



DROXFORD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

FULL COUNCIL MEETING

6.00pm Thursday 17th October 2024

Droxford Village Hall

PRESENT: Councillors: Matt Avison, Paul Cooper, Louise Hudson, Colin Matthissen, Janet Melson (Chair), Peter Richardson and Lewis Smith

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

PUBLIC: 10

24.157 Apologies for absence: None.

24.158 Declarations of Interest: None.

24.159 Requests for Dispensation: None received.

24.160 Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 19th September 2024.

The minutes of the meeting were approved and signed by the Chair.

24.161 Public Session: Ten members of the public were present for the meeting. The first request received was that a designated disabled parking bay be marked out in the Union Lane car park, which is PC owned land. Cllr Smith will take this forward with Hampshire County Council (HCC) Highways.

A second member of the public attended to better understand the meeting process, listen to the planning report and find out about any progress with improving the path alongside the river linking the 2 ends of Mill Lane. The Chair confirmed that the bridge is the responsibility of HCC and reiterated the complexity of the situation as it involves several agencies and legalities that require careful consideration. The difference between the PCSO Police Community Support Office (PCSO) and the Accredited Community Safety Officer (ACSO) roles were discussed. Droxford has limited PCSO support which is provided by the Hampshire Police and Crime Commissioner. ACSO support was reviewed approximately three years ago and was considered to not be required at the time.

Two further members of the public were present to show support to the parish council, following the misinformed claims regarding the councillors and clerk that had been made on one of the village WhatsApp groups.

Two more members of the public had attended to raise their concerns about traffic and speeding in the village, but also to thank the parish council for all the work that is undertaken on a voluntary basis to improve the village for its residents. The Chair noted that there would be an update from Cllr Smith on Roads and Highways later in the agenda and the members of the public were invited to stay to listen.

One member of the public had come to get an overall update on the progression of agenda items that were to be discussed.

Another member of the public was there to support the parish council, to highlight the valid concerns regarding speeding, and to discuss working together on how these issues can be resolved. The Chair stated that as there is clearly widespread concern, a public meeting would be convened by the parish council with the aim of bringing together residents and representatives of HCC Highways, to specifically focus on road safety and traffic matters. Cllr Smith will be looking to schedule this in early 2025 and will confirm the date and invite residents nearer the time. District Cllr Lee noted that a future transport forum for parish councils is to be set up, where common road safety issues can be further shared.

Two further members of the public were present to show support for the work the parish council does.

- 24.162 Response to Public Participation:** The Chair thanked all the members of public for taking the time to attend the meeting, to find out how the parish council operates and for showing support. Members of public attending the parish council are always welcomed, and this is considered the best way to raise concerns. It was agreed that a response would be drafted to inform residents how to engage with the PC.
- 24.163 Reports from County and District Councillors:** Written reports had been received and circulated prior to the meeting. District Cllr Suzanne White sent apologies. County Cllr Wallace reported that, following the Future Services consultation, Bishops Waltham's tip would not be closed.
- 24.164 To review Actions List:** This item was deferred until the November meeting.
- 24.165 Clerk's Report including updates on previous decisions:** It was reported that the Meon Valley Community First Responder's defibrillator training had been well attended and had received positive feedback. All other updates were included on the agenda.
- 24.166 Finance Reports:** Received and Noted.
- a. **NOTED:** Financial Status and bank balance.
 - b. **APPROVED:** Payments as per approval list, including those made prior to the meeting.
 - c. **NOTED:** Following a verbal report made by Cllr Cooper regarding other potential bank accounts, it was agreed to stay with Unity Trust bank.
 - d. **NOTED:** The AGAR had been signed off by the external auditors with no findings. There was a recommendation to review the internal auditor annually and obtain a Letter of Engagement.

- e. **APPROVED:** Cllr Matthissen confirmed that he had spoken to the internal auditor (Eleanor Greene of Do The Numbers) and recommended that DPC appoint her for the year ending 31st March 2025.
- f. **NOTED:** The budget for 25/26 would be drafted by the Clerk, reviewed by Cllr Matthissen and shared with the councilors for comment. The budget must be agreed at the December meeting to set the precept with Winchester City Council (WCC) by the beginning of January.

24.167 Planning Report: Received and Noted.

- a. **NOTED:** No planning applications required comments or objections.
- b. **NOTED:** The current open and closed enforcement cases were noted. It was reported that an enforcement case had been opened on Fairfield House, following advertisement of its intended use as a Country Club.
- c. **NOTED:** Cllr Avison will finalise the Parish Priority Statement. It was noted that there was no deadline for submission to SDNPA.

