

MEETING of DITCHEAT PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF DITCHEAT PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 14th MARCH 2019 AT 7.30PM AT CHURCH ROOM, DITCHEAT.

PRESENT: Chairperson: Councillor Evans (CE); Councillors Travis (RT), Dando (JD), Clifford (SC) Hughes (LH) and Hutton (RH).

IN ATTENDANCE: Miss P Griffiths, Clerk to the Parish Council.

BY INVITATION: Mr Paul Hobbs and Mr Shawn Rawlings from Bristol Water.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – There were no members of the public present.

027/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Apologies for absence from Councillors Harrison (HH) and Clark (HC) were received and approved. County Councillor Nigel Hewitt-Cooper (NHC), District Councillor John Greenhalgh (JG) and PCSO Dury had also sent their apologies.

028/19 WATER MAINS REPLACEMENT – Mr Paul Hobbs and Mr Shawn Rawlings from Bristol Water gave an overview of the project to replace the mains water system which will necessitate road diversions and closures from Wraxall to Ditchheat, Ditchheat Hill and a small section of road going past the sables to the old reservoir. The plans will be finalised shortly. There will be a link on the Parish Council website direct to Bristol Water for information on the project including updates and any necessary changes.

029/19 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORTS. CE read out the report from NHC:

- SCC Finances 2018/19: Current financial year predicted outturn for SCC Finances at Month 10 shows an underspend of £1.385m. This projection is based upon actual spending to the end of January 2019. The last reported projection, based on spend to the end of December 2018, was an underspend of £1.067m. The contingency budget has a residual sum of £1.788m uncommitted at this stage and is very likely to contribute to further under spending at the year-end. This compares with a projected overspend in September last year of around £19m and demonstrates the significant financial turnaround achieved. The key points of the 2019/20 budget as agreed at Full Council are:
 - £780m gross spend on services in the county next year
 - 2.99 percent increase in the County Council's element of Council Tax plus 1 per cent increase ring-fenced for Adult Social Care
 - 91p per week rise in Council Tax for Band D
 - General Fund reserves to double to £19m by the end of the next financial year (previously £5.6m)
 - Investment strategy agreed for up to £100m of capital borrowing
 - Ringfenced £1m to develop preventative work that will reduce demand on services.
 - An extra £200,000 made available for winter maintenance in 2019/20.
 - Savings proposals on gully clearing and jetting dropped
 - Delay on proposals to make savings in flood water management (£80,000), Dementia support (£100,000) and support to help vulnerable young people in to work (£50,000).
 - £224m in capital projects in the County over the next four years.
- Secondary School Places: 1st March saw year 6 students receiving confirmation of their new secondary school place for September. With just over 4,500 applications received, 94.18% (4,271) of students' first preferences were met. This is a 1% increase on last year and continues to show how well the County's school build and expansion programme is meeting the needs of families across Somerset. Primary places for this September will be notified in April.
- Hinkley Point C: EDF's new Sedgemoor Campus in Bridgwater opened at the end of February as the second largest hotel in Britain. The Campus boasts 29 quality

accommodation units that can house almost 1,000 workers, along with restaurants, bars and leisure facilities. The Campus is already providing hundreds of career opportunities for the communities around it. Many of the jobs have been filled by people who live within walking distance, part of the plan to deliver a long-term, positive legacy for the local area.

- Somerset Motofest: is back for the third year running and is anticipated to be bigger and better than before. Organised by SCCI's road safety team, Motofest takes place on Saturday and Sunday, 22 and 23 June, at the Fleet Air Arm Museum in Yeovil. The event is for anyone with a passion for motors, be they four-wheeled or two. There will be a host of activities for all the family, as well as priceless information about staying safe on the road including details of all the further training opportunities that are available – and all for free!
- Children's Services: Ofsted inspectors recently carried out a snap inspection of SCC's early help and social work teams to assess how cases were dealt with in the community. Their conclusion is that vulnerable children in Somerset are receiving an improving service with confident staff making good decisions. No priority areas for improvement were found.
- Adult Social Care: On top of last years £6m increase in fees paid to our care providers this year Somerset will invest another above inflation increase. An additional £2.6m will be used to support and improve the care for our vulnerable adults during 2019/2020.
- Delayed Transfers of Care (DToC): In December the Somerset Adult Social Care Team achieved the best DToC figures compared to other the fourteen South West authorities, significantly taking the strain off the local NHS during the winter pressure period.
- Outdoor learning centres: The last 12 months have seen more than 28,000 bed nights spent in one of SCC's four outdoor learning and residential centres. Half of these nights were enjoyed by young people from across Somerset, coupled with daytime activities to support and expand on their school-based learning.
- Engagement in the National Citizenship Programme continues to grow and benefits from access to the centres including Kilve Court and Charterhouse. Activities are also available for individuals to book as well as schools and youth groups
- Dillington House: will be embracing the Spring towards the end of this month as a fantastic venue for Mother's Day, with both cream teas and a carvery option.
- Library services: Taunton Library was named 'Library of the month' for February by the national 'Love Reading' blog.

