

MINUTES - DITCHEAT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES OF DITCHEAT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 29th JANUARY 2015 AT 7.30PM, in the CHURCH ROOM, DITCHEAT.

PRESENT: Chairman: Councillor Evans (CE) and Councillors Clark (HC), Hutton (RH), Dando (JD), Greenhalgh (JG), Yeoman (RY), Shirley (BS) and Hughes (LH).

IN ATTENDANCE: Miss P Griffiths – Clerk to the Council.

On behalf of the Parish Council CE expressed his condolences to Councillor Harrison on the recent death of Tony Hall, her husband.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – Opportunity for members of the public to address the Parish Council. Anthony Sutcliffe, Church Warden, addressed the Council to explain the situation with regards to the siting of the BT cabinet by the coronation seat at the foot of the steps up to the churchyard. Mr. Sutcliffe explained that following enquiries there was no evidence that the land on which the cabinet had been sited belonged to the Diocese. The view of the Diocesan registrar was that having looked at photographs of the site that the land probably belonged to the Highways Agency as part of the road. He had come to the PC meeting to ask if the PC had any evidence or knowledge that would confirm ownership of the land. RY informed the council that he believed the top of the steps was the edge of the church land and the wall that was there used to extend along the front of the churchyard and behind the war memorial. There was a laurel hedge between the wall and the edge of the pavement which RY remembered was cut by staff from the Priory when it was owned by the Leir family. RY went on to say that he believed that the hedge was removed and the wall moved to the pavement edge.

Both RY and CE did not believe that the land in question was part of the road verge and therefore did not belong to the Highways Agency. It was agreed that Mr Sutcliffe would forward copies of email correspondence to the Clerk who would then contact BT and the Highways Agency to challenge the reason why the cabinet has been sited on the opposite side of the road and not on BT owned land and to check with the Highways Agency regarding the ownership of the land. It was noted that although ownership of the land was not clear the PC has been acting as custodian of the site.

001/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Apologies from Councillor Harrison (HH) were received and approved. PCSO Dury sent his apologies.

002/15 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORTS – No report.

003/15 REPORT FROM AVON & SOMERSET CONSTABULARY- CE read out PCSO Dury's report which included 4 incidents:
29/11/14 at 00:01 – Report of a vehicle on fire near the village – Fire service attended.
07/12/14 at 20:32 – Request for a welfare check in the village – Police attended - all to be found in order.
20/12/14 at 15:49 – Report of a cow in the road near the village – Police attended – No trace of the cow was found.
23/12/14 at 10:23 – Report of a concern for welfare in the village – Police attended all to be found in order.

004/15 CODE OF CONDUCT – Declarations of interest and dispensations.
a) Declarations of interest on items included on the agenda : –
• CE declared a personal interest in agenda Item 010/15 c) 4) as the recipient of the payment.
• JG and JD both declared personal interests in agenda Item 016/15 a) 4) as they are Vice-Presidents of CCRFC.

b) There were no requests for dispensation for disclosable pecuniary interests.

005/15 MINUTES - The minutes of the meeting held on 4th December 2014 were confirmed and signed as a correct record of the meeting.

006/16 MATTERS ARISING - from the meeting held on 4th December 2014.

a) Update on possible breach of planning conditions at Snagg Lane and Long Batch – nothing to report. The Clerk will continue to follow the matter up with the Planning Enforcement team.

Action: The Clerk.

b) Parking in 'No Through Road' by Champs Way –The Clerk read out the email from Dan Bennett the representative of Aster Housing in response to the PC's comments regarding the proposed plan. Mr Bennett confirmed that whilst it would not be possible to stop the residents or others from parking in the lay-by there would be a covenant on the new parking spaces to prevent use other than for parking of vehicles. Mr Bennett is waiting for a response from the Highways Agency with regards to the length of the tarmac access – the plan is to have it as short as practical to reduce the amount of run-off water going back on to the road. A grid system under the gravelled area will be specified to prevent migration of the gravel onto the road.

c) Flooding/pooling of water at the eastern end of Jacobs Lane – The Clerk reported that a quotation has now been provide by the contractor and it was hoped that the work would be completed in the next few weeks.

d) Poor visibility by turning off the A371 at Snagg Lane – the Clerk will contact the Highways Agency again with regards to the long term solution for the problem. **Action: The Clerk.**

e) Telephone kiosk in Ditcheat by the old Post Office – the Clerk reported that BT were unable to confirm the date for removal of the kiosk but due to the hazardous state of the kiosk would arrange for an urgent visit by an engineer.

f) Dog exercising and fouling on former playground at Linterns Close – The Clerk reported that the Operational Asset Department at MDC had been informed of the problem. The initial response had been that perhaps the fence should be removed, however despite following up the matter no formal response had been received. The Clerk will send a further reminder and copy JC in the correspondence. **Action: The Clerk.**

g) Damage to bank tree planting at Evercreech Junction Industrial estate - the Clerk confirmed that a letter had been sent to the owners. The Clerk had also spoken to Mr J Nash – owner, who had indicated that he was not aware of the problem of the deer damaging the trees but did confirm that a replanting programme was taking place.

h) Guards on the trees planted for the Queen's Jubilee – Nick Mann had very kindly pruned the trees as necessary and removed the guards and replaced them with hedge plant spirals to stop any damage when the grass is cut at no charge to the PC.

