

## **DITTISHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Incorporating the Hamlet of Capton and the Manors of Bozomzeal and Coombe**

#### **Draft Minutes of the meeting of Dittisham Parish Council held in Dittisham Village Hall, on Wednesday 1 February at 7.30 p.m.**

Present: Cllrs J Walker (Chair), Cllr S Stothart (Deputy Chair), Cllr M Faulkner, Cllr A Stevens, Cllr J Tucker, Cllr K Wotton.

Devon County Cllr J Hawkins

2 members of the public were present.

#### **18/12 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllr P Unitt and Cllr D Harris-Evans.

#### **19/12 Declarations of interest in items on the agenda**

In line with normal procedures, Cllr Tucker did not participate in item 23/12 Planning/Tree applications below.

#### **20/12 Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 11 January 2012**

The Minutes were **approved** (proposed Cllr Tucker, seconded Cllr Faulkner).

#### **21/12 Public issues**

##### **21/12.1 Report from Police Community Support Officer**

PCSO Broad was unable to attend in person and this item was therefore deferred in her absence.

##### **21/12.2 X81 Bus Service**

The Clerk conveyed the response sent on behalf of Cllr Hawkins to the effect that Devon County Council has no control over the commercial service operated by First from Monday to Saturday. The response did note that the summer Sunday service is financially supported by Devon County Council and will run from Sunday 3 June 2012 to Sunday 23 September 2012. County Cllr Hawkins noted that the local public transport group which meets in Dartmouth is well aware of the public's concerns about local bus services.

##### **21/12.3 Dartmouth Town Council Traffic Management Planning Group Questionnaire**

A member of the public stated that Dartmouth Town Council's Traffic Management Planning Group will be circulating a questionnaire and would like to extend its consultation to Dittisham Parishioners, as users of Dartmouth. Proposals which would have a significant impact on Dittisham Parishioners are being discussed: such as extension of Pay and Display parking, on-street parking meters and an improved Park and Ride Bus Service. The methods available to distribute the questionnaire were discussed. It was requested that provision of questionnaires in the Red Lion Shop be considered. It was considered that distribution by e-mail would be appropriate if the currently minimal take-up of this new service could be increased. It was also noted that concessionary South Hams Residents Parking Permits can be purchased for an annual fee of £21 and entitle holders to use the Dartmouth Park and Ride Bus Service (now including Regatta), which has been of benefit to Dittisham Parishioners.

*Action: Clerk to notify Parishioners of the Dartmouth Traffic Management Questionnaire via the Council's entry in the Parish Magazine. Clerk to contact local Clubs, Committees and Societies to invite them to join the Parish Information e-mail group.*

#### **21/12.4 Dittisham on the National Trust Website as a Transport Link to Greenway**

An individual asked that it be reconsidered whether to once again describe Dittisham as a transport link to Greenway on the National Trust Website, now that the initial peak in visitor numbers to Greenway has subsided. The concern of local residents about parking in the village was noted. It was also stated that the ferry and other local businesses are being affected. A counsellor noted that when Dittisham was listed as a transport route to Greenway previously there was considerable concern amongst residents about the large number of cars parking on Riverside Road due to overflow from the full Ham Car Park, and they favoured the status quo. Another Cllr suggested a meeting between the Car Park Working Party and the National Trust to review the available facts. County Cllr Hawkins noted that the Dartmouth Paignton Steam Railway will have a new Greenway Halt this summer (just before the tunnel on the downhill run) and we might consider advertising Dittisham there.

*Action: Clerk to contact National Trust at Greenway and arrange a meeting with Cllr Walker and the Car Park Working Party.*

#### **21/12.5 South West Water**

A counsellor raised concerns about the impact of South West Water's (SWW) activities in The Ham Car Park:

1. Damage to the road:

There are holes which will require filling and resurfacing. It was acknowledged that SWW will make good as required by the terms of the Agreement.

