

LYDFORD PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Held in The Nicholls Hall

Tuesday 18th July 2006

83-2006 Present:

Mr S Powne Mr P Fletcher: Mrs L Cole:

Mrs P Martyn: Mrs K Boyd (Chairman): Mrs S Holland:

Mrs L Ellicott (Vice-Chairman): Mr DG Evans (Clerk)

Parishioners and others in attendance:

One member of the public was present and Mr C France (Director of Planning and Sustainable Development DNPA)

84-2006 Apologies for absence:

PC Reed and Cllr A Hosking DCC

85-2006 Parishioners and Visitors time:

85.1 The member of the public present enquired if the planning application at Ravenstor would be discussed at the meeting. The clerk confirmed that it would be raised under Planning later in the meeting. The member of the public stated that she and the other adjoining properties to the proposed development would be objecting to it.

85.2 The Chair invited Mr Chris France to address the meeting. Mr France thanked the members for inviting him and explained his background with Exmoor National Park where, latterly, he had held the position of Head of Planning. He stated that it was vital that DNPA worked with parish councils and asked what the members thought of the Local Plan which forms the basis of all planning decisions. The Chair felt that parish councils had had little involvement in the preparatory work for the plan. Mr France explained that the planning laws had changed in the same year as the plan was published consequently it was currently being re-worked under the heading of the Local Development Framework. Comments on this are welcomed before September this year. Mr Fletcher queried some of the decisions taken by DNPA on applications that had been objected to by this council. He referred to the site for Affordable Housing offered by the Rector that was 'turned down flat for obscure reasons'! Mr France stated that WDBC has prioritised Lydford as an area for housing for 'Local Needs'. He will progress this forward in conjunction with the parish council and in tandem with the Parish Plan. Mr Fletcher expressed concern as to the rationale used in the selection of people to occupy these houses. Mr France responded by stating that DNPA will work closer with WDBC and that legal agreements will be placed on property designated for local occupation. Mr France continued by stating that currently DNPA have no working relationship with WDBC and that he will work closely with parish councils to bring local housing to those areas that want it. Mrs Ellicott explained about the Parish Plan which Mr France expressed delight at and offered, through Miss Jo Rumble, any assistance required in its production. Mrs Holland considered that a mix of housing, sheltered etc, should be provided but WDBC have said that this is not an option. Mr Powne expressed the view that the overall conception of DNPA planning was that a lack of consistency of decision existed.

85.2 Contd. Mr France agreed that in the past this had been the case however, a new Chair of the Planning Committee had been appointed along with three new Directors; collectively these people will drive changes through. Mr Fletcher considered that the members of the planning committee serve for too long a period of time and that they should be changed on a yearly basis. Whilst Mr France did not entirely agree he did state that they required training in planning law and the way they should be operating. A discussion on the conversion of barns followed with Mr France stating that the owners should have tried to use them for business use before applying for a change of use. He continued by stating that the current conversion policy needs overhauling from DNPA side. Mr Fletcher enquired if the Community Forum could be held more frequently and would DNPA send someone to assist in the preparation of the Parish Plan. Mr France stated that he would report his comment back and, as had already been offered, Miss Jo Rumble would assist with the Parish Plan. Mr Powne expressed concern over several fields that have been purchased on a speculative basis for potential future housing. He wondered if DNPA would consider issuing a statement confirming future development. Mr France stated that the Core Strategy document will clarify this and that DNPA will 'rein back' any proposed developments with the exception of those for local needs housing. He further stated that, in his opinion, those people purchasing land on a speculative basis are wasting their money. Mrs Holland enquired if outbuildings would be considered for conversion for local needs rather than the open market. Mr France said that this was not possible under the current local plan but that it would certainly be the long term aim of DNPA. Mrs Holland further enquired about Central Government's future housing demands. Mr France stated that this was different within National Parks where only local needs housing will be allowed. Mr France stated that he is surprised at the way DNPA has operated regarding infill in the past, allowing some one hundred new developments a year when the Local Plan stipulates only fifty. He continued by stating that he hopes to influence change in this area and to alter the views of DNPA in the future. He explained about the view held by DNPA on Micro Renewable Energy schemes but that they will continue to be selective on schemes although they will strive to adopt a more positive approach regarding them in the future. Mr France finished by complimenting the members on their positive outlook and that change will happen but please don't expect it overnight. He also detailed the parish council training nights planned to be held from September to April. (No date has yet been fixed for Lydford PC). The Chair thanked Mr France for attending and for his openness on the issues raised. (*Mr France left the meeting at this point.*)

86-2006 To approve the minutes of the previous meeting:

86.1 The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 20th June 2006 were signed, by the Chairman, as a true and accurate record save for the following amendment requested by Mr Fletcher; "*A proposal was raised to produce a Parish Plan and a vote was taken. Two members voted in favour with four abstentions. It was agreed that a further meeting should be held to discuss and agree this single issue.*" This addendum was added to the minutes and signed by the Chair.

