

DITTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF DITTON PARISH COUNCIL, HELD IN THE DON CARMAN HALL AT DITTON COMMUNITY CENTRE ON MONDAY 17TH MAY 2021

CHAIRMAN: CLLR. J E LOVER

PRESENT: CLLRS N NEWMAN, MRS J DEARDEN, MRS K DENNISON, A LAIDOUCI, A R MULCUCK, C ROOK & MRS A THROSSELL

MRS NICOLA GREENAWAY (Clerk of the Council), MRS S CRAIG (Business Administrator),
MRS G JEFFS (OSA & Planning Administrator)

APOLOGIES: CLLRS PORTER, MRS J THWAITES & MRS G GODDEN, BOROUGH CLLR D COOPER,
KCC WARDEN ABSOLON & PCSO SEARS

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: KCC CO. CLLR A KENNEDY, TMBC BOROUGH CLLR R CANNON, MR D STEVENS, MR S WEBLEY,
MRS S FARMER, MR N SAUNDERS, MRS E JONES, MRS B ASHTON, MRS M MULUCK, MR M
MULUCK, MRS P MULUCK, MS P EASTWOOD, MS L SPICE, MS C EASTWOOD & MRS J
MCCORMACK

1. WELCOME

Cllr Lover, Chairman of the Council, opened the Meeting at 7.00pm and extended a warm welcome to those present.

2. NOTICE OF MEETING

Posting of the Notice of the Meeting was certified by the Clerk.

3. LONG SERVICE TO THE COUNCIL AWARD

The Chairman announced that at this meeting, we were very privileged to be able to acknowledge a very special member of our Parish Council. Cllr Tony Mulcuck has given 50 years of unbroken service to Ditton Parish Council.

During his time on the Council he has been Chairman of the Open Spaces & Amenities Committee and is currently Chair of the Planning Committee. He has also served as Vice-Chairman of the Council and as a member of the Community Centre Committee, Personnel and F&A Committees. In other words there is not much he does not know about this Council. Tony has always gone that extra mile to ensure projects are completed such as getting the quarry declared as a Local Nature Reserve and he has helped organise many events, in particular the annual Remembrance Service.

Tony has been inspirational and passionate in finding ways for people in the village to socialise. In 1994 he got a small group together and formed the Ditton Active Retirement Association. In 1986 he instigated the formation of Ditton Bowls Club. In the 1990's Tony was the forerunner of Ditton Heritage Centre and after much fundraising helped to fulfil the project to turn a derelict Victorian School Building into Ditton Heritage Centre.

There is so much more that could be said as Tony has achieved so much since he joined the Council on 26th May 1971.

Cllr Lover finished by asking all present to join in a round of applause for Tony – he then thanked him for his loyalty and dedication to our Parish over the last 50 years. Cllr Tony Mulcuck was then presented with an engraved glass and bottle of Glayva. He was also presented with a bench, that will be placed by the War Memorial, in recognition of his dedication and work on the council, especially to the annual Remembrance Service.

4. MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD 29th APRIL 2019

It was **NOTED** that no meeting could be held in 2020 due to Covid Restrictions, therefore the minutes from the 2019 meeting needed to be approved. **PROPOSED** by Cllr. Lover, **SECONDED** by Cllr Mulcuck that the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 29th April 2019 be taken as **READ** and **CONFIRMED**, and **SIGNED** as a correct record of the Meeting. **CARRIED NEM. CON.**

6. **FINANCIAL REPORT**

The Financial Report was taken as **READ** and the Audited Accounts for 2018/2019 & 2019/20, showed:-

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT as at 31st March 2019

	Notes			2019	2018
Income					
Precept on Borough Council				267,880	264,923
Grants Receivable				898	4,300
Rents Receivable, Interest & Investment Income				17,724	17,626
Income from Services				290,895	302,600
Other Income				211	232
Total Income				577,608	589,681
Expenditure					
Direct Service Costs					
Salaries & Wages				(258,137)	(260,061)
Grant-aid Expenditure				(1,247)	(2,150)
Other Costs	1			(280,019)	(235,683)
Democratic, Management & Civic Costs					
Salaries & Wages				(31,525)	(31,332)
Other Costs	1			(17,363)	(16,989)
Total Expenditure				(588,291)	(546,215)
Excess of Income over Expenditure for Year				(10,683)	43,466
Investment Profit/(Losses)				-	8,150
Net Operating Surplus for Year				(10,683)	51,616
STATUTORY CHARGES & REVERSALS					
Capital Expenditure charged to revenue	11			(12,330)	(27,897)
Reverse (Profits)Losses on investment disposal				-	(8,150)
Transfer (to) Earmarked Reserves	23			22,533	(19,540)
(Deficit) for the Year (from) General Fund				(480)	(3,971)
Net (Deficit) for the Year				(23,013)	15,569
The above (Deficit) for the year has been funded for the Year to as follows:					
Transfer (to)/from Earmarked Reserves	23			(22,533)	19,540
(Deficit) for the Year (from) General Fund				(480)	(3,971)
				(23,013)	15,569

The Council had no other recognisable gains and/or losses during the year.

