

Draft minutes subject to acceptance at the next meeting.

**DOULTING PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON  
TUESDAY 30<sup>th</sup> JULY 2024 AT DOULTING VILLAGE HALL COMMENCING AT 7.30pm.**

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

Some 40 members of the public were present whose names were recorded but are not published here for reasons of data protection.

2407E/1 - Apologies for absence. No apologies received.

2407E/2 - Declarations of Interest:

Cllrs Yoell and Greaves declared an interest by way of their personal objections to the Doultling Stone Quarry application (agenda item 2407E/5i)

2407E/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. The Chairman advised that she would postpone agenda item 2407E/5i until the end of the meeting and would adjourn the meeting for public comments on this item at that time.

i) Matters on the Agenda including planning applications.

A planning consultant spoke regarding planning application 2024/1202/FUL and gave details of the proposals and planning considerations.

A number of members of the public raised concerns about the proposals including proximity to adjoining properties and access difficulties. It was noted that the proposed house was next to single storey dwellings.

A member of the public noted that the new bench positioned at Padfield Green had a damaged leg which made it unsafe.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting.

2407E/4 - Confirmation of the Minutes of previous meetings:

i) That confirmation of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2024 to be postponed until the next scheduled meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2024. This was so agreed.

2407E/5 - Parish Council Response to Planning Applications:

i) Doultling Stone Quarry Planning Approval:

Review of Somerset Councils Approval Process.

Future actions in respect of approval.

This matter was taken at the end of the meeting. The Chairman further adjourned the meeting for public comments.

Members of the public voiced their concerns that this application was apparently considered “non-contentious” and determined under delegated powers when, in fact, there had been 25 objections and a detailed objection from the Parish Council. Most thought that

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Somerset Council had ignored parishioners objections and queried the role of the ward councillors who had supported the application seemingly without reference to parishioners. Concern was expressed about the proposed new access road onto the A361 and the volume of traffic using that road. The size of any visibility splay was queried.

It was noted that the quarry was required to submit a large volume of information before works could be commenced and that there were many planning conditions to be met. There was a general discussion about the necessary response to Somerset Council who, some thought, was guilty of maladministration over this matter. A legal approach was suggested which would need to be funded by the Parish Council.

A member of the public suggested the Parish Council had “been economical with the truth” over this matter and should apologise to the quarry owner. The Chairman refuted this suggestion.

The Chairman closed the public forum and reconvened the meeting.

Cllrs Baker and Yoell spoke about the process used to determine the application and noted that the Parish Councils original objection submitted in October 2023 had been substantially altered and watered down when included on a new Somerset Council website. He also noted that the permitted application was subject to a large number of conditions.

Councillors generally agreed that the process by which the application was determined was flawed with objections from public and the Parish Council apparently ignored.

The Chairman noted that the quarry was older than most of the village and had to accept that it had a quarry. She was not against the expansion of the quarry per se but the actions of Somerset Council in approving the application in the way that it had.

It was generally agreed that the Parish Council should make representations to Somerset Council about what it considered to be a “flawed” planning process. There was a brief discussion about a “Judicial Review” of the matter but this was dismissed due to cost implications. It was agreed that advice on this matter was needed and that it would be the Parish Councils responsibility to fund any such advice.

It was unanimously agreed that the Parish Council should write formally to Somerset Council officers and executive amongst others and including the local MP to highlight the great concern about this planning decision and the process that had led to the approval via delegated powers.

Cllr Shepherd noted that the current low demand for stone across the industry could result in the closure of the quarry within three years or it being sold onto another operator.

It was also agreed that Cllr Shepherd and another councillor should make contact and liaise with the quarry owner.

- ii) 2024/1202/FUL - Erection of a self build dwelling. Land At 364823 143927 Bodden Lane To Chelynch Road Doultling Shepton Mallet Somerset. Objections were noted concerning proximity to adjoining properties which were single storey. Cllr Yoell expressed concern that the dwelling was outside the development area and that an extended time was often taken to self build a property with the need for temporary building on site for an extended time. Access to the proposed dwelling appeared to be a problem and the orientation of the dwelling within the plot was queried.

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The Chairman called for a vote; Cllrs Yoell and Greaves were not in favour, Cllr Goff was in favour and Cllrs Baker, Crewe and Shepherd abstained. It was therefore agreed to leave the matter to the planners without expressing support.

- iii) Planning Appeal in respect of application 2024/0253/PAA – Barn at Newman Street, Doultling. Any further Parish Council response to the Planning Inspector. The Parish Council had supported the original application and agreed to make no further comments.
- iv) The clerk noted that he had recently received notification that the application concerning Oriol Cottage, Church Lane (2023/2188/HSE) would be considered by the planning committee. The council had supported the application. It was agreed not to attend the committee.

2407E/6 – Financial Matters:

- i) Clerks Salary and expenses for July to include reimbursement of payment of invoice for Cllr Shepherd's highway training course. £821.88 – this was agreed and a cheque raised.
- ii) HMRC Tax payment. £107 – this was agreed and a cheque raised.
- iii) Payment of Elite Inspections invoice for Padfield Green and Skate Park inspections £114.00. This was agreed and a cheque raised.

2407E/7 - Matters of Report:

No matters were raised and the meeting closed at 9.05pm.

The Chairman thanked members of the public for their attendance.

2407E/8 - Date and Time of Next Meeting:

11<sup>th</sup> September 2024

**Alan Butcher,  
Parish Clerk,  
28<sup>th</sup> August 2024  
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