



Dormansland Parish Council

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Minutes of the 259th meeting of Dormansland Parish Council held at 6.30pm on Wednesday 6th September 2023 in The Centenary Room, Dormansland

Present: Cllr Alison Hutchinson (Chair)
Cllr David Bright
Cllr Liz Lockwood
Cllr Cheryl Roux
Cllr Hilary Taylor
Cllr Richard Dandy

Parish Clerk: Jacqui O'Sullivan

In Attendance:

Cllr. Nicholas White, Cllr. Nicola O'Riordan & Cllr. Lesley Steeds were present at the meeting & 12 members of the public were also present.

MINUTES

1. To receive and accept apologies for the absence of: Cllr Keith Coleman's apologies for absence were received and accepted.

2. Declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were declared.

Chair suspended the meeting for open forum

All residents present at the meeting (bar 1) were here to discuss parking issues on the high street and the proposal / consultation for double yellow lines.

Resident 1 represented the 3 households located behind the post-office and wanted to object to the proposal of double yellow lines where they currently park. There is no off-street parking for any of the houses and putting yellow lines where suggested is just going to move the problem rather than solve it. Parking by the pub poses risks and wanted to recommend that the council investigate other options for parking such as parking permits instead of double yellow lines.

Resident 2 commented that the vans parked in the parking bays outside the post office were mainly from Mulberry Mews.

Resident 3 commented that during school holidays, parking isn't such a problem but at school pick up time, there is a real issue. The point was also made that she felt that putting in the proposed yellow lines would increase the speed of traffic.

Resident 4 commented that visibility is poor crossing the road and she was in favour of the yellow lines to make it safer for crossing. She understands that there is a parking problem but feels that health and safety should come first so as to lessen the risk of another death.

Residents then discussed the matters amongst themselves, and Resident 1 advised Resident 4 that the yellow lines will just be moving the problem and not solving it.

Cllr. O’Riordan advised that due to the parked cars outside the post office, turning right into The Meades was dangerous due to the speed of the cars coming up the hill and if the yellow lines were in place, this would make it safer. Also, she explained that as her role helping at Dormansland Primary school, groups of children walk to Lingfield College to use their facilities and the build out is the only safe place to cross the road and she feels that safety for the children is paramount.

Resident 1 asked if DPC could give a list of options available and / or that have been considered and why they have been rejected before any decisions are made.

Resident 5 advised that she crosses with 2 disabled children but doesn’t cross when it’s busy but normally crosses on the build out and doesn’t find visibility an issue.

Resident 6 commented that they felt that parking on the other side of the road adjacent to the pub will be worse and more dangerous.

Resident 7 expressed their opinion that if double yellow lines are agreed, this area will just become a drop off zone and that the problem will not go away.

Resident 8 asked if the whole problem of parking in the village could be fixed and looked at as a whole for the village. **Resident 4** asked if we could revisit the idea of turning the top of the recreation group into a parking area. Cllr. Hutchinson advised that this idea had been visited before and had been rejected.

The meeting was reopened, and the agenda item no 16 was brought forward for the Parish Council to discuss and vote on.

16. YELLOW LINES OUTSIDE POST OFFICE – The Chair invited the Council to discuss and vote on the proposal for yellow lines outside the post office on the High Street and in West Street. After much discussion, all were in favour of the West Street double yellow lines, but no decision could be agreed on for the High Street yellow lines as there was a split decision and 2 abstentions. Whilst the majority were in favour of keeping the Hatched Area clear (and would like to see just this area with double yellow lines), not all were in favour of having yellow lines blocking all parking spaces on that stretch.

ACTIONS:

- **Council to draft & send an explanation to Highways with their thoughts on the consultation proposals and that their intention was primarily for improving safety within the village. Response to be sent to David Curl.**
- **Reply to Consultation in favour of the yellow lines in West Street and not in favour for the yellow lines in the High Street.**
- **The Council explore other options to improve parking in the village.**

3. Minutes

3.1 The minutes (previously distributed) of the 258th Full Council Meeting, held on 5th July 2023 were approved and signed.

3.2 The minutes of the meeting held by the Planning Committee, held on 19th July, 9th August 2023 and 30th August 2023 were received at Full Council and had been approved and signed at the respective Planning meetings.

