

WIDECOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held in Church House, Widecombe on Thursday 24 June 2021

Members present: Councillor Hassell (Chairman), Clare (arrived at 7.40pm), Edwards, Elliott, Fenton, Partridge and Whiteside

Also present: District Cllr Sarah Parker-Khan

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

Clerk: Suzanna Hughes

4687 RESIGNATION AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(a) Members noted the resignation of Cllr Routley. The Chairman thanked Cllr Routley for her hard work over the years which was very much appreciated.

(b) Apologies were received from:

- District Cllr Nutley
- District Cllr Cox
- County Cllr Gribble
- Rob Steemson, DNPA

4688 OPEN FORUM

A member of the public advised that he had written to the Parish Council outlining his objection to planning application 0252/21. He informed the meeting that it had been two years since he has first raised the logging issue at Natsworthy and still no steps have been taken to comply with orders from DCC to clear up the road which has been left in an appalling condition. In his opinion, there has been a lack of concern for the environment and contempt for the authorities and he finds it unacceptable that a planning application should be considered.

A member of the public considered that aspects of the application 0252/21 were erroneous. She believed that little consideration has been given to the wildlife, including the nightjar, cuckoo and adders, and there is no need for the hardstanding if it is not for commercial use. Her full statement of objection has been submitted and received by the Parish Council for consideration. There are currently 11 letters of objection which have been posted on the website.

4689 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 Fenton declared an interest in item 4694 (c) as he is the Chair of the charity which is applying to have the land deregistered.

4690 RATIFICATION OF MINUTES

Members received the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 7 May 2021 which were approved as a true and correct record.

4691 REPORTS

(a) County Councillor

Cllr Gribble was not present at the meeting but will be following up the double yellow lines at Deeper Marsh and the two grit bins which have not yet been delivered.

(b) District Councillors

Cllr Parker-Khan advised members that TDC are reviewing the Local Plan and are consulting on proposed sites for housing. This does not affect this parish directly as it is in DNPA but may have a significant impact on other areas within Teignbridge which will have a knock-on effect. They are seeking as many responses as possible and all the documents are available online.

Cllr Clare joined the meeting at 7.40pm.

Cllr Parker-Khan advised that she has spoken to Cllr Cox about the removal of the telephone box at Dartmeet and is willing to help the parish fight for its reinstatement if necessary. All members supported this offer. The clerk advised that the Parish Council has not yet received any response from TDC to its letter. It was agreed to chase a response and if it was not favourable, the projects team will pick it up with the District Councillors to take forward.

Cllr Parker-Khan was disappointed to report that TDC's assets department are reluctant to agree to a metered connection from the public toilets to create a supply to the Parish Field as it will require ongoing maintenance and someone being responsible for billing etc. They have said that should the Parish Council have its own connection put in and need to cross TDC land then that would be a more acceptable alternative to them. It was suggested that SWW may help with this as a community project and this is something which the Parish Council can explore.

(c) DNPA Representative

Rob Steemson was unable to attend the meeting but sent a written report as follows:

- With landowner permission and across Spitchwick Common we will be erecting some wooden posts to enable DNPA to post strategic seasonal messages to visitors. This is part of the wider DNPA revised Communication strategy and helps patrolling Rangers, Marshals & Police remind any perpetrators of Byelaws etc. I am hoping to facilitate a similar arrangement on Widecombe Commons.
- Due to recent strong winds and as seen on path check on Monday there are five trees down on Two Moors Way footpath up from Ponsworthy. The actual path obstruction part of tree will be sawn through soon before we start getting complaints from walkers.
- Yesterday I looked with landowner at potential improvements to the footpath at bottom of Widecombe hill. Now have to get this priced up and find funding.
- The Traffic Enforcement Officers have been present around Deeper Marsh on busy sunny days and vehicles are getting tickets but not all offenders due to lines not being

clear. Still chasing Highways and grateful that your Chairman is chasing the County Councillor for action.

- I continue to undertake erosion surveys and recently with colleagues from our Recreation Section have been across Hameldown to look at issues caused by mountain bikes, scramblerbikes and the occasional rogue 4x4 vehicle that come up the Byeway from Widecombe and then transgress. The main part of the problem is that the Two Moors Way route is marked green on maps and users think it is a bridleway so we are looking at pragmatic and practical solutions.
- Repairs to car parks around Bonehill rocks are being planned and agreed with landowner along with posts for signage as mentioned in 1 above.

The Chairman reported that he had asked County Cllr Gribble to chase up the repainting of the double yellow lines at Deeper Marsh which the Parish Council had requested to be done before Easter, and the two grit bins which have not yet been delivered.

Cllr Partridge suggested that all members could make their own representations about the yellow lines by reporting it to DCC online. She will circulate the relevant link to prompt everyone to do this.

(d) Police

No report

(e) Delegate Reports

Update on Affordable Housing – there is a delay in agreeing the terms of the s106 agreement but it was acknowledged that this was an important aspect as it links it to local people.

Cllr Partridge suggested that it might be beneficial for someone already living in the Hastoe development to be included on the Steering Group.

Cllr Elliott reminded members that Mary Ridgeway, TDC's Housing Enabling Officer, was going to attend the Annual Parish Council last year to give an update and suggested that when it was appropriate to do so, the Parish Council could invite her to a meeting later in the year to update members and residents.