87-2006 Matters arising:

87.1 Post Office – The date for the re-opening of the Post Office, in the Nicholls Hall, was announced as Tuesday 8th August with the hours of opening being; Tuesdays and Fridays 11.30 – 3.30.

87.2 Waste Treatment Works and Bridge House – Caravan site – The Chair announced that Mr Powne has volunteered to take the issue of sewage smells as his particular area of responsibility which was both welcomed and agreed by all members. Mr Powne confirmed that he has had talks with the manager at the Camping & Caravan site detailing to them the problems being incurred. The clerk detailed a letter received from Mr Greenaway, Head of Environmental Health at WDBC, which Mr Powne queried why the consultant being used was contracted to the Camping & Caravan Club as he considered this person should be from an independent company. It was agreed that the clerk would put this point to Mr Greenaway. As no response regarding the licensed numbers for the site has been received through WDBC having no trace of the original agreement, the clerk was requested to write to Mr David Incoll, Chief Executive WDBC, expressing the dissatisfaction at the lack of information from WDBC.

87.3 Parish Plan – The resolution “This parish council should implement a Parish Plan” was proposed by Mr Fletcher and seconded by Mr Powne. The vote taken was four in favour, one against and two abstentions. Carried by majority. The Parish Plan information evening scheduled for Thursday 27th July will now be attended by; Mrs Boyd, Mrs Ellicott, Mr Powne and the clerk

88-2006: Receive report from Councillors on respective outside bodies:

76.1 DNPA – Next meeting November

76.2 Police Authority – Nothing to report

76.3 Southern Link – Minutes of the last meeting were circulated with the next meeting being announced as September.

76.4 Nicholls Hall – Mrs Boyd reported that the highly successful Bistro nights continue with £438 being raised at the last one.

89.2006 - Receive financial report:

89.1 The clerk circulated balances as follows;

Current – £50.12 (Dr)

Flexi - £8,263.54

89.2 The following payments were authorised:

Clerk – £264.84 – Grass cutting £15 – Transfer from Deposit to current £1,000 – Clerk (August) £261.00 – DAPC membership £64 – Balance adjustment (agreed with auditors) 0.01p. The following receipts were detailed as: Toilet cleaning grant from DNPA £674.50

89.3 The clerk and Mr Powne showed the first proof of the Book of Recollections and advised members that because of the increase in both size and amount of colour photographs the estimated cost has now risen to £1,960 some £160 more than the grant awarded for this. It was unanimously agreed that the quality nor the content should be reduced and to accept the new price.

90.2006 - Correspondence:

90.1 The proposed changes to footpath Nos. 8 & 10 and the Bridleway between Lydford Village and the A386 and the addition of a Bridleway from the A386 to the moor via Watervale House were shown and agreed.

90.2 WDBC Satisfaction survey – Mr Fletcher queried why Lydford parishioners were the only ones to raise concern over crime and identified it as a problem. It was explained that as this survey had been carried out by the Borough Council they would have used the electoral ward, which includes Princetown, rather than the parish electoral role.

90.3 ING Direct – It was agreed that the clerk would attempt to attain funding through ING to upgrade and tidy up the walk to the ancient spring and the spring itself.

90.4 A letter was received from Mr Ellington regarding the continued opening of the public conveniences. The clerk was requested to respond.

91.2006 - Planning applications:

90.1 Conversion of redundant garage at Ravenstor – An objection from adjoining residents was noted. It was agreed that this parish council wished to object on the grounds that whilst the garage is not used for the purpose of vehicles this does not make it redundant as new owners of this property in the future would be likely to wish to have a garage which could result in a new planning application to build one. This proposal was voted on with six in favour and one abstention and carried by majority.

92.2006 - Items raised at the last meeting for inclusion on the July agenda:

92.1 Remuneration for the Chairman and members – A discussion followed on the pros and cons of this. It was considered that members preferred not to apply for attendance allowance as they wished to remain completely independent. It was further agreed that an allowance should be paid to the Chairman to cover telephone calls etc to be claimed if the Chair person wished to claim it at the rate of £40 per fiscal year. It was further considered that the mileage allowance currently paid, for the use of members' cars when attending meetings outside of the parish, should be reviewed in October at budget setting time.

92.2 Notice Boards – Mr Powne expressed concern that the Public Notice Board should only be used for the display of local notices and should be locked. It was agreed that the clerk would ask Mr Jones to attend to the lock to enable it to be permanently locked with a notice being placed inside directing future advertisers to Mrs Holland with their adverts for display.

93.2006 – Items raised for inclusion on the September Agenda:

None raised

94.2006 - To agree the date of the next meeting:

94.1 The date of **Tuesday 19th September 2006** was agreed commencing at 7.00pm

There being no further business the meeting was formally closed by the Chairman at 9.50 pm.

DG Evans
Clerk to the Parish Council

20th July 2006

Signed as a true and accurate record.....Date.....

(Mrs K Boyd - Chairman)

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