2. Height of new building:

It was stated that new buildings are quite high compared with the original installation which was ground level except for a control house constructed to suit the area. It was conveyed that concerns are being raised by members of the public about the new buildings being higher than we expected. It was asked why this is the case.

3. Screening and visibility

It was noted that the site was previously reasonably well screened. Two trees have been lost as part of the works; and the hedge, wall, and fence form insufficient screening for the current installation. It was stated the site is now visible from the Level.

It was requested SWW be reminded of their obligations.

*Action: Clerk to arrange a meeting between SWW and Cllrs Walker, Stothart and Faulkner.*

### **22/12 Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda**

#### **22/12.1 Changes to Primary Highway Salting Network**

The last planned additional bin, at the entrance to The Level Carpark, has been installed. It was commented that the green bins are more suitable to an AONB. The possibility of painting the yellow grit bins was raised, but not decided.

*Action: The Parish Council's Snow Warden decision and the effect of the County Council Winter Gritting Policy will be reviewed in April 2012, as previously decided.*

### **22/12.2 Village Children's Christmas party**

The Village Children's Christmas party payments are being finalised. The total cost is well within the budget.

### **22/12.3 Contract for Replacement Clerk**

The contract has been delayed due to other time commitments. It is anticipated it will be finalised shortly.

*Action: Clerk/ Chair to report*

### **22/12.4 Filling the Vacancy for a Councillor**

The notice period to call for a bye-election expires on Friday 3 February 2012.

Advertisements calling for volunteers will be posted on Monday 6 February 2012, with the closing date for applications Friday 24 February to allow for consideration prior to the next Parish Council meeting. It is anticipated arrangements will be made to talk to volunteers immediately prior to the Council meeting and for the Council to vote on the selection of the new Councillor at the next Parish Council meeting.

*Action: Clerk to post the required advertisements for a new Councillor.*

## **23/12 Planning / Tree Applications**

### **23/12.1 18/0054/12/TCA T1 - Birch - Fell and Remove. T2 - Cypress - Fell and Remove Low Dolphin, Lower Street, Dittisham, Dartmouth**

No objection: Responded to by Cllr Faulkner, as Trees Officer, prior to the Council meeting because it was a straightforward application and the non-negotiable deadline to respond predated the planned Parish Council meeting.

### **23/12.2 15\_18/0071/12/RM Reserved Matters application for Access, Appearance, Layout (including arrangements for the disposal of foul and surface water) and Scale pursuant to Outline Planning Permission 15/1888/11/O for demolition and removal of prefab building & porta cabins & the erection of a new workshop & office building Distins Boatyard, Old Mill Creek, Dartmouth.**

Unanimous decision: No objection (proposed Cllr Faulkner; seconded Cllr Wotton).

### **23/12.3 18/0082/12/F Householder application for minor amendments to site boundary, house plans and landscape details of planning approval 18/0297/07/F for proposed erection of dwelling Householder application for minor amendments to site boundary, house plans and landscape details of planning approval 18/0297/07/F for proposed erection of dwelling.**

Unanimous decision: No objection (proposed Cllr Stevens; seconded Cllr Stothart).

## **24/12 Communications from South Hams District Council/Devon County Council in relation to planning/tree applications.**

The following communications were noted:

- 18/3098/11/CLP Paddle Steamer Cottage, The Lane, Dittisham, Dartmouth TQ6 0HB Lawful development certificate for proposed extension to porch. Cert of Lawfulness (PROPOSED) Certified
- 18/0012/12/DIS Dunedin House, The Quay, Dittisham, Dartmouth TQ6 0EZ Discharge of condition 4 to planning approval 18/2763/11/F (householder application for construction of single storey, timber framed garden outbuilding) FINAL DECISION

## **25/12 Reports from Councillors with specific responsibilities / Working Parties**

### **25/12.1 Report from Trees Officer**

Cllr Faulkner reported that he has contacted South Hams District Council (SHDC) regarding the removal of the damaged oak tree branch in The Level Car Park. SHDC will arrange for this work.

