



Minutes of Ditchingham Annual Parish Meeting
Monday 18th May 2015 - 7.30 p.m.
Ditchingham Village Hall

Action
by:

Councillors present: Julian Green - Chair (JG), Keith Weston - Vice Chair (KW), Brendon Bernard (BB), Rev. Reg Kirkpatrick (RK), Colin Mison (CM), Richard Mulley (RM), Stephen Read (SR).

Clerk/RFO: Sally Chapman.

Apologies: None.

Also present: County Councillor Somerville, District Councillor Bernard and 6 members of the public.

Before the meeting commenced the Chair of Ditchingham Parish explained that procedure dictates that the Chair of the Council, if present, should chair the meeting, he welcomed those present, and explained that two separate meetings would be taking place. The first of these being the **Annual Parish Meeting** to be followed by the **Annual Parish Council Meeting**.

MEETING

1. The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 2014

To be "taken as read" proposed RK; 2nd KW, unanimous. Minutes signed by the Chair upon completion of the meeting.

2. Any business not on the agenda arising from those minutes.

None

3. Chairman's report on the Council's activities

The Chair read out his report (full report doc. 1 attached). Main points:

- Thanked the Clerk, retiring Councillors Jane Chadd, Gillian Ogden and noting Vic Cossey, who first become a parish councillor in 1969 and gave 46 years of public service, for their work and support.
- Thanked the retiring District Councillor, Pauline Allen, for the significant contribution she has made to our community and County Councillor Margaret Somerville for support on issues and especially concerning the B1332.
- The four vacancies for co-option on the Parish Council.
- Parish Council website.

4. Reports giving a summary of the year's activities from the Council's Working Parties:

Planning & Highways

Councillor Weston read out his report (full report doc. 2 attached). Main points:

- Planning Applications and Decisions
- B1332 - liaising with NCC over this road and the 17 accidents between Frogg's Hall and the bottom of Hollow Hill.
- Hollow Hill footpath.
- Japanese Knotweed in the village.



- Foul Water Flooding.
- Speed Limits in the village.

Maintenance & Environment

Councillor Kirkpatrick read out his report (full report doc. 3 attached). Main points:

- Significant work has been carried out in the play area restoring the BMX track.
- The Council has employed a very good litter picker and play equipment inspector.
- The allotments are being well used and well maintained.
- The cemetery is well maintained and a family has sponsored a bench.

Local Development

Councillor Bernard gave a report on behalf of retired Councillor Chadd (full report doc. 4 attached). Main points:

- Spending £20,000, the first tranche of the S106 money and suggestions for the remaining £60,000.
- A community website.
- Improving internet in the village.

Finance & Resources

The Chair included his report on F&R activities in his main report (see doc. 1).

Main points:

- Budget and precept reasoning for 2015-16.
- Improved governance matters and policies.

5. Report from the Police

Not present. No report provided.

6. Report from the District Councillor

District Councillor Bernard read out his report (full report doc. 5 attached). Main points:

- Retirement of District Councillor Allen.
- The Local Development Framework is now almost complete.
- Building and Planning – successful challenge in the High Court.
- Council tax not raised this year for the 7th year.
- Ward Budget of £1,000 spent within the 4 villages.

7. Report from the County Councillor.

County Councillor Somerville read out her report (full report doc. 6 attached). Main points:

- NCC is seeking the views of the public concerning the flood risk strategy.
- Adult Social Care – Mental Health social care was taken back into NCC in October 2014 with increased communication at GP and Community Health level.
- Future Voices – a new monthly EDP supplement written by young people.
- NCC – no longer open 24/7, saving £80,000 per year.
- Norfolk Health and Overview Committee – reviewing workforce numbers.

8. Report from Community Groups.

None present.



9. Report from Ditchingham United Charities

The Chair Keith Weston of Ditchingham United Charities read out his report (full report doc. 7 attached). Main points:

- Mr Vic Cossey is the (unpaid) Clerk.
- The sum of £18350.33 has been disbursed and grants have been recently given for all applicants.

10. To receive a report from Ditchingham Primary School

Rev. Kirkpatrick, Trustee, gave a verbal report. Main points:

- The school is thriving and all classes are full.
- Now a DNEAT academy and partnered with Gillingham School, sharing a Head and resources.
- The Ofsted inspection is imminent.

