

GITTISHAM PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON 4TH JULY 2012

Present:

Gittisham Village Ward

Cllr D Fallows (chairman)

Cllr Ms Maggie Walker

Cllr Ms S Trumper

Cllr E Underdown

Gittisham Vale Ward

Cllr D Valentine

Cllr M Edmonds

In attendance; Cllr Roger Giles (DCC), Cllr Graham Brown (EDDC), PCSO Phil Anning, Justin Lascelles (for item 31/12), Ms Fiona Clampin (clerk)

Apologies for absence: Cllr R Hayman

26/12 To receive and accept apologies

Apologies were received and accepted.

27/12 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6th June 2012 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

28/12 To receive the Beat Manager's Report

The police confirmed there had been no reported crimes this month, but they warned residents there had been a spate of thefts of catalytic converters from residential areas. Anyone seeing anything suspicious should report it immediately.

29/12 To receive declarations of interest

None.

30/12 Reports from County Council and District Council representatives

Cllr Giles reported that DCC had received an extra £5 million to repair Class C roads, and Gittisham parish is in line for some of this funding. This will be in addition to routine maintenance, and will prepare the roads for the increased service of the 380 bus in around six months' time. The Chair pointed out that the stretch of road near Truances was often wet, even in a drought, so Cllr Giles agreed to look into this.

The Chair mentioned a conversation he'd had with the Deputy Mayor of Honiton, Cllr David Foster, regarding the Parishes Together fund, which amounts to an additional £1.10 per elector in the parish. Cllr Giles explained this came from DCC and EDDC, and must have no revenue implications. The idea is for larger communities to work with surrounding rural parishes.

Cllr Brown apologised for not attending Gittisham parish council meetings for an extended period.

31/12 To consider limited residential development in the parish

Justin Lascelles from Savills (representing the Combe Estate) discussed with members the problem of birds' nests in chimneys, and members resolved to support the estate's application for a licence to cull the jackdaws that are putting the safety of village residents at risk. All home owners in the village have been reminded by a letter from the parish council to protect their fire chimneys from nesting birds. Mr Lascelles said he would keep members informed, and the Chair thanked him for his concern over the matter.

Members then discussed with Mr Lascelles the principle of limited residential development within Gittisham village, and agreed that this had already been put forward in the parish plan. The Combe Estate would like to assess whether there is support within the village for building 6-10 houses, and members agreed that opening a dialogue with the estate was the best way forward. It could potentially help any case in future with EDDC, as Mr Lascelles is encountering some opposition within EDDC to planning proposals. Cllr Brown explained that current EDDC planning policy is unlikely to help the estate's case, but this could change when new planning guidelines have been fully integrated after next March.

Mr Lascelles said that when the majority of village properties were sold in 2004, the issue of affordable housing for local people was raised. He explained that in order for the estate to be able to contribute to the community, it had to rely on windfall and it was therefore in favour of a larger development as proposed west of Hayne Lane. In this context, he explained, if the estate was granted permission to build and let properties in Gittisham village it would not be looking to invest in any open market housing in the village. He had been approached by Registered Social Landlords regarding development in Gittisham, but building 5 or 6 homes does not make economic sense for them and site acquisition would be a problem. Members expressed concern that empty properties in the village tended to be sold to second home owners, and Cllr Trumper reminded members that a planning application could include a covenant to ensure properties could not be bought as second homes.

Cllr Valentine said any development would have to start from a housing needs survey. Cllr Brown pointed out that currently Gittisham does not meet EDDC criteria for affordable housing development, as these need a certain level of infrastructure and facilities to support any planning application. Cllr Giles said the increased bus service, which has come about thanks to Section 106 grants for Cranbrook, might go some way to helping the village 'tick the boxes' and EDDC might therefore be more sympathetic. Members agreed it made sense to establish a parish view in line with the estate, so that EDDC would understand there was genuine support. Cllr Brown said members should set up a meeting with EDDC once this was established, but that the next couple of months should be avoided because of staff changes and holidays.

Members discussed possible sites, including land west of Town Farm, Curlditch and Talbots. Mr Lascelles agreed to discuss with the parish council how to take the matter forward, and the estate would welcome input as to the most suitable sites.