4. The Clerks Report was received:

Clerks report for 6th September 2023 Meeting

- **PO BOX** – REFUND received from Angela Baker on 31st August 2023. The refund was made to her by the Post Office as she was the original payee. £378.00.
- **Grit Bin Licences** – only a selection of grit bin licences can be found, and I have emailed SCC asking again for clarification on which of our bins have licences. Report was circulated to Council early September showing the licence numbers allocated to the grit bins that we hold.
- **VAS SIGNS** – An email placing an order placed with Nigel Pond / Lesley Steeds as directed in the last meeting has been sent. Signs confirmed that we will have in 2023/24 timeframe. VAS signs, despite DPC offering £2000 contribution, the funds for this are not available and cannot be confirmed until 2024/25 budget.
- **High Viz jackets / Littler pickers** – Order will be placed shortly.
- **Co-option Policy** – amended by committee and on Agenda for agreement.
- **Village Voice** – On the day of the meeting, costs for advertising were sent by the Village Voice and passed to the Chair for discussion on the agenda.
- **PKF Littlejohn** – queries regarding variance sheet answered and Alison helped with sorting out queries as it was not straightforward.
- **Noticeboard order** – chased the company back in July and again on 1st September.

5. To receive reports from Councillors:

Cllr. Dandy

Nothing to report.

Cllr. Roux

Nothing to report.

Cllr. Lockwood

Nothing to report.

Cllr. Bright

- Confirmation of Autumn Tree planting is awaited from Surrey. Arrangements are in place for the watering of the new trees planted in November last year.
- Adam cut strips at beginning of September as agreed in last meeting.
- Advised that he would be attending the TDC Planning meeting on 7th September regarding the application for Hollow Lane Garages.

Cllr. Taylor

- Advised that she had attended a Planning Training session put on by another PC but run by TDC. She advised that it was useful to meet other councillors & discuss Planning.
- Advised that costs for the self-healing surface to be put on the notice boards had been received and total costs including fitting (by Adam who had quoted £100 plus materials) would be in the region of £450. These costs had been agreed in the July 2023 as the notice boards costs would come out of CIL funding.

Cllr. Hutchinson

- Advised that she had passed the artwork for the banner to the graphic designer to look at designs.

- Advised that she had been working on the Consultation for the memorial garden but this in on the agenda.
- Bus shelter maintenance – Cllr. Hutchinson had intended to paint the bottom of the bus-shelter with some wood stain but when she went to inspect, it was too bigger job. **ACTION: Clerk to ask Adam to quote on maintenance of bus shelters.**
- **ACTION: Cllr. Hutchinson to report fly tipping behind bus shelter to TDC.**

6. To receive reports from District & County Councillors

Cllr. Lesley Steeds:

- Dropped kerbs to be put in very soon for disabled access. All agreed and advised that these had been marked up for the work to progress.
- Cllr. Steeds had visited a resident at Haxted whose wall had been destroyed where a car drove into it. Angelo visited site also and is going to improve visibility by cutting back an area of foliage by the corner on Dwelly Lane. Also looking to the future to supply a VAS on Haxted Road but this will be in the next financial years budget.
- Looking at speed reductions on West Park Rd and Felcourt Rd. Study being done to look at this.
- VAS signs for Dormansland had been confirmed but will not be installed until April 2024.

Cllr. Nicholas White:

- Ongoing problem with ditch that should be maintained by resident at no.1 West Street. Clerk advised that the resident had been sent one letter on 15th August and delivered a further letter by hand on 6th September. No response from resident.

Cllr. Nicola O’Riordan:

- The swings in the recreation ground will be looked at with a view to them being mended and back in action.

7. Accounts/Finance

7.1 Invoices for July 2023 were agreed and ratified.

Invoices Agreed for payment at Planning Meeting 19.07.23 to be Ratified				VAT
15 th July	HSBC	Bank charge £5 x a month for July 2023	£5.00	D/D 21.07.23
21 st July 2023	SCC Admin	Pension for Jacqui O’Sullivan July 23	£198.38 Employer contribution	Paid 21.07.23
21 st July 2023	O2	Mobile Phone	£7.50 + VAT Direct Debit	£1.50
21 st July 2023	Jacqui O’Sullivan	Clerk July 23 Salary	£ 913.68 paid 21.07.23	Incl. 16 hours OT agreed for June 2023
21 st July 2023	HMRC	Tax & NI for July 23	£323.48	Paid 21.07.23

21 st July 2023	SCC Admin	Pension contributions for Jacqui O'Sullivan July 23	Employee Contributions £68.15	Paid 21.07.23
21 st July 2023	Jacqui O'Sullivan	Working from home for August 2023	£40.00	Paid 24.07.23
11 th May 2023	TDC	Admin fee for Election	£140.00	Paid 07.07.23
12 th July 2023	DM Payroll Services Ltd	First 6 months services of 2023/24	£60.00	Paid 24.07.23
14 th July 2023	St Johns Church	Centenary Room Hire: 28 th June, 5 th & 19 th July	£36.00	Paid 24.07.23
18 th July 2023	Print Room	Posters for passing horses on road	£18.00	Paid 18.07.23
28 th July 2023	Fiona French	Order for Trees with SCC.	£125.00	Paid 28.07.23

The invoices for August 2023 were agreed and signed for payment.

