



DITCHLING PARISH COUNCIL

Ditchling Village Hall 18 Lewes Road Ditchling East Sussex BN6 8TT
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Parish Clerk: Sarah Mamoany Deputy Clerk: Derek Blackhall

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held remotely via the Zoom platform, on Monday 29 March 2021 at 6.30pm.

Present: Cllrs McBeth (Chairman), Ingham, Orme, Sansom, Farrands, Forester, Rowling, Jones, Madden, Sarah Mamoany (Clerk) and Derek Blackhall (Deputy Clerk)

Maria Caulfield MP
Leigh Palmer – Head of Planning Lewes District Council
Cllr. Rob Mills – Westmeston Parish Council
5 members of the public

Public Participation:

The Chairman welcomed members of the public and prior to the meeting opening read out a statement regarding item 11.2 on the agenda as noted below:

The Parish Council are aware of correspondence that has been circulated regarding the reduction of the speed limit in Spatham Lane involving potential funding and in view of this I would like to provide some clarity on the current situation before inviting members of the public to speak.

- *A feasibility study was completed by ESCC Highways in February 2019 for the Beacon Parish Traffic Group. This group is made up of members of Ditchling, Westmeston and Streat Parish Councillors together with other representatives. It has no authorised powers to allocate funds from Ditchling Parish Council and reports back to the full Council.*
- *The conclusion of this report stated 'A scheme of measures to introduce a 40mph speed limit is therefore recommended, including new '40' terminal signs, '40' roundels, repeater signs and possible coloured surfacing. Further consultation shall be carried out by BPTG to ensure that the community are fully supportive of this scheme and that key stakeholder groups are accepting of the proposals prior to making a formal Community Match application.*
- *The estimated costs for the scheme are £35,000.*
- *An application for match funding to ESCC Highways was submitted in February 2019 by Westmeston Parish Council. No decision has been made on this application and we understand that this will not be considered until later this year, possibly December due to the impacts of COVID.*
- *Ditchling Parish Council agreed at its full Council meeting on the 29 April 2019 to 'support the reduction in speed limit scheme in principle subject to funding being available'*
- *Ditchling Parish Council have never agreed to any financial figure despite being quoted by Westmeston Parish Council as agreeing to support the project with £8,750 in February 2019.*
- *No money has been allocated in the Council's budget and therefore would have to come from Ditchling Parish Councils general reserves or earmarked CIL funding.*
- *The Council today will therefore consider the best way they can support this project moving forwards and understand and acknowledge the concerns of residents in Spatham Lane about the speed of traffic along this road and the issues of safety to walkers, horse riders and cyclists.*
- *To put this in perspective, we as a Council also have traffic problems on the Bostal, in Beacon Road, through the entire Ditchling village centre and the whole length of the B2112 as far as Wivelsfield; all of which require specialist consideration, time, communications and funding.*
- *Recommendations were made in a Local Area Transport Scheme Report by East Sussex County Council Transport Strategy Team bank in 2006, updated in 2010 and 2017. As far as I am aware none of the recommendations contained in that report have been implemented. It is stated in LATS 2010 'introduce measures to slow traffic in Spatham Lane, such as traffic calming, priority working, narrow the lane, introduce more warning signage, and reduce the speed limit to 40mph.'*

Cllr. Rob Mills Chairman of Westmeston Parish Council noted his concerns about the danger on Spatham Lane to walkers, cyclists and horse riders and residents. Following the feasibility study no discussions should be required that Ditchling PC put in the share of £8750 as Westmeston PC have raised the sum of £8750 thinking that DPC was doing the same. He advised that they needed to be in a position to advise ESCC that they have the funds so that they can move forward with the project which was started over 10 years ago and hoped for a positive outcome

A resident of Spatham Lane spoke about the incidents with horse riders and how a horse had been killed and raised concerns of possible further fatalities if the speeds were not reduced on the road.

A resident noted that there are traffic problems throughout the Parish and other areas have needs as well and there is only a limited amount of money available.

