

WIDECOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council

held in Church House, Widecombe on

Thursday 6 June 2024 at 7.30pm

Members present: Councillor Y Elliott (Chair), J Bibby, D Edwards, T Guest, C Partridge & S Raynor

Also attending: District Cllr and Ashburton Postmaster Rogers, District Cllr Nutley and District Cllr Major

Members of the Public: None

Clerk: Suzanna Hughes

5008 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- Rob Steemson

5009 OPEN FORUM

Ashburton Postmaster Stuart Rogers confirmed that he has arranged for cash to be available on the post office van through Starling on Widecombe Fair Day.

5010 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Members were reminded of their responsibility to continually update their Notice of Registerable Interests and invited to state whether they have any interest in the items to be discussed during this meeting in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct.

Unforeseen requests for a Dispensation to be considered at this point only if there was no way a Councillor would have been aware of such before the meeting.

There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensation.

5011 RATIFICATION OF MINUTES

(a) Members received the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on 2 May 2024 which were approved as a true and correct record.

(b) Members received the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 22 May 2024 which were approved as a true and correct record.

5012 REPORTS

- (a) **County Councillor**

No report.

- (b) **District Councillors**

Cllr Major advised that a new round of cost of living payments has been approved. Any residents who already receives a reduction in their council tax should have received a letter about this. The government has announced a further Household Support Fund to help deliver support to vulnerable households in the district.

Teignbridge CVS (Community and Voluntary Services) are running an awards ceremony and are looking for nominations from individuals or organisations to be put forward.

Cllr Nutley advised that TDC has just put its new fleet of refuse vehicles on the road. The 12 Refuse Collection Vehicles (RCVs) comprise a combination of 18t, 22t and 26t vehicles which are fitted with lower emission Euro 6 engines. The fleet features the new Elite+ cab, which offers improved comfort for crews and provides drivers with optimum direct vision along with electric bin lifts which reduce noise levels for operatives. The delivery of these vehicles marks the start of a 56-vehicle replacement programme for the council, which includes kerbside recycling vehicles, sweepers for street cleansing and vans.

Teignbridge Leisure is looking for donations of unwanted buckets, spades, balls and beach toys to fill its seafront toy libraries in Teignmouth and at Dawlish Warren. The popular beach toy libraries allow people to borrow equipment for their trip to the beach and then return the toys at the end of the day. Beach play items can be left in the toy chests located by the pier on Teignmouth's promenade and near the lifeguard station on Dawlish Warren beach. Beach toy libraries reduce plastic waste by encouraging people to reuse items and enables families to access beach fun even if money is tight.

BIPC Devon is launching their Women in Business Course on behalf of Teignbridge District Council utilising Shared Prosperity Funds (SPF) on 7 June at Newton Abbot Library. The free course designed by, and for, women who are starting and developing their own businesses is being run again this year by the Business & Intellectual Property Centre in Devon (BIPC). The 7 week course (starting on 7th June) is being rolled out after the immense success of 2023, with the aim of exploring the particular challenges women may face, and to help develop key business skills.

Cllr Rogers advised that the Teignbridge CVS has agreed to run a 'cost of living' workshop in Ashburton in November. This will be advertised from next month.

Teign Housing has agreed to meet with the Parish Council about the Brook Lane allocations process. Members thought that the value of such a meeting would be to ensure a fairer allocations process in the future as it was now too late to change what had already happened. He will get some more information so that a date can be arranged.

He continues to work on a Connectivity project with TDC and DNPA to try to connect communities with transport to get them to work and higher education. There is central government grant available and he will keep the Parish Council posted on progress.

(c) **DNPA Representative**

No report.

(d) **Police Report**

During the period 1 – 31 May, there was one criminal offence recorded for this area whereby tools were stolen from a farm at Widecombe on 3 May. There were 12 non-crime incidents across the area. These involved a road traffic collision, a missing persons, Firearms Licensing and cattle on the road.

(e) **Delegate Reports**

The Chair circulated some notes following an online network meeting she had attended entitled 'An introduction to Devon's Highways Department' run by DALC and DCC. It highlighted the importance of the role of the Neighbourhood Highways Officer and they should be our main point of contact for any highways related issues. The NHO covering Widecombe is Scott Riddell. The online reporting tool should also be used but go directly to the NHO if issues logged online have not been satisfactorily resolved. If an issue does not fit into an online category for reporting a problem, such as a road defect,

these can be raised directly with the NHO through the Clerk. It is also possible to highlight an entire section of road with significant defects – this can be considered for resurfacing but there is

a limited budget and the priority of the road will be used to determine if this is granted by DCC. Re-reporting things, such as potholes, does not speed up the process in which they are dealt with – much like pressing the pedestrian crossing button repeatedly. There is a risk-based approach to pothole repair – fixes can be scheduled in 2hr or up to 90 days depending on how highly they rate. This will be determined by the grade of the road (A-road, B-road etc) and its busyness/avoidability. The next event will be on 15 August – 'An introduction to self-help highways schemes'. This will include

the Road Warden and Snow Warden Schemes. This is bookable on the DALC website if any members would like to attend.

