

Draft minutes subject to acceptance at the next meeting.

## **DOULTING PARISH COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD TUESDAY 17<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2023 AT DOULTING VILLAGE HALL COMMENCING AT 7.30pm.**

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

2310/1 - Apologies for absence. None.

2310/2 – Co-option of councillor onto the Parish Council following the uncontested election.

2310/3 - Co-option of councillor onto the Parish Council to fill a casual vacancy.

No candidates had come forward to either vacancy.

2310/4 - Declarations of Interest:

Cllrs Goff, Baker and Shepherd declared an interest in agenda items 2310/7 i and ii concerning Doultling Stone Quarry having held informal discussions with the applicant before the applications had been officially received by the Parish Council.

The clerk granted a dispensation to all councillors on the basis that the Parish Council would be unable to function should those councillors be excluded.

2310/5 - 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. 8 members of the public were present.

- i) Matters on the Agenda including planning applications.  
The chairman advised that she would adjourn the meeting before discussion on the planning applications for Doultling Stone quarry were taken to allow points raised by the public to be considered before the council discussed the matter.  
The continuing problem with the drains on Doultling Hill was mentioned.  
The recent fire at The Manor and Church Lane parking were mentioned and a request to discuss this matter further at the next meeting made.  
The blocked footpath on the Edge Tool works site was mentioned as well as the effect of the proposals on nature in the area.  
The Chairman closed the public forum at this point and reconvened the council meeting.
- ii) Somerset Councillors report. Reports from Cllr Clarke had been circulated.

2310/6 - Confirmation of the Minutes of previous meetings:

- i) Minutes of Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record by the Chairman.

2310/7 - Parish Council Response to Planning Applications:

The Chairman further adjourned the meeting to allow members of the public raise matters concerned with the two Doultling Stone quarry applications.

Cllr Baker gave a resume of the applications and the Chairman invited comments from the public. Amongst the matters raised were:

- The incorporation of a crusher with the new application which would turn the quarry from a stone quarry to one producing aggregate with subsequent noise and dust. This would increase output from 6000 tonnes per annum for the original application to 20,000 tonnes with the new proposals.
- The dust produced would be harmful to health being crystalline silica and would likely effect the school and play park which were about 250metres away from the plant.
- There would be increased pollution and lorry movements and the proposed new road being unsurfaced would cause both dust and mud slurry and the proposed access onto the A361 would be unsafe.
- The original permission for the quarry envisaged that the works would be reinstated to agricultural land by 2042 and the proposed extension would increase that life span to 2090.
- Very little restoration of the existing quarry had taken place and residents would be faced with an open quarry for another 70 years.
- The extension to the quarry would be within 25 metres of existing dwellings.
- The proposals would be of no benefit to the village with a small number of additional jobs although some spoke in support of the quarry as an economic benefit to the area which should be supported.

The Chairman closed the public forum at this point and reconvened the council meeting.

- i) SCC/4070/2023 | S96 ROMP – Approval of Scheme of Conditions of application 2014/1075/CNT relating to Doultling Stone Quarry.

There was a general discussion about the objections raised in the public forum. The Chairman proposed that the council objects to the application and this was passed by a majority of 3 – 1 with Cllr Shepherd voting in support of the application. The following comments would be submitted to the planners:

*Councillors were aware of a number of objections from the public. The removal of conditions along with application SCC/4071/2023 would extend the life of the quarry beyond 2042 and also dilute the requirement to reinstate the quarry set down in the original application. Councillors therefore voted by a majority to object to the application.*

- ii) SCC/4071/2023 | Extension to Doultling Stone Quarry including new road access.

There was a general discussion about the objections raised in the public forum. The Chairman proposed that the council objects to the application and this was passed by a majority of 3 – 1 with Cllr Shepherd voting in support of the application. The following comments would be submitted to the planners:

*Councillors were aware of a number of objections from the public.*

*Councillors discussed the application and made the following comments:*

- a) *A crushing plant is indicated on the drawings and it is noted that 20,000 tonnes of aggregate will be removed from the site per year. These operations will create dust and noise pollution in an area close to the village and within 250 metres*

*of a school and children's play park. Crystalline silica dust produced by these operations is a health hazard. There appears to be no information in the application as to how dust from the quarry operations will be controlled.*

*b) The original permission for the stone quarry envisaged 6000 tonnes per year of stone production whereas the new application suggests 20,000 tonnes of aggregate will be removed from site. The change of the quarry from stone to aggregate production at a greatly increased volume will produce dust, noise and environmental pollution for the surrounding area and the timescale proposals will extend the quarry operations for another 70 years.*

*c) The removal of a large volume of stone will cause environmental and air pollution from the vehicles moving the stone.*

*d) The proposed new access into the quarry from the A361 will be unsurfaced creating dust during dry periods and mud and slurry during wet weather which will affect the roads and bring unacceptable dust and mud into the village environment.*

*e) The proposed access onto the A361 at a point beyond the local speed limit will be a hazard for vehicles using the main road especially where large vehicles have limited turning space and visibility. The increase in HGV movements to and from the quarry will bring unacceptable levels and air pollution to the area.*

*f) The proposed extensions to the quarry come unacceptably close to existing dwellings the nearest being within 25 metres and any bunds built will inevitably overshadow those dwelling.*

*g) Residents of Doultong could have expected the quarry to be reinstated back to agricultural land by 2042, it now seems likely that this will be extended by 70 years and there is concern that with large volumes of materials being removed material will have to be brought back to the quarry for any reinstatement.*

