

**GITTISHAM PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON 5TH FEBRUARY 2014**

Present:

Gittisham Village Ward

Cllr D Fallows (chairman)

Cllr R Hayman

Cllr Ms S Trumper

Cllr Ms Maggie Walker

Gittisham Vale Ward

Cllr D Valentine

In attendance: Cllr Susie Bond (EDDC), Ms Fiona Clampin (clerk)

Apologies for absence: Cllr M Edmonds, Cllr E Underdown, Cllr Claire Wright (DCC), Cllr Sara Randall-Johnson (DCC), PC Clive Vickery, PCSO Phil Anning

134/13 To receive and accept apologies

Apologies were received and accepted.

135/13 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7th January 2014 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

136/13 To receive the Beat Manager's Report

No crimes reported this month.

137/13 To receive declarations of interest

None.

138/13 Reports from County Council and District Council representatives

In her absence, Cllr Wright made it known the finance for the two flood gauges near the railway bridge had been released. She also provided links to her blog with information on DCC's proposals to save money on services for both older people and younger people.

Cllr Bond explained that the Feniton super enquiry had finished today. She said it was difficult to gauge what the outcome would be, which will not be known until June. She reported that if the developer does not have the permission to build on land next to the primary school, DCC will make a compulsory purchase, resulting in an extension to the school. The Chair thanked Cllr Valentine for speaking at the enquiry on behalf of the parish council. Cllr Valentine said one of the arguments for refusing the developments was prematurity, as the enquiry into East Devon District Council's Local Plan is due to begin next week. He explained that questions have been raised in Parliament on this point, as a large number of local authorities are in the same position.

The clerk read out a letter from the clerk of Feniton Parish Council, thanking Gittisham councillors and the community for its generous gesture of £500 in support of the fighting fund.

Cllr Bond said EDDC had committed an additional £800,000 to look at moving its premises from the Knowle. The Save our Sidmouth campaign group has agreed to pay for an independent surveyor to assess the building, which has a £1 million maintenance backlog.

139/13 To consider improvements to the parish website, including a Twitter feed

The clerk explained the workings of the parish council's new Twitter account by demonstrating how it had

been used that very day to inform people of flooding. Users are invited to interact with Gittisham PC and post their own reports in real time of where they know roads to be closed or flooded. Members resolved to support a Twitter feed on the parish council website at a cost of £50, which will allow those who do not use Twitter to look at the information.

140/13 To approve the February payments and to note the current bank balance

It was resolved to approve the following payments:

0614	P Sellick	£60	Gazette distribution in the Vale
0615	HMRC	£37.44	PAYE
0616	F J Clampin	£164.70	Clerk's fee and expenses
0617	Village Hall	£20	Village hall hire for December 2013 fair
0618	Websites Ahoy	£50	Twitter feed for PC website
0619	Feniton Parish Council	£500	Contribution towards fighting fund

Members were informed that the current bank balance stands at £10,754.07.

The clerk said the council had been reimbursed for VAT for 2012/13, totaling £1,213.79 and £500 to purchase two flood gauges had also been received from DCC. [Clerk's note: since the meeting it's emerged there has been some confusion over the payment for the gauges. The £500 will be returned to DCC, who will order them]

Cllr Trumper asked if the parish council had the ability to create an emergency fund for parishioners, in the event of a devastating flood for example. The Chair said there was a contingency line in the budget, and the clerk agreed to investigate with DALC.

141/13 To consider the following planning applications:

- a) 14/0063/LBC Combe House Hotel Gittisham EX14 3AD Alteration to tapered lead valley gutter over rear (East) wing

Members resolved to approve the application.

142/13 To consider the East Devon Local Plan

Cllr Valentine said the enquiry into EDDC's Local Plan would run for a couple of months, with a week's holiday at half term. He explained this takes the form of a roundtable discussion. There are three key dates for Gittisham parish, which Cllr Valentine proposed to attend:

12th February: discussion of population figures and statistical basis thereof

13th February: discussion of employment land figures and evidence base

5th March: discussion of allocation for Honiton, including proposals for Hayne Lane

The Chair said he too would like to attend on 5th March, where a slot has been reserved for Gittisham's position. Cllr Valentine said the parish council's previous argument had centred on the issue as to whether the 450 homes proposed for Honiton had already been met by windfalls and the town does therefore not need a reserve site at Hayne Lane. Cllr Valentine would be looking to question what constitutes an up to date figure, as the National Planning Policy Framework requires any evidence base to be 'up to date'. Figures that have emerged through 2011 census data do not, he argued, match those presented in the Local Plan.

143/13 To consider the issue of flooding in the parish

Members said they were not aware any property had been flooded in recent weeks, due to the latest poor weather. The Chair said he had removed eight bags of leaf litter and soil from a drainage channel opposite Willey's Wood. He also said he had reported to DCC some time ago the drains outside the village hall which are blocked underground, but no one from the council has been out to inspect them. The Chair has been in touch with Nick Agg-Manning to discuss flood barriers outside properties. Members also discussed the issue with water on the road at Truances, where there is a concrete gully.

The clerk reported a conversation with Buckerell Parish Council's clerk about employing a lengthsperson. Buckerell has found somebody in the village who is willing, but they are currently investigating insurance. Buckerell's chair will ask this person if he would also consider helping out in Gittisham.

Cllr Valentine asked if DCC has a legal duty of care that requires the council to ensure surface water is contained. Could DCC be vulnerable to compensation claims, in the event properties become flooded through blocked gullies, he wondered? The clerk agreed to pass this on to Cllr Wright. Members noted that DCC Highways have suffered a £6.6m budget cut in 2014/15.

144/13 To consider limited residential development in the parish

Nothing to report. Justin Lascelles has a new role as Combe Estate Manager, as of 3rd February.

145/13 To approve a supplier for the parish amenity area maintenance contract, 2014-15

The clerk outlined four bids submitted for the maintenance contract, based on 20 cuts during the growing season:

1. Grounds Maintenance SW £35 / cut + VAT
2. Laps Lawns £60 / cut (no VAT)
3. Halcyon Landscapes Ltd £38.95 / cut + VAT
4. PLandscape £29.50 / cut + VAT

Members resolved to award the contract to PLandscape.

146/13 To consider progress on the modernisation of the play area, including safety inspections

Cllr Trumper said she had yet to carry out the inspections. The Chairman promised to take action over the drain cover in the wild area; Cllr Hayman agreed to lend him a drill for this purpose. Cllr Trumper said proposals for the wild area should be put back on the agenda, and all members present agreed to discuss with parishioners. The clerk said she would bring the annual schedule of inspection to the next meeting for members to decide on.

147/13 To consider the provision of broadband in the parish.

Cllr Bond said she believed work on the green boxes in Feniton (the exchange which serves Gittisham) was ongoing.

148/13 To consider any late entry correspondence

The clerk read out a letter received from Neil Parish MP, asking about the condition of the parish war memorial. She will pass this on to Gittisham PCC. Members agreed the clerk should purchase a get well card for Barbara Mullett, who is recovering from a hip operation.

149/13 Matters to be reported to DCC / EDDC

The clerk agreed to pass on details of blocked gullies to Cllr Wright, as well as Cllr Valentine's query (cf 143/13).

150/13 Matters for the forward agenda

It was agreed to include Local Plan, flooding, play area, broadband connection, clerk's salary and emergency fund on the next agenda.

151/13 Clerk's Report

None.

152/13 Date of next two meetings. Wednesday 5th March at 7.30pm and April 2014 meeting tbc.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 2100 hrs.

Chairman.....

5th March 2014