

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

Present:

Gittisham Village Ward

Cllr D Fallows (chairman)

Cllr R Hayman

Cllr S Trumper

Gittisham Vale Ward

Cllr D Valentine

Cllr E Underdown

In attendance: Cllr Susie Bond (EDDC), Cllr Claire Wright (DCC), Cllr Sara Randall-Johnson (DCC), Ms Fiona Clampin (clerk)

Apologies for absence: Cllr M Edmonds, Cllr Maggie Walker, PC Clive Vickery, PCSO Phil Anning

153/13 To receive and accept apologies

Apologies were received and accepted.

154/13 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5th February 2014 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

155/13 To receive the Beat Manager's Report

One crime reported since the last meeting: criminal damage within the village, blue spray paint used to graffiti fire hydrant and road signs near Gittisham Farm Cross.

156/13 To receive declarations of interest

None.

157/13 Reports from County Council and District Council representatives

Cllr Wright elaborated on DCC's proposals to save money on services for both older people and younger people. This follows DCC's budget meeting on 20th February where radical cost savings were proposed, rather than 'salami-slicing'. £110 million needs to be saved over the next three years. Across Devon this means all 30 youth centres risk of closure, and the UK Youth Parliament is mounting a campaign against these proposals which Cllr Wright is supporting. If these closures were to take effect, it would result in 60 staff redundancies. Members agreed that often these centres were the first line of defence in helping young people understand issues facing them, rather than end up further down the line with anti-social behavior. The consultation runs until the end of April, and Cllr Wright urged members and parishioners to express their views. <http://new.devon.gov.uk/youthreview>

Members also heard about proposals to close day centres for older people and remove the subsidy for the frozen meal service currently delivered by the company Apetito. Cllr Randall-Johnson added the latter affects 750 people across the whole of the county. Occupancy of day centres, she said, had dropped dramatically in recent years. It's proposed the voluntary or private sector will step in. As a comparison, she said Honiton St Michael's centre costs £80 per session to run, whereas a private set-up could run this for £40 or £50.

Cllr Randall-Johnson said DCC's share of the council tax for 2014-15 would be increased by 1.99 per cent, and similarly the share of the Devon & Somerset Fire and Rescue Service. She explained that DCC had already had to make savings of £100 million over the last four years, in addition to the £100m it needs to

make by 2017. The Chair said he felt people were the country's biggest resource and the Government should put more money into people. Cllr Valentine and Cllr Randall-Johnson agreed to have a conversation offline as to how money is apportioned by DCC to each area of its remit.

Cllr Bond said EDDC would not be raising its share of the council tax this year. She explained that EDDC's preferred option now is to move its offices to Skypark near Exeter, which would cost £900,000 alone to buy the land. Cllr Wright said she had been trying to get more information about other associated costs. Some suggestions are that it would cost £4 million, which the council would have to borrow to meet the cost. Cllr Bond explained that in the long term, running costs would be lower in a modern building.

158/13 To approve the March payments and to note the current bank balance

It was resolved to approve the following payments:

0620	F J Clampin	£101.01	Clerk's fee and expenses
0621	HMRC	£99.84	PAYE
0622	Devon County Council	£500	return of money for 2 x flood gauges
0623	Honiton PCC	£60	Gazette printing costs, Jan-Mar 2014

Members were informed that the current bank balance stands at £9,991.78.

159/13 To consider the East Devon Local Plan

Cllrs Fallows and Valentine reported back from their visit to the enquiry into EDDC's Local Plan earlier that day. Under discussion were housing figures regarding Honiton, including proposals for Hayne Lane. The two councillors said they had made their representations on behalf of the parish council, citing overstretched medical facilities, lack of social activities and school admissions among these. The developers Welbeck Strategic Land and Gleeson were also present, arguing that strategic development guarantees affordable homes, whereas making numbers up by the use of windfalls doesn't. Honiton Town Council however argued that while houses currently being built in Honiton may not meet the Government definition, they were in fact affordable. Terrace infills for example, do not have a high market value. Welbeck also argued, said Cllr Valentine, that as the land west of Hayne Lane was a reserve site, the district council has had no planning objections to it. He said formal planning has not been granted, and the planning committee did not make a planning decision. He added that Taylor Wimpey is proposing to build homes at the east end of Honiton, but disappointingly, the developer was not present at the enquiry that day.

