

**GITTISHAM PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**  
**HELD ON 4<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2020**  
**in the Parish Room, Gittisham**

**Present:**

**Gittisham Village Ward**  
Cllr R Hayman (Chair)  
Cllr C Hall (Vice-Chair)  
Cllr M Walker

**Gittisham Vale Ward**  
Cllr Peter Orchard  
Cllr A Wilkins  
Cllr J Twiss

**In attendance:** Three members of the public, Damian Furniss (on behalf of DCC), Cllr Susie Bond (EDDC), Cllr Phil Twiss (DCC), Fiona Clampin (clerk)

**Apologies for absence:** Cllr D Valentine, PCSO Darren England

Before the meeting Damian Furniss provided the latest advice regarding the corona virus from DCC, where he is acting as the lead on this for the county's adult social care system. He said it was inevitable that the region would see a rise in cases, and it was important for people to be aware of the advice available, particularly those returning from travel to high risk areas. Some people may need to self-isolate for 14 days; these people may need support, as may older members of the community and those with pre-existing health conditions. For people who have not been travelling, he said it was still important to wash your hands regularly for around 20 seconds with hot water and soap to help reduce the number of infections. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze, and put used tissues in the bin straight away and wash your hands afterwards. He suggested that people travelling on buses should have some hand sanitizer available if possible. **Clerk's note:** Since the meeting, the official advice has been updated, with guidance for people to limit social contact where possible – especially those in high risk groups. More information on this developing situation is available from [www.devon.gov.uk/document/coronavirus-advice-in-devon/](http://www.devon.gov.uk/document/coronavirus-advice-in-devon/)

Damian Furniss left the meeting.

One member of the public enquired if there had been any changes in farming practices in the past year that would account for an increase in the large number of flies already present. Cllr Bond advised the person to buy fly papers, write the date on them and remove after one week. These can then be sent to the Environmental Health Officer at EDDC who will analyse the flies and decide whether any action should be taken.

One member of the public reported that BT had replaced the fuse in the control panel of the village defibrillator, and had asked that if the light was still not working to reset the Residual Current Detection (RCD). On investigation, it appears there is no RCD, only a panel with an on / off switch and a simple connection box between the defibrillator and the kiosk wiring. The Community Heartbeat Trust has advised that it is the parish council's responsibility to put in the RCD. Members agreed with the member of the public's suggestion to monitor the situation and see if the fuse blows again. If so, the clerk will contact the electrician. The light is now working again.

**224/19 To accept and approve apologies**

Apologies were received and accepted.

**225/19 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held 5<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2020 were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

**226/19 To receive the Beat Manager's Report**

The clerk said the D&C Police website was still showing the latest crime figures for Dec 2019, which had

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been presented at the February meeting.

**227/19 To receive declarations of interest**

None.

**228/19 Reports from County Council and District Council representatives**

Cllr Twiss said he thought it would be useful to give members a 'high level' overview of what DCC does on behalf of all tax payers, in what is a very big business in terms of its budget and the numbers of people employed to deliver services to all.

**Devon County Council – roles and responsibilities**

Devon County Council is one of 26 County Councils in England. The authority, which has 60 elected County Councillors, represents 795,000 residents and administers an area spanning 2,534 square miles, the third largest in England. The Council is led by a Cabinet of nine senior councillors, chaired by the Leader of the Council, John Hart. The County Council works in partnership with eight District Councils, more than 300 Town and Parish Councils, the Great South West region's Local Enterprise Partnerships and neighbouring County and Unitary councils.

**DCC services**

The County Council has a total budget of £1.1 billion and provides a wide range of public services – some directly and some commissioned from other organisations. The County Council's main service groups are:

Adult care and health including services for older people and adults with physical, or learning disabilities.

- care at home for 10,000 people a year
- 13,000 people with dementia

Children's services including education and learning; services for vulnerable children and families; safeguarding; looked after children and care leavers.

- supporting 16,500 children with special needs or disabilities
- over 200 children adopted or fostered a year
- 97,000 pupils
- 398 schools

Communities, Public Health, Environment and Prosperity including planning, transportation and environment; economy, enterprise and skills; trading standards; libraries; community safety and emergency planning.

