

Ditchling Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting 23rd April 2018

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held in the Old Meeting House, East End Lane, Ditchling.
Monday 23 April 2018 at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllrs. McBeth (Chairman), Smith, Robinson, Madden (Mrs), Guggenheim, Ingham, Leaver, Orme, Jones (LDC), the clerk Mrs Michelle Warner, the deputy clerk Mr Derek Blackhall and 12 members of the public

1. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 10 April 2017, having been circulated, were agreed as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.
2. East Sussex County Council Report. Sarah Osborne the County Councillor for Ditchling apologised for a rather depressing report on the County Council. The Council is seeking to save £19.5m over the next 3 years this accounts for 5% of revenues. Services in all areas will be reduced. There will be no early prevention service in adult/child social care. The deterioration in highways will continue as asset management is run down and the service reacts to problems as they arise. Music services are likely to be axed. Supported housing for those with complex mental health problems is likely to be axed. Services to improve attainment in schools will discontinue. The Phoenix Centre in Lewes may close. There is no accommodation available for vulnerable children.
Cllr Osbourne noted that she voted against the 37% pay rise approved for the leader of the council. Cllr Osbourne had attended the traffic working party meetings in Ditchling, which involve the local MP Maria Caulfield. It was clear that any funds for traffic improvements were unlikely to be provided by the County Council. A recent proposal to give ESCC more power to restrict HGV vehicles was voted down by ESCC. Although the lead member has now written to the Secretary of State regarding the issue. Members of the public put some questions to Cllr Osbourne.
Q Will the Phoenix Centre close, this is a valued local resource?
A This is currently under consultation.
Q Broadband in some areas is still under 1MB are there plans to address this?
A Cllr Osbourne will investigate further. Cllr McBeth will contact BT
3. Report of Parochial Charities. Brian Clutterbuck, Chairman of the Dame Isabella Sprott Eleemosynary Charity gave some information on the history of the charity which was founded in 1378 with the fund divided in 1897 with part relating to the church and part relating to helping the poor of the village. The income is in the region of £650 per year. Mr Clutterbuck thanked his fellow Trustees for their help and support over the past year. There is a new email address for people to make contact this is: sprotts@btinternet.com.
4. Parish Council Chairman's Report. Cllr McBeth, Chairman of the Parish Council noted that much of his review of the year had been delivered in the new Parish magazine. In contrast to other local authorities the precept had increased very little in the year to £84,000. This figure will rise as the parishes are required to take on more work from the County and District Councils. The new car park has planning permission the council is now engaged in purchasing the land, the owner having decided that she would now rather sell the land than enter into a lease. At the same time yellow lines in Lodge Hill Lane have been requested. Ditchling has a full complement of councillors. There will be a local election in 2019. The council is in the planning stage of upgrading play facilities at the recreation ground. The council has additional clerk time with Derek working for a day a week. The Ditchling Fair is taking place in June and features on the cover of the next magazine. The Ditchling, Streat & Westmeston Neighbourhood Plan received a yes vote in the referendum last week. Mr Lockhart-Mummery the QC who examined the plan found it to be 'exemplary'. Of the votes cast 693 voted yes, 55 voted no. The turnout was 34%. The neighbourhood plan document should set in stone planning policy to 2030. The plan will now become part of the local plan of Lewes District Council and the SDNPA. The Parish Council has monitored the Neighbourhood Plan process but it was written by the people of this village, and for this they have our huge thanks.

5. Lewes District Council Report Tom Jones reported on three issues; housing and the 5 year supply, CIL, or Community Infrastructure Levy and section 106 monies.

From 2010 until 2030 the housing need within Lewes District is 10,000 houses. It has proven to be a monumental task to achieve this figure. To achieve this number of houses there must be a five -year supply of housing at any given time. At the moment we are dangerously close to not achieving a five- year supply of housing, consequence of this is that the District would be subject development bids outside of those approved within our local plans for which we would have little control. As an example, the planning committee this evening in Peacehaven, for 450 houses, if refused would have taken us below the required supply. Despite strong opposition with 200 members of the public attending the planning meeting, the development has been approved.

CIL is a pot of money, with money flowing in from new buildings as a charge on square footage. There are exceptions to the charge. Now that the Beacon Parishes plan had been approved 25% of CIL money for development in the community will be paid to the Parish Councils. A further 5% goes into an admin pot. Of the remainder 60% goes into a County pot, 20% into a District pot, and 20% into a community pot. Parishes can bid for funds from the community pot. The Executive Board met for the first time to consider 12 bids recently and approved 5. Cllr Jones had been able to obtain information from ESCC regarding two planning applications where Section 106 monies had been secured for transport improvements in the local area. These were:

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| Ditchling Common Traffic Contribution | £80,000 |
| Ditchling Common crossing contribution | £60,000 |
| B2112 Corridor contribution | £63,745 |
| Land East of Kingsway | £7,506 |

Highways will be advising how these monies will be spent.

Members of the public put some questions to the speakers.

Q What effect will the new car park have on Lodge Hill Lane and what is the timetable? This road is deteriorating and the verges have been wrecked. The edge of the carriageway is collapsing. Emergency vehicles cannot get past the parked cars.

A Yellow lines on both sides of the road have been requested, but these will not be in place until at least 2019. Cllr McBeth will raise again at the meeting with highways next week.

Q Overspill parking is now damaging verges along Lewes Road, wooden posts are used to protect verges in Keymer & Hassocks.

A These verges have been inspected by the highway steward and they do not meet the criteria for repair or posts.

Q Has it been considered that Beacon Road should qualify as a quiet lane as the footpath crosses the road at its most dangerous point.

A Despite the best efforts of our MP, ESCC remain opposed to quiet lanes and there are not any in the county.

Q Will the new car park be free of charge.

A Yes

Q Congratulations to all involved with the Neighbourhood Plan. Will someone be employed to oversee the implementation? Will any training be provided by other bodies?

A This is something that will be considered over the coming weeks.

The meeting closed at 8.25pm.