



## DROXFORD PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES

#### FULL COUNCIL MEETING

6.00pm Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2024

Droxford Junior School

**PRESENT:** Councillors: Matt Avison, Colin Matthissen, Janet Melson (Chair), Peter Richardson and Lewis Smith

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Ailsa Duckworth – Parish Clerk/RFO  
Mr Paul Cooper

**PUBLIC:** 1

- 24.56 Apologies for absence:** Apologies were received from Cllr Lewis Smith (prior commitment) and from Cllr Chris Hawkesford, who also tendered his resignation due to family commitments.
- 24.57 Declarations of Interest:** None received.
- 24.58 Requests for Dispensation:** None received.
- 24.59 Co-option of councillors:** It was agreed to co-opt Mr Paul Cooper to the Parish Council.  
**PROPOSED:** Councillor Melson                      **SECONDED:** Councillor Avison
- 24.60 Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2024.**  
**RESOLVED:** The minutes of the meeting, having been circulated prior to the meeting, were approved, and signed by the Chair.  
**PROPOSED:** Councillor Avison                      **SECONDED:** Councillor Richardson
- 24.61 Public Session:** A member of the public was present to observe the meeting.
- 24.62 Response to Public Participation:** The Chair thanked the member of public for their interest in the Parish Council and councillor role.
- 24.63 Reports from County and District Councillors:** A verbal report was received from District Cllrs Danny Lee and Malcolm Wallace. District Cllr Lee thanked Cllr Smith for his contribution to the travel forum. The Chair noted that DPC would write and thank District Cllr Pearson for his years of support, as he was stepping down from his role.

- 24.64 Clerk's Report including updates on previous decisions:** Verbal report Noted. A PCSO visit had been set for 7<sup>th</sup> August at Wilfrid's and would be disseminated nearer the time. There had been an increase in the cost of hiring the Village Hall and the portrait of King Charles III provided by HALC would be offered to the Village Hall. All other items were due to be covered by the agenda points.
- 24.65 Finance Reports:** Received and Noted
- a. NOTED:** Financial Status and bank balance.
  - b. APPROVED:** Payments as per approval list.
  - c. NOTED:** The Council have been chosen for the 5% intermediate audit again this year, to be carried out by BDO, the external auditor. It was confirmed that DPC could not claim exemption, being a smaller authority with a gross income or expenditure greater than £25,000. The focus is on internal audit. The Clerk is to meet with Paul Reynolds of Fair Account on 7<sup>th</sup> May and would report back on his advice at the next meeting.
- 24.66 Planning Report:** Received and Noted
- a. NOTED:** New applications and decisions. Cllr Avison provided an update on the SDNPA Planning Committee meeting held on 11th April, where it was agreed that a decision on Uplands site would be deferred until further information had been submitted on the sewage treatment location.
  - b. NOTED:** The current open and closed enforcement cases were noted.
  - c. NOTED:** The Parish Priority Statement will be discussed at the Annual Parish Meeting (APM) and suggestions on priorities that would help guide planning decisions will be collated by Cllr Avison and shared with residents.
- 24.67 Green Spaces Report:** Verbal report Noted.
- a. Recreation Ground:** A third quote is being sought for improving/replacing the play equipment from Playdale Playgrounds.
  - b. Pavilion:** There are currently 7 bookings planned for the Pavilion over the next few months. It has been cleaned thoroughly, ready for use by hirers and the Cricket Club, as per the agreement.
  - c. Cemetery:** No update.
  - d. Garden of Reflection:** Grass seed has been purchased and volunteers will carry out reseeding when weather conditions are suitable.
  - e. Allotments:** New tenancy agreements have been issued and the two vacant plots have been allocated. Jerry Lipscombe is the new Allotment contact, following Mike Vear's relinquishment of his involvement in the Allotment Gardens.
  - f. Signage:** Safety and general signage is currently being designed and the quote will come to the next available meeting for approval.
- 24.68 Highways Report:** Verbal report Noted.
- a. NOTED:** The White Gates Initiative application has been signed and returned to HCC. It was agreed to pay the £250 formal cost of application as a deposit.
  - b. NOTED:** The Lengthsmen visited Droxford on 17<sup>th</sup> April 24 and cleaned the road signage, that was covered by vegetation, where safe to do so.
  - c. NOTED:** Cllr Smith is to source costings for batteries for the SLR and liaise with HCC Highways on placement.
  - d. NOTED:** Following discussion with Countryside Access, it was noted that Footpath 14 over the second bridge is open to pedestrian traffic. However, the tree is still in situ and requires removal. The landowner has confirmed that quotes are being sought from tree surgeons,

but the high water levels have delayed progress with this. The stile at Footpath 7a has been mended, most likely by an agent of the landowner; and the steps down to the railway line have also been repaired.

Discussions regarding U189 are continuing and Flick Drummond MP is taking this forward.

**24.69 Sustainable Droxford:**

A written report was provided by Ian Withers on the status of the Palace Meadow renaturing project. A further rewilding project was being explored by Sustainable Droxford. Plans and costs would be submitted prior to any work being undertaken, and funding would need to be sourced by the group.

**24.70 Correspondence received:** None.

**24.71 Agenda Items for next Full Council meeting**

**24.72 Date of the next meeting:** 6.00pm 9<sup>th</sup> May, Droxford Village Hall (Annual General Meeting), followed by the Annual Parish Meeting at 7pm.