

Lydford Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 13th May 2014

Present: Cllrs Moriarty, Evenett, Skeaping, Dicker, Leigh-Tyrer & Fowler.

Also present: 63 members of the public.

Cllr Fowler welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the Agenda for the evening, with public time being held at Item 5.

1. Apologies

None.

2. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 21st May 2013.

The minutes were approved as accurate and signed by Cllr Fowler.

3. Chairman's Report

Cllr Fowler read aloud her report, which was also circulated to members of the public and is attached to the Minutes.

4. Dartmoor National Park Ranger's Report

The Ranger was absent.

5. Questions from the floor

Cllr Fowler confirmed that the majority of public present were in attendance for the Planning Application 0218/14 Lydford House. Cllr Fowler asked for any questions not regarding the application to be taken first. With that, a lady asked if the Parish Council would be responsible for payment of the running costs, maintenance and insurance for the proposed Lydford Playground. Cllr Fowler responded that the Parish Council would work in partnership with the Playground Committee who would continue to fundraise for this.

Cllr Fowler asked the applicants of the Planning Application if they would like to respond to questions as they are presented or to make notes and respond at one time. The applicants requested that they listen, make notes and then respond.

A gentleman spoke first and explained that a private meeting had been held with out with concerned residents on the 8th May and circulated written notes of the meeting to the Parish Councillors. A petition was also handed in to the Parish Council urging consideration to object to the application. In summary the objections from the meeting on 8th May were as follows:

Misrepresentation and lack of consultation, health & safety and foul smells with regard to the current septic tank system, misleading and disingenuous application with regard to proposed use and property value, reduced amenity and an undermining of tourism, which is a departure from the DNPA Plan,

increased traffic, incompatibility with the DNPA Core Strategy and making the village a less safe place to live.

Other members of the public then spoke and expressed concerns and questions on the competency of staff required, considerations of local residents, equine therapy, no of day pupils, structure of facility, lack of consultation, claims of liaison with Ofsted, National Autistic Society, National Trust and DNPA, emergency access to the property and village, and security.

The applicant then responded and confirmed that the septic tank system would be replaced before any change of use was implemented or indeed if the property were to remain a hotel. He also advised of the intentions of equine therapy and disagreed that emergency access would be any different than when it was a hotel. The applicant also defended the consultation with the Parish Council and article supplied to the Village Magazine in 2013.

The applicant's partner then spoke, explaining her role and experience in the field of Autistic children and young adults. She explained that they would operate as an Independent Specialist Provider and went onto explain the benefits to the Autistic community, advised of equine therapy, the input of Ofsted and other organisations, the aims over 5 years and the project team.

Members of the public then queried the need for such provision instead of main school education, funding, lack of consultation with other schools, statements of consultation with DNPA and the National Trust which are not backed up, valuation of property, safety of children, threat to the village, security of the property and interaction with the people of the village and location. A gentleman proposed that the only beneficiaries of the proposal are the owners and if it were not for already owning Lydford House, they would not choose the small village of Lydford for such a project.

A lady spoke in favour of inclusion of autistic young people in the village.

Concerns continued to be raised over the loss of the hotel, making one third of tourism beds in the parish, the facilities for the proposed young people, lack of resources in Lydford for integration, the benefit to DNP and the Parish. The applicants responded that the residents of the House would be involved with local Ranger activities and would benefit from the fantastic environment of Lydford.

As a significant number of those present had not spoken, Cllr Fowler asked for a show of hands from those wishing to object to the application and 57 hands were raised out of 63 present.

The Meeting was closed at 7.55pm.

Signed

Date