

DITCHEAT PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF DITCHEAT PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 23rd JANUARY 2020, COMMENCING AT 7.30PM, AT CHURCH ROOM, DITCHEAT.

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

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

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

001/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. Apologies for absence from Councillor Clark (HC) were received and approved. County Councillor Hewitt-Cooper (NHC), District Councillor Greenhalgh (JG) and PCSO Dury had sent apologies for absence.

002/20 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORTS The report from NHC was noted which included the following points:

Climate Emergency Strategy Events: Rescheduled public events to discuss the creation of Somerset's first Climate Emergency Strategy have been confirmed and will be run by the Somerset Climate Action Network (SCAN) on behalf of Somerset's four District Councils and the County Council.

National Award and Recognition: The Somerset team that provides advice, support and training to governors, clerks and trustees in schools, colleges and other education providers has won a top award.

Specialist Support for Dementia: The list of grassroots projects for creative and imaginative grass roots dementia projects is growing with four new projects coming on stream thanks to grant support from SCC.

Shepton Mallet Library: Shepton Mallet library is set to keep its town centre location and be developed as a community hub as part of the regeneration of the Market Place.

Volunteering in 2020: Somerset residents looking for a New Year's resolution would be warmly welcomed to join the growing army of volunteers in the county. There are roles to suit almost everyone, from supporting the local library to driving people to appointments or supporting the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Opportunities can be found at www.volunteering.somerset.gov.uk

Robot Technology in the classroom: Somerset County Council is taking a trail-blazing lead in the use of robot technology to help poorly children back into the classroom.

003/20 REPORT FROM AVON & SOMERSET CONSTABULARY- PCSO DURY/BEAT OFFICER.
7th and 8th December – Report of accidents near and on Wraxall Hill – Emergency services attend.

12th December – Report of an HGV broken down on Wraxall Hill – Police attend to assist.

16th December – Report of a broken till found in a field near Snagg Lane, Alhampton – Police attend to recover till.

19th December – Report of a vehicle seen driving up and down Mill Lane, Alhampton – No police available to attend – No further calls.

19th and 27th December – Report of flooding along Wraxall Rd – Highways informed.

8th January – Report of damage to litter bins and posts at Haddon Woods.

15th January – Report of flooding along Wraxall Rd – Highways informed.

16th January – Report of a telephone wire across Wraxall Rd – BT dealing.

21st January – Report of an abandoned vehicle along Wraxall Rd – Police attend enquiries on-going.

- 004/20 CODE OF CONDUCT – Declarations of interest and dispensations.
- a) Declarations of interest on items included on the agenda – CE declared an interest in agenda item 007/20 planning application as it is adjacent to his property.
 - b) Requests for dispensation for disclosable pecuniary interests - none.
- 005/20 MINUTES - The minutes of the meeting held on 12th December 2020.
- 006/20 MATTERS ARISING - from the meeting held on 12th December 2020.
- a) Update on opportunity for improved broadband speed in the Parish – agreed that whilst the PC could not be seen to be supporting any particular supplier of broadband councillors could encourage everyone to attend the meeting with Truespeed on the 6th February to learn more about what was on offer.
 - b) Parking at Southview, Ditcheat – CE reported that MDC would not provide pre-planning advice without a fee nor could they give assurance that permission if sought would be approved. After further consideration resolved that no further action will be taken.
 - c) Litter pick - confirmed that all arrangements were in place for the litter pick on Saturday 21st March.
 - d) VE Day celebrations – CE reported that after further consideration the PC should recognise the event and proposed that the tribute is read out on the 8th May at 3.00 pm by CE as Chairperson of the PC. LH will liaise with the PCC and the Bell ringers about ringing the Church bells at 7.00 pm. **Action: CE and LH.**
- 007/20 PLANNING
- RT took over chairing the meeting as CE had declared an interest.
- a) Update on planning application - Erection of a single storey rear extension. Priors Leigh, Ditcheat. Ref:2019/2887/HSE and diversion of footpath SM 6/9. The Clerk reported that the case officer had confirmed that any approval would be subject to a condition that the matter of the footpath is resolved prior to the start of any work on the extension. Agreed unanimously to recommend approval of the application.
- 008/20 FINANCE
- a) Cash book balance as at 23rd January – The Clerk reported that the cash book balance at the 23rd January was £13,017.35 plus £681.11 in the Alhampton defibrillator project account; £140.50 in the signpost project account and £500.00 in the project account for the replacement of the safety matting in the playground.
 - b) The reconciliation of the bank accounts for the third quarter of the year 2019/2020 was approved and signed by the Chairman and the Clerk as RFO.
 - c) Approval of Parish Council payments and authority to sign cheques.
 - 1) SALC for Councillors training - £60.00.
 - 2) Clerk's expenses 1st August to 31st December 2019 – £80.21.RESOLVED: that the above expenditure be approved, and the cheques signed.
- 009/20 PLAYGROUND
- RH arrived.
- a) Update on repairs to the spring mobile – CE reported that due to the very wet weather that no repairs had been completed yet.
 - b) Update on quotations for safety matting replacement and grant application – The Clerk reported that 8 suppliers had been approached for a quotation most had already responded prior to the deadline of the 31st January. The initial evaluation indicated that the cost was within the amount set in the budget of £5,000.00 plus VAT. The PC had received a donation of £500.00 from the NASS community fund. It was proposed and agreed that the PC would continue with the grant application for £3,500.00 with the difference being funded by the PC.

