

DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting Held at Dogmersfield Primary School 17 May 2021 at 7.30 p.m.

Councillors present:

CLlr Graham Chisnall (GC) Chair
CLlr Anne Fillis (AF) Vice-chair
CLlr G Leach (GL)
CLlr Sarah Miles (SM)
CLlr Rob Molloy (RM)

Members of the public present:

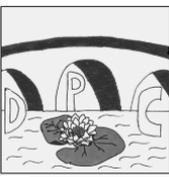
There were 3 members of the public present

Also present:

Locum Clerk: Tracy Predeth (By Zoom)

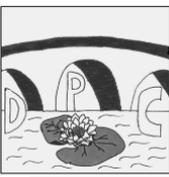
Version 1.4 5/7/21

01/21	<p>Election of Chairman</p> <p>Resolved: CLlr G Chisnall was elected as Chairman of the Council.</p> <p>The Chairman signed his declaration of acceptance of office.</p>
02/21	<p>Welcome from the Chairman</p> <p>The Chairman thanked Members for electing him for another year and welcomed CLlr G Leach to the meeting. The Chairman also expressed thanks Alastair Clark for his many years of service to the Council.</p> <p>CLlr Leach provided the following vote of thanks:</p> <p>As the newest member of the Parish Council, I would like to make a vote of thanks.</p> <p>Firstly, I would like to thank Alastair Clark and Brian White for standing in the Council election on 6th May. The votes they got reflect the many friends they have within the village.</p> <p>Secondly, I would like to thank all those who voted in the election. Over 150 people voted, which was a huge turnout for a small village. And I think it is now good that we have a fully elected Council which can make decisions, and implement plans and ideas on behalf of the whole village.</p> <p>Finally, and most importantly, I would like to say a special thank you to Alastair Clark. He has been a Parish Councillor in Dogmersfield for over 25 years. In that time, he has seen many changes in the village, and has given unrelenting service to the Parish. He was the Vice Chair for many years and has, in the past, represented the Parish Council on various committees with Hart and Hampshire. I think we all owe him a debt of thanks and I'm sure you will join me in wishing him well for the future.</p>
03/21	<p>Election of Vice Chairman</p> <p>Resolved: CLlr Anne Fillis was elected as Vice Chairman to the Council.</p>
	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>There were no apologies for absence.</p>
04/21	<p>Declarations of Interests</p> <p>CLlr Miles declared a personal interest in item 9/21 21/01241/HOU</p>



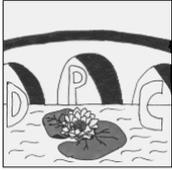
DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

05/21	<p>To receive and adopt the following Policies:</p> <p>The following documents were Resolved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Regulations 												
05/21	<p>Election of Officers and Representatives for the Municipal Year</p> <p>Resolved: Community Liaison (Cllr R Molloy), Planning (Cllr G Leach), Footpaths & Rights of Way (Cllr A Fillis) Environment (Cllr S Miles) Highways (Cllr S Miles) Liaison with Other Councils & Related Bodies (Cllr A Fillis) Newsletters & Communications (Cllr R Molloy) Website (Cllr R Molloy) Neighbourhood Plan Liaison (Cllr G Chisnall) Community Benefit Fund Liaison (Cllr A Fillis)</p>												
06/21	<p>To Approve and Adopt the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on the 12 April 2021</p> <p>Resolved: To agree that the Minutes of the Council meeting held on the 12 April 2021 were a correct record of the meeting.</p>												
07/21	<p>Bank Mandate</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>To agree to remove Mr Alastair Clark from all bank mandates.</p> <p>To agree to add the incoming Clerk and additional councillors to the Lloyds bank mandate.</p> <p>To agree that two councillors will authorise online payments.</p>												
08/21	<p>Representations by the public</p> <p>There were no public questions received in advance of the meeting.</p>												
09/21	<p>To Consider the Council's Response to Current Planning Applications</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="242 1415 1350 1742"> <thead> <tr> <th>Reference</th> <th>Address</th> <th>Description</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>21/00983/FUL</td> <td>Installation of a new 3m high boundary security fence</td> <td>Aragon Hall, Farnham Road, Odiham, Hook, RG29 1HR</td> <td>Objection</td> </tr> <tr> <td>21/01241/HOU</td> <td>Erection of detached double garage with habitable accommodation at first floor</td> <td>Peasmoor House, Church Lane, Dogmersfield, Hook, RG27 8TA</td> <td>No Objection</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>To update Council on any new planning consultations, appeals and enforcements.</p>	Reference	Address	Description		21/00983/FUL	Installation of a new 3m high boundary security fence	Aragon Hall, Farnham Road, Odiham, Hook, RG29 1HR	Objection	21/01241/HOU	Erection of detached double garage with habitable accommodation at first floor	Peasmoor House, Church Lane, Dogmersfield, Hook, RG27 8TA	No Objection
Reference	Address	Description											
21/00983/FUL	Installation of a new 3m high boundary security fence	Aragon Hall, Farnham Road, Odiham, Hook, RG29 1HR	Objection										
21/01241/HOU	Erection of detached double garage with habitable accommodation at first floor	Peasmoor House, Church Lane, Dogmersfield, Hook, RG27 8TA	No Objection										
10/21	<p>Finance & Regulatory Matters</p> <p>Members noted the bank reconciliation to date.</p> <p>Members received and approved the financial statement of accounts and authorised payments due.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="242 2029 1331 2092"> <thead> <tr> <th>Payable To</th> <th>Details</th> <th>Gross Amount</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Payable To	Details	Gross Amount									
Payable To	Details	Gross Amount											



DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

	T Predeth	Provision of Locum Clerk	£1,050
	T Predeth	Mr Repairs	£72.00
	Cllr R Molloy	Zoom Subscription	£12.23
	HALC	Members Training	£114.00
	HALC	Affiliation Fee	£191.64
11/21	<p>Staffing</p> <p>Resolved: The appointment of a new clerk was agreed and it was resolved that Cllr Chisnall would agree a contract of employment with an expectation that the new clerk will commence in June 2021. The Locum Clerk will continue until the end of May 2021.</p>		
12/21	<p>Communications and Engagement</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To agree for Cllr Molloy to seek quotations for Microsoft 365 and SharePoint, also to consider options for a new laptop and printer for the Council. To consider the purchase of equipment to enable future broadcasting the meeting by zoom. To agree the production of a newsletter (final content to be circulated by email) 		
13/21	<p>Contributions to Costs of Repair of Footpaths</p> <p>Members received an update from Cllr Fillis regarding footpath repairs. It was resolved that the Council would contribute £436.80 to fund the replacement style on footpath 9 and would contribute £300 towards the cost of repairs for footpath 6. Members agreed in principle to fund the replacement of up to 5 stiles with gates, paid for from the Community Benefit Fund.</p>		
14/21	<p>To confirm dates for future council meetings for 2021/22</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>Monday 21 June (later due to covid restrictions easing, need to approve audit)</p> <p>Monday 12 July, (no meeting in August)</p> <p>Monday 13th September, Monday 11th October,</p> <p>Monday 8th November, Monday 15th December,</p> <p>Monday 10th January, Monday 14th February,</p> <p>Monday 14th March</p>		
	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>Monday 21 June 2021 at Dogmersfield Primary School.</p>		



DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held at Dogmersfield Primary School 21 June 2021 at 7.30 p.m.

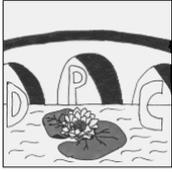
Councillors	In Attendance	Apologies	Absent
Cllr Graham Chisnall (Chair)	✓		
Cllr Anne Fillis (Vice-chair)		✓	
Cllr Graham Leach	✓		
Cllr Sarah Miles	✓		
Cllr Rob Molloy	✓		

Clerk: Martin Whittaker

In attendance:

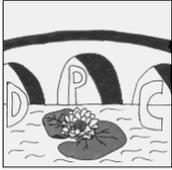
Cllr Ken Crookes, Hart District Council
Cllr Tim Davies, Hampshire County Council
6 members of the public

		Action
21/15	<p>Welcome and apologies for absence</p> <p>Cllr Fillis had sent apologies (holiday).</p> <p>The motion being proposed by Cllr Chisnall and seconded by Cllr Molloy, IT WAS RESOLVED to accept the reason for absence.</p> <p>The Chairman welcomed the new clerk, Martin Whittaker, to the council and gave his thanks to the locum clerk, Tracy Predeth, for her help in organising the council's affairs during a difficult few months.</p> <p>The Chairman also announced that there would be Parish meeting sometime this year, probably in October.</p>	
21/16	<p>To receive and note any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and requests for dispensation for items to be discussed</p> <p>Cllr Miles declared a personal interest in the planning applications for Pond House and Peasmoor House.</p>	
21/17	<p>To approve the minutes of the council meeting of 12 May 2021</p> <p>Because of the number of amendments suggested to the minutes it was decided to make these changes outside the meeting and to submit them for approval again next month</p>	
21/18	<p>Announcements from the Chairman and Clerk and members' questions received in advance of the meeting</p> <p>None.</p>	



