



DROXFORD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

FULL COUNCIL MEETING

6.00pm Thursday 18th January 2024

Droxford Village Hall

PRESENT: Councillors: Chris Hawkesford, Colin Matthissen, Janet Melson (Chair) and Peter Richardson

IN ATTENDANCE: Ailsa Duckworth – Parish Clerk/RFO
District Cllr Danny Lee
District Cllr Malcolm Wallace

PUBLIC: 1

24.01 Apologies for absence

Councillors: Matt Avison and Lewis Smith (Prior Commitments). Mark Dennington had also sent apologies and tendered his resignation to the Parish Council.

24.02 Declarations of Interest: Cllr Janet Melson declared an interest in agenda item 11a, as one of the planning applications to be discussed related to her residence.

24.03 Requests for Dispensation: It was agreed that Cllr Melson would leave the meeting whilst planning application SDNP/24/00065/LIS was discussed. The committee would remain quorate in her absence.

24.04 Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 14th December 2023.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting, having been circulated prior to the meeting, were approved and signed by the Chair.

PROPOSED: Councillor Melson **SECONDED:** Councillor Matthissen

24.05 Public Session: A member of the public attended to request the £54.85 shortfall from the sourcing and planting a Coronation tree next to the Fire Station, Union Lane.

24.06 Response to Public Participation: Cllr Melson thanked the member of public for undertaking the work and it was agreed to pay the amount requested.

PROPOSED: Councillor Melson **SECONDED:** Councillor Richardson

- 24.07 Reports from County and District Councillors:** A written report was received from County Cllr Hugh Lumby, and circulated prior to the meeting. There were no questions. District Cllrs Malcolm Wallace and Danny Lee gave a verbal report, highlighting the Local Nature Recovery Strategy survey and the Rural England Prosperity Fund. It was agreed to add this item to the February agenda. District Cllr Wallace made reference to the first District Cllr surgery which will be held on 29th January 10.30am – 12.30pm at Wilfrid’s Café.
- 24.08 Sustainable Droxford:** [This item was brought forward]
Cllr Melson reported that Sustainable Droxford had held a recent meeting, attended by Stuart Mills (WinACC), Suzanne White (CANS) and Droxford residents. The purpose was to refocus the group and a series of events was agreed, including a children’s book swap (19th January) as part of the Waste Prevention group; a talk from the Bishops Waltham’s Men’s Shed (23rd March); a stall at the Country Fair to share information and encourage new members and a Climate Café in Autumn.
- An application had been made to the SDNPA ReNature fund, with a meeting set to discuss the project with two South Downs Rangers. The project to rewild some of the land owned by WCC between Union Lane and The Park is ongoing.
- 24.09 Community Emergency Response:** [This item was brought forward]
Cllr Melson had attended a training event organised by HALC, where community resilience and emergency planning were discussed.
- 24.10 Clerk’s Report including updates on previous decisions:** Verbal report Noted. All items to note were due to be covered by the agenda points.
- 24.11 To consider dates of meetings:**
It was agreed to change the May meeting date from the 16th May to the 9th May 2024.
- 24.12 Finance Reports:** Received and Noted
- a. **NOTED:** Financial Status and bank balance
 - b. **APPROVED:** Payments as per approval list. It was agreed to make a 50% payment for the permissive path on School Field as there had been no response to the email requesting information on the invoice amount. The £300 grant from the Country Fair Committee was to be followed up.
 - c. **NOTED:** An internal audit took place on 16th January 2024, with no actions arising. Cllr Melson attended to discuss potential savings and investment options.
- 24.13 Planning Report:** Received and Noted
- a. **NOTED:** New applications and decisions.
 - b. **NOTED:** The current open and closed enforcement cases were noted.
 - c. **NOTED:** Cllr Avison is overseeing production of the Parish Priority Statement.
- 24.14 Green Spaces Report:** Verbal report Noted.
- a. **Recreation Ground:** The annual play inspection has been set for March 2024, with an additional play equipment life expectancy report requested. Two quotes had been sought for the equipment replacement program.
 - b. **Pavilion:** Cllr Richardson noted that a risk assessment would be required for potential improvement works, including a barbeque area. A meeting is required with the Cricket Club to review the lease.

c. Cemetery: The spring planting is due, with the intention to introduce more colour to the borders.

d. Garden of Reflection: Cllr Richardson thanked Cllr Melson and Mrs Baillie-Strong for their hard work in keeping the Garden of Reflection weeded and free from leaves. The metal edging is to be retrieved from Mr Freemantle and put in place to neaten the border.

e. Signage: It was agreed that certain safety signage was required and would be installed. Additional signage noting contact details and ownership of assets would be introduced at a later date.

24.15 Highways Report: Verbal report Noted.

a. NOTED: Cllr Melson reported that Cllr Smith would provide an update on the Community Funded White Gates initiative at the next meeting.

b. NOTED: The Lengthsmen will visit on the 9th February and will be asked to clear the moss (MUGA) and place the metal edging (Garden of Reflection).

c. NOTED: Cllr Smith is to source batteries for the SLR and liaise with HCC Highways on placement.

d. NOTED: The proposed extinguishment of Highway Rights at the Mill were discussed and it was agreed that the Parish Council were in favour of the proposal, and therefore no comment would be made. The permissive path and its invoicing were discussed under agenda item 10b. Footpath 14 is closed between its junction with Footpath 9 and 12 from 6th January for 21 days whilst the path and bridge are made safe from the falling tree. Should the work not be completed at this time, an update will be requested from the Hampshire Countryside Service.

24.16 Neighbourhood Watch – SmartWater initiative

a. NOTED: Neighbourhood Watch are to hold a briefing event for residents on Saturday 20th January so the community could hear about the product and ask questions. Cllr Hawkesford is to email the NW Chair with questions in advance of the meeting as he is unable to attend. It was noted that Highways would not be in favour of any signage that could distract drivers.

24.17 Correspondence received:

a. NOTED: A letter had been received by three children living in the village, requesting that the goal on the recreation ground be replaced. Cllr Melson is to write asking them to attend the next meeting to answers questions on their request.

b. REJECTED: A request to place a banner advertising school places for the Meon Valley Federation (Newtown and Meonstoke infant schools) on the Village Green was rejected based on the size of the banner, and the fact that it could distract drivers as they pass through the Village on the main highway. The Council were keen to help in other ways if possible.

24.18 Agenda Items for next Full Council meeting

24.19 Date of the next meeting: 6.00pm Thursday 22nd February 2024, Droxford Village Hall