5013 REVIEW OF COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP

Members reviewed the committee membership and the following was agreed:

- **Planning/Finance:** Cllr Bibby, Cllr Guest and Cllr Edwards
- **Projects/Estates:** Cllr Raynor and Cllr Partridge

5014 PROJECTS & ESTATES

(Cllrs Raynor & Partridge)

- **Parish Field**

(i) The income and expenditure for the Parish Field (to 31 May 2024) was received. A balance of £1103.85 was noted.

- Members noted that there had been a leak in the water pipe on the parish field. It was agreed that the estimated cost of the water used (£190) would be borne by the Orchard Committee.

- **Widecombe Fair**

Members reviewed the letting agreement for the Village Green and the fee for this year's event. As the fee had been static for a number of years, it was agreed by a majority of members that this is increased by £100 to £1300. No other changes to the agreement were necessary.

- **Village Strimming/Weed spraying**

Members received a quotation of £100 from Geoff Partridge to spray the weeds on the four roads out of the centre of the village. It was agreed that his worked well last year and therefore members agreed to accept the quotation.

Cllr Partridge shared an article from an old DNPA newspaper from 1989 about some work DNPA did to help the parish. This included cobbling and making improvements around the Widecombe Fair sign. Over the years, it has become grown over and it might be nice if the weed spraying extended around the sign to expose the cobbles again. The sign and cobbles could then be cleaned using a power spray. It was agreed to support this proposal and the weed spraying around the sign would be included in the quoted cost.

- **Village walkabout**

It was agreed that this would be arranged for some time in this summer, a date to be arranged outside the meeting.

5015 PLANNING/LOCAL LIAISON

(Cllrs Bibby, Guest & Edwards)

(a) **New planning applications/appeals:**

(i) 0210/24 – Installation of 20m lattice telecommunications tower supporting 9 antennas, 2 600mm dishes together with one foul weather enclosure, 1 generator and 1 meter cabinet plus a 1.2m satellite dish and compound fencing for the EAS and Shared Rural Network projects at Challamoor Field, Buckland in the Moor, Newton Abbot

After discussion, it was agreed to support this application. Whilst acknowledging that a mast is not aesthetically pleasing, a mobile signal is much needed in the parish of Widecombe. Representations from parishioners have previously been made to the Parish Council regarding the need for a mobile phone signal and this mast would provide this much-needed facility.

(b) **Planning Decisions/Withdrawals**

(i) 0150/24 – Southcombe House, Widecombe

Retrospective erection of an ancillary building at Southcombe House, Widecombe-in-the-Moor

Members noted that DNPA has granted conditional planning permission.

5016 FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE

(Cllrs Bibby, Guest & Edwards)

(a) **Payments**

Members received and approved the following payments:

- Clerk's salary and disbursements – £289.07
- Reimbursement to clerk for refreshments purchased for the Annual Parish Meeting – £80.98

5017 HIGHWAYS

Potholes and other highways maintenance issues can be reported direct to DCC:

Online: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/>

Telephone: 0345 155 1004

Email: customer@devon.gov.uk

(a) Road Warden Scheme – Cllr Raynor advised that she had drafted an article for the Parish Link seeking

volunteers. It was encouraging that a couple of volunteers have already come forward. It is also planned to include something in Rolling Along. The Parish Councillor who co-ordinates the scheme in Lustleigh is also happy to support the Parish Council to set this up. District Cllr Rogers also offered to share information on the Post Office van.

(b) It was requested to ask Scott Riddell to look at the poor road surface at Parkland Head. It has been

like this for some time and continues to deteriorate.

(c) There are still various missing directional signs. It was agreed to raise this again with Scott Riddell.

(d) Members received and noted an email from a resident in Lower Town who had liaised directly with

Scott Riddell about road closures and diversionary routes.

(e) It was noted that cars are parking and blocking the cattle grid at Dartmeet. This has been reported

online but signage is probably needed to make it very clear to drivers that they shouldn't be blocking the cattle grids. This will also be reported to Scott Riddell.

5018 CORRESPONDENCE

(a) Website update – members received an update from Roger Claxton advising that work on the new Widecombe website using WordPress is progressing well. All pages have been transferred across into the new environment and they are testing prior to going live. Changes have been made where necessary, but the design of the site is largely unchanged. It is hoped that a new addition to the team will start in June. Only £20 of the £80 that the Parish Council provided to help with migration has been used. Members agreed that the balance should be retained by Widecombe Website for any future expenses that arise.

5019 MEMBERS' ITEMS FOR INFORMATION OR GENERAL DISCUSSION, FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS AND/OR ITEMS REQUIRING URGENT ATTENTION

Members are reminded that they have not received the statutory notice of this business to be transacted and should therefore recognise that any decision made may be taken to be unlawful if challenged in the future

Associated with the Road Warden Scheme, Cllr Raynor suggested that the Parish Council has a discussion about setting up a Parish Council Facebook Page. It was agreed that Cllr Raynor will make some further enquiries about how this might work.

The Chair reminded members to send her a short blurb about themselves with a photo so she can put together a 'Meet Your Councillors' article for Rolling Along.

5020 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on 4 July 2024 in Church House, Widecombe.

Signed Dated