Cllr Valentine said he was stunned by the news revealed at the enquiry today that there was only £50,000 in the pot already allocated for the Turk's Head junction which had come through Section 106 agreements. Two schemes are proposed here: a roundabout or traffic lights, with the former the preferred option at around £750,000.

As regards the 15 hectares of employment land proposed, one developer proposed 28,000 for the entire district would be a better figure but this was not supported by other developers, according to Cllr Valentine. He had also attended two previous sessions of the enquiry.

160/13 To consider the issue of flooding in the parish

Members agreed flooding had been minimal, despite the poor weather in January and February. Cllr Hayman said some work had been done by the ironbridge to improve drainage. Cllr Valentine thanked Cllr Wright for following up on his enquiry regarding DCC's duty of care and whether it is required to ensure surface water is contained. She had received an email in response which suggested DCC could be vulnerable to compensation claims if this was not contained.

The clerk reported the latest correspondence from Buckerell Parish Council, where unfortunately it looks as though Buckerell will be shelving their proposal to have a parish lengthsman. They said there had been too many issues to resolve regarding PAYE and training which the individual concerned did not wish to pursue. They will next meet on 18th March, where this will be discussed again, but at the moment it does not look as though it is going further. The clerk agreed however to get in touch with Luppitt-based A R Tucker to see if this highways contractor could potentially carry out some remedial work. Cllr Hayman

said that recent work by SW Highways had proved effective.

161/13 To consider establishing an emergency fund for residents of the parish

The clerk had investigated with DALC whether it was possible to create an emergency fund for parishioners, in the event of a devastating flood for example. This followed Cllr Trumper's request at the last meeting. DALC's advice was that it is not possible to give money to individuals, and the most likely option would be to work with a charity that could ringfence any payments. Members agreed this could be cumbersome and resolved not to pursue the matter.

162/13 To consider progress on the modernisation of the play area, including regular safety inspections and the annual schedule of inspection

Cllr Trumper said she had carried out the inspections, and had found that the gate was not opening as easily as it should. She proposed a working party to give the play area a spring clean, around Easter. The clerk produced the annual schedule of inspection; members agreed the annual inspection and risk assessment should be carried out, ideally after the spring clean.

163/13 To consider the provision of broadband in the parish.

Cllrs Bond and Wright said they had corresponded with BT Openreach as to whether Gittisham and Buckerell would benefit from the upgrade of Feniton's exchange this summer, but had received an opaque answer.

Cllr Randall-Johnson left the meeting.

164/13 To consider any late entry correspondence

The clerk read out an email from a resident of a neighbouring parish, asking her to remind members that an application for a premises licence at Escot had been submitted. The resident was concerned over noise levels at last year's music festival.

The Chair informed members that the collection time of Gittisham's postbox has changed, and he was not aware of any consultation on this. There has however been a letter going round from Royal Mail regarding changes to deliveries. Members did not come to any agreement as to whether a letter should go to Royal Mail, asking if they could guarantee a collection after delivery.

165/13 Matters to be reported to DCC / EDDC

Cllr Wright agreed to investigate whether the Stagecoach bus is able to drop off / pick up passengers at Hayne Lane bridge or Ironbridge, following a previous request by Cllr Trumper. Cllr Bond asked if anybody from the parish council would be attending an informal hearing regarding the change of use to a traveller site on 19th March. As the parish council had not objected, members agreed they would not be sending representation.

166/13 Matters for the forward agenda

It was agreed to include play area and parish lengthsperson on the next agenda.

167/13 Clerk's Report

None.

168/13 Date of next two meetings. Wednesday 7th May at 7.30pm and Wednesday 4th June.

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

Chairman.....

7th May 2014