

# Stinsford Parish Council

## **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 10 August 2015 at 7.20pm in The Old Library, Kingston Maurward College**

**Present:** Dr Andy Stillman (Chairman), Mr George Armstrong, Mr Chris Hext, Mr Will Molland, Mr Kim Payne and Mr Richard Wheel

**Also in attendance:** Cllr Mrs Jill Haynes (Dorset County Councillor), Cllr Patrick Cooke (West Dorset District Councillor), Miss Kirsty Riglar (Clerk) and 3 members of the public.

### **Public Discussion Period (7.00pm – 7.20pm)**

The following matters were raised by members of the public:

#### Road safety in the vicinity of Kingston Maurward College

Mr David Cotterell, Farm Manager for the College informed the Parish Council of ongoing problems and safety concerns arising from the speed of traffic, particularly around the Stinsford Hill roundabout. Particular problems were experienced when crossing the roundabout with tractors and the lack of sight of traffic approaching at speed from the Puddletown bypass. He asked that the Parish Council lodge these concerns with the County Council, as Highways Authority.

The Chairman explained that the Parish Council were meeting with an officer from the Highways Authority the following week to discuss concerns about road safety and speeding and undertook to raise this particular issue.

It was noted that, as a trunk road, it was Highways England (formerly the Highways Agency) which was responsible for the A35. A representative had previously agreed to attend a meeting of the Parish Council to discuss this but the meeting had been aborted. It was agreed that an invitation should be extended to a future meeting.

#### Superfast Broadband

Mr Hugh Grenville-Jones drew attention to the response received by the Parish Council to the question as to why the business parks at Higher Bockhampton had not been included in the planned roll-out of superfast broadband. He considered this to be unsatisfactory and requested that the Parish Council seek a fuller response and explanation. It was noted that Lower Bockhampton was currently within phase 9a of the project, with fibre being laid from the exchange box at Max Gate. It was agreed that a further request be made for information and, pending the response received, a representative from the Superfast Broadband project team be invited to address a future meeting.

## **86. Chairman's Welcome**

86.1 The Chairman welcomed all those present and opened the formal business meeting of the Parish Council.

## **87. Apologies for absence**

87.1 An apology for absence was received from Mr M Clarke.

## **88. Neighbourhood Planning**

88.1 The Parish Council received a presentation from Mr Trevor Warrick, Spatial Policy and Implementation Manager, West Dorset District Council about neighbourhood planning. Mr Warrick set out the legislative background and national policy changes which resulted in the introduction of neighbourhood plans and explained that, whilst these were complementary to parish plans, they had a higher status as they were used to determine planning applications. He outlined the process for the development of a neighbourhood plan and the assistance and funding available to local groups to do progress this.

88.2 In relation to the parish of Stinsford, Mr Warrick outlined the impact of the Local Plan which would soon be adopted by West Dorset District Council. He drew attention to major development proposed by developers on land north of Dorchester, some of which lay within the parish. He also explained that the parish lay outside of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, so many of the national 'permitted development rights' applied. The draft Local Plan included some policies specifically relevant to rural areas and he suggested that the Parish Council consider these in order to identify whether there was a need for a neighbourhood plan for Stinsford.

88.3 The Chairman thanked Mr Warrick for his informative presentation.

*Action: Clerk to disseminate presentation slides and supplementary information about draft Local Plan to the Parish Council.*

## **89. Declarations of Interest**

89.1 There were no declarations by members of the Council of disclosable pecuniary interests.

## **90. Minutes**

90.1 It was **resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2015 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

89.2 Further to minute 79.4, Mr Armstrong reported that he would prepare the draft letter for consideration at the next meeting. The Chairman added that he had spoken to the Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils (DAPTC) about the possibility of accessing legal assistance through the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and had been informed that the first step was to submit a short scenario setting out the issues for initial consideration. Mr Armstrong confirmed that he was willing to prepare this but raised the issue of confidential legal privilege throughout this preliminary investigation. The Clerk was asked to ascertain whether any information provided to the DAPTC and NALC would remain confidential.

*Action by: Mr Armstrong (drafting of short scenario for submission to DAPTC and letter to the County Council's external auditors) and Clerk (to confirm confidentiality of any preliminary investigation of legal assistance).*

## **91. DCC Matters**

91.2 Cllr Mrs Jill Haynes reported the following:-

(i) Tricuro, the trading company owned by Dorset County Council, Bournemouth Borough Council and the Borough of Poole for the delivery of adult social care services went live on 1 July 2015.

(ii) The County Council was currently working through an holistic transport review. This was a huge piece of work, particularly in relation to school and college transport, with the objective of making transport provision more person-centred.

(iii) Smarter IT solutions were being rolled out to ensure that officers could operate more efficiently.

(iv) The Policy Development Panel currently looking at the County Council's country parks had recently undertaken a site visit to the Hardy's Birthplace Visitor Centre as part of a fact-finding tour.

