

Open Forum

Mrs Elizabeth Lethbridge (Executive Academy Head) Diptford School attended the meeting to give the council an update on school life and background to the bid for grant-funding. Lizzie welcomed the opportunity to improve communication with the council and outlined her aims for the school – to increase pupil role and for the school to thrive. She explained that the Link Academy Trust specialises in small schools with 12 primary school members and no secondary schools. She described how the introduction of the breakfast and after-school clubs has helped to recruit new pupils and talked briefly about the various extended opportunities available to pupils as a result of Diptford School being in the Academy Trust and benefiting from economies of scale and a wider field of specialisms.

Lizzie explained that the Playground had recently been cordoned off following the recent health and safety check which identified numerous repair work to equipment that has really reached the end of its life-span. As outdoor play is an important element of the School’s ethos and a factor in attracting new pupils she has put in a bid to the Lottery Fund for 10,000 and The Friends of Diptford School are aiming to raise the remaining £7,000.

Cllr Peach asked if it was possible for some of the Sports Grant to be used but this year the funds are already committed. There is a possibility that some of the money could be allocated next year.

Councillors thanked Lizzie for attending the meeting, emphasising how important the school is in the community and welcoming her reassurance that the school is thriving with a stable budget and a “Good” OFSTED rating.

Report from Cllr Hosking (DCC)

Cllr Hosking expressed regret that there had been another incident on Gara bridge and apologised for the delay in providing an alternative solution. He reassured Council that work was in hand. He will pursue whether there is sufficient evidence from the witness to the damage to pursue prosecution. Cllr Hosking confirmed that grit bins would be filled this winter and that there was a procedure for requesting new bins. He agreed to chase the warning signage for the depression in the road at Benicknowle. Cllr Hosking advised that there are 2 important consultations being launched – Connecting Devon and Somerset (wifi speed) and School budget allocations and transport provisions to schools. He urged councillors to respond and share the online links widely when they are available. There was a discussion regarding the reporting of potholes and the decision-making process for the repair of potholes and Cllr Hosking agreed to chase up the status of the stretch of road recently logged by Cllr Lethbridge.

Cllr Franklin commented that there was a need to revisit the classifying of roads as many are used very differently now from when last classified.

Report from Cllr Smerdon (SHDC)

PARKING PERMITS

At the Executive Committee meeting on 31 October Members received a report recommending the review of the issue of parking permits due to the fact that in some town car parks most of the spaces are taken up by permit holders leaving fewer for shoppers. It was agreed that the sale of all new parking permits be ceased pending this review.

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The Executive Committee considered a proposal to consult on reviewing the Statement of Community Involvement, last carried out in 2009. This will set the principles for how the Councils will aim to conduct their community engagement and consultation processes for Planning matters. There will also be an opportunity for public involvement through a six week public consultation.

LANGAGE ENERGY PARK

An agreement has been reached between SHDC and the owners of Langage Energy Park, close to the A38 near Plympton, to develop 30,000 sq.ft of business starter units on a block of land next to the power station.

ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINTS

A two year project to install at least 25 electric vehicle charge points for public use in car parks across Devon begins this month.

A379 SLAPTON LINE

The Slapton Line Partnership has secured funding for an Adaptation Manager to work closely with local village communities to ease traffic issues and to create positive changes to prepare for the possible future loss of the A379 Slapton Line.

DEVON CLIMATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE

A top team of environmental experts, charged with ensuring that Devon reduces carbon emissions as quickly as possible, is now calling on residents to submit their ideas on how to do it.

Have your say by going to www.devonclimateemergency.org.uk

Cllrs requested that Cllr Smerdon once again investigate the problems with waste collections and also review the assisted bins register.

There was a brief discussion about Christmas arrangements for the village. Cllr Foster explained that large trees are very scarce and expensive this year, but that he has spoken to 2 people regarding provision for the village. Cllr Crocker requested new lights and this spend will be formally agreed at the next meeting.

Cllr Smerdon was asked to look into the recent brightly lit hoardings at The Totnes Christmas Tree Farm.

Highways

It was agreed that The Lengthsman would be asked to do the annual road – sign clean and tidy up the verge where the lorry had recently crashed. Cllr Foster confirmed that the snow warden had agreed to continue in the role and Cllrs confirmed that grit bins were full and the clerk was asked to look into replacing the bin outside the playing field and purchasing a bin for Curtisknowle Hill. (DPC has previously funded the bin on Horner Tongue) Cllrs were pleased to note that the hedges had been cut at Brushford as requested.

It was agreed that the **Annual Parish Meeting** in 2020 would be on 21st April 2020.

Finance

DPC approved payment to the Parochial Church Council of Diptford for the inclusion of the minutes in the Parish Magazine (£100) and a grant for Graveyard maintenance (£400). The Council also agreed to donate £100 towards the Ivybridge and District Ring and Ride scheme. Grant funding of £250 would be made to The Friends of Diptford School for new play equipment pending legal advice from the National Association of Local Councils.

Wheat Park

The clerk had written an email to Jameson Homes requesting an update to progress and stating that: “The Parish Council are concerned that the site is deteriorating into a wilderness and becoming an eye-

sore at the entrance to the village and disappointed that, despite all the support for the development, no progress is being made.”

Jameson’s reply was:

“Further to our last update in May there has been no change and the project currently remains on hold. As soon as the situation changes and we have a firm start date we will of course let you know.”

The next meeting is on Tuesday 10th December 2019