

GITTISHAM PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON 6TH MAY 2020
via Skype

The Parish Council Meeting has to take place remotely for reasons of social distancing brought in by HM Government during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Present:

Gittisham Village Ward

Cllr R Hayman (Chair)
Cllr M Walker
Cllr D Valentine

Gittisham Vale Ward

Cllr A Wilkins
Cllr A Orchard
Cllr J Twist

In attendance: Cllr Phil Twiss (DCC), Cllr Susie Bond (EDDC), Fiona Clampin (clerk), three members of the public

Apologies for absence: Cllr C Hall (Vice Chair), PCSO Darren England

Before the meeting Damian Furniss updated members regarding the situation with corona virus from DCC's perspective, where he is acting as the lead on this for the county's adult social care system. He said that Devon had the fewest infections, fatalities and outbreaks in England relative to population size. He added that evidence shows that small rural communities have much lower levels of infection than urban areas. About 15 per cent of care homes in Devon have outbreaks, also among the lowest in the country. But sadly, he said, Devon has had several care homes with ten or more fatalities due to COVID-19. Exeter is significantly the most impacted part of the county, with more than double the infection rate. Mr Furniss explained that the risk is a longer duration of outbreaks in Devon, and as lockdown restrictions ease, opening up travel could bring in infection from elsewhere. In the immediate area, he said, which includes Feniton, Whimble etc, there have been no fatalities. There have been very few fatalities in neighbouring areas, such as Honiton and Ottery. The Chair thanked Mr Furniss for his input, and said although the news was good, it was still worth being cautious. More information on this developing situation is available from www.devon.gov.uk/document/coronavirus-advice-in-devon/

Damian Furniss left the meeting.

One member of the public reported that the grit bin near Sherman's Farm had been raided and was therefore empty. The clerk agreed to update this on the dedicated DCC website.

1/20 To accept and approve apologies

Apologies were received and accepted.

2/20 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held 1st April 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 1st April 2020 were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

3/20 To receive the Beat Manager's Report

PCSO England sent the following figures for recorded crime covering 1st January – 30th April 2020:

Homicide	1
Violence without injury	3
Vehicle offences	1
Public order offences	1

4/20 To receive declarations of interest

The Chair declared an interest in agenda items 8a) and b) as he is a tenant of the landowner.

5/20 Reports from County Council and District Council representatives

Household waste recycling centre (not EDDC home collections)

Cllr Twiss said that with a Government update on the reasons for essential travel not forthcoming, it was not possible to carry on with this situation where residents cannot use recycling centres. Therefore the recycling centres will open on Monday 11th May. DCC officers have spoken to the local police regarding the essential travel element and they are content with the reopening.

This will be challenging, said Cllr Twiss, and we will be restricting vehicles to cars only for the first couple of weeks at least, to help with flow through the site, there will be a one out one in system and social distancing will be adhered to. We are expecting long queues as we have all been having a good clear out, hence the advice is to please only visit if it is essential. He advised that capacity will be reduced. It may well be worth considering putting off that exciting trip to the recycling centre until things calm down a bit. There will be no resale shops open, all payments will be contactless and we will have security on the sites.

He reported that the last weekend that they were open, which was before the lockdown, the staff were subjected to abuse. This included staff being coughed on to pass on the Covid-19 infection, there was no adherence to social distancing and queues on the highway were forming. Some centres had to be closed as a result to control the situation. DCC will have no hesitation in doing this again, as the safety of our residents and the staff at the sites is paramount.

Once there is a lifting of social distancing we can look at changing back to our former way of working at the HWRC's but until then, restrictions will be in place and a consequent longer wait for the public. DCC will be keeping all the sites under review and will be amending the operations accordingly. Once we have got over the initial surge, Cllr Twiss explained, we can then have larger vehicles and trailers on the site. But to give everyone a fair chance of accessing the site, the cars-only restriction will be in place for a couple of weeks, unless in the unlikely event that there are no queues. This has been a challenging time for our officers in the DCC waste and recycling team, they have pulled out all the stops to get this moving forward at pace.

