

MEETING of DITCHEAT PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF DITCHEAT PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 8th March 2018 (Postponed from 1st March 2018) AT 7.30PM AT CHURCH ROOM, DITCHEAT.

PRESENT: Chairperson – Councillor Hutton (RH) and Councillors – Clark (HC), Harrison (HH), Dando (JD), Kerr (SK) and Hughes (LH).

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

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – Mr Brian Longman who had indicated that he wished to address the Council sent his apologies that due to unforeseen circumstances he was unable to attend. There were no members of the public present.

022/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. Apologies for absence from Councillors Evans (CE), and Travis (RT) – were received and approved. County Councillor Nigel Hewitt-Cooper, District Councillor John Greenhalgh (JG) and PCSO Dury had also sent their apologies.

023/18 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORTS: –
RH read out the briefing from NHC which gave an overview and update from Somerset County Council the general points of which are:

- Ofsted report into SCC Children’s Services
- Family Support Service
- Adult Social Care precept
- Delayed Transfers of Care
- Domestic Homicide Reviews
- Library Consultation
- Somerset Road Safety Strategy
- Highways England consultation
- Apprenticeships in Somerset
- Trading Standards

RH read out the report from JG which included the following points:

- The Council has agreed a balanced budget for 2018/19 with council tax going up by £5. The resulting tax will still be an increase of less than 4% since 2011. SCC have still to agree their final tax, so the total increase cannot be confirmed as of now. In addition, the Council will continue the Council Tax Precept for the shadow Somerset Rivers Authority which gets passed directly to them.
- Going forward the Council is facing a cumulative shortfall in funding over the next four years of nearly £5.5m and is looking to close the gap through efficiency savings including those from the 5 councils’ partnership, investing for earnings and other revenue streams such as fees.
- Due to continuing pressures on planning, some of which is driven by Government policy, the Council is looking at a new structure for the function with both more planners and enforcement officers. The latter has become more important due to the impending retirement of two enforcement officers.
- Whilst there have been reports in the media about local elections this year, the MDC local elections will take place in May 2019.

SC added that it is planned for the Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) to be given the power to be a precepting body in its own right.

024/18 REPORT FROM AVON & SOMERSET CONSTABULARY- RH read out the report which included the following incidents:

27th January – Report of a flock of sheep near Wraxall Hill – Police and owner attend.
28th January – Report from a resident in Alhampton that they had seen a male in the early hours walking down her pathway and away from the property – Caller didn’t want police to attend – advice given.

29th January – Call from an elderly resident in the village reporting their concerns regarding a cold caller – Police attend and give reassurance and crime prevention advice.

5th February – Ditcheat School were having a week inviting people to talk to the children about their jobs - PCSO Dury and a colleague attended with a police car, giving a talk to three classes for about one and half hours. To the delight of the children they all had a go with the emergency blue lights and sirens on the police car, while the teachers looked on.

15th February – Report of an accident along Snagg Lane, Alhampton – Police attend.

025/18 CODE OF CONDUCT – Declarations of interest and dispensations.

- a) Declarations of interest on items included on the agenda – none.
- b) Requests for dispensation for disclosable pecuniary interests – none.

026/18 MINUTES - The minutes of the meeting held on 18th January 2018 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

027/18 MATTERS ARISING - from the meeting held on 18th January 2018.

- a) Painting of fingerpost road signs – The Clerk reported that the preferred contractor had indicated that the price for replacement finials is between £250 - £275; as the PC would be ordering at least three it would likely be £250 per finial giving an overall total of approximately £6000.00. It was agreed that personal representation would be made by CE and RH to various persons/organisations in the parish with a view to raising the necessary funds. In addition, the Clerk will put a notice in the FTN advising all parishioners of the intentions of the PC and who to contact if interested in supporting the project. **Action: The Clerk, CE and RH.**
- b) Purchase of a new litter bin – The Clerk reported that the rubbish bin has been received and would liaise with CE about fitting it. **Action: The Clerk.**
- c) Dumping of food waste – The Clerk reported that whilst the initial reports of food dumping along the Ditcheat to Arthurs Bridge road had reduced the problem appeared to have moved to Elbow Corner. Recent indications are that the problem on the Ditcheat to Arthurs Bridge road had returned and appeared to happen overnight. The Clerk will contact the Enforcement Officer at MDC again and also inform Evercreech PC about Elbow Corner. **Action: The Clerk.**
- d) Mural board in the bus shelter in Ditcheat – The Clerk reported on behalf of CE that members of the Ditcheat Art Club have agreed to paint a new mural on the back wall with a gardening theme, once the old mural had been painted over and the side walls repainted. The Clerk will put an article in the FTN to inform and thank the people who were involved in painting the existing mural. **Action: The Clerk.**
- e) Replacement for shroud on the 'Elephant rocker' in playground – The Clerk reported that the cost of replacing the shroud would be £126.27 plus the cost of the specialist bolt tool if necessary. The Clerk will check with CE to see if he has the specialist tool for removing the bolts and then place the order accordingly.
- f) Pooling of water at entrance to Haddon Wood by Jacob's lane – HH reported that she had contacted the Highways Department and would arrange a meeting in the near future to agreed how to resolve the problem. **Action: HH.**
- g) Update on letter from East Pennard regarding the sign and fence - The two matters raised by East Pennard Parish Council have been dealt with. MDC enforcement are going to follow up the Cross Keys sign. The owner of Leighbridge has not "land grabbed" but merely put a low fence on the line of a former post and wire fence.

028/18 MINUTES - The minutes of the planning meeting held on 8th February 2018 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

029/18 MATTERS ARISING - from the planning meeting held on 8th February 2018 – None.