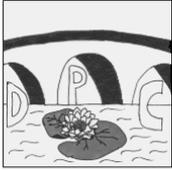
DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

21/19	<p>County and district councillor's reports</p> <p>Cllrs Davies and Crookes gave verbal updates.</p>	
21/20	<p>Representations by the public</p> <p>A member of the public made the following points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The item "Consultant Clerk" on the variance report was unexplained. The Clerk agreed to investigate and report. • Agenda item 21/24 on trees should make clear that expenditure from the Community Benefit Fund requires the approval of the council. The Chairman agreed with this point. 	Clerk
21/21	<p>1. To consider responses to planning applications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21/01435/HOU Erection of a two storey side extension with basement Pond House Church Lane Dogmersfield Hook RG27 8TA. Expiry: 13/7/21 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Chairman reported that there were a number of issues with this application: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It may contravene the Dark Skies policy in the Neighbourhood Plan ▪ It is not clear whether the extension is entirely on housing (rather than agricultural) land ▪ It is not clear that the previously required updates to the sewage system have been done. ○ Therefore, as the expiry date is after the next meeting, members asked for further information to be brought to that meeting. • 21/01309/PREAPP Various works Four Seasons Hotel Dogmersfield Park Chalky Lane Dogmersfield Hook Hampshire RG27 8TD. Expiry: N/A <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No application details on the Hart planning portal: the Chairman will check with Hart. • 21/01241/HOU Erection of detached double garage with habitable accommodation at first floor. Peasmoor House Church Lane Dogmersfield Hook RG27 8TA. Expiry: 9/6/21 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This was dealt with at the last council meeting. • 21/00626/FUL Cottage 1 and Cottage 2, Plough Farm - Joint application for the demolition of conservatories and erection of a two storey and first floor rear extension. Cottage 1 Plough Farm Chalky Lane Dogmersfield Hook Hampshire RG27 8TD. Expiry 1/7/21 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The motion being proposed by Cllr Chisnall and seconded by Cllr Molloy, IT WAS RESOLVED unanimously to offer no objection, as long as the Dark Skies policy in the Neighbourhood Plan is adhered to. 	<p>Chisnall</p> <p>Chisnall</p>



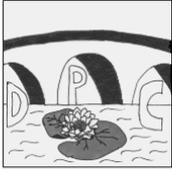
DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

	<p>2. To update members on any new planning consultations, appeals and enforcements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The erection of a glazed roofed open sided extension to the rear of St John's, Church Lane will be brought to the next meeting. 																	
21/22	<p>To review and adopt Standing Orders and Financial Regulations</p> <p>The Financial Regulations had been approved at the previous meeting.</p> <p>The motion being proposed by Cllr Chisnall and seconded by Cllr Miles, IT WAS RESOLVED unanimously to approve the Standing Orders.</p>																	
21/23	<p>Finance & Regulatory Matters</p> <p>1. To receive and approve the annual audit papers and associated documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certificate of Exemption: the motion being proposed by Cllr Chisnall and seconded by Cllr Molloy, IT WAS RESOLVED unanimously to approve this. Cllr Leach asked that his abstention be recorded as he was not a member of the council during the period covered by the certificate. Accounting Statements: the motion being proposed by Cllr Molloy and seconded by Cllr Miles, IT WAS RESOLVED unanimously to approve these. Cllr Leach asked that his abstention be recorded as he was not a member of the council during the period covered by the statements. Annual Governance and Accounting Return (AGAR): the motion being proposed by Cllr Chisnall and seconded by Cllr Molloy, IT WAS RESOLVED unanimously to approve this. Cllr Leach asked that his abstention be recorded as he was not a member of the council during the period covered by the return. <p>2. To confirm the dates of the period for the exercise of public rights as being from 23 June to 3 August 2021: the motion being proposed by Cllr Molloy and seconded by Cllr Chisnall, IT WAS RESOLVED unanimously to approve the dates.</p> <p>3. To authorise the payments due</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The motion being proposed by Cllr Chisnall and seconded by Cllr Miles, IT WAS RESOLVED unanimously to approve the following payments: <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date</th> <th>Supplier</th> <th>Description</th> <th>Amount</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>14/6/21</td> <td>Rob Molloy</td> <td>Expenses</td> <td>50.69</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11/6/21</td> <td>Software-pdf.com</td> <td>PDF Architect</td> <td>15.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15/6/21</td> <td>GeoXsphere</td> <td>Parish Online</td> <td>36.00</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>4. To receive an update for online banking: the Clerk reported that he had downloaded and completed the Lloyds form to become a signatory and change the address used for the account. When this had been completed, he would proceed with sorting out online banking for all members. After some discussion, members asked the Clerk to bring to the next meeting details of alternative banks that may offer a more appropriate service.</p>	Date	Supplier	Description	Amount	14/6/21	Rob Molloy	Expenses	50.69	11/6/21	Software-pdf.com	PDF Architect	15.00	15/6/21	GeoXsphere	Parish Online	36.00	Clerk
Date	Supplier	Description	Amount															
14/6/21	Rob Molloy	Expenses	50.69															
11/6/21	Software-pdf.com	PDF Architect	15.00															
15/6/21	GeoXsphere	Parish Online	36.00															



DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

21/24	<p>To consider approval of a budget for tree planting</p> <p>On behalf of Cllr Fillis, Cllr Molloy presented the plans for planting trees in the parish over the next 5 years. £650 had already been approved by the council, but Cllr Fillis was asking for the rest of the 5 years' funding, £2600, to be made available this year from the Community Benefit Fund.</p> <p>Doubts were expressed whether it was wise to order and plant all the trees in one go as this might cause wastage if the process was delayed or land proved unsuitable. After some discussion, the motion being proposed by Cllr Chisnall and seconded by Cllr Molloy, IT WAS RESOLVED unanimously that a budget of £2600 for this financial year to be made available from the Community Benefit Fund for the planting of trees, provided that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports on progress were made available to each council meeting • Trees were only purchased when land on which to plant them was available. 	
21/25	<p>To consider approval of a budget for footpath improvements</p> <p>Cllr Miles reported that Ian Taylor, Footpath Warden, had received a proposal from the Ramblers Association to contribute £200 to make Footpath 8 passable, and requested the council to match-fund up to £250. The motion being proposed by Cllr Miles and seconded by Cllr Molloy, IT WAS RESOLVED unanimously to grant a budget of up to £250 for this purpose.</p>	
21/26	<p>To consider establishing a virtual landline for the council (paper to follow)</p> <p>The Clerk requested that a budget be made available to establishing a virtual landline number that could be diverted to his personal phone to enable calls to be managed effectively. The motion being proposed by Cllr Chisnall and seconded by Cllr Leach, IT WAS RESOLVED unanimously to grant a budget of up to £6 per month plus VAT for this purpose.</p>	
21/27	<p>To receive a report of the Hampshire Highways meeting on 18 June and consider any related matters</p> <p>The meeting had been cancelled due to the non-availability of Hart and Hampshire personnel due to flooding and had been rescheduled for 12 July.</p>	
21/28	<p>To receive an update on the Shapley Heath New Town and consider appropriate actions</p> <p>The Chairman reported that, although Dogmersfield would not be the worst affected parish, the development would have considerable impact. As well as the construction traffic that would pass through the parish for many years, the commuter traffic would increase enormously. He would continue to work with other parish chairman and keep the council updated on progress, but in the meantime he and Cllr Molloy would put a factsheet together for distribution to the village.</p>	<p>Chisnall/ Molloy</p>
21/29	<p>Correspondence received</p> <p>None.</p>	
21/30	<p>Information sharing</p>	



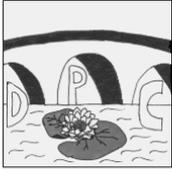
DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

	A number of members of the public congratulated Cllr Molloy on the recent newsletter and agreed with the decision to go electronic in future.	
21/31	Date of next meeting 12 July 2021 7.30 pm	

Signed:

Date:

DRAFT



DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Proposed Changes to Banking Arrangements

V1.1 5/7/21

1 Summary

Many councils, including Dogmersfield have had issues with high street banks over the past few years. Although parts of their offering work very well, the mistakes and difficulty of operation have brought many frustrations and wasted considerable time.

It has been said many times by clerks that this is because the big banks don't understand parish councils. However, there is one bank that specialises in bodies such as parish council and receives universal praise from Clerks – Unity Trust Bank.

I recommend we transfer the council's current account to Unity.

2 The Need

In order to operate effectively and to conform with the increasingly stringent requirements for parish councils, DPC needs:

- An appropriate and responsive banking facility
- Payment authorisation that meets the councils needs, and those of the Financial Regulations (FRs)
- Access to debit/credit card facilities with limits on the amounts that can be spent.

