weather permitting.

Cllr Crowcombe asked that the sum of £15 be paid to Margaret Hares for the use of electricity for the chipper used in the Glebeland. This was agreed.

2104/8 - Matters relating to Padfield Green.

- i) Cllr Wilkins reported that the play area had been well used. She noted the need to provide some form of shade. A willow structure was suggested. Cllr Wilkins to seek ideas and quotes and speak to a specialist about a willow structure.

2104/9 - Matters relating to Prestleigh, Bath and West Showground and Waterlip.

- i) No matters were reported from Waterlip.
- ii) Cllr Fidge advised there was little to report from Prestleigh although she noted that NASS appeared to be going ahead. She understood that “Not the Bath and West Show” would be taking place at the end of August.

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2104/10 - Financial:

- i) Payment of Clerks Salary and expenses. £411.03 – This was agreed.
- ii) Quarter 4 Tax payment – HMRC. £322.25 – This was agreed.
- iii) Draft accounts to 31/03/2021. These had been circulated prior to audit.
- iv) Completion of Certificate of Exemption. This was signed by the Chairman.

2104/11 - Matters of Report

- i) Cllr Crewe was concerned that a letter about her hedge had been sent to Mendip DC apparently “on behalf of the parish Council”. An officer from MDC had visited and confirmed that there was no problem with the hedge. He had noted that the pavement was quite narrow. Clerk to investigate the letter sent to Mendip.
- ii) Cllr Crewe referred to an accusation that she and Cllr Goff had broken Covid rules, an accusation she completely refuted. Cllr Fidge advised that this had now brought the matter onto the minutes whereas she had endeavoured to deal with the matter of complaints from several people directly with Cllr Crewe.
- iii) Cllr Wilkins referred to complaints she had received about the church gates being left open following the agreement about the permissive path. She had spoken to the church who were considering a suitable notice asking for the gates to be closed after use. She would advise if there was any financial implication for the Parish Council.
- iv) Cllr Fidge noted correspondence about parking at the entrance to Beech Close. She noted that this matter had been discussed before. She advised that the parish Council could get involved if the residents could agree a way to resolve this problem.
- v) Cllr Fidge asked Cllr Goff to forward emails, etc concerning the village hall and school situation.

2104/12 - Date and Time of Next Meeting:

The next meeting being the Annual Parish Council meeting to be held on Tuesday 4th May 2021 starting at 7.30 with the Annual Parish Meeting beforehand starting at 7pm.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm

Alan Butcher,
Parish Clerk,
28th April 2021
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