4692 PROJECTS

(Lead Councillors: Cllrs Partridge & Fenton)

(a) Parish Field

Members noted that the Open Day has been postponed due to government restrictions until Saturday 11 September which will tie in with the 'Not the Widecombe Fair' event. Cllr Fenton summarised the various activities which have been arranged including the hiring of an apple crusher, a presentation by the history group etc

Some issues were raised regarding the use of the field by the pre-school including the exact area which the pre-school has been allocated, the fencing, ensuring it is stock-proof and the requirement for change of use. It was agreed that these matters would be looked into.

Cllr Clare asked about the sheep grazing which was originally for a 5-week period. Cllr Fenton will liaise with the farmer about what he would like to do as this period could be extended depending on the quality of the grass.

Cllr Edwards advised that the £21 fee for the TEN for the Open Day event is not being refunded by TDC.

4693 ESTATES

(Lead Councillors: Cllrs Edwards & Elliott)

(a) Parish Trees

Members noted that DNPA is not protecting the chestnut on the green with a Tree Preservation Order and the Parish Council's planned work can proceed. Cllr Fenton advised that the work will be undertaken at the beginning of July. The resistograph will also be carried out at the beginning of July and a report will follow.

(b) North Hall Lease

An updated photographic schedule of the play equipment and tennis court have been sent to the solicitor and an engrossment copy of the counterpart lease is awaited from DCC for signature.

Cllr Partridge asked about the responsibility for the trees as there is a dying ash tree in the car park which will need felling. It was noted that a few years ago, DNPA carried out some hedge laying. It was agreed to write to Andrew Watson at DNPA to confirm responsibility.

(c) Memorial Bench

Members received a request to site a memorial bench in the parish. After a discussion, members voted against the request for now but it was agreed that a general policy for memorial benches should be considered by the Estates team and brought back to the Parish Council for consideration.

(d) Request for filming

Some further information was provided about the request to film in the parish following an initial enquiry which was considered by the Parish Council in March's meeting. It was noted that the request included use of Church House for which the Parish Council was not responsible. For external filming, it was agreed to ask for a donation of £500 per day. A copy of their risk assessment and insurance would also be required. The Parish Council would not be able to give permission for drones.

4694 PLANNING/LOCAL LIAISON

(Lead Councillors: Cllrs Clare & Elliott)

(a) New planning applications/appeals

(i) 00268/21 – Café on the Green, Widecombe-in-the-Moor

Removal of mobile home and erection of staff accommodation

Members agreed to support this application. The proposed development will be a visual improvement on the existing mobile home and the Parish Council echoes the online comments of local residents expressing their wish to support this local business.

(ii) 0264/21 – Newbridge Hill Cottage, Poundsgate

Replacement outbuilding for use as ancillary accommodation to main dwelling

Members agreed not to comment on this application.

(iii) 0252/21 – Land South West of Honeybag Tor, Widecombe-in-the-Moor

Widening of access and new hardstanding

Members agreed to object to this application on the following grounds:

- The size of the hardstanding is disproportionate to the track, access and woodland.
- The hardstanding is out of character with the area and will have a negative visual impact.
- This is a multi-use track used also for leisure including riding, cycling and walking. It would be inappropriate and dangerous for those users to have to share it with heavy vehicles.
- The surface of the track is fragile and large vehicles will damage it creating an ongoing highway maintenance issue.

In the event that permission is granted, it was agreed to suggest to the planning officer that it should be conditional on the hardstanding being removed and the gate reinstated once it has served its purpose.

(b) Planning Decisions/Withdrawals

None

(c) Local Plan Modifications Consultation

The Parish Council was invited to comment during the consultation period which runs from 7th June until 19th July 2021; documents can be viewed at <https://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/living-andworking/business/planning-policy/local-plan-review>

The clerk advised that this was DNPA's Local Plan and not TDC's Local Plan which was referred to in District Cllr Parker-Khan's report.

(d) Commons Act 2006: Schedule 2(7)

Members noted that DCC, as the Commons Registration Authority, has received a request to deregister land that had been wrongly registered as common land under the Commons Registration Act 1965 being part of CL69, land in the Manor of Dunstone comprising Blackslade Down and part Dunstone Down. There were no comments.

4695 FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE

(Lead Councillors: Cllrs Partridge & Routley)

(a) Payments

Members received and approved the following payment:

- Cheque no 001076 – Clerk’s salary and disbursements – £229.87
- Cheque no 001077 – D Edwards (Reimbursement – Temporary Event Notice) – £21

4696 HIGHWAYS

Cllr Fenton that the signpost at the top of Southcombe Hill is propped up and not properly fixed.

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

4697 CORRESPONDENCE

(a) Members received correspondence from Hastoe Housing advising that a 2 bedroomed property is becoming vacant in the next few weeks. This will be advertised on Devon Homechoice from Wednesday 23 June.

(b) Members received correspondence from Mike Pascoe regarding mobile phone signal in Widecombe. It was agreed that members should talk to parishioners to find out what they want so that members can fairly represent the views of parishioners about the mobile phone signal in Widecombe when the issue arises in the future.

(c) The Chairman read a letter from Rod Newbolt-Young thanking the Parish Council for the gift of a painting which had recently been presented to him.

4698 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.

4699 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting will be held in Church House on 15 July at 7.30pm.

Signed Dated