

MEETING of DITCHEAT PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF DITCHEAT PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 14th SEPTEMBER 2017 AT 7.30PM AT CHURCH ROOM, DITCHEAT.

PRESENT: Chairperson – Councillor Evans (CE) and Councillors – Harrison (HH), Dando (JD), Clifford (SC), Hutton (RH) and Hughes (LH)

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

BY INVITATION: County Councillor Nigel Hewitt-Cooper (NHC) and District Councillor John Greenhalgh (JG).

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – Opportunity for members of the public to address the Parish Council. There were no members of the public present.

134/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. Apologies for absence from Councillors Clark (HC) and Travis (RT) – were received and approved. PCSO Dury had also sent his apologies.

135/17 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORTS: –

NHC gave a report which in brief cover the following points:

- Recently 200 of the more than 4,000 miles of the county's roads have been surface dressed.
- Children's Services previously rated inadequate by Ofsted are due to be re-inspected soon. It is hoped that following the assistance of Essex CC that the situation will have improved. 70% of the SCC's overall budget is spent on Adult and Children's Social Services with 40% of that spent on Adult Social Services. In light of this there is a big drive to look at how services are provided – moving away from a 'one size fits all' to a more tailored service.
- NHC sits on the Corporate Parenting Board and the Scrutiny Board and is Vice-Chair of the Regulation Committee.

CE gave an overview of the main areas of concern for the PC which it was felt that NHC could assist with if and when problems arose.

SC asked that NHC give updates on the consultation and progress with the Children's Centres and any proposals to assist/deal with the loneliness issues experience by residents in the county.

JG gave his report which included the following points:

- As part of the implementation of the 5 councils' partnership there are several IT upgrades being introduced. Of particular interest is the development of a number of new and revised online forms by which constituents can contact the council about fly tipping, abandoned vehicles or general enquiries plus more.
- There will also be new forms for interaction with Revenues and Benefits and a new digital portal to interact with the council generally to view such things as council tax payments and set up a direct debit.
- Finally, on the IT front, there is now a plan to set up an automated switchboard.
- NatWest bank have arranged with MDC some advisory sessions on all bank matters at Shape Mendip both this month and next. Dates are on the MDC website.
- The monthly Sunday Market is returning on 17th September.
- For the current year all departments continue to work within budget.

- 136/17 REPORT FROM AVON & SOMERSET CONSTABULARY- The Clerk read out the report which included the following incidents:
 04/08/17 - Report of an intruder alarm activated in Alhampton – Police attend and find everything in order.
 06/08/17 – Report of a failing to stop accident on the A37 Wraxall – Caller advised to attend their nearest police station to report incident.
 29/08/17 – Report of a theft from a vehicle in Snagg Lane, Alhampton.
 03/09/17 – Report of a theft from a vehicle at a local farm in the village.
- 137/17 CODE OF CONDUCT – Declarations of interest and dispensations.
 a) Declarations of interest on items included on the agenda – CE declared an interest in item 141/17 b) 4) as recipient of the payment. JD declared an interest in Item 144/17 a) as a member of the group of volunteers undertaking the work. SC declared an interest in item 139/17 d) and e) as SCC commission these services.
 b) Requests for dispensation for disclosable pecuniary interests – none.
- 138/17 MINUTES - The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd August 2017 were approved and signed by the Chairman.
- 139/17 MATTERS ARISING - from the meeting held on 3rd August 2017.
 a) Land opposite The Lodge on the A37 – CE explained to NHC the situation. The Clerk read out the update from the Enforcement Officer at MDC. It appears that the land owner intends to use the land for parking with the access from the Class 4 road – creating an access onto a Class 4 road does not automatically require planning permission. Previous correspondence from the Highways department when the PC had expressed its concern regarding the safety of this access/egress, has indicated that they have no concerns about the location of this access so close to the road junction. MDC intend to monitor the site and have indicated that any building development on the site would require planning permission. The Clerk will respond to MDC indicating the PC finds this totally unacceptable and expressing its continuing concern about what is believed to be an unsafe situation. **Action: The Clerk.**
 b) Adoption of telephone kiosk in Alhampton for installation of defibrillator - LH reported that the defibrillator had been installed but would not be operational until the ambulance service has got it on its system. LH circulated the details of the financing of the scheme and gave the clerk a cheque for £920.00 to cover the expected ongoing costs for the next four years. There is still a query as to who is responsible for the insurance both in terms of the public liability and damage to and/or replacement of the kiosk. The clerk and LH will investigate the matter. **Action: The Clerk and LH.**
 c) Co-option of councillor to fill vacancy – The Clerk report that there had been no expressions of interest and requested that Councillors actively look for a volunteer.
 d) Painting of fingerpost road signs - CE will progress this matter. **Action: CE.**
 e) Broadband speed in the parish – it was reported that the parish was not in the first phase of Gigaclear’s rollout programme – there was apparently no option for bringing this forward.
- 140/17 PLANNING
 a) The following planning applications were considered:
 b) **Full application:** An existing farm cottage to be refurbished with new 2 storey rear extension, 1 Ditchat Hill Farm Cottages, Ditchat. Ref: 2017/2115/FUL. **Outcome:** Recommend approval with the comment that the

proposal appears to make good use of the existing dwelling/s and therefore maintain the housing stock.