Invoices received for payment to date 31 st August 2023 (not paid)				VAT
21 st August 2021	HSBC	Bank charge £5 for August 2023	£5.00	21.08.23 Direct debit
21 st August 2023	SCC Admin	Pension for Jacqui O'Sullivan August 23	£197.84 Employer contribution	Paid 18.08.23

21 st August 2023	O2	Mobile Phone	£7.50 + VAT Direct Debit	£1.50
21 st August 2023	Jacqui O'Sullivan	Clerk August 2023 Salary	£1884.89	Includes hours OT agreed for July 2023 Paid 21.08.23
21 st August 2023	HMRC	Tax & NI for August 23	Zero as tax code change for clerk £58.01 NI	Paid 21.08.23
21 st August 2023	SCC Admin	Pension contributions for Jacqui O'Sullivan August 23	Employee Contributions £61.48	Paid 18.08.23
21 st August 2023	Jacqui O'Sullivan	Working from home Sept 2023	£40.00	
28 th July 2023	Jacqui O'Sullivan	Viking Order – ink for printer & lamination pouches	£75.50	£12.58
31 st July 2023	Fiona French	Tree order x 2	£50.00	Paid 08.08.23 agreed at FC meeting 5.4.23 agenda no.18.
30 th August 2023	Adam Neill	Shepherds Grove Wilderwick Clayfords	£150	

7.2 Members noted the bank reconciliation and cash books for period to 31st July 2023

HSBC COMMUNITY ACCOUNT & BMM ACCOUNTS
Balance per bank statement as of 31 st July 2023

Community Account	£22055.46		
BMM Account	£91932.98		

Members noted the bank reconciliation and cash books for period to 31st August 2023

HSBC COMMUNITY ACCOUNT & BMM ACCOUNTS			
Balance per bank statement as of 31 st August 2023			
Community Account	£20,167.24		
BMM Account	£92,074.30		

7.3 The council signed off the month end reconciliations against the bank statements for July & August 2023.

7.4 Clerks overtime hours in July 2023 was ratified following approval by email.

7.5 Village Voice advertising costs were discussed and put forward to the committee. Full page for 10 issues costs would be £320 per year. It was agreed by full council that we would take on a page per month until the end of the financial year starting from the October issue (Oct to March inclusive – 6 issues @ £32 an issue. Payment to be made £192.00. **ACTION: Clerk to advise Village Voice of commitment to 1 page per issue for the rest of the following financial year.**
Note for Council: Going forward, Village Voice costs should be factored into the budget for 2024/25 under communications / social media.

7.6 Unity Bank – The criteria of the account details were agreed and ratified by full council. **ACTION: Clerk to go ahead and set up the Unity account.**

7.7 CCLA investment of savings – it was discussed and agreed that we would not invest monies with CCLA due to risk factors and that savings and current accounts would be set up with Unity and the remainder of the savings (keeping a maximum of £85,000 with Unity) should be kept at HSBC.

7.8 Mulberry internal auditors – Full council agreed that an interim audit would be helpful however we would not commit to the 3 year plan with Mulberry but continue with a rolling agreement. Cllr. Hutchinson noted that we have had scrutiny from the external auditors this year about our variances and that this needs to be focused on in the internal audit we have as this was not picked up on the final internal audit this year. **ACTION: Clerk to advise Mulberry that we would like to have an interim audit.**

8 POLICIES – The following policies were agreed and approved subject to 2 amendments:

- Document Retention Policy and Disposal** – Policy approved for publication.
- GDPR website and Privacy Notice** - Policy approved for publication.
- Freedom of information Policy** – amendments were agreed, and Policy approved for publication.
- Information and Data Protection Policy** – a statement needs to be added about forwarding on of emails from the public in relation to sharing of their information with full council members. Clause 6 – Town Council to be amended to PC. **ACTION: clerk to amend policy and forward amendments to be approved at next meeting.**
- GDPR Notice** - Policy approved for publication.
- Co-option Policy** – Policy amendments were approved for publication.
- Grants Policy** – the policy was discussed by working Group on 30th August 2023 and it was discussed that perhaps we should revert back to the former way of accepting

grants on a first come, first serve basis. It was noted that the clerk had published the deadlines for the next application process and that when the Grants Policy was reviewed, this was for the full financial year. Grants policy to remain as it is for this current financial year but to be reviewed for the next financial year. Recommendations to be noted: Feedback form to be added to successful applications & also criteria for applicants to be added to the Grant Application form for reference when completing the application. **ACTION: Clerk to put on agenda for review in Jan 2024.**