### **25/12.2 Report from Ham Maintenance Working Party**

Cllr Wotton reported that the marshy area on The Ham is due to an area of the reclaimed land having sunk. Options for draining or raising the land were discussed briefly.

*Action: Cllr Wotton will research available options for improving the marshy area of The Ham and report to the March Parish Council meeting*

Cllr Tucker noted that there is a hedge on Ham Lane which requires trimming back about one meter. It was established that the hedge is on Parish property.

*Action: Cllr Wotton will arrange for the trimming of the overgrown hedge on Ham Lane.*

Cllr Stevens has surveyed the play equipment on The Ham, however a detailed response to the SHDC Inspection Report is pending. There are no immediate safety concerns.

*Action: The Ham Maintenance Working Party will present a response to South Hams District Council Six Monthly Inspection Report of the Play Area on The Ham, and a report on the Working Party's activities to the March Parish Council Meeting.*

### **25/12.3 Report from The Ham Car Park Working Party**

The new parking permits have been distributed over the last two weeks: 350 delivered to about 300 properties, including some duplicates. Six houses have been missed due to unusual difficulties in making the delivery: unable to locate box at all etc. It was noted that few of the new red parking permits have been seen on vehicles.

*Action: Clerk to include the need to change parking permits to the new valid red permits in the Council's submission to the Parish Magazine. Clerk to edit the parking infringement notice to state that the colour of the valid sticker is red. The Ham Car Park Working Party will report in full at the March Parish Council Meeting.*

### **25/12.4 Report from Village Guide Working Party**

The Village Guide Working Party reported that there has been considerable advancement in the preparation of the new Village Guide. Henry Harvey has been asked to prepare a new map of the Village for which he will be paid. It is expected that a draft of the new Village Guide will be ready for the March Parish Council meeting.

*Action: The Village Guide Working Party will report to the March Parish Council meeting.*

## **26/12 Strategic Planning Matters**

### **26/12.1 Progress regarding transfer of assets (the Level Car Park and The Ham Toilets) from SHDC**

Cllr Tucker reported that in principle the transfer of The Level Car Park does not present a problem. It was noted that as the Car Park's owner the Parish Council might become liable for business rates. A nominal purchase fee (£1) would be paid to

SHDC and SHDC would ensure hedges and trees were maintained to a standard acceptable to the Parish Council prior to handover.

From SHDC's perspective the costs of maintaining The Ham Toilets includes the overheads of a staff and a van. Thus it is not viable to devolve one facility at a time: non-fee paying toilet facilities would need to be devolved as a group to generate a cost saving for SHDC. The toilets are expensive for SHDC to maintain and keeping them open in the winter months may become an issue in the long-term. One option might be for the Parish Council to subsidise maintenance of the toilets if ownership continues to reside with SHDC. Additionally if this route becomes a possibility the Parish Council could approach Dart Harbour to ask for financial assistance with this maintenance. It was noted that the winter cleaning is currently frequent and the schedule could be reviewed in consultation with the Parish Council as a cost saving measure.

## **27/12 Financial Matters**

### **27/12.1 Income and Expenditure 2011-12**

The Clerk tabled an updated statement, showing a balance of £18,777.56. It was noted that the Council has a wage payment liability of approximately £4,500, so available funds are less than this amount. The statement was **approved** (proposed Cllr Walker, seconded Cllr Stevens).