11. Public Questions

- A parishioner requested the cow parsley to be trimmed down on the banks of the dip before the annual fete. The Chair advised it was cut twice a year at the beginning and end of season and left throughout the year for the preservation of nature.
- A request for a bus shelter at the village hall. Duly noted.
- Councillors were informed of 'near misses' at the Pirnough Street junction. Duly noted.
- Councillors were asked why regular Council reports were not in the Parishioner magazine. The Chair referred the parishioner to the Council's comments already published in the May 2015 magazine in that respect.
- Councillors were asked who is responsible for the tarmac on the entrance of Green Lane. KW advised he would investigate.
- Concerns were expressed at cars and motorbikes meeting in Green Lane in an unlit area and exchanging items. The Police have been informed.
- Glass recycling banks – would they continue in the future. The Chair informed that no formal decision had been made from SNDC.

Meeting closed at 8.10pm.



Doc. 1.
DITCHINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL - A YEAR'S REVIEW

I would like to introduce the Ditchingham Annual Parish meeting 2015. Please note there are 2 meetings tonight. This is the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING. Before commencing I shall simply acquaint those present with some rules and procedures regarding annual parish meetings. So briefly:

- **The purpose of the Annual Parish Meeting?** To allow registered electors to discuss parish affairs and to pass resolutions thereon. This meeting is also an opportunity for the Parish Council and community group leaders to explain their activities over the last year... I'm not sure yet who will wish to speak; we shall soon find out!
- **Who can attend the meeting? And can I speak?** Anyone may attend but only registered electors in the parish may speak and vote. Should you wish to speak I will ask you to stand so that all persons present can identify who is talking; and I shall ask for your name and address for the purpose of the minutes.
- **Who will chair the meeting?** The Chairman of the Parish Council is obliged to chair the meeting if present. In his absence the vice chairman must preside if present. If neither is able to attend, then the meeting will elect a chairman from those electors present.
- **Will Parish Councillors be there?** Although there is no compulsion, Councillors normally attend; they will speak if required, but the purpose of the meeting is to enable the ordinary electors to have their say.
- **Will notes be taken of the meeting?** A written record of the meeting will be taken by the Parish Clerk to keep in a special book. The rules on the signature and admissibility of minutes are the same as those for Parish Council meetings.
- **How long will the meeting last?** As long as need be within reason; previously meetings in Ditchingham have lasted about 30 minutes... it really depends on those present and the number of questions and the discussions that are raised.
- **Will the Press be there?** If they choose! The rules for press admission are the same as any Council meeting.

The **Annual Parish Council Meeting**: will follow immediately after the close of the Annual Parish meeting. This also is a special meeting, when contrasted with the other five Council meetings in the year. At the annual meeting the Council: elects the chairman and the vice chairman; makes other annual appointments [to committees and advisory working parties] and makes resolutions on other business matters such as insurances, risk management policies, etc.

At the end of the Annual Parish Meeting there will be a 5 minute break before I convene the ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING... not least to ensure that the new term Councillors have completed the statutory return. Thank you.

Once the Annual parish meeting is convened, as retiring Chair of DPC, as is custom and to some extent statutory requirement, I and other members of the Council will report on the years events. As parishioners you are welcome at the Chair's discretion to ask questions on these reports.

Without further ado, and without stealing the thunder of my colleagues around the table as Chairs of our sub committees and working parties, I will briefly summarise the year's activities.

Before doing so however I would like to remark to all those present, that's Councillors and members of the public, that the Chair will not permit questions in respect of any of the reports until item 11. This is in the interest of ensuring that the meeting is conducted briefly and in a structured manner. Thank you.



Firstly, I would like to thank Sally Chapman our new Clerk. Sally started as Clerk in January last year. So she has now completed her first year as Clerk and has made an enormous improvement in the running of the Council's administrative affairs. It was a tough challenge for her to pick up the many loose ends but with her assistance, the new Council Chair should have every confidence that the affairs of the Council are properly managed.