007/15 MINUTES - The minutes of the planning meeting held on 11th December 2014 were confirmed and signed as a correct record of the meeting.

008/15 MATTERS ARISING - from the meeting held on 11th December 2014. There were no matters arising.

009/15 PLANNING

a) It was noted that the PC had confirmed its response to the application 2014/2432FUL & 2433 LBC (see MIN 178/14 ii)) following an amended application which had corrected the outline on the location plan.

b) It was noted that the PC had confirmed its response to the application 2014/2264OTS (see MIN 166/14) following an amended application which shows an improvement to the access to the site.

c) The approval of planning application Ref: 2014/2352/HSE – Harvester Yard. NOTED.

d) The refusal of full and listed applications for Corner Cottage, Ref: 2014/2170/FUL & 2171/LBC. NOTED.

010/15 FINANCE

- a) Balance of accounts –The Clerk gave a verbal update confirming that the cash book balance on the date of the meeting is £13,788.48.
- b) Setting of the precept for 2015/16 – it was agreed to increase the precept in line with the Retail Price Index rate of inflation as at December of 1.62%. The precept would therefore be set at £8,600.72 which along with the Council Tax Support Grant of £243.81 will give a budget for 2015/16 of £8,844.53. **Action: The Clerk.**
- c) It was resolved to approve the Parish Council payments and authority to sign cheques for the following:
 - 1) P Griffiths expenses for 1st September to 31st December 2014 – £29.07.
 - 2) P Griffiths salary for 1st September to 31st December 2014 – £636.24.
 - 3) HMRC for PAYE/NICs 1st September to 31st December 2014 – £159.20.
 - 4) Mr C Evans for materials for the work on the footpath: – 28th November 2014 - £62.93; 9th December - £62.93 and 6th January 2015 - £15.70 = Total of £141.56.The cheques were duly signed.
- d) The payment to the following was noted:
 - 1) Tony's Garden Services for maintenance of the playground and village green for December - £65.00.

011/15 PARISH PLAN

Update on action plans – RY stated that the January meeting which had been cancelled was re-scheduled for February.

012/15 The possibility of creating a "Centenary Field" in memory of those who lost their lives in World War I. It was agreed that it would not be appropriate to re-designate the playground which is the only land owned by the PC.

013/15 'Consultation on the Government's intentions to modernise parish poll regulations' - the Clerk will collate Councillors comments and respond on behalf of the PC. **Action: The Clerk.**

014/15 The date of the Annual Litter Pick - the date is confirmed as Saturday 21st March 2015. HC will update the risk assessment and complete the paperwork for MDC. The Clerk will send a notice for publication in the FTN magazine. It was noted that a considerable amount of litter picking had taken place throughout the year; this should be taken into consideration when any comparisons are made as part of the PPSG action plan 2. It was noted that there appeared to be a lot of litter on the A371 stretch of road from Arthurs Bridge to Castle Cary station – this will be reported to MDC. **Action: The Clerk and HC.**

015/15 PLAYGROUND

- a) Annual inspection and risk assessment – The Clerk confirmed that Wicksteed Leisure would be undertaking the inspection and assessment in the next couple of months.
- b) Other matters of report – it was noted that the rubbish bin in the playground need replacing. The Clerk will get quotes for the next meeting. **Action: The Clerk.**

016/15 HIGHWAYS

- a) Update on repairs previously reported.
 - 1) Potholes at the T junction on the Alhampton to Ditchheat road – still outstanding.
 - 2) Dotted line at junction from Ditchheat to Valley View - still outstanding.
 - 3) Gully in 'No Through Road', Alhampton – as previously reported the Highways Agency are planning to repair the storm drains in 2015.