## **92. WDDC Matters**

92.1 Cllr Patrick Cooke noted the Parish Council's concerns and dissatisfaction about the performance of and access to the District Council's planning department. He requested that he be provided with details about specific applications so that he could follow these up.

92.2 In relation to neighbourhood planning, Cllr Cooke suggested that the Parish Council wait until the Local Plan was formally adopted before considering whether it wished to pursue a neighbourhood plan for Stinsford. In the event that the Parish Council did wish to pursue this, he suggested that they contact a freelance neighbourhood planning facilitator for advice in the first instance.

*Action: Cllr Mrs Haynes to provide details of freelance facilitator.*

## **93. Finance**

93.1 The following item of expenditure was **resolved**:-

Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils – Delegate Fee for chairmanship session - £30.00

93.2 The Parish Council also noted the update on the Parish Council's financial position provided by the Clerk in her capacity as Responsible Financial Officer.

## **94. Governance Documents**

94.1 It was **resolved** to defer consideration of the adoption of updated versions of the Code of Conduct, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations to the next meeting but that the proposed Standing Orders be considered as extant in the interim.

*Action by: Clerk to include on agenda for next meeting.*

## **95. Planning Matters**

95.1 WD/D/15/001615 – Greenwood Grange, Higher Bockhampton – Extension to leisure facilities to provide a snooker room, games room, store and WC (Full)

It was **resolved** to **OBJECT** to this application on the grounds that the proposed extension to the leisure facilities would abut the boundary of the Greenwood Grange site with two neighbouring properties and would affect the amenity of these properties, predominantly through an increase of noise. The Parish Council expressed a preference that the proposed leisure facilities were re-sited elsewhere on the Greenwood Grange property so as to minimise the impact on the amenity of its neighbours. It was also agreed that, whilst the Parish Council were supportive of Greenwood Grange wishing to offer the best possible facilities to its visitors, West Dorset District Council be requested to consider the cumulative impact of the significant number of recent planning applications to extend the buildings on the site when determining this application in terms of whether this site in a famously rural setting is becoming over-developed.

#### **96. Hardy's Birthplace Visitor Centre**

- 96.1 Cllr Mrs Jill Haynes reported that the County Council was aware of the issues with traffic and the general visitor experience at the Visitor Centre. She explained that there had been a suggestion to consider putting double yellow lines down to prevent parking on the lane. There was awareness that the car park was not big enough and the County Council was exploring the possibility of offering an overflow car park and reorganising the existing car park. It was acknowledged that parking needed to be addressed and not merely displaced. She also confirmed that parking meters would be installed in the main car park but it was necessary to consider the charges and what could be offered to local residents. She added that during the recent site visit, Members had looked at the interpretation boards installed in the Visitor Centre by the National Trust and agreed that these were not what was expected. Similarly, the fact that the shop was not open on a regular basis was disappointing.
- 96.2 Members of the Parish Council welcomed this update but expressed their concern that the plans to reduce the use of cars to travel to the Visitor Centre as set out in the Heritage Lottery Fund bid and the planning application for the building had not been progressed. Cllr Mrs Haynes agreed that the management of traffic was not considered as much as it should have been but explained that consideration was being given to extending the cycle route from Kingston Maurward College to the Visitor Centre. She also added that the Ranger Service had been very recently reorganised but was not bedding in.
- 96.3 In response to a question about the collection of statistical data of the use of the car park, it was noted that the County council were supposed to be undertaking this. Cllr Mrs Haynes stated that she understood that the Rangers based there were doing 'spot surveys' of where visitors had come from, etc. She undertook to find out more.
- 96.3 The state of the bridleway at Higher Bockhampton between the Visitor Centre and Hardy's Birthplace was raised. It was noted that this had an impact upon the ability of disabled people and other pedestrians to reach the end of the lane, particularly as there was no public parking made available by the National Trust. Cllr Mrs Haynes explained that she believed that trampers were due to be provided to assist disabled visitors.

96.4 The Parish Council thanked Cllr Mrs Haynes for her efforts in trying to improve the situation at the Visitor Centre.

**97. Kingston Maurward College**

97.1 No business was raised under this item.

**98. Traffic Management and Road Safety**

98.1 The Parish Council noted that a site meeting with the Community Highway Team Leader on Monday 17 August 2015 at 10.00am to discuss the issues relating to traffic in the vicinity of Kingston Maurward College.

**99. Website Content**

99.1 The Chairman drew attention to the statement about the current issues facing the parish written by Mr Wheal previously circulated. All parish councillors were asked to make any comments on this by the end of the week.

*Action: Mr Wheal to supply updated article to Clerk for uploading.*

**100. Items for next agenda**

100.1 That, subject to the response received to the request for further information, a representative from the Superfast Broadband team be invited to attend.

**101. Date of next meeting**

101.1 It was **noted** that the next full meeting would be held on Monday 21 September 2015.

The meeting concluded at 9.25pm.

**Chairman**.....**Date**.....