

WIDECOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday 4 July 2019 in Church House, Widecombe

Members Present: Councillor Hassell (Chairman), Edwards, Elliott, Fenton, Morley, Partridge, Routley and Whiteside

Also present: County Cllr Gribble

Members of the Public: There were seven members of the public present.

Clerk: Suzanna Hughes

4451 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- Cllr Booty
- District Cllr Nutley
- Robert Steemson (DNPA)

4452 OPEN FORUM

A member of the public reported that the hedges/trees are overgrowing into the road at Mill House, Ponsworthy. It was agreed to contact DCC so that the appropriate action can be taken. A member of the public commented that areas along the Natsworthy Valley have been chipped out; rocks have been moved and not replaced. There is also need to sort out the passing places. The potential closure of Ashburton Fire Station was raised and objections expressed about limiting coverage on the moor. Public meetings have been arranged in Ashburton (19 & 22 July) and people are being encouraged to write to Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service to object to Ashburton's potential closure.

It was suggested that the Parish Council alternates its meetings between Widecombe and Leusdon.

4453 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & 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 Fenton declared an interest in item 4456:6.2.1.1.

4454 RATIFICATION OF MINUTES

Members received the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 6 June 2019 which were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

With reference to item 4447, it was noted that the payment of £12,656 to Widecombe Community Hall CIO was simply a transfer of funds which had been held in the Parish Council's account on behalf of Widecombe Community Hall CIO whilst their bank account was being set up.

As a matter arising from the minutes, Cllr Partridge reported that Moor than Meets the Eye is happy to look at providing a 'shared use' notice board in Poundsgate. The cost of the board will be around £1500 and it is probable that Moor than Meets the Eye will grant the funds to the Parish Council.

4455 REPORTS

5.1 County Councillor

Cllr Gribble informed members that the Moorland Hotel has been awarded four stars and an AA Rosette. He also advised that DCC were planning to replace the cattle grid at Hemsworthy Gate, Dartmeet.

5.2 District Councillor

Cllr Nutley was unable to attend the meeting but had written to the Parish Council asking it to consider writing to object to the proposed closure of Ashburton Fire Station.

Similar representations had also be made by District Cllr Parker-Khan. DNPA Representative Rob Steemson was unable to attend the meeting. With regard to the proposed work at Newbridge, the boulders are still available and the contractor is ready to proceed so things could be achieved before the main summer holiday period. If the cost can be shared between Holne and Widecombe Parish Councils it would be no more than £250 each.

5.3 Police

No report.

4456 MATTERS ARISING

6.1 ESTATES

(Lead Councillors: Cllrs Fenton & Whiteside)

6.1.1 Lease of North Hall Field

Members received and considered correspondence from DNPA regarding the renewal of North Hall lease including heads of terms, plans and DNPA land registry title entries.

Cllr Fenton advised that he had looked through the documents and would be happy to propose approval of the proposed heads of terms. It was therefore unanimously agreed that the terms are accepted and that it was not necessary to sought independent legal advice.

6.1.2 Boundary adjacent to leat opposite tennis court

Cllr Fenton reported that he had spoken to the resident of Coombe who is happy for the branches from her property which are resting on the BT cables opposite the tennis court to be trimmed provided there is no cost to her. It is now understood that a working party within the parish will address the problem.

6.1.3 Land Registry searches on land in the parish to establish unregistered land

Cllr Fenton reported that this is in abeyance.

6.2 PLANNING/LOCAL LIAISON

(Lead Councillors: Cllrs Booty & Elliott)

6.2.1 New planning applications:

Members considered the following new applications:

6.2.1.1 0281/19 – Works to include extension of the approved Plant Room, alterations to internal layouts of the main barn, insertion of new rooflights, variation of the courtyard elevation of the Outdoor Education Building, variation of the below ground drainage layout, relocation of an existing oil tank, creation of a new Devon Bank, and various minor changes to the approved joinery scheme at East Shallowford Farm, Widecombe-in-the-Moor

Having declared an interest in this item, Cllr Fenton did not speak or vote on this item.

Members agreed they had no objections to this application.

6.2.1.2 0273/19 – Installation of new kitchen window and decoration of porch bench at Hannaford Manor, Poundsgate

Members agreed they had no objections to this application.

6.2.1.3 DNPA (Newbridge Hill, Poundsgate) Tree Preservation Order 2019 Members agreed to support the Tree Provision Order.0249/19 – Change to reduce the number of glazed sections from five to four at rear of dwelling at Middle Natsworthy, Widecombe-in-the-Moor; Members agreed to continue to support this application.

6.2.2 Planning Decisions/Withdrawals

6.2.2.1 0193/19 – Erection of a general-purpose agricultural barn (27x12m) with hardstanding at Sherwell Farm, Poundsgate

Members noted that this application has been withdrawn.

