

Ditchling Parish Council

Minutes of the Statutory Council Meeting held in the Old Meeting House on Tuesday 23rd February 2016 at 7.30 pm

Present: Cllrs. McBeth (Chairman), Smith, Robinson, Banfield and the Clerk, Mrs M. Warner.

Declarations of Interest: None.

Public Participation: Rowena Cager spoke in support of planning application SDNP/16/00345/FUL and showed pictures of similar structures.

1 Apologies for absence: Apologies received and accepted from Cllr Leaver, Madden, Madden, Jones and Ingham

2 Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 9th February having been circulated, were agreed as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

3 Outstanding Matters

Neighbourhood Plan. The chairman explained the background to the Neighbourhood plan for the benefit of the members of the public present. The plan has been developed by local residents. A full first draft is available and although the Neighbourhood Plan team will continue to work on editing, formatting and presentation aspects the substance of the content is final. The statutory 6 week pre-submission consultation with residents, elected bodies and other interested groups is expected to commence on March 16th 2016. The draft document had been issued to councillors on Monday 22nd February. The Neighbourhood plan group need to know as soon as possible whether there are matters of substance on which the council as a whole has concerns by 29th February. It was agreed that there was nothing contentious in the draft document. Feedback from local residents had shown that there was some concern regarding the concept of 'shared space,' where traffic and pedestrians have equal rights, in the High Street. It has been shown in other towns and villages that this concept is not recommended where traffic flows exceed 100 vehicles per hour. It was noted that Ditchling with 5,000 traffic movements per day in each direction would fall outside of the recommended criteria. It was noted that there would be hard copies of the draft plan available for public viewing in multiple locations in the three parishes as well as the soft copy on the website. There will be a meeting on 9th March at 7.30 in the lower room of the Village Hall to which all councillors are invited to confirm their support for the Neighbourhood Plan.

Recreation Ground. Standing orders were suspended to allow Sean Guirey representing Ditchling Pavilion to address the council. Mr Guirey explained that the rent the pavilion can earn is in part dependent upon the match fees paid by Ditchling Football Club to the Parish Council. The Football Club has been promoted in the league and this means that the FA want to see improved changing facilities and for this work to be completed by 31 March 2016. The funds of some £1,000 for these works are in place, but the Pavilion Committee do not want to spend money, until that have been assured that the Football Club will be playing on the recreation ground for a full season. The rugby club has pledged support for one more year.

Cllr Smith noted that the poor weather and the delayed works to the football pitch had meant that the south pitch had been out of action for the 2015/16 season. The Parish Council had already indicated that it would look favourably on a reduction of charges for the 2016/17 season. It is expected that the improved new pitch, only, will be used for the 2016/17 season, with 20 games to be played. This means that use of the Pavilion will remain unchanged (from an ordinary season).

Cllr McBeth proposed that the pitch rental fees to the Football club be waived for the 2016/17 season; this was seconded by Cllr Robinson and carried unanimously.

Lighting The light at the top of East End Lane is faulty. The sign at the bottom of West Street has been knocked by a vehicle again and is facing the wrong way. A number of faulty lights have been reported in February but response times have been very poor and have exceeded the 10 working days timescale agreed. There seems little that can be done as the contract with the current supplier ends in March, it is hoped that the new contractor will perform better. It was agreed that an alternative contractor could be sought to replace glass broken in the lanterns and that plastic replacements may be preferable.

Proposed additional car park Mr Ellis was not in attendance and so the proposed planning application could not be discussed. Cllr McBeth and Cllr Jones had met with Michael Higgs, Senior Road Safety Officer for ESCC and had viewed the proposed car park site. Michael Higgs advised that it would be possible to extend the 30mph zone to the Keymer side of the proposed site, meaning that the entrance to the car park would be within the 30mph zone; however it would not be possible to extend the zone further along the Keymer road as there are no buildings along this stretch of highway. Further Mr Higgs advised that putting this change in place would take approximately one year, and he would advise further in writing. Mr Higgs was not in favour of yellow lines close to the museum to ease parking problems in this location. Cllr McBeth & Jones were able to pursue the idea of Village gateways and look at potential sites, the Road Safety Officer was agreeable to the idea in principle as long as the gates are the type that flattens if hit by a vehicle. Village gateways are to be included as an agenda item at the next Parish Council meeting.

Broadband The Chairman reported that BT had responded to his earlier queries and have agreed that the new BT box necessary for the broadband upgrade could be located 100m and not 50m, as previously advised from the existing box. Openreach will now return to look at possible sites for the siting of the box, including the wall on South Street by the grass bank and bus stop.

Defra. No further information.

4. Planning applications

LW/16/0045/ Ditchling Common Industrial Estate. New windows in South Elevation.

No comment.

SDNP/16/00345/FUL Land East of Allotments. Single storey timber building.

No comment.

LDC proposal to cease supplying paper copies of planning applications. There have been various discussions with Lewes District Association of Local Councils and Russell Pilford from LDC. The District Council seems determined to push ahead despite the concerns raised by Parish Councils all over the district. The one concession seems to be to arrange training sessions for Clerks and Councillors. Many Parish Councils do not have the equipment/funds/technology to migrate to an online system. Ringmer Parish Council has raised concerns over the amount of Clerk time that will be spent downloading documents individually for each planning application. There is to be a meeting on 2nd March with LDC and LDALC to discuss this matter further. It was agreed that viewing plans electronically was preferable moving forward but LDC had to be prepared to download the files to each Parish Council rather than require the Parish Councils to undertake this work and had to realise that the majority of Parish Councils would not have the necessary equipment in place by 1 April 2016.

5. HM The Queen's 90th Birthday celebrations. celebrations It was agreed that an initial working party meeting should be called the following week and Alec Gaskin as the Scout representative should be invited. Cllr McBeth & Cllr Robinson to attend. Cllr Banfield to attend if possible.
6. Annual Parish Meeting It was agreed the committee chair's would make brief speeches.
7. Finance matters.
 - a) *To receive bank reconciliation.* This was agreed as correct by Cllr Banfield
 - b) *To approve invoices for payment.* Payments totalling £3,425.89 covered by cheque numbers 301688 to 301692 were approved.
- 9 Correspondence. The list has been circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that the Clean For The Queen weekend would be taking place on 5-6th March; there was a sign- up sheet in the Post Office. P1, it was noted that contractors were on site making repairs to 3 Barnfield Gardens. P2, this item was discussed under outstanding matters. P3, this item was discussed under planning applications.
9. Written reports by representatives. There were no written reports.
Cllr Smith advised that drainage experts had been on site earlier in the day at the recreation round to determine the drainage channel to be used for run-off from the Pavilion roof once the guttering is in place.
10. Matters raised by Councillors for exchange of information only
The DVA AGM takes place on April 27th; the new website will be launched at this time. The AGM is expected to be held at the Pavilion
The Lewes District Association of Local Councils will be meeting representative from ESCC and the Police in two weeks.
The Neighbourhood Plan website has proved inaccessible to some users. It was noted that the site had been hacked but was now operating normally.
The meeting closed at 8.45pm.

Chairman

8th March 2016