A representative from the Ditchling Village Society noted that the Beacon Parish Traffic Group had been working towards moving forwards with the traffic issues as a complete picture by engaging a Traffic Consultant and working with ESCC Highways.

MP Maria Caulfield spoke in relation to the Local Plan Housing numbers which she was aware are a huge concern to residents in the Lewes District areas and noted the following:

- The LDC Local Plan is approaching 5 years old and as from May will be out of date.
- The confirmed new annual housing numbers have increased from 345 to 782 which will be required over the next 10 years.
- During the process of making a new plan measures can still be used to challenge developers who will be coming forwards with applications whilst the local authority is in this position – Neighbourhood Plans will still have weight and it is important to keep them up to date if they were agreed more than 2 years ago; in regards to the 5-year land supply, it is possible to look at Part 2 of the Local Plan and a Planning Inspector might acknowledge this as it was agreed at a later date than Part 1.
- Making arguments against why these figures cannot be met due to constraints such as areas being in the SDNP and conservation areas; however the Planning Inspector may not agree with these
- The site in East Chiltington owned by Eaton College was mentioned and Maria advised she is in support of the campaign to stop the development and to get it called in by the Secretary of State.

Leigh Palmer – Head of Planning Lewes District Council spoke in relation to the Local Plan Housing numbers and noted the following:

- The Local Plan will reach maturity in May 2021 and a new plan will not be adopted until 2023 which currently gives developers a window of opportunity; however, the current plan still does give some weight.
- LDC launched a call for sites to engage all landowners and these sites are currently being evaluated.
- The issues/options document consultation will be available in the summer which will give broad principles and consider if disbursed growth or a new settlement are appropriate. At that stage no specific sites will be mentioned in relation to a new settlement.
- The figures were confirmed as 782 although site constraints may lower this figure, however LDC will be looking at filling the gap of 782.

MP Maria Caulfield also noted the concerns being raised by Councils about remote meetings not being allowed to continue from the 7th May and she is supportive that Councils have the option to hold remote meetings in the future.

1.	Declarations of Interest – no declarations of interest were made	
2.	Apologies of absence – Cllr. Burman.	
3.	To approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 22 February 2021 Cllr. Orme requested amendments were made as follows: Item 3 Minutes of previous meeting (18 January) Item 10.1 to be amended by deleting 'and he' in line 2 and inserting 'who had'. Item 10.1 Beacon Parishes Traffic Group: In line 1 after 'LDC/ESCC Highways', insert 'combined with Ditchling PC funds of £5000 already allocated'.	

