

WIDECOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held in Church House, Widecombe on Thursday 15 July 2021

Members present: Councillor Hassell (Chairman), Butcher (from item 4701), Clare, Edwards, Elliott, Jones (from item 4701), Partridge and Whiteside

Also present: County Cllr Gribble, District Cllr Nutley and District Cllr Sarah Parker-Khan

Members of the Public: None

Clerk: Suzanna Hughes

4700 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- Cllr Fenton
- Rob Steemson, DNPA
- District Cllr Cox

4701 CASUAL VACANCIES

Four applications were received for two vacancies. Members agreed to cast their votes by paper ballot which resulted in Simon Butcher and Sue Jones being elected as co-opted members. They both signed their Declarations of Acceptance of Office and joined the meeting.

4702 OPEN FORUM

There were no comments.

4703 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.

Cllr Partridge declared an interest in item 4707 (b).

4704 RATIFICATION OF MINUTES

Members received the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 24 June 2021 which were approved as a true and correct record.

4705 REPORTS

(a) County Councillor

Cllr Gribble informed members that he was still pursuing the parking issue at Spitchwick. He is also progressing the procurement of two new grit bins for the parish and will liaise with the Highways Officer, Scott Riddell, and the Snow Warden, Miles Fursdon, re positioning. Cllr Partridge expressed concern about the number of road closures from Hexworthy Cross to Dartmeet as this is a major route across the moor. She queried why jobs could not be combined so as to restrict the number of road closures.

(b) District Councillors

Cllr Parker-Khan advised that it was garden waste bin renewal time. The cost is £45 per year (£5 reduction if you are in receipt of a council tax discount). There are issues with waste collections; staff are isolating, there is a national shortage of HGV drivers and the volume of waste has increased with people working from home. She reminded members that TDC are reviewing the Local Plan and are consulting on proposed sites for housing. She reported that she and District Cllr Cox are looking at monitoring TDC's progress following its climate emergency declaration. As well as carbon reduction they will also assess the ecology and a report will follow shortly. She asked whether the Council had received a response from TDC about the Dartmeet telephone box. The clerk advised that TDC had not even sent an acknowledgement of receipt. Cllr Parker-Khan offered to follow this up.

Cllr Nutley advised that there had been a member update by the Leader of the TDC, Cllr Connett, on strategic direction. Priorities are climate change, jobs and homes. The full effect of Brexit and Covid on the economy is not known. In regard to climate change progress, work on the leisure centres is being undertaken to make the buildings energy efficient; the Council's online services were expanding providing easier access for residents of rural areas and the tree planting scheme is continuing. Progress on increasing job opportunities included the successful £9 million High Street Fund for improvements to Newton Abbot town centre. The Council's T100 programme to provide homes for the most needed was continuing, an increasing number of empty homes were being brought back into use and the government required 751 new homes to be built in Teignbridge.

DNPA: Cllr Nutley reported that at the recent Annual Meeting, Pamela Wood was elected as Chair and Peter Harper as Deputy Chair. Ali Kohler (Director of Conservation and Communities) and Donna Healey (Head of Business Support) are both leaving this year.

(c) DNPA Representative

Rob Steemson was unable to attend the meeting but sent a written report as follows: As reported last month the five trees blown down on the Two Moors Way footpath at Ponsworthy have now been cleared along with some minor surface improvements near a dangerous river bank have been completed.

The Dartmoor National Park Authority has just been informed about some extra funding available from DEFRA to deliver a Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL). We are presently making farmers and land managers aware of the scheme and Sector Rangers have been asked to develop four project ideas by 16 July. I anticipate that proposed works on the footpath at bottom of Widecombe hill, the proposed works at Bonehill rocks and potentially some works on erosion issues over Hameldown (as mentioned last month) could all be entered. I also have plenty of other ideas with my wider Community & Landscape Management work across the moor. For further details on the scheme see the link here <https://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/living-and-working/farming/farming-in-protected-landscapes>

(d) Police

No report.

(e) Delegate Reports

No reports.

4706 PROJECTS

(Lead Councillors: Cllrs Partridge & Fenton)

There were no items.

4707 ESTATES

(Lead Councillors: Cllrs Edwards & Elliott)

(a) Pre-school in the Parish Field

An amended agreement had been circulated to members for approval. The Chairman suggested that a clause excluding sub-letting without the permission of the Parish Council should also be added. The amended agreement with the addition of the sub-letting clause was approved. The clerk will send a copy to the pre-school in advance of their meeting on Monday.

(b) Strimming around the village

Having declared an interest, Cllr Partridge left the meeting for this item. Members discussed the annual strimming of the village. It was agreed to ask Geoff Partridge to carry out 1 cut @ £150. It was also agreed that Cllrs Edwards and Elliott would carry out some research about the job specification.

(c) Request for filming

Members received a request for a reduction in the proposed donation of £500 per day to film externally in the parish. After discussion, it was agreed to wait until confirmation has been received that filming will take place before negotiation of the rate.

(d) Memorial Benches

Members received suggestions from the Estates team with regard to the provision of memorial benches in the parish based on processes which other parishes have put in place. It was proposed that should the Council wish to allow memorial benches the following should be agreed: locations, maximum number, eligibility criteria, limited bench styles to choose from and an application process. After discussion, however, it was agreed by a majority of members not to pursue the proposal to allow memorial benches in the parish.

4708 PLANNING/LOCAL LIAISON

(Lead Councillors: Cllrs Clare & Elliott)

(a) New planning applications/appeals

(i) 00351/21 – Middle Cator Farm, Widecombe-in-the-Moor

Erection of agricultural building (18.5 x 9m)

Members agreed to support this application.

(b) Planning Decisions/Withdrawals

(i) 0210/21 – Higher Uppacott, Poundsgate

Removal of replacement of doors and frames, two windows and cills

Members noted that DNPA has granted listed building consent.

(ii) 0208/21 – 6 Lady Meadow Terrace, Widecombe-in-the-Moor

Erection of single storey front and rear extensions with minor internal alterations

Members noted that DNPA has granted conditional planning permission.

4709 FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE

(Lead Councillors: Cllrs Partridge & Routley)

(a) Payments

Members received and approved the following payments:

- Cheque no 001078 – Clerk’s salary and disbursements (July & August) – £483.14
- Cheque no 001079 – HMRC (PAYE) – £162
- Cheque no 001080 – S Hall (reduction of sycamore limb and removal of remaining sycamorestem) – £504

4710 HIGHWAYS

There were no new issues.

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

4711 CORRESPONDENCE

(a) The Chairman read a thank you note from Roderick Newbolt-Young following the recent and belated presentation of a watercolour painting from the Parish Council following his retirement as Chair in 2019.

4712 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

None

4713 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting will be held in Church House on 2 September 2021 at 7.30pm.

Signed Dated