24.168 Green Spaces Report: Verbal report Noted.

- a. **Pavilion:** Cllr Cooper reported on the proposals to enhance pavilion surroundings. The preferred option included an inset, required due to the gradient of the bank, and porcelain tiles which were easier to maintain and more hardwearing than concrete. The costs exclude installation of external power and water.

The Chair thanked Cllr Cooper for the report and requested that Cllr Matthissen conduct relevant checks on the suggested companies. Once an appropriate contractor has been agreed upon, the exact scope of the works, a final quote and payment terms would be sought.

It was reported that the decommissioned chairs from the pavilion, which had been placed at the back of the Cricket Club's shed, needed removing from a safety point of view. Cllr Cooper agreed to collect and dispose of the chairs.

- b. **Recreation Ground:** The contract with Waltham Wolves for use of the 9v9 football pitch is nearly finalised. The pitch is already in use and is ready to be hired out.
- c. **Play Equipment:** The services survey has been undertaken and the equipment is due to be installed from the w/c 21st October 2024. The contractors have requested that the road up to the recreation ground is as clear as possible on the first Monday to allow for large vehicles to deliver equipment and supplies. Residents and parents driving up to school had been notified. It was agreed that the car park at the recreation ground would be closed on the 21st of October for safety reasons.
- d. **Grounds maintenance contract quotes:** The Clerk had obtained three quotes from grounds maintenance contractors to consolidate the work required. Following review of the quotes with the Chair, it was recommended to accept the quote from Shawyers. The Clerk is to review the terms of the RP Commercial Services and EMS South Ltd contracts prior to cancelling them.

Further clarification is required from Shawyers as to whether ad hoc changes can be made and whether there is a review point. Regarding the cricket club annual fee of £1058 to maintain the cricket pitch between April and September, it was agreed the PC had to ensure

best value for money. The Clerk is to follow up with Shawyers and a further meeting with the cricket club is to be set up to finalise responsibilities and charges.

24.169 Footpaths and RoW: Verbal report Noted.

- a. The Extinguishment of Highways Rights at Land at the Mill House, Mill Lane, Droxford has been deferred until January 2025. The public consultation ended some months ago and DPC made neither comment nor objection to the proposal.

A landowners meeting has been set up for 30th October and invitations circulated to the relevant residents.

24.170 Highways Report: Verbal report Noted.

- a. Discussion on the Union Lane car park improvements was deferred to the November meeting.
- b. Cllr Smith reported that the Speed Limit Reminder (SLR) adaptor required to deploy the SLR was difficult to source but would approach the company from which the SLR was purchased for the part.
- c. Cllr Smith shared that a petition regarding the placing of the white gates at the Swanmore Road junction had been circulated by residents who live outside of the settlement area, and who consider that the gates are in the wrong place. Cllr Smith recommended that the parish council sign off the completed works, following the satisfactory inspection by HCC Highways.
- d. Cllr Smith had investigated the 20 is Plenty campaign for Union Lane and reported that it cannot be a mandatory speed limit, and any signs must be on private property. A community Speedwatch group is not thought to be effective as it does not improve behaviour long term, and the police are reluctant to take data from it. A residents' meeting will be held in early 2025 to discuss the various road safety initiatives and whether they could be implemented in Droxford with appropriate representation from HCC Highways Authority.

24.171 Sustainable Droxford: Verbal report Noted.

- a. Cllr Hudson reported that Droxford is now part of the Greening Campaign. A launch meeting is required and will be scheduled for the beginning of next year. A Repair Café meeting is to be held in Owlesbury and will be attended by Cllrs Hudson and Melson as a fact-finding exercise.
- b. The Autumn Litter pick is scheduled for the 26th of October and Wilfrid's Café have kindly offered to provide hot drinks to the volunteers.

24.172 Installation of EVCPs in The Square: Cllr Melson will circulate the presentation provided by Believ to councillors. The council is to consider whether to proceed with this company at the November meeting.

24.173 Correspondence received:

- a. **DEFERRED:** Mrs. Foster had requested funding for elements of the Scarecrow Festival that took place in September. Due to the financial governance constraints as to how parish councils can spend money, it was agreed to refer this request to the Internal Auditor for a response. In general, events which are self-supporting should not receive grants from a parish council.

24.174 Meetings and Events: None.

24.175 **Agenda Items for next Full Council meeting:** Meon Valley Bus; EVCPs in the Square.

24.176 **Date of the next meeting:** 6.00pm Thursday 21st November, Droxford Village Hall.

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