	The minutes were resolved by the Council and it was noted these will be signed by the Chairman when circumstances allow as the meeting was being held remotely.	
4.	Clerks Report The Clerk had circulated her report prior to the meeting to all Councillors.	
5.	COVID-19 Update 5.1 To discuss future meeting arrangements and any matters arising. The Clerk noted that the government were not renewing the legislation that is currently in place to carry out remote meetings and this will expire on the 7 May 2021. Therefore, the Council resolved to hold the Annual Parish Council meeting on the 5 May instead of the 24 May. The Council will write to MP Maria Caulfield to raise their concerns as to why the legislation will not be extended. 5.2 To discuss arrangements for the Annual Parish Meeting. The Council resolved that they will not hold a meeting this year due to the COVID restrictions and that the Chairman's report of the Council's activities will be published in the Parish Magazine due to be distributed in early May. The Chairman noted he had also made it clear in his article that members of the public were welcome and encouraged to attend Council meetings to ask questions.	Clerk
6.	Planning The following comments were resolved by the Council. 6.1 6.1 SDNP/21/00521/HOUS & SDNP/21/00522/LIS - 80 East End Lane Ditchling BN6 8UR - Installation of timber vehicular and pedestrian gates to the existing drive – no comment. 6.2 SDNP/21/00511/FUL - Weathervane 35 Shirleys Ditchling Hassocks East Sussex BN6 8UD - Demolition of existing garage to provide for a two storey extension to the side and single storey rear extension, two storey front gable extension and associated alterations. The Council object to the application due to the following reasons; The percentage increase in floor area is shown as 34.75%, when the existing garage is included in the assessment. The GIA of existing outbuildings should only be included if they have been used for ancillary domestic purposes (paragraph 7.92 of the South Downs Local Plan). There is no indication that the existing garage was so used and so it should be excluded, in which case the increase in floor area is 56%. The existing dwelling has 2 bedrooms. The revision notes to the amended floor plans record that the proposed study was previously intended to be a bedroom. This room is of a size suitable for a bedroom and could so be used in future. The dwelling should therefore be considered to be 4-bedroom, i.e. no longer a medium-sized dwelling. The proposed development would, by the increase in floor area and by the loss of a medium-sized dwelling, as defined by the South Downs Local Plan, be contrary to Policy SD31: Extensions to Existing Dwellings and Provision of Annexes and Outbuildings of the South Downs Local Plan. 6.3 SDNP/21/00602/HOUS - 7 Mulberry Lane Ditchling BN6 8UH - Demolition of existing garage and replacement with single storey extension and replacement of pergola, existing windows, fascia and flat roof – no comment. 6.4 SDNP/21/00775/TPO - 15 Beacon Road Ditchling BN6 8U T1 - Beech - dismantle to 6 foot monolith. Large wound at approximately 10m, with rot T2 - Previously reduced, twin stem Beech. Re-reduce to maintain life span. Included join where tree breaks into 2 stems - movement in wind and water egress – no comment. 6.5 SDNP/21/01118/TCA - 2 Barnfield Gardens Ditchling BN6 8UE - Horse Chesnut tree-Remove all elements of crown overhanging garden of Aspin, Farm Lane – no comment. 6.6 Any other applications received since publication of agenda – no further applications were received.	
7.	Lewes District Council Local Plan 7.1 To receive reports from LDC Head of Planning and MP Maria Caulfield These reports were received as noted above and the Council thanked Maria Caulfield and Leigh Palmer for attending the meeting. 7.2 Plumpton Parish Council – request to join inter-parish steering group in relation to site 11PL (LDC Call for Sites) at East Chiltington – It was noted that the Council had sent in comments to LDC relating to this site and Cllr. McBeth offered to attend the steering group meetings representing Ditchling with Cllr. Rowling offering to attend if Cllr. McBeth was not available.	Cllr. McBeth/Cllr . Rowling