- 50 libraries and four mobile libraries
- free school transport for 14,500 pupils a day
- funding for 185 bus services, 60 voluntary car schemes and 16 community ring and ride schemes
- nine new primary schools built or due to be completed in 2020

Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste including road and bridge maintenance; waste disposal and recycling; and the County Council's capital programme.

- 8,000 miles of road (England's largest local network)
- 62,000 potholes filled a year
- managing 357,000 tonnes of domestic waste a year
- 19 recycling centres
- £114 million invested every year on major infrastructure projects.

Legal, Human Resources and Communications including democratic support and scrutiny; Crown services; registration of births, marriages and deaths, and the Coroner services.

County Treasurer including Revenue and Capital budgets; Investment and Treasury management; Devon Audit Partnership and the Devon Pension Fund.

Digital Transformation and Business Support including ICT; procurement; property management; customer service and information governance.

**Background Context**

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The Government's reaffirmed commitment to a fair funding review of local government is very welcome and much needed, said Cllr Twiss. The continuing wide disparity in funding between counties and metropolitan areas requires tackling. Current Government funding per head of population is £258 for Devon compared to an average £421 for metropolitan councils and £556 for inner London boroughs. There has been a 72% real terms reduction in Government funding for Devon between 2010 and 2019/20. During that period of austerity, the County Council has reduced its spending by nearly £300 million and staff numbers by nearly 3,000. Through a combination of efficiencies, innovation and collaboration with other councils, Devon has managed to protect many important public services during this time. All of Devon's 50 libraries remain open, some with longer opening hours. The County has maintained a universal youth service and provided targeted support for the most vulnerable youngsters, and working ever more closely with health partners, the County has maintained services for the elderly and vulnerable adults. However, the demand-led pressures on all Devon's front-line services continue to rise exacerbated by demographic and climate change.

### **Climate Change**

Cllr Twiss said Devon is one of UK's leading county councils in the national response to climate change. In February 2019, the County Council declared a climate emergency and pledged to work with other organisations so that the Devon should be carbon neutral by 2030. The declaration built on the Council's Energy and Carbon Strategy and as a result Chief Executive Phil Norrey established and chairs a Devon Climate Emergency Response Group bringing together key partners from across Devon.

The County Council has already reduced its carbon footprint by 40% since 2012/13 including a 75% reduction in carbon emissions from street-lighting (15,000 tonnes a year).

In August 2019 and on the recommendation of the above group the County Council and University of Exeter established a Net-Zero Task Force with key public, private and voluntary sector partners with the following funding – County Council - £250,000, University of Exeter £130,000 and £70,000 from other partners. This is paying for the work of the Net-Zero Task Force to develop a cross-Devon plan supported by staff from the County Council and University of Exeter. The Task Force is chaired by Professor Devine-Wright who is the lead author on the UN Climate Change report, the findings of which have been accepted by the County Council as the basis for the Council's future policy response.

The Task Force has held a series of themed public hearings to call for evidence on ways in which Devon can achieve the pledge by the rapid shift in behaviour. Hearings were held between October and December on the following themes: food, land and sea (including agriculture, forestry, fisheries and land use), mobility and transport, the built environment, energy and waste.

A new draft Carbon Plan for Devon will be developed through a review of the evidence by an expert panel and the proposal of policy options. These options will be put forward to a newly created 'citizens panel' that will start meeting this month (January 2020) run by Prof Devine-Wright who has expertise in this area. The outcome of all this will be a draft Carbon Plan for wider public consultation this spring.

A key challenge that the Carbon Plan will seek to address is how Devon can prosper in a carbon-neutral economy. The County Council is a leading partner in the Great South West campaign which seeks to establish the region as the UK's key provider of renewable energy and deliver a £45 billion boost to the regional economy. Through the Heart of the South West Joint Committee, Devon County Council and partners are also working with Somerset local authorities to align their carbon plans.