6.2.3 Closure of Ashburton Fire Station

Members were consulted on the proposed closure of Ashburton Fire Station. After discussion, it was agreed that the clerk would draft a letter for approval by members opposing the closure.

6.2.4 Widecombe Fair

Members received and considered correspondence from Widecombe Fair Committee requesting that the Parish Council writes to TDC asking that the cost of public toilet provision on Fair Day is waived. It was agreed that the Parish Council would write.

6.2.5 Devon Air Ambulance Night Landing Site

Members were informed that Toby Russell from Devon Air Ambulance Trust would like to come and speak to the Parish Council to update them on plans for a site in Widecombe. It is likely that this will be in September.

6.2.6 Upkeep of St Pancras churchyard

Members received a request from Mike Pascoe, Church Warden, asking that the Parish Council writes to TDC about the poor standard of maintenance of the churchyard. It was noted that TDC only have an annual budget of £500 for the maintenance of the closed churchyard and that there is one year left of a ten-year contract. Options are being discussed by the PCC. In the meantime, it was agreed that the Parish Council writes to express its dissatisfaction about the condition of the churchyard and the frequency that it is being cut.

6.2.7 DNPA Forum

Cllr Elliott advised that should would be attending the DNPA Forum on 10 July.

7.3 PROJECTS

(Lead Councillors: Cllrs Edwards & Morley)

7.3.1 Parish Poll

Cllr Edwards reported that a meeting of Councillors had been held to discuss how the decisions made at the last meeting can be implemented. Notes of the meeting had been circulated to members for information.

The Chairman recapped on some of the decisions already made. There will be one vote per household. There will be two open meetings to relay information about what the poll is about. Dates for those meetings will be set once the procedure has been agreed.

Members agreed that the fact sheet which has been drafted is both factual and neutral and were happy with it as it stands.

The Chairman advised that a further meeting for members only would need to be arranged in August to confirm arrangements so that everything can be tied together formally in September' Parish Council meeting.

Members received a letter from Widecombe Community Hall CIO asking the Parish Council to reconsider the terms of its loan to the Charity namely the 31 October annual deadline and the requirement to have 80% of funds secured before requesting the grant. Cllr Fenton advised that he had carried out some research and had noted that East Devon use a grant application form which requires that the 'vast majority' of funds need to have been reached before grant funding is released. After discussion, members confirmed that they were happy with the terms they had agreed at the last meeting.

It was reported that Leusdon Memorial Hall has agreed that at present they do not require any funding raised from a public loan. It was agreed, therefore, to proceed with the poll on the basis that a loan is required only for Widecombe Community Hall CIO.

7.3.2 Affordable Housing

There was no further update.

7.4 FINANCE

(Lead Councillors: Cllrs Partridge & Routley)

7.4.1 Payments

To receive and approve payments for approval:

£ Cheque no 001013 – Clerk’s salary and disbursements (July & August) – £471.54

£ Cheque no 001014 – HMRC (PAYE) – £157.80

£ Cheque no 001015 – DALC (Training) – £300

7.4.2 Newbridge

The clerk advised that Holne Parish Council had agreed to support a request for funds from Rob Steemson, DNPA, to purchase and install boulders at Newbridge. It was agreed that Widecombe Parish Council would also make the same contribution (£250). It was agreed to ask County Cllr Gribble for a grant from his locality budget.

4457 HIGHWAYS

There were no new highways issues. Members were reminded that the preferred method of reporting highways issues is online via the ‘Report a Problem’ page.

4458 CORRESPONDENCE

Members were informed of all relevant correspondence not otherwise dealt with on the agenda:

- Members received a letter from Roger Claxton seeking permission to use the digitised images from the Parish Chest in a piece of work he has written that tells the story of welfare provision in Widecombe parish between in 1700 and 1900. All profits from the work will go into local Widecombe charities. Members agreed that the digitised images can be used.
- Rumours have been circulating that the Primary School is going to close. A letter from the Chair of Governors, Chris Elliott, confirmed that this is not true.
- It was noted that a lot of cattle has been killed on Widecombe Hill (5 cows and 5 sheep) and a request for increased signage was made. Cllr Partridge advised that it is important to report this to Karla McKechnie, Livestock Protection Officer (Dartmoor Livestock Protection Society). In the meantime, temporary signs could be requested. Landowners/DNPA should also be encouraged to build up edges and there should be more ‘dogs on leads’ signs.
- Cllr Partridge reported that she had attended the ‘Beating of the Bounds’ of Ilsington and is happy to represent Widecombe at the next event on 13 July.

4459 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.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.05pm.

Signed Dated