- c) It was noted that planning permission has been granted for the following:
- 1) Owley Farm, Ditcheat – Ref: 2017/1660/HSE.
 - 2) Former stables at Ringwell House, Ditcheat – Ref: 2017/1088/HSE and 2017/1089/LBC.
 - 3) 7 Prospect Villas, Ditcheat. Ref: 2017/1719/HSE.
 - 4) The Manor House, Ditcheat. Ref: 2017/1883/CLE and 2017/1866/APP.

141/17 FINANCE

- a) Bank balances as per cash book at 1st September - £15,077.14 however after the amounts committed on the agenda the balance reduces to £8,532.07.
- b) Approval of Parish Council payments and authority to sign cheques.
- 1) Mr Grayson Pattermore for repair of bench in playground - £116.00.
 - 2) Wicksteed Leisure Limited for annual Inspection and Risk Assessment - £72.00.
 - 3) Ministry of Play Limited for replacement of safety matting in the playground - £5,154.00
 - 4) Mr C Evans for materials and fuel for the repair of Ditcheat to Sutton footpath - £73.48 for timber to create stock proof enclosure for materials; £17.82 for screws to create enclosure; £4.13 for fuel for generator = Total £95.43.
 - 5) Longhill Accounting Limited for internal audit - £75.00.
 - 6) Tony's Garden Services for grass cutting on 4th, 14th and 25th August 2017 - £195.00.
 - 7) Miss P Griffiths – Clerk's salary 1st July – 30th September 2017 - £837.64.
- RESOLVED - that the above expenditure is approved and the cheques signed.
- c) Receipt of the grant from the Big Lottery Fund for the installation of the defibrillator in the now redundant telephone kiosk in Alhampton of £2,568.00 was noted.
- d) The payments to the following were noted:
- 1) Tony's Garden Services for grass cutting on 7th, 17th and 28th July 2017 - £195.00.
 - 2) Community Heartbeat Trust for defibrillator for Alhampton - £2,341.00.

142/17 PLAYGROUND

- a) The PC reviewed the recent Annual Inspection and Risk Assessment report from Wicksteed Leisure and it was agreed that CE will reassess and undertake the most urgent repairs. **Action: CE.**
- b) It was noted that the work to replace the safety matting had been completed.
- c) Any matters of report – JD reported that there was a lilac tree in the small area of garden at the entrance to the toddlers' playground which was encroaching on the neighbouring garden – CE and JD will assess and take necessary action. **Action: CE and JD.**

143/17 HIGHWAYS

- a) Update on items/matters for repair previously reported – marking of the road from Ditcheat to Alhampton which is in very bad condition. It was agreed to monitor the situation.
- b) New matters for report to the Highways authority:
- JD reported that a warning sign indicating flooding had been left by Snowdrop Cottage and that he would retrieve the sign to be collected by the Highways Department. **Action: JD.**
- c) The temporary closure of Wyke Road for water main replacement works from 16th October was noted – the work is expected to take 6 weeks.

- 144/17 FOOTPATHS, BRIDLEWAYS AND RIGHTS OF WAY.
- a) CE gave a report on the progress of the repairs to the Alhampton to Sutton footpath and an update on current expenditure and expected costs to complete the work. It was resolved that the repair work should continue until footpath repair is completed. LH expressed the thanks of all on the PC for the work that the voluntary team had achieved.
 - b) Update on matters previously reported:
 1. Bridge on SM6/26 – noted that the work has not been completed but is however passable by walkers. The Clerk confirmed that the Rights of Way team had updated the notice confirming that the bridge was impassable by horses and vehicles.
 - c) Any matters for report – None.

- 145/17 FEEDBACK FROM COUNCILLOR ATTENDING 'THE RENDEZVOUS' - JD reported that the following had been raised at the 8th August session:
- Concern was raised about the Himalayan Balsam which was growing on the spoil heap in the field on Back Lane – noted that the spoil heap had now been removed.
 - It was mentioned that 'gangs' were targeting Victorian post-boxes.
 - A parishioner had asked about when the decision would be made about the allocation of potential development sites in Ditchheat through the MDC Local Plan Part 2 – advised to contact MDC.

146/17 HEALTH & SAFETY - nothing to report.

147/17 CLERK'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE.

- a) Correspondence.
 - 1) Letter from Oil-Club UK about collective purchasing of heating oil.
- b) Reports/items for information.
 - 1) The Clerk report that the manager at Somerset Waste Partnership had dealt with the complaint about vehicles travelling unnecessarily through the parish due to the road diversion at Alford.
 - 2) The CPRE had sent information about the forthcoming AGM – SC will try and attend.

148/17 ITEMS OF REPORT AND INCLUSION ON AGENDA FOR THE NEXT MEETING.

- a) Chairman – CE reported that the PCC were inviting all groups and organisations in the parish to decorate and present a wheelbarrow at the Harvest Festival service. CE offered to take the lead. (Post meeting note – apologies from CE but he will be unable to take the lead due to other commitments).
- b) Members – none.

Signed: Chairman of Ditchheat Parish Council.

Dated: 26th OCTOBER 2017.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING – 26th OCTOBER 2017 AT 7.30 pm in the Church Room.
If necessary, a Planning meeting will be held on 5th October 2017 the Church Room at 7.30pm.

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