This is the first Annual Parish Meeting after Council elections. Our full 'contingent' of Councillors is 11 (the Clerk is an officer and cannot vote). At the last elections you will be aware that there were only 7 nominations, but as the Council only requires 4 members to be quorate, the Council is properly constituted. Given there remain 4 vacancies on the Council at the current time the issue of cooption will be discussed further in the Annual Parish Council meeting (following this meeting).

However, looking backwards, I would like to thank Brendan Bernard who was co-opted onto the Council May 2014. Brendon moved to Ditchingham in 2013 and is now semi-retired with main hobbies, sport, walking, gardening and travel. Brendan is also the new district councillor for the Broome & Ditchingham ward.

I would like to thank the retiring Councillors who for personal reasons decided not to stand this time round, Jane Chadd, Gillian Ogden, and particularly Vic Cossey who as a parish councillor since 1969 has offered some 46 years public service!

I would also like to thank Pauline Allen the retiring District Councillor for the significant contribution that she has made to our community and also Margret Somerville our County Councillor for ensuring that Norfolk County Council continue to remember that Ditchingham continues to exist... Councillor Somerville has been notably supportive on issues concerning the B1332 and I'm sure that the new Council will not let her rest in that respect.

Over the last couple of years the Council has made significant progress with 'new ways of working'... and you will shortly hear reports from the Chairs of our committees in respect of:

- Planning & Highways (Keith Weston)
- Local Development (Brendan Bernard)
- Maintenance & Environment (Reg Kirkpatrick)

As Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee I will now include a brief summary of these activities in this report before handing over to my colleagues who will tell you more about their areas of responsibility.

With regard to Finance and Resources we have:

- Continued to ensure that the better governance matters remarked on last year are maintained. These include matters of insurances, employee affairs, risk management, systems of internal control
- Reviewed our portfolio of existing policies and added new policies to include Allotments, Cemetery, Fly-Posting and Reserves and while these are arguably bureaucratic, are necessary to comply with legislation and helps ensure that the Council makes its decisions in a fair and equal manner.
- Recommended to Council a budget for 2015-16.

As a Council we agreed to levy a precept of £34,250. Why another large increase? As with the decision for the past three years the decision to increase the precept was carefully considered. Again, the Council took a long term view, giving consideration to the current political agenda, where it appears through the various announcements and consultations through the office of Eric Pickles (Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government) that there is clear continued, albeit lesser, intent to force a freeze, or cap on parish precepts. But more significantly, the Council is mindful of national advice that local councils



(including Parish Councils) should keep maintain adequate reserves for specific purposes, and for general reserves.

The Council continues to maintain its web site. On the web site you can find contact details of all Councillors and of the Clerk. You can also find copies of agendas and past meeting papers (minutes). You can also find copies of our Committee Terms of Reference and our policies.

So that's it from me as Chair for my report. I will now ask the Chairs of our subcommittees and working parties to give their reports, and remind those presents to hold their questions to item 11.

Thank you

Julian Green
Chair, Ditchingham Parish Council

Doc. 2

**DITCHINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS
COMMITTEE**

Chair's Report to Annual Meeting 2015

Planning During the year the committee has processed a number of planning applications via South Norfolk Council and the Broads Authority (the planning authorities). Applications have included: change of use of existing buildings; extensions to dwellings; minor changes to plans previously approved and proposed new builds. The Chair has responded, without reference to the committee, where plans were either non-contentious or they clearly breached Council policies. Two new builds were recommended for refusal as they were proposed in gardens.

Major upgrading has taken place at All Hallows Convent. Emmaus Norwich at Ditchingham, part of an international charity housing homeless and vulnerable people has converted former convent buildings into accommodation for companions and staff. The premises are sustained by the collection and resale of unwanted household items.

After a lengthy process the decision to allow proposed new housing in Lamberts Way was overturned following SNC's appeal (supported by DPC.)

The development of The Maltings has proceeded at a good pace with all phases completed or underway. Parishioners who have expressed an opinion all agree that the housing development is of a high standard. At the time of writing some 80 dwellings are occupied. There are some on-going issues about the provision of telephone lines to the new residents.

At the time of writing the pedestrian footbridge, to bypass the bridge at Ditchingham Dam, is ready and access is being built. This facility is well behind the time the developers originally told us it would be ready.