- c) Any matters of report – The Clerk reported that should the grant application be successful there would be funding available in the budget for the replacement of the elephant spring mobile and associated repairs to the safety matting and that it would be more cost effective for the safety matting repairs to be done at the same time as the replacement of the matting under the swings. **Action: The Clerk.**

010/20 HIGHWAYS

- a) Update on matters previously reported:
- 1) Pooling of water on the corner by the Manor House Inn – matter resolved.
 - 2) Pooling of water along the Wraxall Road – Still remains a problem.
 - 3) Blocked gully by dwelling known as Long Batch – gulleys have been cleared and the adjacent landowner requested to clear the outflow to prevent reoccurrence.
 - 4) Sunken gully, No Through Road, Alhampton – still outstanding.
 - 5) Noted that the matter of the problem of the spring in Sutton causing water to flow across the road, which had frozen in the recent cold weather, was still outstanding.
- Action:** The Clerk will report the outstanding matters again.
- b) New matters for report to the Highways authority included:
- 1) The drains on Ditchat Hill are blocked.
 - 2) The white lines on the exit from Smith Lane have worn away.
 - 3) The 'road narrows' signage of the approach to the Alham bridge has worn away.
- Action:** The Clerk to report these matters to the Highways Department.
- c) Road closures – the following road closures were noted:
- 1) Temporary closure of Ditchat Hill – prohibition of all traffic proceeding along Ditchat Hill from the junction of Ditchat Hill and Vale View to the junction of Folly Cottages with Wraxall Road for duration of approximately 5 days from 27th January to facilitate the repair works and the replacement of covers by Bristol Water.
 - 2) Temporary closure of Folly Cottages to Wraxall Road – prohibition of all traffic proceeding along Folly Cottages to Wraxall Road the junction with Ditchat Hill to the junction with Wraxall Road for duration of approximately 5 days from 27th January to facilitate remedial cover replacement works by Bristol Water.

011/20 CLIMATE EMERGENCY – RJ proposed that the PC consider the ideas for action by the PC as previously circulated. See below for document from RJ. These ideas included:

- That the PC declare a 'climate emergency'.
- The PC should seek to provide information to the citizens of the parish on how they can help promote biodiversity and cut the carbon footprint of the local community.
- Encouraging 'sustainable shopping'.
- Using the influence of the PC to encourage 'greener' government policies.

RESOLVED: that all Councillors should look at the proposals from RJ in greater detail and bring specific ideas for further discussion at the next meeting. **Action: All Councillors.**

012/20 FOOTPATHS, BRIDLEWAYS AND RIGHTS OF WAY.

- a) Update on stile in field opposite The Court, Alhampton – HH and CE will speak to the relevant landowners. **Action: HH and CE.**
- b) Any matters for report – Following a proposal from RH it was agreed to investigate the possibility of creating a permissible footpath from the Sutton road by CCRFC to join with footpath SM 6/17 going behind Moff Motors. **Action: RH** to speak to the relevant landowners.

013/20 VE DAY 75 CELEBRATIONS – See matters arising above.

014/20 FEEDBACK FROM COUNCILLOR ATTENDING 'THE RENDEZVOUS'.

Points raised from The Rendezvous on the 14th January included the following:

- Lots of comments about blocked gulleys throughout the village.
- Road condition - Ditchheat Hill, halfway up where the road forks right, road markings poor and road surface appalling.
- Running water constantly running down Ditchheat Hill.
- The white 'Slow Down' signs are nearly worn away at Jonathan's Corner.
- Lintern Close - Into the Hammer Head, weed growth in the gutters along with general rubbish and leaves plus blocked drains.
- Request to know when the road sweeper comes to the village.

015/20 HEALTH & SAFETY – No matters raised.

016/20 CLERK'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE.

- a) Correspondence – the letter from the Leader of MDC about the proposal by SCC to become a unitary authority was noted.
- b) Reports/items for information.

017/20 ITEMS OF REPORT AND/OR FOR INCLUSION ON AGENDA FOR THE NEXT MEETING.