CE read out the report from JG.

- As reported last month, the financial year is coming to an end and the Council has not had any unexpected overspends and expects to complete the year with a balanced budget. Whilst a budget shortfall was expected for the forthcoming year this has been addressed by judicious use of reserves, increased income from business rates and further savings from the 5 councils' partnership. Therefore, another balanced budget is forecast with no job losses or reductions in services. The budget was discussed and approved at Full Council on 25th February.
- Within the budget there is recognition that enforcement activity has been under resourced and at least two additional officers will now be recruited.
- The Council Tax for Mendip will increase by £5 a month (3.30% Increase). With the precepts for Somerset County Council, the Rivers Authority, the PCC for Avon & Somerset plus Fire and Rescue and parishes added this will give a total for a Band D property of £156.61.
- With a focus on achieving a strong local economy, extra money has been allocated for developing town centres and working with young people and businesses.
- The annual Basic Allowance paid to Councillors has increased by £128 to £4,132. At the last review in 2015 a target was set to take the value of this allowance back to the value it was in 2007/8. This will be reviewed again in 2020.
- Mental health has been part of Mendip's corporate objectives for some time. We are maintaining our duty of care to staff by training Mental Health First Aiders and

Community Connectors as well as providing dementia awareness sessions for staff and members. Well worth attending.

030/19 REPORT FROM AVON & SOMERSET CONSTABULARY- The Clerk read out the report which included the following incidents:

15th and 21st February – Report of a broken down lorry on Wraxall Hill – Police attend no trace of vehicle.

17th March – Report of a vehicle constantly driving up and down Alhampton Lane, they passed the church and stopped for nearly 40 mins. No one got out. Unable to note any vehicle details. No Police available at this time. No further calls.

5th March – Report of a theft from an out building near the village of Wraxall.

031/19 CODE OF CONDUCT – Declarations of interest and dispensations.

a) Declarations of interest on items included on the agenda – CE declared a personal interest in Item 036/19 b) 3) as the recipient of the payment.

b) Requests for dispensation for disclosable pecuniary interests - none.

032/19 CASUAL VACANCY – to note that, as Sarah Kerr has failed to attend meetings for a period of six months, in accordance with Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972, a casual vacancy has arisen in the Office of Councillor for the Parish Council. It is hoped that following the forthcoming election the PC will have its full complement of nine councillors. Any one interested should request a nomination form from MDC or the Clerk. Further details can found on the PC website.

033/19 MINUTES - The minutes of the meeting held on 31st January 2019 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

034/19 MATTERS ARISING from the meeting held on 31st January 2019.

a) Pooling of water at entrance to Haddon Wood adjacent to Jacobs Lane - the work to rectify this has been completed. Snagg Lane – despite the ditch on the river side of the road having been cleared but the problem persists. Highways will be asked again to check that the culvert under the road is not blocked. Tinneys Lane – CE reported that following a recent inspection of the site that the water was now flowing away.

b) It was noted that the repairs to the Alhampton notice board have been completed.

c) New signs for playground – The Clerk confirmed that a quote had been requested.

d) Lintern Close – signs requesting dog walkers to clear up any dog waste – The Clerk reported that MDC has been requested to erect some signs.

e) Parking - Lintern Close and Southview. CE reported that following a constructive meeting with representatives from MDC options to address the matter will be considered.

f) Floodlights and dog fouling on Ditchat Hill – the hazard of the floodlights has been reported to the highways Department and will be brought to the attention of the Planning Department at MDC. Neighbourhood Services at MDC have been informed about the problem regarding the dog fouling. **Action: The Clerk.**

g) Stile by Easton Trow – the Clerk reported that a kissing gate was on order. However, CE reported that in the meantime the landowner has repaired the stile. Agreed to keep the gate for further use.

h) Parish Council website is now up to date and functioning.

i) Litter pick – all arrangements were in place.