8.	<p>Parish Magazine Update</p> <p>The Deputy Clerk reported that he had received enough articles and was just awaiting the final copy from two contributors. Cllr. McBeth requested if the magazine could be published prior to the 5th May due to the change in the Parish Council meeting dates.</p>	Deputy Clerk
9.	<p>Car Park Update</p> <p>9.1 Update on progress of project, next stages and associated costs. The Clerk noted that the SDNP had raised some queries in relations to the discharge of conditions and were awaiting a response from Gould and Co and she had chased this up today. The specification is awaiting some final drawings to go alongside it and the Clerk is looking at the tender process to ensure the Council comply with the required Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.</p> <p>9.2 To discuss the requirement for a single light unit within the car park and associated costs. The Clerk noted that due to the original planning application having no lighting on it and the fact the current design has one solar light, it will be necessary to submit a Variation of Condition if the light unit remains in the plans. Gould & Co will submit the necessary paperwork, with just the planning authority fees to pay of £117. The Council resolved to proceed with the Variation of Condition as it was felt that the light would be a safety feature and should be in the design if possible. It was noted the light complies with the SDNP Dark Skies Policy.</p> <p>9.3 To discuss the quotations for directional signage and line marking required for the tender specification The Clerk had received two quotations to supply detailed design drawings for the external directional signage and white line markings. Cllr. Orme offered to put together the specification details which he felt would be adequate for the purpose of the tender document and will liaise with the Clerk and ESCC Highways as required.</p>	Clerk Clerk Cllr. Orme
10.	<p>Finance</p> <p>10.1 To receive the bank reconciliations. The reconciliation was circulated dated 28.02.2021 and was resolved by the Council.</p> <p>10.2 To approve the schedule of payments for March 2021. The schedule of payments was circulated and the payments amounting to £6,562.29 were resolved by the Council.</p>	
11.	<p>Beacon Parish Traffic Group</p> <p>11.1 Update on funding and traffic consultancy study. Cllr. Orme confirmed that he had received an email from Jon Wheeler (ESCC) confirming that S106 funds of £18,129 are in the process of being transferred to Ditchling Parish Council. LDC hold some of the S106 funds so this will need to be transferred to ESCC first. The Clerk noted she would speak to Emma Kemp at LDC to see if she could get an idea of timescales. Cllr. Orme felt that by the April meeting we should be in a position to appoint the traffic consultants and obtain the feasibility report in late summer/early autumn, once we had control of the S106 funds which would be put together with the £5,000 from Ditchling Parish Council 2020/21 budget allocated for this purpose. It was noted that this would fit into the timelines regarding the match funding application that would be discussed in item 11.2. It was noted that prior to the April meeting the Beacon Parish Traffic Group need to meet and perhaps should be made into a more formal group in order to provide further input for the consultant's brief. The previous 2006/2010/2017 LATS reports were discussed and it was noted that these appeared to be a statement of intent, rather than proposals that were shown to be actually viable measures.</p> <p>11.2 To discuss support for the Spatham lane 40mph speed limit restriction and associated costs. It was noted by Cllr. McBeth at the start of the meeting that Ditchling Parish Council have never agreed to any financial figure despite being quoted by Westmeston Parish Council as agreeing to support the project with £8,750 in February 2019. Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated a report, which included 3 emails and 5 letters from residents of Spatham Lane and the Chairman of Westmeston PC supporting the project for the speed restriction.</p> <p>The Council discussed the issue and the following was noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that the whole village had traffic issues and it was difficult to argue as to which areas were more important; • the whole problem should be looked at together as the B2112 also has major issues; • a concise report that looks at the whole of the village should assist with the Council making informed decisions on what the best way forward would be; 	Cllr. Orme/ Clerk