9. NEWHACHE MEMORIAL GARDEN: Cllr. Hutchinson had done some work on the consultation document, but this needs to be drawn up formally with the Consultation Aims and agreed by TDC prior to sending out. We are waiting on the information from TDC regarding the licence and need to understand the terms of the licence information before the consultation can proceed. Cllr L.ockwood & Cllr Roux are happy to work on this project together going forward. **ACTION: Clerk to chase up licence agreement with James Devonshire. Clerk to query as to what would happen to the payments currently being received by TDC from Newhache residents for upkeep of the green, should DPC take over the maintenance of the green.**

10. PRIORITY PROJECTS – Strategic Planning information was circulated prior to the meeting giving timelines for projects and their importance of being managed. The Council agreed to the working party recommendations as outlined in the Strategic Plan document. **ACTION: Clerk to update the Strategic Plan document to reflect the recommendations agreed.**

11. BUDGET MEETING – ACTION: clerk to circulate suggested dates for the meeting. Clerk agreed to chair the budget meeting.

12. DEFIBRILLATORS – In principle, the council is in favour of supporting the installation of more defibrillators in Dormansland. A resident has offered to fund one Defibrillator (£1000) and asked that the Council fund the cabinet for the defibrillator (£600) and carry out the maintenance. The resident attended the meeting for the discussions. The resident was keen for the defibrillator to be placed at the Centenary Rooms but it was noted that the gates are locked and access would be tricky in an emergency. It was suggested that perhaps the Parish Rooms or The Old House at Home would be better locations as they are habited more frequently, and access is better. The following was agreed: The council would look into the following locations for new defibrillators: Memorial Hall – **ACTION:**

Cllr. O’Riordan to discuss with the Memorial Hall if they would undertake the weekly inspections. To report back at the next meeting on 4th October.

The Plough Pub – ACTION: The Clerk to discuss with The Plough if they would undertake the weekly inspections. To report back at the next meeting on 4th October.

The Old House at Home – ACTION: Cllr: Dandy to discuss with the The Old House at Home if they would undertake the weekly inspections. To report back at the next meeting on 4th October.

OR The Parish Rooms – ACTION - Clerk to discuss with the nursery group at The Parish Rooms if they would undertake the weekly inspections. To report back at the next meeting on 4th October.

Cricket Field – ACTION - Clerk to discuss with the Mr H if someone at the Cricket Club would undertake the weekly inspections. To report back at the next meeting on 4th October. Resident to email the clerk his contact details.

Once this information has been gathered, the council will make a decision on how to proceed.

ACTION: put on agenda for October 2023.

13. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – All councillors advised they would like to attend the TDC NP teams meeting arranged for 14th September. Cllr. Dandy will advise. Cllr. Coleman was not present so still to advise. **ACTION:** Clerk to circulate the Teams link for the meeting.

14. MEMORIAL BENCHES – One resident has decided not to proceed, and the other resident is still to decide.

15. TRAINING – Councillor training

- None of the councillors wished to proceed with any training.
- SALC AGM in October – None of the councillors wished to attend.
- CILCA Costs – Additional costs were agreed by council. £450 subscription (CILCA registration fee paid to SLCC) and £365 (training fee to Mulberry) total £815.

16. This item was brought forward to the first item for discussion.

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- Full Council on Wednesday, 4th October 2023 at 18.30 in The Centenary Rooms, Dormansland.

Meeting closed at 20.30.

Meeting closed to the public.

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

- **CLERK MATTERS:**

Cllr. Taylor advised that there had been a meeting earlier that day with the Clerk, herself and Cllr. Roux and the following requests were made and agreed on by full Council.

1. Clerk requested that Mulberry help with end of year financial figures to ensure all was in order. Andy Beams came for a couple of hours in April this year and it was really helpful to have him oversee the year end. Full Council agreed to the costs for this mentoring (last years costs were £132).
2. CILCA additional hours – Full Council agreed to payment of study hours equating to 4 hours a week starting from October 2023. (18.3 hours a month for next 12 months – Oct 23 to Sept 2024). Clerk is able to manage hours as and when necessary for study.
3. Annual increment based on merit. Clerk to have an appraisal on 1st November at which time an assessment of whether a pay increment would be made based on her working practice.
4. The annual NALC increment has not yet been announced and this % increase will be back dated to April 2023 once awarded.
5. Set hours will stay at 14 hours a week and continue to be reviewed on a rolling basis. Clerk to draft a list of general duties and other duties that she feels are outside the remit of the 14 hours a week so that this can be reviewed. The Council can then assess whether additional hours can be agreed on for projects outside the general duties. Clerk to have more fixed hours and will put these on email footer and website for clarification.

The meeting closed at 20.45.

MINUTES CONFIRMED AS A CORRECT RECORD:

DATED

SIGNED: (CHAIR)