B1332 This committee has, again, spent lots of time and energy liaising with NCC over this road. In the last calendar year there were 17 accidents between Frogg's Hall and the bottom of Hollow Hill. We have commissioned work from NCC's highway rangers and kept our Highways Engineer informed about accidents. NCC has replaced and cleaned out some gullies, washed road signs and repaired some defective parts of the road. The latter is in preparation for the road to be surface dressed (in May); this has been brought forward from 2017/8. Councillors Mulley and Weston have used the speed awareness monitor on the B1332 (and elsewhere in the village).

A feasibility study was carried out for a proposed alternative footpath up Hollow Hill with a view to applying to the NCC Partnership Scheme for part funding. With



uncertainty over numbers of pedestrians likely to use the footpath, the Council voted against applying for this funding. Since then a consultation carried out by an individual parishioner has revealed considerable support for the path. The Council may be asked to look again at this proposal.

Other Matters

Last year Japanese knotweed was discovered in Tunneys Lane. Norfolk County Council dealt with it and there is no sign of it, so far, this year.

There have been a number of instances of foul water flooding the bottom end of Station Road. Councillor Weston and District Councillor Allen gave support to the worst affected household and liaised with various authorities. Anglian Water is upgrading certain pumps locally and this should solve the problem.

At the behest of parishioners a small number of speed limit reductions were explored – Bakers Lane, Loddon Road and Tunneys Lane. There are clear guidelines in relation to speed limits and no changes were agreed.

Keith Weston
Chair Planning and Highways

Doc. 3

Report from Maintenance & Environment Committee

Tabled Chair's Report for May 2015 Annual Meeting

Play Areas:

Both play areas continue to be well used. The area around the goal posts at both sites is showing considerable signs of wear and we may have to look at moving the posts to give the ground time to recover. The maintenance to the areas is our biggest expenditure and we are grateful that Paul Austin has taken over the responsibility of checking the equipment and providing a detailed report to the clerk for matters that need to be addressed.

The Waveney & Yare Community Payback Unit have done a very good job clearing the old BMX track and a number of young people are using it. We will continue to monitor the area and assess if we need any more work done by this team.

Allotments:

The allotments continue to be well used and well maintained. We will monitor their use over this growing season and any that seem to be being neglected the holder will be contacted with a view to either work the plot or give it up.

Cemetery:

The cemetery continues to be well maintained. A bench has now been placed in the ashes area, paid for by a family and will be appreciated by those visiting that area.

We will review the cemetery fees this year as they have fallen considerably behind adjoining authorities.

I would like to thank my committee for their support this year.

The council are very happy to receive ideas of how the community would like to see any these facilities improved.



Reg Kirkpatrick 18th May 2015
Chair of Maintenance & Environment Committee

Doc. 4.

ANNUAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2014/15

The main work of this Committee this last year was dealing with the first tranche of the 106 money. Meetings were held to determine how the first £20,000 should be spent. Local bids were considered and money has now been allocated through the Broads Authority from Livsey the builders.

The following recipients were successful Emmaus, Nescab, the Village Hall Management Committee and the Parish Council to spend specifically on outdoor furniture.

Suggestions for the remaining £60,000 are solar panels for the Village Hall and a good sign.

- A basketball area on the Dip.
- A bus shelter at the village Hall.
- Should we save the money to be spent in a lump sum on a larger project?
The Broads Authority favour this.

A village web site is being considered to combine the Parishioner and the Parish Councils.

The internet connection is very poor in the village so Wispire has been approached.

Jane Chadd
Chair Local Development Committee

Doc. 5

Report from the District Councillor Elect.

Pauline Allen has retired and is not available to report on the past year.

Some Items from the past year.

The Local Development Framework is now almost complete and it should become the main document for planning purposes shortly.

Other item of interest speculative builder had applied to build 4 houses in Ditchingham outside the development boundary setting an unwanted precedent. SNC turned the application down but the planning inspectorate over-rode this and granted permission. SNC decided to take the issue to judicial review at the High Court in London where the planning inspectorate's decision was thrown out. SNC costs were recovered from the planning inspectorate. The appeal was heard again by the planning inspectorate and last month we heard that SNC's decision was upheld. So as you can see sometimes challenges from residents can be successful.

