

MEETING of DITCHEAT PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF DITCHEAT PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 12th DECEMBER 2019 AT 7.30PM AT CHURCH ROOM, DITCHEAT.

PRESENT: Chairperson – Councillor Evans (CE) and Councillors – Clark (HC), Travis (RT), James (RJ), Dando (JD, Derham (JDr), Harrison (HH), Hughes (LH) and Hutton (RH).

MINUTE TAKER – Councillor Clark.

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

191/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. Apologies for absence from Councillors – none. The Clerk, County Councillor Hewitt-Cooper and District Councillor Greenhalgh had sent apologies for absence.

192/19 BY INVITATION- Mr Tony Najdoski from Truespeed to give a short presentation about opportunities to improve broadband speed in the parish. Truespeed is a local broadband company building a new independent network in the south west. It began in Bath and has moved to the Chew Valley and is now moving south. It is a demand lead business picking up communities which are poorly served. The network is used by Truespeed customers only and guarantee an upload and download of 200Mb for households and 10,000Mb for businesses. The process of assessing demand starts with a public meeting. If there is sufficient interest, then a “polygon” of the area to be covered will be drawn up and a feasibility study carried out. If there is enough uptake, then Truespeed would contact their financiers for approval to proceed (Aviva and private individuals) and work could be started within 6 months. Installation is free, cost per home £47.50 per month, each property would have its own fibre optic cable which would be an uncontended service. Forms were distributed to Councillors. RH volunteered to be the parish champion. **Action: RH** to work with Truespeed to publicise and arrange an information evening in the parish.

193/19 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORTS – no reports due to pre-election purdah.

194/19 REPORT FROM AVON & SOMERSET CONSTABULARY- The report from PCSO Dury includes the following:

1. Report of flooding along Wraxall Rd – Highways are dealing
2. Report of an argument between a driver and council worker along Wraxall Rd – Police enquiries are carried out and words of advice given.

195/19 CODE OF CONDUCT – Declarations of interest and dispensations.

- a) Declarations of interest on items included on the agenda: CE declared interest in Item 200/19 planning application as it adjoins his property. LH declared an interest in Item 201/19 as Church warden regarding grant to maintain the churchyard.
- b) Requests for dispensation for disclosable pecuniary interests - None.

196/19 MINUTES - The minutes of the meeting held on 31st October 2019 were approved and signed as a correct record.

- 197/19 MATTERS ARISING - from the meeting held on 31st October 2019.
- a) Repair of fence alongside road on the left of the south side of the Alham Bridge – completed.
 - b) Rubbish dumped by Aster Housing owned property in Southview – most of the rubbish has been removed. Aster Housing are aware of the small amount remaining.
 - c) Parking at Southview, Ditcheat - CE recently had a meeting at MDC to discuss the situation. If the Parish Council wish to proceed, access may be granted to just the parking area in front of Southview which leaves the vast majority of the area in Mendip ownership. This would require a transfer from MDC to the PC, for a minimal cost of £1 plus advertising and legal fees of approximately £1,000. CE to meet with planning department to ensure that planning permission would be given for parking before any further action is taken. **Action: CE.**

198/19 MINUTES - the minutes of the meeting held on 21st November 2019 were approved and signed as a correct record.

199/19 MATTERS ARISING - from the meeting held on 21st November 2019 - None.

200/19 PLANNING

RH took the chair as CE had declared an interest.

1) Planning applications: to consider the following planning application: -

- a) Erection of a single storey rear extension. Priors Leigh, Ditcheat. Ref:2019/2887/HSE.
Outcome: Recommend refusal for the following reasons:
 - The PC does not believe that the juxtaposition of the path and building are correctly shown on the planning application drawing and there are errors on the drawing showing the existing plan which does not adequately show the line of the footpath.
 - There is a lack of explanation of the proposed re-routing of the footpath and it does not appear that an application for this re-routing of the footpath has been submitted.
 - The PC is unable to consider the planning application until the matter of the route of the public Right of Way is established and accurately drawn on the plan. Furthermore, the PC could not consider this application until either the location and size of the extension is amended, or the re-routing of the public footpath is confirmed.

CE resumed as chair of the meeting.