### **27/12.2 Preparations for Audit**

The system of Internal Audit and the Dittisham Parish Council Risk Register have been reviewed. The Ham play equipment needs to be added to the Risk Register which will complete the review. The review alerted Cllrs to the risk of travellers camping on The Ham. The meeting agreed that any practical measures must be taken to prevent encampment occurring. The review team noted a broken Ham boundary post. It was also noted that most of the remaining posts are damaged and not sufficiently securely installed. The installation of wooden posts to prevent vehicles going onto The Ham was discussed. These should be high enough to be seen by reversing drivers. One removable barrier is required to allow maintenance and event access to The Ham. Cllr Tucker stated he is having some fencing work done within the next month and because the cost of contractors travelling to site is high it was suggested it could be advisable to have the same contractor do the work required by the Parish Council. This was **agreed** (proposed Cllr Walker, seconded Cllr Stohart). Cllr Faulkner noted that he would also be arranging for posts on the Ham triangle.

The Clerk has held a discussion with a solicitor at SHDC and has been advised that because the Parish has clear ownership of The Ham and is in possession of the necessary supporting documentation, recourse to the County Courts to remove travellers should be straightforward and successful. The process involves filing a Claim, and then going to the County Court to request an Order for Possession of our land. If the travellers did not leave, a further Court attendance would be required to request a Warrant of Possession and an instruction to the Court Bailiffs to evict the travellers. The meeting considered it advisable to employ solicitors to conduct this process on the Parish's behalf rather than to act for ourselves. The Clerk is researching the choice of solicitor so that the process can be conducted rapidly if required.

*Action: Clerk to write to potential solicitors and establish services, terms and a contact solicitor. Cllr Stevens will replace and straighten existing posts as far as practicable as an interim measure. Cllr Tucker to arrange for replacement of the*

*current concrete Ham boundary posts with robust wooden posts, high enough to be seen by reversing drivers and allowing for one removable barrier.*

## **28/12 Correspondence received since the previous meeting**

### **28/12.1 Invitation Exeter Cathedral Service and Garden Party**

The Parish has been given the opportunity to nominate an ‘unsung hero’ and their guest to attend a Special Service being held at Exeter Cathedral to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of HM The Queen and a Garden Party. The Council has unanimously nominated Mr Bill Quick.

### **28/12.2 Fields in Trust (FiT) (National Playing Fields Association)**

The National Playing Fields Association is hoping to create a nation-wide network of protected green spaces. The deeds are changed to protect the use of the space in perpetuity. The Cllrs did not consider this was applicable to The Ham. The information was passed on to Cllr Tucker for consideration by the Trustees of the football field.

### **28/12.3 Planning System Explained Information Session**

The Devon Association of Local Council and the Campaign to Protect Rural England are running three free half day sessions on the planning system. The Clerk will attend and report back to Council.

## **29/12 Report from Devon County Council / South Hams District Council**

### **29/12.1 Report from South Hams District Council**

Cllr Tucker reported that SHDC has chosen to increase Council Tax by £3.36 or 2.5% in the 2012/13 financial year. Although SHDC has accepted a Government incentive in exchange for freezing Council Tax in the current financial year, it was decided by SHDC that freezing Council Tax for a further year would lead to subsequent Council Tax increase of 5% in order to protect long-term services and it was considered that such an increase would not be tolerated by constituents. There is an elector fund (£1/elector in Dartmouth, 10p/elector Dittisham) for which we can bid. It was asked that projects which would require £500-£600 be considered in discussion at the March Parish Council meeting. The Locality Budget has increased from £1,000 to £1,500. In the next financial year SHDC may have £300-£400 it can grant to charities such as the Dittisham Jubilee Fund.

*Action: Ideas for projects with a budget of approximately £500 for discussion at the March Parish Council meeting.*

### **29/12.2 Report from Devon County Council**

County Cllr Hawkins reported that the DCC budget is not yet decided. There is a budget meeting in 2-3 weeks. He noted there will probably be no increase. Cllr Hawkins offered his apologies for the next Parish Council meeting.

## **30/12 Date of the next meeting of Dittisham Parish Council**

The next full meeting of the Parish Council will take place on **Wednesday 7 March at 7.30 p.m.** in the Village Hall.