

Ditchling Parish Council

Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held in the Old Meeting House on Tuesday 7th January 2014 at 8pm.

Present Mrs Y Sen in the Chair, Mrs N. Banfield, Mrs B. Brittain, Mrs M Bolton, Mrs C.M. Robinson, A.T. Jones, M. Madden, P.M. Smith, and the Clerk Mrs Mary Holman.

Apologies R. Burman (away), D. Carpenter (work),

218. Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 17th December having been circulated, were taken as read agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
219. Minute 182 Spatham Lane & Speeding. There was nothing new to report.
220. Minute 183 Neighbourhood Plan It was agreed to ask Tom Dufty for a synopsis of the meetings or a copy of the Minutes in order to keep the Council informed.
221. Minute 184 18 South Street No further details received.
222. Minute 185 Suggested additional Car Park in Keymer Road A formal response has been received and circulated. There was a debate about the site, possible costs, environmental impact and the intrusion into the Strategic Gap, the following proposal was made "the Council should go ahead with putting in a full Planning Application for the site on the north side of Keymer Road and inform the Neighbourhood Planning project team of the decision and invite their comments." A recorded vote was requested and taken as follows In favour A.T. Jones, Mrs B. Brittain, Mrs N. Banfield, P. M. Smith and Mrs C.M. Robinson; against M. Madden, Mrs Y. Sen and Mrs M. Bolton. The motion was carried by 5 votes in favour to 3 against. It was agreed to set up a sub group to assist the Clerk with the application – A.T, Jones, P.M. Smith, Mrs M. Bolton and Mrs N. Banfield volunteered.
223. Minute 190 Tennis Court The following response was received from the Club and noted."There is a brush in the court for brushing needles to the side on a daily basis, unless it has been stolen again, but there has to be some common sense here. We provide an outdoor facility for the village, which is not all weather, and members are encouraged to help maintain the court individually to keep membership fees down, but we do have it professionally cleaned when needed. I had received one call earlier this month regarding this matter, and explained that if we do have inclement weather, the court may not be playable unless the surface is cleared of needles, but over 90% of members appreciate this, and given the low membership fee, are happy to accept this. We have an AGM once a year, which is notified in the court, where all members can attend. I can supply a list of members if you wish?
224. Minute 198 Gate on FP40. The Monday Group have made and installed the new stile instead of the old gate.
225. Minute 200 Bollards It was noted that photographs of both sets of bollards would be sent to E, S.C.C. so that they can see that the Council wants the more elegant bollards as erected in Lewes Road.
226. Minute 202 Enquiry re Twinning with French Village – Details have been circulated as the matter had been deferred from the last meeting. It was agreed to take no action.
227. Minute 204 Parish Councillors Code of Conduct and decision making protocol. This had been deferred for further details; details had been received from Mark Madden and Tom Jones and circulated for debate. The new Code was the one all Councillors signed up to last year and is published on the LDC and PC Websites. The revised Guide for Councillors dated September 13 had been circulated on 10th October. There was a frank and informative debate on the role of Councillors, District Councillor, Chairmanship etc, it was agreed that in future each Councillor should be given the opportunity to express an opinion and that those opinions should be respected. A.T. Jones withdrew the email he had sent previously.
228. Minute 217 Ditchling Common Country Park The following response had been received from E.S.C.C." We were fortunate to secure funding to manage the Country Park as the final cut off date for entering new HLS schemes has now passed. There are no other similar funding sources available to support management of the Country Park and I am sure you are aware that local authority funding is under severe pressure in the current financial climate. Although the decision to bring in a modest increase in the amount of grazing on the Common has been made, in 2014 we will consult the local community on a new 10 year management plan for Ditchling Common and this will give local visitors, special interest groups and other Councils the opportunity to influence the way ESCC manage the Country Park".

There was still disquiet about the lack of consultation and it was agreed to invite Andy Mitchell from E.S.C.C. to discuss the matter informally with D. McBeth, Mrs M. Banfield and the Clerk.

229. Wivelsfield LW/13/0720 Land Adjoining North Common Road Wivelsfield Green. No Councillors were available to speak on this matter on behalf of the Council it was left to Tom Jones who would be speaking on behalf of the District Council.
230. Ash Tree in Recreation Ground It was reported that the groundsman had found fungi growing around the base of the Ash Tree a sample had been sent to Daniel Wynn the Tree Officer at LDC as it appeared to be *Pholiota squarrosa* which caused the demise of the twin Ash beside it. At the time the consultant who took the internal readings was very concerned as it can be spread through the root system and the roots of the two trees were intertwined. The letter and details had been circulated. It was very important that this was investigated as soon as possible electronically as there were only inches of solid wood holding up the old tree although it appeared very healthy. It was agreed to go ahead and obtain quotations from suitably qualified arboriculturists.
231. Invitation to LDC – Tenancy Policy Event on 17th January. This was noted, no action taken.
232. Re- appointment of Representative Trustee on Oldland Mill Trust. Roger Broadbent wished to be re-appointed, the email had been circulated. This was agreed.
233. Pot holes at entrance to Recreation Ground. The Clerk reported that there were some large pot holes at the vehicular entrance to the Recreation Ground, it was agreed that the County Council should be contacted and a quote sought.

Chairman

28th January 2014