DCC Highways

Highways teams are continuing to work, but a combination of safe working practices, staff sickness and limited access to relevant equipment and supplies is severely restricting activities, which it is hoped will ramp up in coming weeks, with an anticipated and controlled lifting of some lock down restrictions. Emergency service call outs and repairs are being treated as priorities.

Cllr Twiss said that in the chief executive's address to DCC staff and councillors, Phil Norrey explained that the Government is expected to outline its plans for the next steps for the country on Sunday 10th May. This could include guidance to help get people back to work in the coming weeks, while continuing to follow social distancing and hygiene measures. Mr Norrey had been joining chief executives from across the country in regular discussions with the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government about possible relaxation measures and what this might mean for us in Devon. Mr Norrey said that he and the Leadership Group are immensely proud of how you have all responded to the threat of the virus and helped the South West maintain the lowest number of cases in the country. But we are still very sadly losing loved ones and we need to do all we can to continue to protect ourselves and those around us. That's why he is continuing to urge the Government to think very carefully about how coronavirus is affecting our communities and that any relaxation measures need to be balanced with continuing to do all we can to minimise the spread of the virus. At Devon County Council we are beginning to think ahead about what the 'new normal' might look like for us. We have shown over the past weeks how adaptable we are and that we can continue to deliver vital services and protect the most vulnerable in our communities in extraordinary circumstances.

Mr Norrey finished his briefing by saying DCC will of course continue to review all its working arrangements as Government guidance emerges but for now, please keep going; please keep working from home if you can; please take care on the frontline and most of all, please keep safe.

Cllr Bond said EDDC had made available various funds to support struggling businesses and families in need. She said the green waste collection would be starting again on Monday 11th May, although it is not open to new subscribers at the moment. The Chair said there had been a marked increase in flytipping; Cllr Bond said this could be reported on the EDDC app. Members agreed that any problems were swiftly dealt with.

Cllr Twiss left the meeting.

6/20 To consider the parish council response to the COVID-19 outbreak

Cllr Walker said the volunteer group was working well in the village, and Cllr Wilkins said this was the same in the Vale.

7/20 To note the latest planning decision notices

Cllr Wilkins said there had been no updates since the last meeting.

The Chair left the meeting. Cllr Valentine took the chair.

8/20 To consider the following planning applications:

- a) **20/0781/FUL Rapshayes Farm Gittisham Honiton EX14 3AB - Conversion of barn to holiday let accommodation**
- b) **20/0782/LBC Rapshayes Farm Gittisham Honiton EX14 3AB - Conversion of barn to holiday accommodation**

Members had no objection to the two applications above.

The Chair returned to the meeting.

- c) **20/0780/FUL - 7 Ferndale Close Honiton EX14 2YN - Construction of side extension**
- d) **20/0584/FUL - Coign Cottage Gittisham Honiton EX14 3AB - Remodelling of existing dwelling and garage including raising of ridge heights, single and two storey enlargements, balcony, dormer windows, provision of cladding, and alterations to existing openings**

Members had no objection regarding c). In terms of d), councillors did not object in principle. However they agreed that the proposals would change the appearance of the dwelling dramatically, and questioned whether the design was appropriate for the setting within the AONB.

9/20 To consider progress on the modernisation of the play area, including fundraising and regular safety inspections

Members discussed whether it was appropriate at this stage to re-open the play area, following requests by residents. However all agreed with the Chair's view that the parish council should follow government advice on play areas (which remain closed), rather than parks. Cllr Walker said she would ask Len Abbott if he had been able to take a look at the items that needed attention in the RoSPA inspector's report.