3 Experience with our current bankers

Many councils have issues with the main high street banks. The services are not really adequate for what is effectively a small business with specific needs. Issues include:

- Long-winded telephone access
- Inadequate support
- Difficulty in removing old signatories and adding new ones
- Authorisation system that does not really meet a council's needs
- Debit cards are available, but the amount per transaction cannot be limited

As the council is about to make the move to online banking, this presents an opportunity to consider a move to a more appropriate bank.

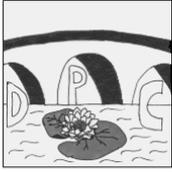
Although the Lloyds Treasurer's Account is currently free, the service can at best be described as "good value for money".

There is one bank that does offer appropriate facilities to parish councils: Unity Trust.

4 Unity Trust Bank

4.1 Overview

Unity Trust (<https://www.unity.co.uk/>) was originally set up as a joint venture between the Co-op bank and the trade union movement but is now backed by NatWest. It originally only provided accounts for unions and



DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

voluntary organisations but now seems to have gone fully commercial. It has a peerless reputation amongst clerks for efficiency, ease of use, flexibility and responsiveness. Here's a typical comment by a clerk on Facebook:

"They are a great bank and I cannot imagine why any Council would not move to them"

For more views from clerks, see the Appendix below.

They also have some particular advantages:

- Communications to signatories are sent to their home addresses rather than having to be forwarded from the corporate one.
- They don't use authentication cards and machines with batteries that fail.
- The statement system is fully online and paperless. With our current bankers, proper monthly statements can only be obtained by post, and pdf statements are only available for current accounts.
- The authorisation system is much more flexible than that of the major banks (see below).

4.2 Authorisation

FRs require that internet payments be authorised by one or two signatories (depending on interpretation).

Our current bank requires two signatories, but in order to set payments up the Clerk must be a full signatory. Ideally, the Clerk should operate the account on behalf of the council but should not be a signatory. Therefore the Clerk must be given more access than is desirable.

Unity Trust allows three levels of access for each person on the account: View, Submit and Authorise. These can be set up individually so, for example:

- The Clerk can View and Submit
- The Chair and Vice-chair can View Submit and Authorise
- Other councillors can View and Authorise
- The auditor can View

In addition, different authorisation levels can be put on transactions of different values, eg:

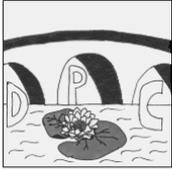
- Transfers to other accounts can require authorisation by fewer people
- Transactions above a certain amount can require authorisation by more people
- ...or by specific people

4.3 Cards

It is against the standard model of Financial Regulations for parish councils to allow/encourage/force members and officers to use personal credit or debit cards. As many facilities needed by the council are only available using such cards (eg email, virtual phone line, much software, online purchases), this makes it tricky to conform.

Unity does not offer a debit card but offers a Corporate Multipay Card – effectively a charge card that is paid off monthly. This can be tailored so that:

- Single transaction and monthly limits can be set per user
- Merchant category blocking is available, allowing the card to be restricted to certain types of purchase.



DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

4.4 My experience

I've been banking with Unity for one of my companies for 12 years and had excellent service. I persuaded Hook PC to move to them after trouble with Lloyds and they were equally impressed. I recommended that the Rooksdown Community Association moved to Unity, which they did and are very satisfied. I moved the council to Unity shortly before I left, after an extremely frustrating time with Lloyds.

4.5 The costs

Unity charge £6 per month for a current account. This compares with £7.20 a month I pay to Lloyds for my other company. We currently pay nothing to our current bankers as we have a Treasurer's account, though this may go some distance to explain the poor service we receive.

The Multipay card costs £3 per month. It also has a setup fee of £50.

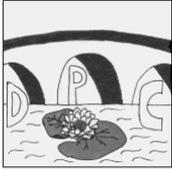
5 Recommendation

That the council moves its current and savings accounts to Unity. This should be done instead of trying to set up the Lloyds account for the new councillor and for internet banking.

Note that a cheque (or transfer) for £500 written in favour of the council will be necessary to open the account.

Martin Whittaker

Clerk and RFO



DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

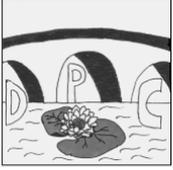
APPENDIX - Comments by parish clerks

The national clerks' group on Facebook were recently asked the question:

- Who currently banks with Unity Trust and how long have you banked with them?