BALANCE SHEET As at 31st March 2019

	Notes		2019	2019	2018
Fixed Assets					
Tangible Fixed Assets	10			442,597	466,643
Long Term Assets					
Investments Other than Loans	13			457,526	457,526

Current Assets				
Stock	14		5,591	6,417
Debtors & prepayments	16		15,259	15,220
Investments	15		50,829	50,584
Cash at Bank and in hand			<u>155,038</u>	<u>170,959</u>
			226,717	243,180
Current Liabilities				
Creditors and income in advance	17		<u>(50,179)</u>	<u>(43,629)</u>
Net Current Assets			<u>176,538</u>	<u>199,551</u>
Total Assets Less Current Liabilities			1,076,661	1,123,720
Deferred Grants	19		<u>(15,944)</u>	<u>(18,867)</u>
Total Assets Less Liabilities			1,060,717	1,104,853
Capital and Reserves				
Capital Financing Reserve	21		426,653	447,776
Financial Instruments Adjustment Account	20		457,526	457,526
Usable Capital Receipts Reserve	22		9,633	9,633
Earmarked Reserves	23		103,538	126,071
General Reserve			<u>63,367</u>	<u>63,847</u>
			1,060,717	1,104,853

These Accounts were approved by the Council on 3rd June 2019.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT as at 31st March 2020

	Notes		2020	2019
Income				
Precept on Borough Council			269,287	267,880
Grants Receivable			-	898
Rents Receivable, Interest & Investment Income			14,201	17,724
Income from Services			306,060	290,895
Other Income			221	211
Total Income			<u>589,769</u>	<u>577,608</u>
Expenditure				
Direct Service Costs				
Salaries & Wages			(261,276)	(258,137)
Grant-aid Expenditure			(400)	(1,247)
Other Costs	1		(283,958)	(280,019)
Democratic, Management & Civic Costs				
Salaries & Wages			(34,725)	(31,525)
Other Costs	1		(22,591)	(17,363)
Total Expenditure			<u>(602,950)</u>	<u>(588,291)</u>
Excess of Income over Expenditure for Year			(13,181)	(10,683)
Investment Profit/(Losses)			63,994	-
Net Operating Surplus for Year			50,813	(10,683)

STATUTORY CHARGES & REVERSALS					
Capital Expenditure charged to revenue	11			(9,534)	(12,330)
Reverse (Profits)Losses on investment disposal				(63,994)	-
Transfer (to) Earmarked Reserves	23			47,194	22,533
(Deficit) for the Year (from) General Fund				24,479	(480)
Net (Deficit) for the Year				(22,715)	(23,013)
The above (Deficit) for the year has been funded for the Year to as follows:					
Transfer (to)/from Earmarked Reserves	23			(47,197)	(22,533)
(Deficit) for the Year (from) General Fund				24,479	(480)
				(22,715)	(23,013)

The Council had no other recognisable gains and/or losses during the year.

BALANCE SHEET As at 31st March 2020

	Notes	2020	2020	2019
Fixed Assets				
Tangible Fixed Assets	10		438,090	442,597
Long Term Assets				
Investments Other than Loans	13		523,043	457,526
Current Assets				
Stock	14	6,107		5,591
Debtors & prepayments	16	21,482		15,259
Investments	15	501,829		50,829
Cash at Bank and in hand		96,864		155,038
		175,282		226,717
Current Liabilities				
Creditors and income in advance	17	(31,092)		(50,179)
Net Current Assets			144,190	176,538
Total Assets Less Current Liabilities			1,105,323	1,076,661
Deferred Grants	19		(13,017)	(15,944)
Total Assets Less Liabilities			1,092,306	1,060,717
Capital and Reserves				
Capital Financing Reserve	21		425,073	426,653
Financial Instruments Adjustment Account	20		-	457,526
Usable Capital Receipts Reserve	22		523,043	9,633
Earmarked Reserves	23		56,344	103,538
General Reserve			87,846	63,367
			1,092,306	1,060,717

These Accounts were approved by the Council on 25th June 2020.

RESOLVED that the Financial Reports 2018/19 & 2019/20 be **ADOPTED**.

7. **COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN'S REPORTS** (* copies filed with minutes)

(a) **Allotment Managers***

Cllr Mrs Dennison gave a report on the work of the Allotment Managers during the year and advised that little has changed over the past two years of lockdown. She advised that 3 new tenants have taken over plots during this time. She reported that generally the allotments are tidy and tenants seem to be enjoying getting out to use their plots. She advised that instead of the annual skip hire, the council has been supplying a trailer every couple of months and this is working well to keep the space tidier. There remains a long waiting list, currently 14. Regular inspections were carried out by staff during lockdown and the new allotment managers will reintroduce a regular rota now that restrictions are being lifted.

(b) **Community Centre Committee***

Cllr Mrs Dearden reported that it has been a very difficult year for everyone but it has also given the Council the opportunity to do some well needed maintenance during the closures. The Oaken Hall has new energy saving lighting in its new ceiling, 2 new boilers, redecoration of the caretakers office, 5 year electrical inspection plus remedial works was undertaken. Also 2 electric car charging points have been installed.