035/19 PLANNING:

a) Local Plan Part II update and action required – CE gave an overview of the current situation. Resolved that the matter would be further considered, and a response agreed at the Planning meeting to be held on 4th April. **Action: The Clerk.**

b) It was noted that planning permission has been granted for:

1) Household application – Jasmin, Alhampton. Ref: 2018/2981/HSE (circulated by email).

036/19 FINANCE

- a) Balance as per cash book at 8th March 2019 = £11,461.72.
- b) Approval of Parish Council payments and authority to sign cheques for the following:
 - 1) Tony's Garden Services for grounds maintenance February - £70.00.
 - 2) Mr Pattermore for repairs to Alhampton notice board - £400.00.
 - 3) Mr C Evans for materials to replace gate posts X 2 on footpath - £23.08.
 - 4) Miss P Griffiths for Clerk's salary - 1st January to 31st March 2019 - £683.53.
 - 5) HMRC for PAYE/NICs - 1st January to 31st March 2019 - £170.80.RESOLVED: that the above expenditure be approved, and the cheques signed.
- c) The payments to the following were noted:
 - 1) Wicksteed Leisure Limited for materials and labour to repair playground equipment - £2,289.92.
 - 2) Somerset Forge for repair of finger signposts - £5,484.00.

037/19 PLAYGROUND

- a) Any matters of report – CE reported that following the weekly inspection by HC it was noted that the wood edging strip on the safety matting of one of the swing sets was starting to rot. Agreed to monitor the situation.

038/19 HIGHWAYS

- a) Update on items/matters for repair previously reported:
 - 1) RH reported that Moor Lane has been repaired.
 - 2) RH reported that the Highways Department has confirmed that they had responsibility for the 'No Through Road' in Sutton as far as the water works and were aware of the very poor state of the road. Also that the camber of the road back from the junction with the 'No Through Road' and Moor Lane was causing grounding of low slung vehicles.
- b) Matters for report to the Highways authority:
 - 1) There is a loose kerb stone which is a serious trip hazard outside Hazeldene in Ditcheat.
 - 2) Water is pooling on both sides of the road by Brookfield on the road out of Ditcheat to Arthurs Bridge.

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

039/19 FOOTPATHS, BRIDLEWAYS AND RIGHTS OF WAY.

- a) Update on matters previously raised/reported:
 - 1) Replacement of gate posts on footpaths SM 6/23 in Ditcheat at back of the church and SM 6/9 by Priors Leigh have been repaired. .

040/19 MOURNING PROTOCOL FOR SENIOR NATIONAL FIGURE – agreed that the Parish Council would agree a protocol with the PCC. LH and the Clerk will work on the protocol – LH will ensure that matters relating to the flying of the flag are in place and the Clerk will organise a 'Book of Condolence'. **Action: The Clerk and LH.**

041/19 DATES OF MEETINGS for 2019/2020 – noted.

042/19 FEEDBACK FROM COUNCILLOR ATTENDING 'THE RENDEZVOUS' – CE reported that the following had been raised:

- a) Concern that fallen apple trees will be replaced thus maintaining the orchards.
- b) The damaged stile at Easton Trow – addressed see above.
- c) Flooding on Ditcheat Hill – which it is believed is water run off from the adjacent fields.
- d) Query regarding the progress with Part II of the Local Plan.
Volunteer required for Rendezvous on 9th April and the session in May date to be advised.

043/19 HEALTH & SAFETY - Nothing to report.

044/19 CLERK'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE – Nothing to add.

045/19 ITEMS OF REPORT AND INCLUSION ON AGENDA FOR THE NEXT MEETING:
Chairman - CE reported that HM The Queen would be driving through Ditcheat at a little after 10am on Thursday 28th March on her way to a private appointment at Paul Nicholls stables.
Children from Ditcheat school will be standing on the Jubilee Hall carpark to see the Queen pass by.

Signed: Chairman to Ditcheat Parish Council.

Dated: 25th APRIL 2019.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING – 25th APRIL 2019 AT **8.00pm (please note change of time)**
the meeting will follow the Annual Parish meeting at 7.30pm in the Church Room.

If necessary, a planning meeting will be held on 4th April 2019 in the Church Room at 7.30 pm.

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