

GREAT DODDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

The minutes of the meeting of Great Doddington Parish Council held on 18 June 2014 in the Chapel Rooms, Great Doddington.

Present: Mr C Davies, (Chairman), Mr J Sharp, (Vice-Chairman), Mr J Crisp, Mr D Kelly, Mr I Ross, Mrs A Smith and Mrs S Sharp.

(Apologies were received from Mrs J Griffiths and Mr K Howes.)

Also present: Mrs C A Mundy (Clerk), 1 parishioner and representative of Northamptonshire Police.

14/10 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The minutes of the Annual meeting and Annual meeting of the Parish Council held on 7 May 2014 were approved and signed as a true record.

14/11 DECLARATIONS

There were no declarations made.

14/12 POLICE MATTERS

The Police informed the meeting that there had been a number of burglary dwellings in the village with car keys being taken. It was recommended that people be extra vigilant with the warm weather ensuring that windows were securely locked at night time. Ongoing investigations were continuing to find the culprits. The local identified priorities continued to be around speeding, fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour, though this did not appear to be a significant problem in the village.

RESOLVED that this be noted.

14/13 HIGHWAY MATTERS

Bus Stop sign, Earls Barton Road

There was no further information on when this would be installed.

Kissing gate/Footpath High Street

The clerk had spoken with Highways regarding the kissing gate and the footpath. Unfortunately there was little that could be done about the High Street footpath but the NCC had agreed to remove the current kissing gate and replace it with a disabled friendly version. The clerk had circulated this option to parish councillors who had agreed that this would be a good solution to the problem.

The clerk had instructed the NCC to proceed with this and they would make arrangements for the work to be carried out as soon as possible.

Footpath at Magna Grove

A site meeting had been held to discuss the concern over the lack of a footpath from the site to the centre of the village.

Parish Councillors and the Borough Councillor had attended along with representatives from the NCC and BCW. After much discussion the decision had been made that a footpath would not be installed. A crossing point from Magna Grove to the opposite side of Earls Barton road would be installed.

Parish Councillors who had attended the site viewing had been very disappointed with this decision. Concern was expressed that with the volume of traffic and the poor visibility leading from the site that an accident could happen.

The clerk would write to the NCC and express this concern.

Hardwater Road Speed Limit

A response had been received to the formal request for a reduction in the speed limit at Hardwater Road. The panel had met to discuss the request. A number of issues were taken into account including the collision history over the previous 3 years, and the current speed and volume data. This had indicated that there had only been one recorded collision involving slight injury. A recent survey had revealed an 85th percentile of 42mph for vehicles travelling away from the bridge and 46mph travelling towards the bridge. The panel, by consensus, determined that there was no compelling evidence to support a reduction in speed limit along this section of road. Given the open nature and levels of extended visibility available to a driver it would not be obvious to a careful and competent motorist why a lower limit was in place and would not reflect the function of the road and the road environment. It is also evident from the speed data that the vast majority of motorists were travelling well within the posted limit of 60mph and do not experience any particular difficulty in negotiating this section of road at those speeds.

Parish Councillors were disappointed with this conclusion as those who had recently walked along the road had found it to be dangerous. It was suggested that the County Council be approached again to see if a footpath could be installed. The clerk considered that this would be unlikely but that a request would be made to this effect.

14/14 PLANNING ISSUES

Planning Applications WP/14/00379 – Grove Farm
Planning Application WP/14/00391 – The Manor

No objections were raised to either application other than to ensure that they did not contravene the listed building rules.

14/15 FINANCE

RESOLVED that the following invoices were approved for payment along with the statement of accounts:

Great Doddington United Reformed Church Hire of room for meeting (1450)	154.00
Great Doddington United Reformed Church Hire of room for Chiropody (1451)	168.00
Accounting Solutions (1452)	282.00
Auditing Solutions (1453)	372.00
Marchean Newsletter (1454)	465.00

The Clerk reported on the Internal Audit Report for 2013-14 and referred to the recommendations contained therein as follows:

- Cheque number 1389 for £25.00 had not been cashed and it was recommended that this be written back into the books. This was agreed.
- That formal reconciliations be presented to meetings. This was agreed.
- that formal tender action be reduced to £20,000 and be reflected in Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. It was agreed that this be reduced to £20,000.
- Formal consideration be given to audit reports, and this be minuted. This was agreed.
- that members who sign cheques also sign the invoices. It was clarified that this was already being done.
- Details of cheque numbers be included in the minutes. This was agreed.
- Contingency levels/earmarked reserves be formally considered. The clerk confirmed that there was £8,000 in earmarked reserves should an election be called at any time. Members considered that this was appropriate and agreed the figure.
- A formal review of the parish council's asset stock should be carried out giving an indication of a decision on those assets to be subject to cover by the council's insurers. This would be reviewed in the next few months.
- The clerk's contract (circa 1993) needed to be brought in line with current employment contracts. Any changes to terms and conditions should be formally recorded. The clerk would contact NALC to see if they could provide a model contract and guidelines for consideration.

The Statement of Accounts and Annual Return was reviewed and signed by the Chairman.

14/16 ANY OTHER ITEMS

Playground Equipment

The clerk reported that she had received £1,000 of empowering councillors funding from the county council courtesy of County Councillor Paul Bell.

Mrs Sharp said she had carried out a small survey of parents to ascertain what was required at the playground. This survey had indicated that a variety of equipment was required for all ages. She needed to carry out some additional research before she could present her suggestions to the parish council.

The clerk reported that she had also completed a form to apply for Section 106 funding. There was no funding available at the moment but the Borough Council would keep the parish council's request on file until more funds were available.

Development Plan

The chairman reported that he had received correspondence from a local resident regarding a 'development plan' for the village and asking various questions regarding a development plan.

The chairman reminded members that consideration had been given in 2013 to the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan, Village Design Statement or some other similar document and the parish council had decided at that time that one would not be drawn up.

The chairman would respond to the parishioners email.

Drainage Issues

Mr Crisp reported that there were some issues with a blocked drain near to 16 The Ridge, possibly caused by a tree roots. The clerk would report this to Street Doctor.

Land opposite The Stag

This was once again very overgrown and a request was made for highways to clear this back to assist with access to the footpath.

Wilby Lane

Following the planting of two trees in Wilby Lane it was reported that the tree outside 34 had died and needed to be replaced. The clerk would contact Wilby Tree Services regarding this.

Springclean

The recent parish springclean had resulted in 15 bags of rubbish being collected. Thanks were extended to all those who had helped and to Wellingborough Norse.

Calendar of Meetings

Parish Councillors approved the draft calendar of meetings which the clerk would formally circulate and which would be placed on the parish council website.

Prison Site

There was no further information on the future of the site.

Cemetery

There was no further information on this item.

14/17 Next meeting

The next meeting would take place on Wednesday 16 July 2014

Chairman

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.