Following on from a query raised at the last parish council meeting, Cllr Twiss explained that DCC's policy on road gritting is available on its website. He said that school bus routes were not necessarily included in the list of those that are maintained. However, he said that if the parish council resolved that it was important to have school routes gritted, he could take this proposal to the next HATOC meeting. The clerk agreed to email Cllr Twiss with a list of the grit bins that are currently low.

Cllr Bond said that work is continuing on the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan (GESP) with a view to publishing a draft policy and potential development sites document for consultation this summer. GESP is looking at housing and employment land provision up to 2040 across the four council areas of East Devon, Mid-Devon, Teignbridge and Exeter City.

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She announced that EDDC has just been awarded Platinum in the Investors in People award scheme and is only one of three district councils to receive this accolade. It builds on previous success of being a Gold-standard Council.

Cllr Bond reported that a motion at full Council on Wednesday 26 February relating to fireworks and Chinese lanterns was agreed unanimously:

That this Council agrees to:

- (i) request the organisers of all public firework displays within East Devon, of which the Council is aware or becomes aware, to advertise them in advance, allowing residents to take precautions for their animals and vulnerable people;
- (ii) continue to support public awareness about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare and vulnerable people – including the precautions that can be taken to mitigate risks;
- (iii) write to the UK Government urging them to introduce legislation to limit the maximum noise level of fireworks to 90 decibels for those sold to the public for private displays;
- (iv) encourage local suppliers of fireworks to stock ‘quieter’ fireworks for public use; and
- (v) recommends that Cabinet adapts the Drone Policy (being recommended to it from Overview Committee 30 January 2020) so as to prohibit;
  - a) the release of lanterns and balloons from EDDC property and land
  - b) the release of any firework (above 90db) from EDDC property and land.
- (vi) write to the UK Government urging them to urgently ban the sale of sky lanterns (supported by the Fire Service, RSPCA, Marine Conservation Society, Women’s Food and Farming Union, Soil Association and National Farmers Union).

Cllr Twiss and one member of the public left the meeting.

**229/19 To note the latest planning decision notices**

None.

**230/19 To co-opt a councillor to Gittisham Vale ward**

There being no other candidates, Janet Twist was automatically co-opted to the parish council (Gittisham Vale ward). Cllr Twist said she moved from Lancashire to Wilmington in 2007 and had spent her working life as a civil servant in a range of financial positions. She explained that she had served for a time as a parish councillor for Widworthy Parish Council, which had been involved in setting up its own Community Land Trust. She said she moved to the Hayne Farm development just over a year ago.

**231/19 To consider progress on the modernisation of the play area, including fundraising and regular safety inspections**

Cllr Orchard reported that in order to make use of S106 funding, EDDC had told him that the parish council would need to collect ideas from the community for outdoor, capital sports projects. Members agreed the form provided by EDDC could be attached to a future edition of the Gittisham Gazette. Cllr Orchard agreed to bring this to the next meeting.

Cllr Hall said that Western Power Distribution had mended the fence surrounding the substation. Members offered to help install the bird boxes in the play area, and agreed to help source a cordless hammer drill. Cllr Walker said she had drafted a safety inspection rota; members agreed to take it in turns to fill this out, and Cllr Wilkins said he would draw up an online document to which all could contribute without having several copies in circulation.

**232/19 To consider capital works to Gittisham Village Hall**

Cllr Hall reported that work was due to start on 11th May to redecorate the village hall, taking around five weeks. Members resolved to approve an additional payment of £400 to install double glazing on two windows, taking the total for those items to £1,800. Cllr Hall said she would ask the contractor if it was possible for the parish council to pay for this direct, as the VAT could then be claimed back. Councillors discussed the most appropriate way to arrange payment for the entire work, and resolved to issue four weekly payments for three separate payees at the May meeting, totaling £7.5k. There will be a further payment for £5.8k in June. Cllr Hall agreed to draw up a contract and send to the clerk. She reported that

the village hall committee members were thrilled the work was going ahead, and passed on their thanks to the parish council.

**233/19 To receive an update on the Hayne Lane development**

Cllr Wilkins said there was no progress from DCC on changing the incorrect signage. He reported that the noticeboard had been installed, but it was not what had been ordered and Baker Estates had agreed to take charge. Cllr Twist said both she and the sales office have a key for the board.