10/20 To consider plans for expenditure in the parish under the Community Infrastructure Levy & S106

Members discussed Cllr Orchard's draft proposal inviting residents to suggest new outdoor sports equipment which can be purchased using S106 funding. Cllr Bond said it was important to follow EDDC guidelines on spending the money, and advised that any suggestions considered inappropriate or too expensive would be put to one side. The clerk agreed to be the point of contact to receive replies by the end of June 2020, and Cllr Orchard said he would circulate the finalised copy.

Cllr Valentine explained that he had been speaking to staff at Baker Estates about the possibility of trying to enhance their leisure provision within the Hayne Farm estate. He reported that there is going to be a play area once the 150th dwelling is completed, but there may also be opportunities for a bench close to the footpath or something similar. He offered to identify some possible locations. Members agreed to allow Cllr Valentine to continue the dialogue with Baker Estates, and to ask if it was possible to fix the noticeboard.

11/20 To consider capital works to Gittisham Village Hall

Members agreed to support the village hall committee's decision to proceed with a partial repair and replacement of the existing front windows (as new windows are not available during lockdown), as well as painting the internal wood panelling to the same specification as the internal doors. The overall cost of the project will be the same.

12/20 To consider work to be carried out by the lengthsman to maintain drains and ditches in the parish

Cllr Wilkins reported that weeds were beginning to appear on the kerbsides in the Vale. Members agreed to carry out an annual review of the lengthsman's hourly rate at the next meeting.

13/20 To consider climate change measures within the parish

There was no update on this.

14/20 To consider limited residential development in the parish

Cllr Valentine said the administration side of things was moving forward, with a letter going out to architects to invite expressions of interest.

15/20 To consider the parish emergency plan

Cllr Valentine said this would be discussed at the next meeting.

16/20 To resolve to adopt supplementary Standing Orders to meet the statutory requirements for the holding of remote meetings, and this lasts until May 7th, 2021 or the repeal of legislation whichever is the earlier

Members resolved to adopt the supplementary Standing Orders.

17/20 To approve the May payments and to note the current bank balance

It was resolved to approve the following payments:

1033	F J Clampin	£289.67	Clerk's salary (£218.79), overtime (£50.49 and expenses £20.39)
1034	Michael Poll	£60	Play area grass cutting, (inv ref. 10001)
1035	Len Abbott	£94.50	7 hours lengthsman work, April 2020
1036	Community First	£495.17	Annual insurance policy 2020-21
1037	Paul Martin	£1,000	Village hall refurbishment (wk5)
1038	Adam Martin	£1,000	Village hall refurbishment (wk5)
1039	Paul Martin	£4,100	Balancing payment for village hall work
			[NB this payment may be accounted for in two cheques, depending on progress of work, but the total remains the same.]
DD	NEST	£17.50	Clerk's pension

Members were informed that the current bank balance stands at £11,593.19 (which includes the £7,000 in

the business reserve account). The clerk said a CIL payment of £6,718.38 had been made to the parish council, which includes the deferred payment from October 2019 and the April 2020 payment. She added that the annual pay scales for clerks (2020-21) had not yet been published, so any change in the rate would be backdated to 1st April 2020. She explained that she had done 4.5 hours overtime at the end of March 2020 to draft emergency operating guidelines during the lockdown. This was approved by members.

18/20 To consider any late entry correspondence

Cllr Wilkins said The Codfather fish & chip van would potentially be putting in its annual trading licence around this time. The clerk agreed to get in touch with Cllr Twiss about this, and to remind EDDC that Gittisham needs to be involved in the consultation.

19/20 Matters to be reported to DCC / EDDC

As above.

20/20 Matters for the forward agenda

It was agreed to include coronavirus, climate change, village hall capital works, play area, lengthsman work, limited residential development, emergency plan, review of clerk's and lengthsman's salaries, annual governance statement and annual accounts on the next agenda.

21/20 Clerk's Report

None.

22/20 Date of next two meetings. Wednesday 3rd June and Wednesday 1st July at 7.30pm via Skype. Should restrictions on public movement be lifted, these meetings will revert to being held in the parish room.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 2020 hrs.

Chairman.....

3rd June 2020