

Diptford Parish Council Meeting

Diptford Village Hall

Tuesday 18 February 2014 at 7.30pm

Questions from the Public were raised in relation to planning application 17/0265/14/F (Agenda Item 14.015.1). Opposition to the proposals included:

- Cumulative visual impact of solar farms and wind turbines in the area
- Undermine local tourism
- Industrial scale of the installation and its visibility over a wide area
- Visual intrusion of infra-red illuminations required for CCTV coverage
- Adverse effect on the setting of a listed building and adjacent to AONB
- Likelihood that permission for the panels would be renewed after the initial 25 year term
- Traffic management plan flawed as it is reliant on using the Avonwick road, over which there is a weight limit. Traffic disruption and potential damage to the lanes
- Query longterm effectiveness of renewable energy production
- Query ability to graze livestock between the panels
- Increased water run-off from the site
- Dept of Energy & Climate Change would be issuing its Solar PV Strategy in spring 2014 and the decision should be deferred until its publication

Support for the proposal related to the need to support local farmers; meet future energy needs; and provide a quiet landuse.

County Cllr Vint highlighted the budget cuts to DCC services. Although the intention was to safeguard the most vulnerable within the community, it was likely they would be most affected by the closure of day centres and the privatisations of residential care centres and other services. He considered that cuts to the £2m business support budget would be preferable.

Savings to the highways budget relied on reducing maintenance times, but in the long run, the roads would deteriorate and require greater repairs at increased cost. More potholes were reported last month than in the last two years and, pending permanent repairs by skilled maintenance teams, temporary repairs were being undertaken. Councillors considered this arrangement of repeated pothole filling wasteful, and that the underlying problem was lack of drainage maintenance, with buddle holes being left uncleared. The Clerk would complain to Head of DCC Highways David Whitton, and request that more funding be made available.

District Cllr Steer reported that, in order to meet planned net expenditure of 9,027,727, the SHDC budget would be increasing to 1.9%, resulting in a £2.71 Band D Equivalent Council Tax increase.

Visibility improvements at Blue Post were dependent on the landowner. An Enforcement Notice had been issued against the caravan at Coombeshead Cross, and it was noted that two further caravans were now on site.

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Foster (Chairman), Baggott, Crocker, Franklin, Gopal, Hill & Peach; SHDC Cllr Steer; DCC Cllr Vint; 28 members of public

14.012 To accept apologies for absence None

14.013 Declarations of interest and Dispensations in items on the Agenda were noted in Item 14.015.1 from Cllr Crocker: (Pecuniary) and DCC Cllr Vint & SHDC Cllr Steer (Personal)

14.014 To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 21.1.14, as previously circulated

14.015 Planning

Planning Applications

Cllr Crocker left the meeting during the item

1. Installation of up to 45,000 ground mounted solar pv panels (max output 8.88MW), erection of ancillary buildings and structures, and access tracks at Fields at SX753 557 East of Coombeshead Farm, Fields at SX749 550 South of Coombeshead farm and connecting access tracks Ref 17/0265/14/F AEE Renewables UK 12 Ltd

Object. The cumulative visually intrusive impact of this proposal, together with the concentration of three large and ugly solar farms already approved in the locality, would fundamentally and unduly alter the character of the landscape in a parish whose high scenic quality is valued by residents and visitors, and is sensitive to such urbanisation. The proposal would have an adverse effect on the adjacent AONB. The traffic management plan is flawed, as lorry access is proposed via the Avonwick road, which is subject to weight restrictions.

Planning Decisions - Noted

3. Replacement of modern roof windows and replacement with roof glazing at Creber Barn, Diptford Ref 17/2811/13/LB & 17/2810/13/LB **Conditional permission**

Planning Correspondence

4. Proposed revised location for wind turbine at Foales Leigh Farm, Harberton - Noted

14.016 Amenity Trust Report

1. Resolved to defer the Amenity Trust AGM to the 18.3.14

2. Funds: Acc 00196602 £135.44; Acc 02042009 £6910.27

3. SHDC: Quote for 15 grass cuts in the summer £810+ VAT, or £54 for a one-off cut. Councillors considered 5 cuts were adequate, from May to September, and the Clerk would request a quote from Keith Janes. A quote was awaited for the power washing.