Mr Lascelles left the meeting.

32/12 To approve the July payments and to note the current bank balance

It was resolved to approve the following payments:

0539	F J Clampin	£173.17	Clerk's fee and expenses
0540	HMRC	£31.20	PAYE
0541	Laps Lawns	£80	Maintenance of playing fields
0542	Ken Abraham	£90	Annual parish audit

Members were informed that the current bank balance stands at £10,902.91

33/12 To consider the following planning applications:

- 12/1304/FUL - Masts Gittisham Common Radio Tower Putts Corner Honiton
- 12/1397/FUL – Hayne Farm, Hayne Lane Gittisham EX14 3PD Erection of covered feed area and cubicle building

Members had no objections to either application.

34/12 To adopt Fiona Clampin as the parish clerk and Responsible Finance Officer as of August 2011

Members resolved to adopt Ms Clampin as the parish clerk and Responsible Finance Officer as of August 2011.

35/12 To consider the formulation of a strategic plan to cover the period 2012-2015

To be discussed at next meeting.

36/12 To receive a report on the Local Plan meetings at EDDC to date and to consider future input

The Chair said the flyer drop around Gittisham Vale had met with success, as the council had received a large amount of correspondence from Vale residents against EDDC's proposals to build 300+ homes at Heathfield Manor. This correspondence has been submitted to EDDC, along with the parish council's own position. A Vale resident had told Cllr Edmonds she had questioned a man carrying out a survey of Honeysuckle Drive, who told her he was planning the road layout for Heathfield Manor but he would not say who had employed him. Cllr Brown said he could not understand how the proposal came to be included in the Local Plan, if, as Honiton's Cllr Mike Brown said, all Honiton was against it. Cllr G Brown doubted EDDC's chances of getting the Local Plan approved, which risks leaving the door open to developers. Cllr Trumper asked if EDDC had identified a need for these homes; the Chair explained that historically within the period of the plan Honiton is predicted to gain 450 homes by windfalls, so he questioned the need for a strategic allocation. Declaring an interest as governor of King's School, Cllr Giles said the impact on local schools of building so many additional homes was obvious. Cllr Brown added that EDDC might in that case build a new primary school. EDDC is not likely to come forward with its preferred option until February 2013. Members agreed that the parish council had made the necessary representations and would await the next opportunity to comment.

37/12 To consider progress on the modernisation of the play area, insurance cover and to note the current play area finances

The clerk reported there had been no change to the finances. She added that the roundabout supplier is sympathetic to the problem with the item, and has contacted the manufacturer again to see if a solution can be found. If that fails, the roundabout will be replaced with another item of equivalent value. The Chair said the insurance would need to be increased for the current items, which could add an additional £120 to the cost. Cllr Walker reported that some young residents of the village had said they were keen to work on the development of the new section of the play area, and members reiterated the need for a working party to knock a hole in the wall over the summer to join the two sections.

38/12 To consider the development of the parish website

The Chair reported he was keeping the parish website up to date. He informed members that Honiton TC charges £28 / year for businesses to advertise by way of a link on the town council site, and he agreed to continue exploring how to monetise the site.

39/12 To consider any late entry correspondence

The Chair agreed to fill out DCC's Winter Service Review regarding its treatment of public highways. The clerk reported some parish councils were unhappy with the level of service provided. The clerk had received an invitation to the EDDC Chair's summer garden party, to which the parish council could nominate an 'unsung hero' as guest. Members agreed that the Chair would ask Jayne Bramley.

40/12 Matters to be reported to DCC / EDDC

Cllr Giles reported that King's School had been successful in obtaining a grant to replace some of its prefabricated buildings, but this was supposed to be spent before March 2013. Cllr Giles agreed to Cllr Trumper's request to investigate why emergency water works at Gittisham Farm Cross from 28th June onwards had resulted in the bus not serving the school.

41/12 Matters for the forward agenda

It was agreed to include the play area, Strategy 2012-15 and residential development in the next agenda.

42/12 Clerk's Report

None.

43/12 Date of next two meetings. Wednesday 1st August and Wednesday 5th September at 7.30pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 2105 hrs.

Chairman.....

1st August 2012