

WIDECOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

WIDECOMBE PARISH COUNCIL Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday 7 March 2019 in Church House, Widecombe

Present: Councillor Newbolt-Young (Chairman), Fenton, Hassell, Lomax, Morley, Routley, Southcombe and Welby

Also present: District Cllr Jeffery

Members of the Public: There was nine members of the public present.

Clerk: Suzanna Hughes

4390 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- Cllr Booty
- County Cllr Gribble
- Rob Steemson (DNPA)

4391 OPEN FORUM

Three members of the public made representations strongly objecting to the planning application to be discussed later in the meeting at 4399 (a) (i) – 0059/19 – Installation of 20m telecommunications column mast at Land at Newbridge Hill, Poundsgate. Concerns related to visual impact, destruction of a stone wall, criticism over the process which has been followed and the lack of public consultation, effect on nearby trees, effect on butterflies and bees on adjacent site and a general concern as to whether alternative options (e.g. satellite) have been fully explored.

4392 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Councillors were reminded of their responsibility to continually update their Notice of Registerable Interests and to declare any disclosable interests, including the nature and extent of such interests they have in any items to be considered at this meeting. 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 4398 (f)(i) & (ii) and Cllr Southcombe declared an interest in item 4398 (f)(i).

4393 RATIFICATION OF MINUTES

(i) Members received a request for an amendment to the January minutes in relation to Richard Casey's comments on the relationship between the Widecombe Village Hall Steering Group and Devon Communities Together at 4371(a) which is recorded in the minutes as having 'broken down'. It was requested that this is deleted as the committee has managed to preserve a good working relationship with Devon Communities for future co-operation. Members agreed that the minutes could not be amended as they had already been ratified and signed. However, the observations were noted.

(ii) Members received the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 7 February 2019 which were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

4394 POLICE REPORT

No report.

4395 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

No report.

4396 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Jeffery informed the meeting that he would give a report at the Annual Parish Meeting.

4397 DELEGATES REPORTS

None.

4398 MATTERS ARISING

(a) Community Housing Project

Cllr Hassell advised that a concern has been raised about surface water drainage which is being looked at. He also advised that Teign Housing are looking to earmark one property for self-build.

(b) Widecombe Community Hall The clerk advised that the Church House was not available on the date originally planned for the Parish Poll. It will therefore be held on Wednesday 19 June. There is no provision for poll cards. The Parish Meeting at which the Poll will be demanded will be held on 23 May. Cllr Hassell suggested that Leusdon Memorial Hall could also be approached to find out whether they would benefit from some long-term funding which could also be raised through the precept.

(c) Parish Field The Chairman advised that correspondence had been received from Michelmore Hughes who have provided a market appraisal of the land should the Parish Council agree to sell it. The Chairman advised that the contents of the letter would be discussed in Part II. Members were advised that further repairs to the fencing were required and it was agreed that three quotations should be sought. Members also discussed the water supply and whether this is something that the Parish Council should reinstate.

(d) Grazing Licence 2019 Members received one application for the grazing licence for the parish field (1 April – 30 November 2019). The application was received from Claire and Geoff Partridge who bid £110. The application was accepted unanimously. As repairs to the boundary fencing were necessary, it was agreed that it would be preferable that these are undertaken prior to the commencement of the grazing licence. It was considered that it would not be possible for the works to be completed by 1 April and it was therefore agreed to ask Mr and Mrs Partridge if the licence period could start after the fencing work has been completed.

(e) Newbridge Members received email correspondence from Rob Steemson, DNPA Ranger, regarding proposals at Newbridge to prevent vehicles from parking in front of the gates and a request for a financial contribution. It was understood that boulders had been sourced and a contractor is being arranged. Members were unclear why funding was required if boulders had already been sourced and it was therefore agreed to wait and see what happens. Cllr Fenton commented that there were a number of areas which appeared to have been restricted by boulders and questioned whether DNPA has considered the visual impact and aesthetics.

(f) Grant requests (s.137 LGA 1972) Members considered the following applications: (i) Leusdon PCC It was agreed to grant £1000 towards the essential work in the top of the tower as required by the quinquennial inspection. The donation also includes a contribution towards the annual churchyard maintenance grant. (ii) St Pancras PCC It was agreed to make a further contribution of £100 towards the churchyard maintenance. This is in addition to the £200 already granted in September 2018.

(g) District/Parish Elections – 2 May 2019

The Clerk updated members on the Election process and distributed nomination packs to those wishing to stand again. The deadline for submitting nominations is 3 April at 4.00pm. The elections will be held on 2 May.