4. The ROSPA inspection would be carried out in late March

14.017 P3, footpaths & highways

1. County Cllr Vint: Parish lane maintenance maps – It was proposed to cease the maintenance of category 11 & 12 lanes, and Councillors were concerned that this included the lane below the arch at Curtisknowle and the lane to Larcombe, Newhouse and Cleave. To continue maintenance of those lanes would require a trade-off with other lanes.

2. DCC Highways: Flood clean up and repair work. Complaints would be forwarded to Cllr Vint about the potholes in the lane from Marley Head to Wonton Cross. It was considered they were caused by the solar farm traffic and that they should pay for the repairs.

3. Snow Warden – Andrew Savery had confirmed he would continue as Snow Warden. Community First had confirmed that the volunteer pulling the gritter was covered for personal injury up to £25,000. The possibility of appointing a Deputy Snow Warden would be considered at the March Parish Council Meeting.

4. P3 Report: Paul McFadden would be repairing the gate latch on FP5; FP57, the field between Wheeldon Lane and Curtisknowle had been cropped, but not yet marked, and there was a low electric fence along the field abutting Moreleigh Road. After expenditure of £500 in 2013/14, the balance remaining was £74.29

14.018 Annual Parish Meeting – The meeting would be held on Tuesday 29 April and DCC Highways would be asked to make a presentation on the restructuring of road maintenance.

14.019 Councillor vacancy: Resolved to co-opt Mark Wood

14.020 Finance

1. Cheques passed for payment:

Cheque	Description	VAT	Gross
0621	S Woodman – January pay		151.98
0622	S Woodman expenses: Office £26.20, travel £40.50		66.70

2. The Financial Statement was received

Lloyds Current Account to 31.1.14	4346.46
Less payments & unrepresented cheques	253.68
Plus uncleared receipts	450.00
Total Current Account	4542.78
Santander Account to 31.3.13	12.39
Total funds	4555.17

Earmarked Reserves

P3 Footpaths	74.29
Winter Emergency Planning	800.00
Total Reserves	874.29

Total uncommitted funds £3680.88

Finance correspondence

3. Resolved to increase the Clerk's salary to Scale Scp25 [£2349.62pa] with effect from February 2014

4. Noticeboard repairs: Resolved to purchase replacement locks from Greenbarnes Ltd at a cost of £112.58, incl £18.76 VAT (Chq 622) plus £30 fitting charge by ASAP Locks

5. Resolved to transfer £500 to Diptford Amenity Trust

6. Resolved to contribute £100 towards the cost of printing the Parish magazine (Chq 623) Printing would now be undertaken by Erme Press

7. Funding request 2014/15: Ivybridge & District Community Transport Association – As £100 was granted in November 2013, IDCTA would be invited to submit a further request later in the 2014/15 financial year.

14.021 Correspondence received

1. SHDC Totnes & surrounding area Parish Cluster Meeting 6.30pm 18.3.14: Request for agenda items and chairman - Cllr Foster would attend. Request an agenda item relating to group Parish Council employment of Lengthsman
2. PCSO Russ Broadhurst: Introduction and request for regular surgery – It was noted that surgeries were previously held in the village square. There would be a charge to use the village hall and attendance at surgeries was likely to be low as it was outside the village centre. PCSO Broadhurst would be invited to attend the Parish Council meetings to discuss policing issues.
3. DALC training – Mark Wood would attend the New Councillors Course at South Brent on 18th June at a cost of £25 + VAT
4. DCC Consultations: Managed Day Services Review; Meals service; Devon Heritage Services; Youth Service Review; & Devon Waste Plan – Details would be included in the magazine

14.022 Reports on Meetings Attended - None**14.023 Correspondence available at the Meeting – None**

Meeting ended 9.45pm

Date of next Meeting 18.3.14 starting at 7pm with the Amenity Trust AGM