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> if no decisions are made at the moment on the funding, it has little implication on the Spatham Lane project moving forwards as the match funding application will not be decided until later in the year, possibly December; the wording in ESCC feasibility study raised concerns of the Council committing funds of £8,750 as it stated <i>'It is their view that the impact of a 40mph speed limit in terms of speed and casualty reduction would be minimal and would therefore not be considered a priority to fund from the County Council Road Safety Budget. With this said they have however confirmed that they would not object to the introduction of the lower speed limit along Spatham Lane.'</i> <p>The Council resolved to defer making a decision on the funding for this project which has been requested by Westmeston Parish Council in the sum of £8,750 and to proceed with obtaining the traffic consultant's report. Once the consultant's report has been received, they will be in a position to make an informed decision on the funding request prior to the deadline for the match funding application.</p> <p>It was noted that information circulated by Westmeston Parish Council was incorrect in relation to the facts of the situation with funding and the Clerk was asked to write formally to request that information was corrected. An article would also be published in the Parish Magazine to inform residents of the current situation.</p>	Clerk
12.	<p>Street Furniture</p> <p>12.1 To consider locations of additional bins.</p> <p>The locations were considered for an additional bin in the village centre. The Clerk was asked to contact LDC to see if a suitable location could be found at the entrance to the Village Hall Car Park on LDC owned land as the Village Hall Committee had advised they did not want a bin placed at the front of the hall.</p>	Clerk
13.	<p>Recreation Ground and Burial Ground</p> <p>13.1 To note current lease situation on Ditchling Pavilion.</p> <p>The Clerk reported that the current lease expires on the 24 March 2022 and suggested that discussions should take place with regards to how both parties wish to proceed. A meeting will be arranged with the Pavilion representatives and Cllrs. Madden, Ingham, Sansom and Farrands will attend together with the Clerk.</p> <p>13.2 To discuss Ditchling Cricket Club fees for 2020 season.</p> <p>Following a request from the Cricket Club in regards to the effect that COVID had on the playing season the Council resolved to reduce the fees by 50% for 2020 and the Clerk will send an amended invoice.</p> <p>13.3 To discuss continuation of tennis court maintenance</p> <p>The Council agreed in 2019 to pay for the monthly maintenance of the tennis courts, which involves clearing the court of debris from trees etc. This has not been reviewed and the Council agreed that it should be considered if this is appropriate as the club is a member only club and it was noted that membership has increased over the past 12 months. Therefore, the Clerk was asked to request a copy of the club's current accounts and the Council will review the maintenance agreement at the next meeting. It was suggested it might be more appropriate if they needed additional support that they apply for a grant in the future.</p> <p>13.4 To sign Deed of Grants</p> <p>The Council resolved the Deed of Grants and these will be signed when possible due to the meeting being held remotely.</p>	Clerk/ Councillors Clerk Clerk Clerk/ Councillors
14.	<p>Correspondence & Consultations</p> <p>14.1 Royal British Legion Centenary request for Torch of Remembrance – Saturday 28 August 2021</p> <p>Cllr. Jones advised the local RBL branch had not been informed of the event. The Council resolved that they would assist in the involvement of the event, which would involve a beacon.</p> <p>14.2 LDC Road Closure Consultation - Cycle Race – Sunday 7 November – The Council made no comment. It was noted that the Ditchling Village Society had been unable to obtain a road closure for volunteers to litter pick and the Clerk was asked to see if she could assist with this any further.</p> <p>14.3 Advance notification of cycle event - Saturday 24th April 2021 – noted no comment made.</p>	Clerk Clerk

15.	<p>Written and verbal reports by representatives</p> <p>15.1 Village Hall Management Committee – Cllr. Ingham advised the Parish Council office was being inspected on the 1 April regarding the decorating and damp issues reported.</p> <p>15.2 Ditchling Village Association – no comments</p> <p>15.3 Ditchling Pavilion Club – no comments</p> <p>15.4 Lewes District Association of Local Councils – no comment.</p>	
16.	<p>Future meeting dates and items for future agenda.</p> <p>Cllr. Jones noted that the enforcement officer at the SDNP had been made aware of activities at Mac's Farm that did possibly did not comply with the planning conditions; this also involved LDC.</p> <p>Parish Council Meeting – 26 April 2021 at 6.30pm (remote meeting)</p> <p>Annual Parish Council Meeting – 5 May 2021 at 6.30pm (remote meeting)</p>	

The meeting closed at 20.40 hrs.

Schedule of Payments for March 2021

Date	Payee Name	£ Total Amnt	
01/03/2021	Vision ICT	£705.00	New website
01/03/2021	InReach Print	£42.00	Photocopying
01/03/2021	Panda Security	£28.19	Antivirus software
03/03/2021	Amazon (Timeslink Ltd)	£11.99	Replacement office clock
03/03/2021	Amazon	£32.79	Post box outside for office (Village Hall using old one)
22/03/2021	Lewes District Council	£1,539.00	replacement bins
22/03/2021	Simon Woodley	£1,176.00	Tree work (ash trees) and burial ground driveway works
23/03/2021	Parkers Building Supplies	£188.50	shingle burial ground driveway work
29/03/2021	Staff March Salaries	£1,796.41	March salaries
29/03/2021	HMRC	£476.85	PAYE March
29/03/2021	East Sussex Pension Fund	£492.37	Staff pensions March
29/03/2021	Zoom	£14.39	Remote meeting
29/03/2021	Brightpay	£58.80	Payroll software
	Total payments	£6,562.29	