Cllr Orchard reported that there had been a low turnout for the ‘meet the parish council’ event in the sales centre, but the event had nevertheless been productive. It had emerged that the welcome letter from the parish council intended for new residents was not being distributed. Cllr Wilkins agreed to update it, with reference to the CMC garage. Cllr Hall said she would offer some suggestions of additional information for this.

**234/19 To consider plans for expenditure in the parish under the Community Infrastructure Levy & S106**

There was no update on this.

**235/19 To consider work to be carried out by the lengthsman to maintain drains and ditches in the parish**

Cllr Walker said that Cllr Valentine was monitoring the situation at Clysthayes. It has been reported to DCC. The clerk added that following the lengthsman’s survey of the parish grit bins, she had reported defective bins and empty ones to DCC.

**236/19 To consider climate change measures within the parish**

Members agreed it would be worth asking EDDC’s conservation officer to see if the regulations on double glazed windows could be relaxed in any way.

The clerk said Stagecoach had referred her to DCC’s Transport Co-ordination department regarding the possibility of any additional stops to the service through the village. She added that the temporary bus stop outside Combe Garden Centre was being used, but there was no update on when it would be publicised further.

**237/19 To consider proposals to update the parish council’s co-option policy**

Members discussed the wording of Cllr Wilkins’s proposals to update the co-option policy, and resolved to adopt the policy once an addition had been made regarding the number of vacancies. Members thanked Cllr Wilkins for his work on this, and he agreed to send an updated version to the clerk.

**238/19 To consider proposals to update the parish website to comply with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (no.2) Accessibility Regulations 2018**

Members resolved to approve work on the website at a cost of £500.

**239/19 To approve the March payments and to note the current bank balance**

It was resolved to approve the following payments:

1009	F J Clampin	£224.92 Clerk’s salary & expenses
1010	Michael Poll	£60 Play area grass cutting (inv. ref 599/20/1)
1011	Land Registry	£40 Play area
1012	Len Abbott	£54 Lengthsman work, 4 hours Dec 2019
1013	Len Abbott	£27 Lengthsman work, 2 hours Jan 2020
1014	Len Abbott	£101.25 Lengthsman work, 7.5 hours Feb 2020
1015	Websites Ahoy	£500 Website compliance
1016	EDDC	£40 Bench memorial plaque
DD	NEST	£17.50 Clerk’s pension

Members were informed that the current bank balance stands at £17,530.89 (which includes the £7,000 in the business reserve account for contingency).

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**240/19 To consider the parish council's grant-giving policy**

Members resolved to adopt the grant-giving policy.

**241/19 To consider the parish council's publication scheme**

Members resolved to adopt the publication scheme.

**242/19 To consider the parish council's complaints policy**

Members resolved to adopt the complaints policy, once the following amendment had been made: in line with paragraph 9, paragraphs 10 and 11 be amended to 10 and 20 working days.

**243/19 To consider any late entry correspondence**

Cllr Wilkins said he had sourced a quantity of 'no cold caller' stickers; anyone interested in acquiring one should contact him or the clerk.

**244/19 Matters to be reported to DCC / EDDC**

Members resolved to ask Cllr Twiss to propose a motion for free bus travel, and also that school bus routes should be gritted as a matter of course. Cllr Wilkins asked if EDDC could provide recycling figures by parish to encourage people, and requested that the contractors take more care when emptying the recycling containers to avoid litter. See also 236/19.

Members agreed they would keep the current place of this item, so that anything discussed during the meeting could be passed on to county and district councillors as necessary.

**245/19 Matters for the forward agenda**

Members agreed to include coronavirus, climate change, village hall capital works, play area, lengthsman work, limited residential development and emergency plan on the next agenda.

**246/19 Clerk's Report**

None.

**247/19 Date of next two meetings. Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April and Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2020 at 7.30pm in the parish room. NB Awaiting further guidance from DALC regarding the possibility of holding meetings remotely in the light of Government advice on restricting public movement during the coronavirus outbreak.**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 2130 hrs.

**Chairman.....**

**1<sup>st</sup> April 2020**