- 4) Update from JG re parking on the road verge by CCRFC – JG reported that he had written in to CCRFC asking for an explanation as to why vehicles were parking on the road verge. The response received indicated that this only occurred when there were visiting teams on a Sunday when the children were playing. Recently due to the bad weather it had not been possible to use the Barbers field except for 4 x 4s. The club had created additional spaces and were also using the sides of the pitch and had officials monitoring the parking on Sundays when there were visiting teams. JG indicated to CCRFC that in a safety advisory role the PC was concerned about the safety of people getting in and out of the cars parking on the road verge - particularly children. The club have advised that there is one further match with a visiting team, on 1st February this season. Councillors recognised that the Club were actively trying to address the issues in the short term but remained concerned. JG will ask the club to provide more signs and to consider publishing the dates of visiting teams in the FTN. **Action: JG.**
- 5) Pooling of water on Wraxall Road opposite Long Batch – this appears to be caused by the subsidence of the road surface; the Clerk will report the matter again.
- 6) The culvert in Back Lane in Ditchheat - the Clerk confirmed that the Highways Agency had been requested to install a grating to prevent rubbish blocking the culvert and the subsequent flooding of the road.
- 7) Pub sign at the Brook House Inn – the Clerk confirmed that no response had been received following the letter which had been sent to the landlord of the pub. The Clerk will send a reminder letter to the landlord.
- 8) CE reported that the Highways Agency were aware of the water pooling on the Wraxall Road by Lindyson House and that the repair work is planned for April. RY expressed concern that in the current colder weather the road may become icy. The Clerk will request that the road is gritted until the problem is resolved.

The Clerk will report the above matters. **Action: The Clerk.**

b) Matters for report to the Highways authority:

- 1) LH reported that one of the signs by the turning to Ditchheat off the A371 has slipped down the pole thus obscuring the sign below. Also that there is a broken sign on the A371 when approaching the turning to Alhampton.
- 2) JD reported that one of the signs at the crossroads by the Queens Arms/Wraxall Road was twisted to be parallel with the road. Also a sign by the Fir Tree Café at the top of Ditchheat Hill was twisted

The Clerk will report these matters. **Action: The Clerk.**

- c) RY raised the matter of the new access which has been created on the unclassified road by the former Fir Tree Café site. The original access to this site was off the A37. The new access is considered to be in a dangerous location due to drivers turning off the A37 would be unaware of this access/egress from the site. The Clerk confirmed that the matter had been reported to the Highways Agency who have arranged to inspect the site to ensure that it is in a safe condition. The Planning Department were also informed who confirmed that no planning proposal application had been received for this site. The Clerk will contact the Planning Enforcement Team at MDC to inform them of the concerns of the PC. **Action: The Clerk.**

017/15 FOOTPATHS, BRIDLEWAYS AND RIGHTS OF WAY.

- a) Update on matters reported – The stile at the top of the steps on Ditchheat Hill had still not been repaired.
- b) It was noted with appreciation and grateful thanks the efforts of a parishioner to keep the steps on Ditchheat Hill clear of leaves and debris.

018/15 FEEDBACK FROM COUNCILLORS ATTENDING 'THE RENDEZVOUS'.

December (JD) – Matters raised included blocked drains and the speed of tractors going around Factory Corner in Ditchheat and along Wraxall Road.

January (JG) – Matters raised included the pot hole in the road by Folly Cottage; the drains and gulleys in Smiths Lane and by the telephone kiosk in Ditchheat need clearing; that due to the landfill at Dimmer closing no more land fill grants will be available – noted that recycling station will continue; a query from a parish councillor from Baltonsborough about the surface under the safety matting in the playground and for information that MDC will empty bins utilised for dog mess – decided no further bins required; parking on the pavement by Two Wells.

019/15 HEALTH & SAFETY- Nothing to report.

020/15 CLERK'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE.
No correspondence or matters to report.

021/15 ITEMS OF REPORT AND INCLUSION ON AGENDA FOR THE NEXT MEETING.

a) Chairman: – nothing to report.

b) Councillors:

- HC reported that the AGM of the Jubilee Hall had taken place and that more funds had been spent than usual due to a number of improvements. Further improvements may include replacement of fire doors, refurbishment of cloakrooms and possibly work on the exterior of the building. The committee officers were re-elected.
- LH raised the matter of the response to the Rights of Way Improvement Plan – it was agreed that all councillors should forward their comments to the Clerk who will collate the responses and reply to the survey on behalf of the PC. All councillors to respond as soon as possible but no later than 27th February.
- RY reported that as lead on the PPSG Action plan 2 for fly tipping and dog fouling and as a parish councillor, he had been approached by a parishioner about a stray dog which had been causing a nuisance and a hazard on the road in Ditchheat village. RY had contacted, via email, PC Lucy Bagnowiec who had responded and visited Ditchheat village but had been unable to establish the owner of the dog.

Signed: _____ Chairman of Ditchheat Parish Council.

Dated: 12th March 2015.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING – 12th MARCH 2015 AT 7.30 pm in the Church Room.

If necessary a Planning meeting will be held on 19th February 2015 in the Church Room.

PLEASE CHECK THE NOTICEBOARDS FOR AGENDAS AND DATES.
MEMBERS OF THE PARISH AND PRESS WELCOME.