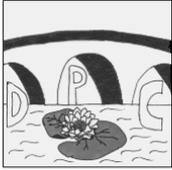
Responses were:

- Hi have been with unity around 3 years now, **best thing I ever did!** Easy to add signatories and cheques can be paid in over the counter at NatWest
- Yes - I've had 4 different councils with UTB over the past 12 years. There is absolutely **NOTHING bad to say about them**. I've even just opened a bank for my husband's business with them too. I post cheques and pay in cash at the post office
- I have been with Unity for seven years. **Cannot recommend them highly enough.**
- Been with them a few years, **wouldn't change them.**
- Been **excellent**, over 4 years, council and charity accounts
- I use them at my two councils - one small and one a town council. They **are excellent.**
- We switched in January and love **how easy it is**
- Been with them for 5 years and **all positive.**
- Been with Unity 7 years, precept £128k. **Highly recommended.**
- We've been with them a couple of years and have **no issues whatsoever.**
- Easy to manage the account, make payments, set up DDs etc **not a single issue** so far
- We have been with Unity for about 5 years. We only do online stuff with them though. No cash/cheques as we have another bank for this. **Unity are good** as far as I'm concerned. precept £70k but We have lots of CIL to do I'm dealing with lots of banks to ...
- Been with them about 4 years, **no problems** so far.
- Been with them about 6 years with various councils ranging from £2K income to £250K. **Highly recommend** for any size council. I've generally found when there's a change of clerk, it's easier to change banks than to change the address with eg Barclays or ...
- **They are a great bank and I cannot imagine why any Council would not move to them**
- **Best bank**, so helpful and very easy to get hold of if you have a problem.
- Been with them over 5 years, took on a new PC with Barclays and got them to move over to unity. Super quick, great customer service. Can pay in cheques via free post or NatWest Counters abs **can't fault them** at all. A win all round for us
- We started with 2 of my councils in the past month and it is like a **breath of fresh air!** Humans that answer the phones and will speak to me about the account, easy online payments without having to be a signatory...**I love it** as do my councils!
- **I can't say enough good.** I hope you can convince them to make the switch!!
- I'm not sure how long my PC has been with them as I've only been in post since November but I've found them **really easy** to contact by phone, **straightforward to change** mandates and primary contact details and their online banking **is easy to use.**
- All my councils even little ones with Unity. **Sooooo easy to use.** Pay car park cash in through post office to Unity.



DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Martin Whittaker
Clerk and RFO



DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

General Power of Competence (GPC)

V1 5/7/21

1 What is GPC?

GPC was brought in under the Localism Act 2011 to give local councils “the confidence in their legal capacity to act both for their communities and in their own financial interest to generate efficiencies and savings, and provide them with more freedom to innovate and work together with others, manage assets and run new services.”

It gives parish councils the same power to act as an individual has, rather than being restricted to its statutory powers and – in particular - powers under s.137 of the Local Government Act. This can make it easier for councils to work on behalf of their communities.

2 How does the council obtain GPC?

GPC is obtained by the council passing a resolution to adopt it. This can be done at any meeting. The power only lasts to the next Annual Meeting, where it needs to be resolved again.

In order to be able to adopt GPC, the council must satisfy 2 criteria:

- 2/3 of the councillors to have been elected (rather than co-opted or appointed)
- The Clerk must be qualified, at least to the level of the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA), including the GPC module.

Dogmersfield PC satisfies these criteria.

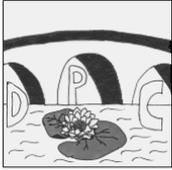
Once obtained, the power must be renewed at each Annual Meeting.

3 Recommendation

That the council adopts the General Power of Competence.

Martin Whittaker

Clerk and RFO



DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Proposed Changes to Council IT Services

V1.0 5/7/21

1 Summary

The council's current IT is not fit for purpose. The obvious route forward is to purchase a laptop and printer for the Clerk, switch to MS 365 and replace Zoom with Teams. However, because the Clerk routinely uses his own IT for council work, buying a laptop and printer that would only be used occasionally would be a poor use of resources.

It is therefore recommended that the council pays the Clerk an allowance for the use of his existing IT, and buys basic Microsoft 365 licences for the Clerk and councillors. In addition, to meet future security requirements the council should also purchase and utilise the Dogmersfield.gov.uk domain.

In summary, the council should

- Purchases 6 Business Basic licenses for MS 365 at a cost of £274 pa
- Cancels Zoom (-£140 pa) and phases out UK2 (-£60 pa)
- Purchases dogmersfield.gov.uk from NetWise (the current website providers) at £50 set up and £60 pa
- Contributes £230 pa to the clerk for use of IT equipment.

2 Current situation

2.1 Laptop

The Clerk's laptop was purchased in 2018 for £294. There have been frequent issues with it freezing and crashing, and it recently went for repair work at a cost of £72. It is currently only semi-functional: it is out of use for long periods when updating and is not fit for purpose.