4399 PLANNING

(a) New applications/appeals

(i) 0059/19 – Installation of 20m telecommunications column mast accommodating three antennas, pole mounted satellite dish, ancillary equipment cabinets, cabling, landscaping and access track at Land at Newbridge Hill, Poundsgate Members agreed to object to this application. It was noted that there is significant local objection to this application which demonstrates the strength of local feeling. Widecombe Parish Council supports these local objections and the reasons which have been presented by those objectors. It was agreed to highlight four particular concerns: • The lack of consultation with the community prior to the application being submitted. The Parish Council endeavoured to arrange a site meeting in June

2018 prior to the submission but was told that DNPA had recommended some alterations to the proposal and that once addressed a meeting could be arranged to discuss the amended scheme. The next communication from the agent was in December which stated that due to project timescales, 'we have had to submit the application as swiftly as possible, but we would be happy to discuss the proposal further in parallel'. The first the community were therefore aware of the proposals was when the site notice was put up. This is not acceptable and the process followed for such a scheme is flawed. • Rather than erecting an eyesore in this beautiful setting, have satellite options been explored? A structure such as this has such a negative visual impact and the Parish Council would appeal to DNPA to consider all other avenues before considering granting permission for a mast in this location. Further, there is uncertainty over previous arrangements with Airband for mobile coverage which was promised but never delivered. Similarly, it seems that only the emergency services and not the public in general would benefit from the mast. • The negative effect this structure will have visually is indisputable. The visual impact survey states that it will be barely noticeable – this is simply not true. DNPA, as custodians of the moor, has a duty to protect it from such a construction. • The impact on this historical area of Dartmoor must be considered. Similarly, the impact on wildlife. A construction of this magnitude will damage stone walling, trees, wildlife habitat and protected species – all of which are usually reasons for refusing a planning application.

(ii) 0074/19 – Erection of agricultural workers dwelling (principal dwelling) at land to the north of Lower Blackaton, Blackdown Piper, Widecombe-in-the-Moor Members agreed to object to this application on the grounds of overdevelopment. Permission has already been granted for one dwelling on this land.

(iii) 0083/19 – Change of use of agricultural land to mixed agricultural/equine use and erection of stable block at Hatchwell Hall, Widecombe-in-the-Moor Members agreed that they had no objections to this application.

(iv) 0068/19 – Remove metal roof and replace with natural slate, installation of new roof lights, removal of existing extension, addition of new extension and erection of open fronted timber

framed car port at Bowden Barn, Widecombe-in-the-Moor Members agreed to support this application.

(b) Decisions

None received.

4400 FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE

(a) Payments

Members received and approved the following payments:

â^a Cheque no 0001002 – Clerk's salary and disbursements (March) – £256.87

4401 HIGHWAYS

Cllr Routley advised that the Newbridge road is closed from 11 March and a diversion route will be in place. She commented that DCC had given little notice of this. Cllr Routley advised that the sign at the top of Leusdon Green has broken off at ground level in the high winds. This has been reported to DCC Highways.

4402 CORRESPONDENCE

(a) A complaint was received from a parishioner about the number of visitors to Widecombe and whether there was any law to restrict the number of visitors. The complaint was noted but no action agreed.

(b) A comment was received regarding the publishing of the Parish Council minutes. It was agreed that these could be displayed on the noticeboard as soon as they were produced and in

advance of them being approved. Cllr Fenton agreed that he would put them in the notice board.

(c) Cllr Morley reported that with regard to the suggestion made in February's meeting about access improvements to the footpath at the bottom of Century Hill, it had been further suggested to him that a raised walkway over the muddy section to the stile would be a worthwhile improvement. The clerk advised that the suggestion had been forwarded to Rob Steemson, DNPA and was awaiting a response.

4403 MATTERS OF INFORMATION AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN

Cllr Southcombe advised that the defibrillator pads need replacing in May. The clerk agreed to order a new set of pads.

PART II

[Contains items which may be taken in the absence of the public and press on grounds that exempt information may be disclosed]

4404 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Members resolved that the public and press are excluded from the meeting as the item under discussion contains information exempt under Local Government Act 1972 Section 100A Part 1 and Schedule 12 A & Public Bodies (Admissions to meetings) Act 1960 Section 2(1)

4405 PARISH FIELD

Members considered the market appraisal carried out by Michelmore Hughes. After discussion, it was agreed that the Parish Council would not sell the land at present and it would be earmarked for a potential site for affordable housing at some point in the future.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.10pm.

Signed Dated

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Thursday 21 March at 7.00pm.

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Thursday 5 April 2019 at 7.30pm.