A great deal of income has been lost from both bookings in the Centre (down by £87,500 on previous year) and the bars (down £153,00 on previous year). Expenditure has been kept to a minimum and we have been fortunate enough to receive grants and not have to pay business rates.

More maintenance and redecoration was undertaken in the Kilnbarn prior to its reopening last year.

(c) **Personnel Committee***

Cllr Mrs Dearden gave an overview of the staff: Office – the Clerk and Business Administrator worked throughout, the Open Spaces Administrator worked through the first lockdown but was put on flexible furlough during the second. The Community Centre Administrator was only able to work for the first couple of months of lockdown and was then furloughed. Caretaking staff- the supervisor worked through the first lockdown but has been on flexible furlough in the second, other staff were furloughed. Bar – all staff furloughed initially. Lockdown meant a change in opening hours which led to an option of new roles being put to the Bar Manager and Assistant Manager, unfortunately they opted to take redundancy. Grounds staff – worked through first lockdown but were put on flexible furlough during the second. Cllr Mrs Dearden concluded by thanking all staff for their continued hard work and dedication during the very difficult times.

(d) **Open Spaces & Amenities Committee***

Cllr Mrs Dennison gave a report on the work of the Open Spaces Committee. She advised that all the open spaces have been well used during the lockdown periods. The playground and outdoor gym equipment had to be closed according to recommendations but are now both open and well used. Organised sports and the multi-sports courts have also been affected by the restrictions. We are pleased that football is back on the field and football and netball has returned to the Multi-sports. The War Memorial was professionally cleaned and the Quarry Local Nature Reserve continues to give enjoyment to many. We are still investigating the legal responsibility of the Stream and we have some fencing issues around the parish to deal with this year. Cllr Dennison said that the last year had been unprecedented and she would like to thank all the Grounds staff and the Open Spaces Administrator along with the Clerk for her continued help and knowledge of the open spaces and amenities.

(e) **Planning Committee***

Cllr. Mulcuck reported that it had been a challenge dealing with planning issues, particularly while the council could only meet via zoom. There have been a lot of “regular” planning requests such as pollarding of trees and small extensions. There have been several requests for access to driveways along the London Road that the parish council opposed but TMBC agreed to. The plan for the Lidl store went ahead despite many objections. The application for warehousing at the old papermill site was also approved but Ditton held meetings with our neighbouring parishes to point joint queries to the developer. The application that gave most concern is for up to 300 houses at Ditton edge. Despite our strong objection and those from nearly a thousand residents it was narrowly approved. We will continue to monitor the development and liaise with the developer to hopefully get

some concerns addressed. On a positive note we are continuing regular meetings with other parishes in the medway gap. He thanked his my vice chair, Cllr Throssell and Cllr Rook for their assistance with planning matters and also the parish clerk and office staff for their work and support.

8. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT***

The Chairman reiterated what a challenging year 2020/21 has been because of Covid. He acknowledged everyone had been affected in some way and that our thoughts are with those that have lost loved ones.

He acknowledged that it had been particularly challenging for staff and managing the community centre and Kilnbarn Bar, with working from home, furlough of staff and constantly reviewing the latest guidance to open/close accordingly.

He advised that at the start of lockdown we had a group of volunteers that assisted local residents that were shielding with the collection of prescriptions and shopping. Also that generous donations were made to enable the volunteers to give out food parcels to those most in need. The Chairman said a big thank to those volunteers and all the others that help out around the village with tasks such as litter picking. He added that when restrictions are lifted the council would like to hold a celebration evening to acknowledge all those that help others.

He reiterated thanks to Tony Mulcuck for his 50 years service to the Council and that we could at least acknowledge one achievement at the meeting.

The Chairman also reported on a very small increase to the parish rate and also welcomed two new council members. He advised no events could take place, including Twinning but it is hoped all will be resumed when restrictions lift.

Finally he thanked all the staff, those that volunteer to help others, our KCC Warden and PCSO. He also thanked the Borough Councillors David Cooper and Rob Cannon and congratulated our new KCC Member, Andrew Kennedy who was present this evening. He then thanked his fellow councillors for their support during this very difficult year.

9. **QUESTION TIME AND GENERAL DISCUSSION**

No questions had been previously submitted and no questions were raised at this time.

The Chairman invited KCC Cllr Kennedy to say a few words if he wished to do so.

Cllr Kennedy thanked the parish council for inviting him and said that parish councils are the unsung heroes of local councils. He said he would do all he can to support the work of Ditton and the other parish council's he represented and he also thanked David Cooper and Rob Cannon for the fight against Ditton Edge. He said he would continue to campaign to protect rural villages and would be their spokesman at KCC and not KCC's spokesman. He also congratulated Cllr Mulcuck on his 50 years of service.

10. **CLOSURE & THANKS**

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.34pm, thanked everyone for attending this special, socially distanced annual meeting.

Chairman
19th May 2022