2.2 Printer

The council has no printer and the Clerk is using his own.

2.3 Email

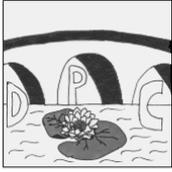
The current email system is hosted by UK2. This covers email, spam filtering and domain registration.

The council currently has 6 email addresses within the council – each of the councillors and the Clerk. We also have two forwarding addresses – webmaster@ and rfo@ (Responsible Financial Officer – probably not needed).

The current email system relies on users adding their UK2-hosted DPC email account to their existing email system used on their own computer. There is no central management.

Annual costs are currently as follows:

Item	Cost
Email forwarding	£16.99
Spam Filtering	£7.99
Email Accounts	£24.00
TOTAL	£58.97



DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

2.4 Domain

Domain registration costs £10 per year from UK2.

2.5 File storage

The email and document archive appears to be stored only on the laptop, with no accessible backups. They are not accessible to anybody else and the data is vulnerable to crashes.

2.6 Software

The laptop has a copy of Office 2016, which went out of support in 2020 and reaches end of life in 2025.

2.7 Support

Support is purchased on an ad hoc contract, which cost £200 in the last fy.

2.8 Videoconferencing

Currently £140 pa for Zoom.

3 Issues

3.1 Laptop

- Currently unusable.

3.2 Printer

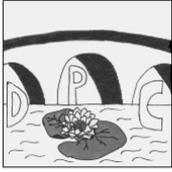
- None. The Clerk is printing documents (eg for accounting records) at his own expense.

3.3 Email

- The controlling document for councils, JPAG Practitioners Guide 2021 5.169 states:
“It's also important to have a secure, centrally managed email system. There are many popular systems on the market, including Office 365”
- UK2 offers no central management capability
- If an FOI request is received that requires access to councillors' emails, there is no practical way to get at them without obtaining access to councillor's private/company laptops, which would probably not be possible. [If they use POP3 rather than IMAP there is no way of accessing emails without the laptop.]
- If the owner of the laptop (assuming it's a company laptop) receives an FOI request, they may get access to council documents and emails
- Microsoft 365 (MS 365), the new name for Office 365, includes email forwarding, spam filter and email accounts.

3.4 Domain

- JPAG 2021 5.169 states:
“There are a number of important reasons why local councils of all sizes should ideally obtain an appropriate GOV.UK domain name for their council, and equally importantly, a secure and centrally-managed email system to sit behind it.



DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

“First and foremost, obtaining a GOV.UK domain for your council website and email accounts demonstrates the council's official local government status. Members of the public are increasingly cyber security aware, so a GOV.UK domain can also help to build trust, credibility and visibly demonstrates authenticity. Many people will now reasonably expect a local council to have a GOV.UK domain name.”

- As well as being advisable, it is likely that gov.uk will become compulsory in future.

3.5 File storage

- There is no central file repository for shared access to files, meaning all must be emailed out and stored locally
- Local storage makes version control of documents difficult.
- There is no backup or file security, leading to risk of total loss. Manual backups tend to be unreliable.

3.6 Software

- Unless a new Office licences are purchased regularly, it will go out of date leading to potential functionality and security issues. However, licences are now only available on a subscription basis and cost nearly the same as full MS 365.

3.7 Support

- The cost of support last year was £200. Support has also been suggested at £25/month, £300 pa. This is rather high for the limited facilities possessed by the council.

4 Options

4.1 Do nothing

Leaving aside the fact that the Clerk will have no usable IT facilities, the council will be in clear breach of GDPR due to lack of control and almost non-existent data security. This is not a sustainable option.

4.2 Do the minimum

Conformance to usability requirements, reasonable practice and legislation requires:

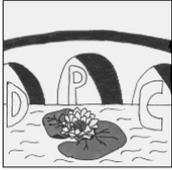
- Buying a laptop: cost ~£500, to last about 5 years: (equivalent to £100 pa)
- Obtaining MS 365 licences: Business Basic for councillors and Business Standard for the Clerk: total £340 pa
- Support: say £200 pa
- Printer: say £100 for 5 years: £20 pa, plus ink and paper at £70 pa

Total cost:

£600 capital plus £610 pa revenue

Most of the UK2 costs would fade away after migration, saving ~£50 pa. In addition, the inclusion of Teams in MS 365 means a saving of £140 on Zoom. This would give a net cost of:

£600 capital plus £420 pa revenue



DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

4.3 Do everything

This would be as above plus the cost of a gov.uk domain: £50 set-up plus £60 pa.