Your SNC council tax has not risen this year - the 7th year with no rise.



The most interesting development this year was having a Ward Budget of £1k to spend within the 4 villages to make things happen. All funding has been part of a partnership to maximise the use of the money for residents

Broome Play Association £300 - picnic benches

Thwaite £228 - folding tables

Ditchingham/Broome NESCAR outreach project £200

Hedenham WI - £150 for a bursary to the WI College

Brendon Bernard – District Councillor

Doc. 6

Events at Norfolk County Council

FLOOD risk Strategy: Norfolk county Council seeks the views of the public concerning the flood risk. Strategy will be finalised subject to response from public.

Adult Social Care: Mental Health social care was taken back into NCC in October 2014 and posts and roles redefined. Mental health care remains under the Norfolk and Suffolk foundation Trust but there is increased communication at GP and Community Health level. There is co- location within the 5 clinical commissioning groups now, improving communication.

Costs of Care for the elderly is increasing as demand increases and people live longer

Future voices: New monthly EDP supplement written by young people on such issues of; keeping safe; safe online; sexual health ne self harm. More openness about these issues will hopefully support the well being of young people

Museums: Celebrating stories from the sea! What's on at the Castle. Summer events to be published

Opening hours at NCC: The building will no longer be open 24/7 and will represent a saving of £80,000 per year. There will be areas opened in the event of emergencies and increased opportunities to hire out meeting rooms to improve income for NCC

Norfolk health and overview committee: We are reviewing workforce numbers within all areas of the NHS in Norfolk, with particular emphasis on the reasons why we have reducing numbers of GPs at a time we hve increases in demand for Primary Care. Less GPs has a significant impact on the availability of GP appointments. It takes at least 10years to train as a GP and we have a real problem in persuading medical students to become GPs. It is no longer popular as a career choice

GP s have been retiring early because of the increase in pressure and they tend to work part time and do research, lecture or have some other medical interest rather than working just as a GP.

Margaret Somerville. Email :Margaret.somerville@norfolk.gov.uk
Norfolk County councillor for Clavering Division

Doc. 7



DITCHINGHAM UNITED CHARITIES (DUC)

Clerk: Vic Cossey

Chair: Keith Weston

CHAIR'S REPORT FOR 2015

Vic Cossey has continued to fill the role of Clerk. The Charities welcomed Mrs Louise Wilkin as a new trustee.

At the AGM, held on April 27th I was re-elected as Chair; Rev Reg Kirkpatrick as Vice-Chair. These two trustees, plus the Clerk and Mr Frank James were elected as the Finance Committee.

Interest on the sums invested in the Charities Official Investment Fund has, again, held up well despite returns elsewhere being generally poor. Year on year the sums for disbursement have not diminished.

As usual the Finance Committee met to read applicants' letters and to look at their accounts. In deciding how to disburse funds the Trustees take into consideration the following:

- Historical situation – some organisations/applicants provide important services to the community and may be reliant on support from the DUC
- Variety and number of applicants
- Current priorities of applicants
- Financial situation of applicants
- Membership of organisations – are most members local?
- Age range served by applicant organisations; the Trustees try to spread the funds to the benefit of all age groups

After some discussion the recommendations made, by the Finance Committee to the full meeting of trustees, were adopted.

At 2015 AGM the Trustees had £18,350.33 to disburse. The church is entitled to 1/3 of Townlands Trust income which left £13,963.45 for distribution and they were able to make grants to all of the organisations that sought help. They were:

Parochial Church Council
Parishioner (Village News Letter)
All Hallows Hospital
Village Hall
Primary School
Play Association (For Thwaite Road Play Area)
Broome & Ditchingham Playgroup
CAB
Community Cafe
Scudamore Homes for the Elderly
Village fete

A sum was set aside to help students entering university. Trustees agreed to increase the sum per student from £250.00 to £300.00.

The Clerk was thanked for his efficient work.

DUC only owns two parcels of land now (two grazing marshes). Both of these are let to the same tenant. Although returns on sums invested (following previous land sales) have produced better returns than rent the trustees decided not to sell at present. However, following a recent valuation, the trustees asked the Clerk to negotiate a higher rent from the tenant.

Keith Weston
18.05.2015