

Ditchling Parish Council

Minutes of the Statutory Council Meeting held in the Old Meeting House on Tuesday 27 September 2016 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs.Madden (Chairman), Smith, Ingham, Madden (Mrs.), Jones, Leaver and the Clerk, Mrs M. Warner.

Declarations of Interest: Cllr Jones declared an interest in item 3 by virtue of being the Chairman of the Ditchling branch of the RBL and the applicant. Cllr Ingham declared a personal interest in item 4 by virtue of being a neighbour of the Scout HQ.

Public Participation:

Martin Craven spoke in respect to item 3 reading a letter from a neighbor who objected to Eric Gill's name being displayed on the plinth at the War Memorial. The plinth is not appropriate and is disrespectful to the fallen soldiers.

Marianne Hickman spoke in respect to item 3, she finds that the size of the plinth is inappropriate as is its siting. Gill was an important artist but the plinth could be sited away from the War Memorial. Normal formalities earlier in the process of the siting should have been considered.

Penny Worth noted the considerable opposition from local people and the desire to remove the plinth. No one understood why the British Legion had sited the plinth here, the decision was ill-considered. The Parish Council had decided not to apply to planning permission in its own name. Even if permission is granted the parish Council as the landowners should have the plinth removed.

Herbie Flowers announced that he was withdrawing his membership of the Ditchling Museum unless the slab was removed. Gills name now appears larger than anyone of the fallen listed, in his nine years in the RAF and having visited War Memorials all over the world none have adverts. A criminal is being glorified.

Phillip Baring, a non-resident, reported that he was shocked when he saw the plinth and had never seen anything similar at memorials visited all over the Commonwealth.

Roma Leon stressed that it was unfortunate that discord had reached this point with a small village and that the matter had been badly handled. An advert should not appear by the War Memorial.

Judith Davies asked if any members of the Council were also members of the Royal British Legion? She was informed that two councillors were members of the RBL, Cllr Jones and Cllr Robinson.

Louise Evatt spoke in respect of item 4 and specifically the children's playground. The playground is dangerous and lacks imagination, there is limited equipment for children aged 6-11 years old. There are many parents who would like to see improvements and would be willing to speak to the Parish Council and to help.

Jenny Evatt also spoke regarding the playground noting that it was well used, that there was rotten wood on the slide and there was a willingness to help with fundraising.

The Chairmen responded that the playground was not dangerous and had no areas of concern were raised in the annual inspection.

1. Apologies for absence Apologies received and accepted from Cllr McBeth & Robinson
2. Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 12 September having been circulated, were agreed as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.
3. Planning Applications Cllr Jones left the room and did not participate in the discussion.

SDNP/16/04371/FUL War Memorial Lodge Hill Lane, Ditchling. Section 73A retrospective application for erection of Portland stone plinth at the Ditchling War Memorial. **Object** the plinth by virtue of its siting, form and size is considered detrimental to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, it is an unacceptable and unduly prominent structure within the streetscene.

The Chairman advised that members of the public who wished to make their objections known to the planning officer should ensure that they include valid planning reasons for objecting, and avoid criticising Eric Gill personally, as the planning committee will only consider valid planning issues

Cllr Jones returned to the meeting.

4. Outstanding Matters
Neighbourhood Plan -Mike Burr is drafting the final version of the plan, based on the public and agency responses to the original pre-submission report. The revised version excludes for now housing and green spaces that are still being prepared for the second pre-submission report.

Recreation Ground. The replacement fencing at the playground has been completed. The wood for repairing the slide was ordered some time ago, but is not available yet, as soon as the timber comes into the supplier the job will be completed. The final sanding of the football pitch was completed yesterday. The proposed items of play equipment that will fit into the existing space in the playground have been circulated, councillors considered whether to place an order. Cllr Smith explained the Neighbourhood Plan process and noted that the household survey from 2014 had identified a need for facilities for older children. It is intended that over the next year or two a Sports and Recreation Development Plan would be produced which would include updating the playground, and form a 15year plan. Money had been put in the current year's budget to develop ideas. Drainage is an issue on the whole recreation ground. There are lots of ideas to explore and a piecemeal approach may not be effective. It was agreed that no new equipment would be purchased until the community had been consulted further and a plan was in place.

Lighting. Faulty lights have been reported. The light at Long Park Corner needs further repairs and we are awaiting a quotation. The poor response time and inability to provide a service in accordance with the contract that is a 10 days turn around has been brought to the attention of ESCC highways. It was noted that members of the public could report faulty lights on the ESCC website.

Proposed additional car park. To consider the quote for a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Three quotes were sought, one has been received from Huskisson Brown to carry out the work required for £2,250. It was unfortunate that the other companies approached had chosen not to quote. It was agreed to accept the quote given that the price was competitive and to avoid delay.

Working party- Scout HQ. Minutes from the meeting of 20th September have been circulated. It was agreed that the minutes be amended to note that further information on numbers of children was requested from the pre-school, and the minutes then be circulated to all parties.

War Memorial To consider the quotations for cleaning the memorial. Four quotations had been received ranging from £360 to £990. It was agreed to accept the quotation from Derek Tourle and ask that the work is carried out as soon as possible.

5. Finance matters.

- a) To receive the bank reconciliation. This was deferred until the next meeting.
- b) To approve invoices for payment. Payments totalling £8,443.35 covered by cheque numbers 301755 to 301766 were **approved**.
- c) It was noted the External Auditor has concluded the audit for the year to 31 March 2016

6. Correspondence. The list had been circulated prior to the meeting.

P1- East Sussex Association of Local Councils AGM – Cllr McBeth & Jones will attend.

P2 -Road Closure 13 November for Remembrance Day service noted.

P3 -Planning training – 10 November 6-9pm at Battle, no Councillors can attend.

S19 – The planning appeal on land east of the allotment gardens was discussed. It was agreed that no action was required.

S12 – Cllr Jones noted that it was important to complete the Waste & Recycling Survey as kerbside recycling was not working, recycling rates are low at 21% compared to 50% in other districts. Mixed waste wheelie bins are an option for the future. This could potentially save £700,00.

7. Written & verbal reports by representatives.

Village Hall Management Committee – Cllr Ingham. Nothing to report

Ditchling Pavilion Club –Cllr Smith. Nothing to report

Ditchling Village Association – Mrs C.M. Robinson. Nothing to report.

Lewes District Association of Local Councils (two representatives) – Cllrs Mc Beth and Madden. Nothing to report.

8. Matters raised by Councillors for exchange of information only

Cllr Madden invited members to visit Dumbrells Court to view the quality of work of the maintenance contractors who will be quoting to provide the Parish Council with a similar service.

Cllr Madden (Mrs) noted that the typography exhibition at Ditchling Museum had now closed and the Museum should be reminded that the painted letters around the village should be removed.

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.

Chairman 10 October 2016

Ditchling Parish Council
Expenditure September 2016

Date	Ref	Value (incl vat)
01/09/2016	Ditchling Village Hall rent & electricity	£30.34
15/09/2016	SOS Systems copier	£229.74
20/09/2016	Stationery & post	£21.80

21/09/2016	LDC dog poo bins/ other bins	£395.56
11/09/2016	Annual Audit	£480.00
23/08/2016	BT	£10.20
12/08/2016	Printing Neighbourhood Plan	£534.00
27/09/2016	Salaries	£3,910.96
27/09/2010	Fuel & repairs	£137.63
13/09/2016	Goal posts & sockets	£264.12
08/09/2016	Kestrel Contractors Ltd	£2,394.00
30/09/2016	Website	£35.00
	Total	£8,443.35