*In summary, councillors have great concern about the impact of these proposals on the village of Doultong and its community. The proposals are of no economic benefit to the village, will cause increased levels of air, dust and environmental pollution, increased vehicle movements over a long period and leave an open quarry for many years.*

*Councillors voted by a majority to object to the application.*

- iii) 2022/1507/FUL| Erection of shed to accommodate electrical components and new access track (revised design and location) on land near Well Lane, Doultong. Cllr Baker gave a resume of recent changes and read out comments from the planners to the applicant concerning the revised proposals for a building on site which planners noted could be considered as a dwelling and also the matter of the blocked footpath which had led to objections from Rights of Way. Councillors concurred with the planner's comments about the building and also noted that previously included water turbine installation did not now appear on any drawings. Councillors agreed unanimously to object to the proposals noted that they would have been happy to leave the matter to the planners had the footpath not been blocked.

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- iv) 2023/1768/HSE | Demolish Garage and replace with double garage at Trendsber, Chelynych Road, Doultong. Councillors expressed concern that the property was being used for commercial purposes for car repairs and dismantling and that the proposed double garage would assist in these activities. Councillors voted unanimously to object to the application.
- v) 2023/1893/FUL | Change of use of existing stables to form home office and gym at Fernbank, Chelynych Road, Doultong. Councillors noted that this property had been the subject of a previous application for a dog walking field. Councillors had no adverse comments about the proposed change of use and agreed unanimously to support the application.

2310/8 - Parish Council Matters.

- i) Highways and traffic –
  - a) Road Signs – these were being replaced around 24<sup>th</sup> October 2023.
  - b) Obstruction of Church Lane by parked vehicles. The clerk noted this was a police matter and it was agreed that Cllr Crewe should speak to the local PCSO about the apparent problem of parking.
- ii) Parish Paths Liaison Officer report. Nothing to report.
- iii) Speedwatch and SID's. Two watches had been held.
- iv) Hearing loop for community room. Cllr Baker reported this had been installed but was yet to be finally tested.
- v) Village Hall matters. The ceiling repair was awaited.
- vi) Bus Partnership and Public Transport. A survey was being carried out. The cheaper bus fare period had been extended.
- vii) SALC Training Events. There were no takers for the current events.
- viii) Facebook and social media. The Facebook page had been launched.
- ix) Neighbourhood Plan proposals. Cllrs Baker and Crewe to organise a meeting of interested parties and then come back to the Parish Council with proposals for the council to consider.
- x) Fibre Broadband offer for Doultong. Cllr Baker reported that number of people had expressed an interest and he was hoping that sufficient people would sign up for the new broadband installation in the village.
- xi) Sign at St Aldhelms Well. Cllr Baker to seek a stone mason to cut a new sign into the stonework above the well; sign to read St Aldhelms Well with the words Untreated Water below.
- xii) Somerset Council matters
  - a) LCN Meeting minutes and Agenda for 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023. No one was available to attend this meeting.
  - b) Local Plan Re-assessment of sites. Further details awaited.

2310/9 - Matters relating to The Glebeland:

- i) The minutes of the meeting had been circulated. Cllr Baker reported that the displaced fencing had been replaced. He noted that a number of the fencing rails were in need of replacement and the committee would prepare a budget for consideration in the next financial year.

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2310/10 - Matters relating to Padfield Green.

- i) Tree planting. A budget for the tree was set at £150. Cllr Crewe to seek suitable tree from local suppliers.
- ii) Sun shading structure and green wall proposals. Cllr Goff suggested a willow structure which she had seen and would endeavour to obtain photo's before the next meeting.
- iii) Funding and grants for proposed works. Final details of costings were required.

2310/11 - Matters relating to Prestleigh, Bath and West Showground and Waterlip.

- i) Westfest event. No comments about the arrangements for this event had been received.

2310/12 - Financial:

- i) Payment of Clerks Salary and expenses. The clerk circulated details of an increase in Local Government salary scales from April 2022 which had not been applied to his salary as yet. Councillors agreed to pay the outstanding backpay and the total amount to be paid to the clerk was £816.13. A cheque was raised in this amount. The clerk further advised that there was an anomaly in his salary scale point between what was being paid now and the salary point included in his contract. It was agreed that he would sent councillors details and the matter would be discussed at the next meeting.
- ii) Payment of HMRC Tax. £181.40 being the increased amount to cover the payment of back pay. This was agreed and a cheque raised.
- iii) SALC Affiliation invoice. £180.08. This was agreed and a cheque raised.
- iv) PKF Littlejohn audit fee. £252.00. This was agreed and a cheque raised.
- v) Request from St Aldhelms Church for grant towards upkeep of churchyard. This was held over until the next meeting.
- vi) Interim accounts to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and review of budget to half year. The clerk circulated half year accounts and a bank reconciliation was signed. He also circulated an updated budget to date noting that changes to salaries and tax would affect the figures show. He also noted several cheques beyond six months old which had not been cashed. A letter of authorisation to the bank was signed by Cllrs Goff and Shepherd to cancel the cheques for security reasons before they could be re-issued.

2310/13 - Matters of Report

- i) Concern was expressed the apparently abandoned cars left in the village. Cllr Crewe to check with the .PCSO

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.15pm

2310/14 - Date and Time of Next Meeting:

14<sup>th</sup> November 2023

**Alan Butcher,**  
**Parish Clerk,**  
**20<sup>th</sup> October 2023**  
**01749 870358; email: parish.clerk@doulingparish.org**