- a) Chairman – none.
- b) Members – The Clerk read out the report from HC as the Parish Council representative on the Jubilee Hall Committee: During 2018 to 2019 many people have again helped to maintain and run the hall by giving their time and energy freely and it has been much appreciated as The Jubilee Hall is a facility enjoyed and used by the local community. Ongoing maintenance in the Hall this year has seen the installation of a new cooker in the kitchen plus replacement of emergency exit doors, and a new front door in UPVC which are more secure and easier to maintain. Income in 2019 relied on regular hire income as well as fund raising activities including Glastonbury Festival stewarding and Ditchheat Big Screen. This last year has also seen significant work on "Health and Safety" including a comprehensive fire risk assessment. Work is ongoing assessing and documenting other risks and associated mitigation.
JD reported that the work by Bristol Water in Smiths Lane had not been completed and that the temporary fencing was still in place. The Clerk will ask for a completion date from Bristol Water. **Action: The Clerk.**

Signed: Chairperson, Ditchheat Parish Council.

Dated: 5th March 2020.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING – 5th MARCH 2020 AT 7.30 pm in the Church Room.

If necessary, a Planning meeting will be held on 13th February 2020 in the Church Room at 7.30 pm.

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

PAPER TABLED BY COUNCILLOR JAMES at the meeting on 23rd January 2020.

A Cool, Green Ditchheat

Ditchheat to declare a Climate Emergency. This means that the parish council recognises the scale and threat posed by climate change to the community. The council will seek to support information and to propose actions which help mitigate future warming and to look to adapt to its affects locally.

A Climate and Ecological Emergency was declared in 2019 at Mendip, as councillors from the district council made a commitment to take care of the environment, leaving it in a good condition for generations to come and lead the way for Mendip to be carbon neutral by 2030.

<https://mendip.gov.uk/article/8342/Mendip-s-Climate-Emergency-Council-plans-moving-forward-for-being-part-of-the-solution>

In the first instance the Ditchheat Parish Council will seek to provide information to the citizens of the parish on how they can help promote biodiversity and cut the carbon footprint of the local community.

A key area is energy use and saving

We can help to ensure that public spaces and village facilities utilise energy efficient lightbulbs are used. [LED lights](#) can be up to 90% more efficient than traditional bulbs. <https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/energy/reducing-your-energy-consumption>

We can provide information to encourage householders to switch to a green energy supplier, <https://www.t3.com/features/best-green-energy-supplier> www.bigcleanswitch.org and <https://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/home-energy-efficiency/switching-utilities/buying-green-electricity>

We can make our community greener and more biodiverse

We can work with the local wildlife and garden groups to promote wildlife friendly gardening and garden pond construction www.wildlife-gardening.co.uk We should ask the council to cut verges less often. We should adopt Plantlife's guidelines for managing road verges to benefit wild flowers and other nature. <https://www.plantlife.org.uk/> We can encourage households to plant a tree. We should seek to identify local sites where community trees of amenity and wildlife value can be planted. <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/>

Stop using glyphosate a broad-spectrum systemic herbicide and crop desiccant

Reducing the need to travel encourage walking, cycling and low carbon transport

Promote car sharing and encourage people to Join a car share scheme <https://liftshare.com/uk> <https://www.blablacar.co.uk/> or <https://www.mobindustry.net/top-8-carsharing-mobile-apps/>

Produce and publicise guides to walking Local Footpaths/cycle ways <https://footpathmap.co.uk/>

Promote the use of the bus <https://bustimes.org/services/1-yeovil-castle-cary-shepton-mallet> and Local Train Station <https://www.gwr.com/plan-journey/stations-and-routes/castle-cary>

Electric car use: Can we install a village electric charging point?

Sustainable shopping

Use our spending power to help change the world for the better. Encourage sustainable consumption - Refuse, reduce, repair, reuse, and recycle. **We should encourage our local facilities and ongoing events to use local, ethical and Fairtrade brands**

Choosing brands that align with green aspirations. www.ethicalconsumer.org Buying Fairtrade is easy. Look for the FAIRTRADE Mark. <https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/Buying-Fairtrade>. We now have a local zero waste store 'Unwrapped Essentials' on Triangle Castle Cary <http://bit.ly/30u2ICK>

Seek out locally produced food <https://www.bigbarn.co.uk/> or <http://www.farma.org.uk/> Use our local village shop <https://www.barbers.co.uk/pages/contact-us>

Seek to use our council influence to encourage greener government policies

We can write as a council to our local Member of Parliament, to District and County Councillors <https://members.parliament.uk/constituencies?searchTerm=sw15> about our concerns on climate change.

Communications

We should commission a double sided A5 leaflet to promote these proposals, with a reply coupon for comments or actions taken

We should create and promote a special section on our DPC website to promote and update. This should be interactive to enable local people to post their ideas and action in response.

We should have an article each month of the parish magazine on a topic which will help inform and motivate readers to action.

These measures will not only help cool the world but will foster health and happiness by encouraging active, social, meaningful lives promoting health and wellbeing. These activities will help build our local culture and community by empowering local people in our identity and heritage by working together to create a culture of sustainable living.