As well as helping to future-proof the IT, this would make the transition to MS 365 easier: we could run both domains in parallel then cut over when ready, diverting the old domain and email to the new one.

5 Possible savings

5.1 Laptop

One of the big advantages of MS 365 is that it can be operated from any device, anywhere. As the Clerk already has his own IT, he would only use a council laptop for meetings – poor utilisation of an expensive asset. And, as he has his own laptop, it isn't really necessary.

Rather than buying a laptop at effectively £100 pa and a printer at £90 pa it is suggested that the council pays the Clerk a fee for the use of his facilities.

5.2 Software

The Clerk already has MS 365 installed on his laptop and desktop. Therefore he would only need Business Basic rather than Standard, saving ~£70 pa.

Note that Business Basic includes access to OneDrive and 1Tb of storage per licence. The Clerk would use his own MS 365 apps but the council's 365 Outlook on the Web and OneDrive for DPC business.

5.3 Support

MS 365 does not really have any support issues, and phone support is available as part of the contract. The Clerk has provided the necessary amount of support in the past., and supports his own IT. This could result in a saving of up to £300 pa.

5.4 Cost reduction

The above measures would save the council per year:

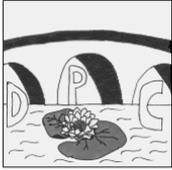
- £100 laptop
- £90 printer
- £70 MS 365
- £200 (say) support
- Total saving: £460 pa.

Splitting the saving evenly between the council and the Clerk suggests paying a fee to the Clerk of $£460/2 = £230$ pa.

5.5 Summary

The recommended actions based on the above savings would give:

- Purchasing 6 Business Basic licenses for MS 365 at a cost of £274 pa
- Cancelling Zoom (-£140 pa) and phasing out UK2 (-£60 pa)
- Purchasing dogmersfield.gov.uk from NetWise (the current website providers) at £50 set up and £60 pa
- Contributing £230 pa to the Clerk for use of IT equipment.



DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

This will reduce the capital expenditure to £50 (for the domain). For the revenue:

MS 365	£274
Clerk's IT	£230
.gov.uk	£60
Zoom	-£140
UK2	<u>-£60</u>
	£364

6 Conclusion and recommendations

The council's current IT is not fit for purpose. The obvious route forward is to purchase a laptop and printer for the Clerk, switch to MS 365 and replace Zoom with Teams. The cost of this would be:

- Capital £600
- Revenue pa £420

However, because the Clerk already owns and supports his own IT, which could be used effectively and securely for the council's purposes, it is recommended that he provides the IT and takes over the support function for an annual fee. This would bring the costs down to:

- Capital £50 saving £550
- Revenue pa £364 saving £56

It is therefore recommended that the council:

- Purchases 6 Business Basic licenses for MS 365 at a cost of £274 pa
- Cancels Zoom (-£140 pa) and phases out UK2 (-£60 pa)
- Purchases dogmersfield.gov.uk from NetWise (the current website providers) at £50 set up and £60 pa
- Contributes £230 pa to the Clerk for use of IT equipment.

Martin Whittaker

Clerk and RFO



HART DISTRICT ASSOCIATION OF PARISH & TOWN COUNCILS

Annual General Meeting 13th July 2021

Proposals for Election of Officers and Representatives

Position	Current holder	Proposal
Chairman	Alastair Clark	Vacancy
Vice Chairman	Tony Spencer	
Treasurer	Jan Hyatt	Vacancy
Auditor	Claire Inglis	
Representative on the Hart DC Standards Committee	Alastair Clark	Vacancy
Second representative on the Hart DC Standards Committee	David Argent	
Third representative on the Hart DC Standards Committee	Trish Monks	
Director on the Hampshire Association Board	Alastair Clark	Vacancy
Second representative on the Hampshire Association Board	Tony Spencer	
Third representative on the Hampshire Association Board	David Argent	
Fourth representative on the Hampshire Association Board	Trish Monks	
Representative on the Basingstoke Canal JMC	Alastair Clark	Vacancy
Rights of Way and Countryside Access Action Team		
Representative on the Hart DC Community Safety Partnership	Alastair Clark	Vacancy

.....Parish / Town Council wishes to nominate the above persons for office for the Association year commencing in July 2021. We have obtained the permission of the persons nominated.

.....Parish / Town Clerk or Chairman

This form should preferably be returned to the Association Secretary, Melanie Pride, before the meeting although proposals at the meeting will be accepted. admin@hartdapc.com