201/19 FINANCE

- a) Cash book balance as at 6th December - £12,055.50 plus £140.50 in fingerpost account and £681.00 in defibrillator account.
- b) The budget for the year 2020/2021 was confirmed and the precept set at £11,220.00.
- c) Approval of Parish Council payments and authority to sign cheques.
 - 1) First Image Signs for new signs for playground - £216.00 including VAT.
 - 2) Somerset Association of Local Councils for Councillors training - £50.00.
 - 3) Parochial Church Council for room hire August to December inclusive - £72.00.
 - 4) Clerk's salary 1st August to 31st December 2019 – £700.16.
 - 5) HMRC for PAYE/NICs 1st August to 31st December 2019 - £175.00.
 - 6) Somerset Playing Fields Association (SPFA) membership fee - £15.00 (minimum).
- RESOLVED: that the above expenditure be approved, and the cheques signed.
- d) The payments for the following were noted:

- 1) Tony's Garden Services for grounds maintenance for October 2019 - £210.00.
- 2) Somerset Association of Local Councils for Clerk's training - £75.00.
- 3) Tony's Garden Services for grounds maintenance for November 2019 - £70.00.

202/19 PLAYGROUND

- a) Update on maintenance and repairs following annual report and risk assessment – CE proposed that the base plate and bolts of the elephant be welded to prevent “rocking” – agreed unanimously. **Action: CE.**
- b) Update on new signs for the playground – CE confirmed that the new signs have been erected.
- c) Matters of report – Reported that the Clerk is obtaining quotations for the replacement of the safety matting under the swings in order to apply for grant funding.

203/19 HIGHWAYS

- a) Update on matters previously reported:
 - 1) Pooling of water on the corner by the Manor House Inn - noted that this was not so bad of late.
 - 2) Pooling of water along the Wraxall Road – noted that this is very bad, the depth and extend of which could be dangerous, however the Highways Department have been informed and are aware of the problem.
 - 3) Blocked gully by dwelling known as Long Batch - again this continues to be a problem and the matter has been reported to the Highways Department.
- b) New matters for report to the Highways department – there is a dropped drain cover and sunken gully by driveway of Home Acres, No Through Road Alhampton. CE will report the problem to the Highways Department. **Action: CE.**

204/19 CLIMATE EMERGENCY - RJ had attended presentation at Mendip District Council which has declared a Climate Emergency and had circulated information documents prior to the meeting. Discussion followed regarding what action the Parish Council could take as declaring a Climate Emergency is a statement of intent. CE proposed that Councillors review materials available and this item be placed on the agenda for the next meeting to discuss how it can be taken forward. RJ will circulate ideas prior to next meeting as a start to discussion. **Action: RJ and the Clerk.**

205/18 LITTER PICK 2020 – the date of the annual litter pick was confirmed as Saturday 21st March 2020 starting at 09.00 am. HC will make the necessary arrangements and complete the risk assessment and associated paperwork. The Clerk will publicise the event in the FTN and on the notice boards. **Action: HC and the Clerk.**

206/19 DATES OF MEETINGS FOR 2020/2021 - dates for meetings for 2020 – 2021 were confirmed.

207/19 FOOTPATHS, BRIDLEWAYS AND RIGHTS OF WAY.

- a) The stile in the field opposite the Court in Alhampton to the next field is broken. **Action HH to brief CE.**
- b) There is a tree down across Grove path agreed that JD will speak to Manor House gardeners and CE will speak to the owners of Manor House. **Action JD and CE.** (Post meeting note - the tree removed by a parishioner).

- 208/19 VE DAY 75 CELEBRATIONS – Agreed that it was not seen as role of the Parish Council to organise an event. However, LH will speak to the bell ringers on behalf of Church and forward information to Church wardens. CE to speak to Head of School as they may want to do something. The matter will be put on the agenda of next meeting to consider further. **Action: LH, CE and the Clerk.**
- 209/19 FEEDBACK FROM COUNCILLOR ATTENDING 'THE RENDEZVOUS' – nothing to report.
- 210/19 HEALTH & SAFETY – nothing to report.
- 211/19 CLERK'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE – nothing to report.
- 212/19 ITEMS OF REPORT AND/OR FOR INCLUSION ON AGENDA FOR THE NEXT MEETING.
- a) Chairman.
 - b) Members - There is a 'Have your say' Mendip Climate Drop-In Event on 15th February 2020.

Signed: Chairperson of Ditchat Parish Council.

Dated: 23rd January 2020.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING – 23rd January 2020 AT 7.30 pm in the Church Room.

If necessary, a Planning meeting will be held on 2nd January 2020 in the Church Room at 7.30 pm.

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