030/18 PLANNING

- a) It was noted that planning permission has been granted for:
1) 3 Folly Drive, Ditcheat. Ref: 2017/3106/HSE.

031/18 FINANCE

- a) Bank balances as per cash book at 1st March 2018 excluding items on the agenda – the Clerk reported that the balance was £10,874.44. (This includes the reserved defibrillator fund).
- b) Approval of Parish Council payments and authority to sign cheques.
1) Miss P Griffiths – Clerk’s salary 1st January – 31st March 2018 - £837.64.
2) Glasdon UK – litter bin for playground - £167.04 (includes VAT).
- RESOLVED - that the above expenditure be approved, and the cheques signed.
- c) The Clerk reported that the payments had been made to:
1) The Parochial Church Council (PCC) for room hire - £36.00.
2) The Parochial Church Council (PCC) a grant of £500.00 towards the maintenance of the churchyard as agreed in Min 163/17 c).

032/18 PLAYGROUND

- a) Renewing the grass cutting/grounds maintenance contract for the playground and village green. The Clerk informed the Council that the existing contractor had increased the cost per cut to £70.00 (the first increase since 2012). The contractor had been able to minimize the increase as he also maintains the churchyard for the PCC. It was resolved to extend the existing contract for one year and then review in conjunction with the PCC. **Action: The Clerk.**
- b) Overhanging tree in hedge in playing field – The Clerk reported that having discussed the matter with CE that Mr Radford had been asked to assess the trees to see if any action is required; the initial assessment had indicated that nothing was required at present. Members of the Alhampton to Sutton footpath gang have cut back the overgrown hedging on the east side of the Ditcheat playing field.
- c) LH reported that having recently read an article in the Town and Parish Information Bulletin about the introduction of Public Space Protection Orders (brought in under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014) that MDC have apparently brought in various Orders for all council owned under 5s play areas and are considering more to cover the whole of the Mendip are. However, it was not clear from the article whether the councils referred to include Town and Parish Councils and when the various Orders come into effect. LH will contact the Community Safety Officer for clarification. **Action: LH.**

033/18 HIGHWAYS

- 1) Update on items/matters for repair previously reported –
• Various marks had appeared following the previous reports to the Highways Department, but no repairs completed.
- 2) New matters for report to the Highways Department:
• The gully about 5 – 10 m down from the entrance to the Hire Shed in Sutton is blocked and water is pouring across the road.
• The warning signs which were put up when repairs were being undertaken on the A371 have not been removed.
• SC raised the matter of the fly tipping by Champs Way. LH confirmed that the matter had been reported. HC agreed to check after the litter pick to see if the items have been removed. **Action: HC.**
- The Clerk will report the above. **Action: The Clerk.**

034/18 FOOTPATHS, BRIDLEWAYS AND RIGHTS OF WAY.

- a) Concrete footpath from Old Post Office alongside the village green – The Clerk reported on behalf of CE that having reviewed the possible trip hazards due to

uneven joints on the concrete path alongside the playground, more extensive work is required. CE will consider what is most suitable. **Action: CE.**

- b) Ditcheat to Sutton footpath - Due to the very wet conditions underfoot, it has not been possible to continue with the Alhampton to Sutton section of the path since before Christmas. It is hoped work will start again in March.
- c) Any matters for report: – The Clerk reported that the kissing gate had been delivered.

035/18 CONSULTATION – Somerset Libraries services. RESOLVED that Councillors who wished would complete the survey as individuals and that the Clerk would respond on behalf of the PC that although it accepts the proposal in principle it should be noted that there is due to be a considerable increase in housing in Castle Cary and that whilst there may well be economies in Shepton Mallet in moving the library in to Shape MDC there will be a reduction in footfall due to the location. **Action: The Clerk.**

036/18 CONSULTATION – Crime and poor performance in the waste sector. It was resolved that following discussion HH would complete the survey and forward to the Clerk for submission. **Action: HH and the Clerk.**

037/18 FEEDBACK FROM COUNCILLOR ATTENDING 'THE RENDEZVOUS' in February – Concern about number of blocked gullies in and around village. Water lying over gully on pub corner gets splashed onto footpath by passing traffic and is a hazard in freezing conditions. Similar problem with overflowing manhole part way up Ditcheat Hill.

038/18 HEALTH & SAFETY - none.

039/18 CLERK'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE.

- a) Correspondence.
- b) Reports/items for information – The Clerk confirmed that it would be necessary to hold a planning meeting on the 22nd March to consider the Listed Building Consent for the Trap House, Ditcheat.

040/18 ITEMS OF REPORT AND INCLUSION ON AGENDA FOR THE NEXT MEETING.

- a) Chairman – nothing to report.
- b) Members – HC confirmed that all the arrangements including a risk assessment had been done for the litter pick. A parishioner who regularly picks up litter had expressed concern about the unwillingness of the relevant authorities to take the collected litter away as it was considered contaminated and could not be recycled. Similarly, the items were not accepted at the Dimmer dump for the same reasons. HC reported that having spoken to the contractors they will provide bags for this rubbish and will when informed collect it.

Signed: Chairman of Ditcheat Parish Council.

Dated: 12th APRIL 2018.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING – 12th APRIL 2018 AT 7.30 pm in the Church Room.

If necessary, a Planning meeting will be held on 22nd March 2018 the Church Room at 7.30pm.

PLEASE CHECK THE NOTICEBOARDS FOR AGENDAS AND DATES.

MEMBERS OF THE PARISH AND PRESS WELCOME.