

WIDECOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council

held on Thursday 5 March 2020

in Leusdon Memorial Hall, Leusdon

Members present: Councillor Hassell (Chairman), Booty, Edwards, Elliott, Partridge and Routley

Also present: County Councillor Gribble, District Councillor Cox and Brian Beasley (DNPA).

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

Clerk: Suzanna Hughes

4525 RESIGNATION AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(a) Members received and noted the resignation of Cllr Morley. The Chairman proposed a vote of thanks

for everything Cllr Morley had done whilst on the Parish Council which was supported by all present.

(b) The following apologies were noted:

- Cllr Fenton
- Cllr Whiteside
- District Cllr Parker-Khan
- District Cllr Nutley

4526 OPEN FORUM

Brian Beasley, DNPA's Trees and Landscape Officer, was in attendance to express his view about the Parish

Council's application to fell the sycamore tree on the Green which he considers to be one of the best veteran

sycamores on Dartmoor and which contributes greatly to the environment. He acknowledged that the tree has

experienced a significant failure of one of its limbs and therefore it would be necessary to carry out work to

reduce the loadings on its weaker points. However, he asked the Parish Council to give very careful

consideration to felling the tree without giving it a chance to see if it would respond to a reduction. He

emphasised that it was about assessment of risk and a reduction would be a way of minimising risk of future

failure whilst retaining this important feature. He disagreed with the view of Aspect Tree Consultancy Ltd and

believes that the chance of the tree surviving is greater than the report indicates. He asked the Parish Council

to consider withdrawing its section 211 notice to give more time for discussion about the tree's future.

4527 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 Partridge declared an interest in item 4531 (a)(i).

4528 RATIFICATION OF MINUTES

Members received the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 6 February 2020 which were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

4529 REPORTS

(a) County Councillor

Cllr Gribble advised members that he was still pursuing the request for a 20mph speed restriction around the school though he was not particularly optimistic that this would be received well. He is also following up a request from the Dartmoor Commoners for three new cattle grids and is looking at the proposed sites with them. These will be funded by Spitchwick Commoners (not DCC). Cllr Gribble was informed that the issue on the Natsworthy valley road is still not resolved and no authority is taking responsibility for it. Cllr Gribble agreed that he would pursue issue with DNPA. Cllr Booty was surprised that DCC is passing on the responsibility to clear buddle holes to Parish Councils. Cllr Gribble advised that it is all about funding and DCC prioritising its statutory duties.

(b) District Councillors

Cllr Cox made reference to TDC's Local Plan Review and the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan. He also advised members that the parish could sign up to the Road Warden Scheme where DCC will train and insure volunteers and provide relevant equipment to enable parishes to undertake minor works on the public highway such as repairing potholes.

(c) DNPA Representative

No report.

(d) Police

No report.

(e) Delegate Reports

No reports.

4530 PROJECTS

(Lead Councillors: Cllrs Edwards)

(a) Climate Emergency

Members received and noted the recommendations of Roger and Ann Claxton following their attendance, on behalf of the Parish Council, of the Act on Climate in Teignbridge (ACT) Forum. They

believe that that there would be a huge benefit in declaring a climate emergency and generally taking

the climate emergency on board as a Parish Council as a matter of urgency.

ACT are developing a parish pack to provide some guidelines and help kick-start local action.

They emphasised that each parish was different and so such a pack would need to be tailored to local needs.

It was agreed that Climate Emergency could be the focus of the Annual Parish Meeting and it

would be
useful to invite someone from ACT to give some practical tips to members of the community.
Cllr Elliott and Whiteside would also share information following their attendance at the
Dartmoor

Assembly on the Climate and Ecological crisis being held in Chagford on 7 March.

(b) VE Day Celebrations

Members were advised that Leusdon are planning a meeting to discuss events to celebrate VE
day.

The Chairman suggested that rather than arrange its own event, the Parish Council could
support

community events by making a financial contribution. All members supported this approach.

Cllr

Routley was asked to report this at the meeting being arranged by Leusdon Memorial Hall. She
also

agreed to feedback to members if support is be required.

(c) Affordable Housing

There was nothing further to report.

4531 ESTATES

(Lead Councillors: Cllrs Fenton & Whiteside)

(a) Parish Trees

The Chairman advised that tree quotes have been received to survey the tree in the parish for
which

the Parish Council is responsible. However, the Estates team had not had sufficient time to
review

these and a recommendation would therefore be made at the next meeting.

(b) Parish Field

(i) The Clerk advised that there had been no applications to rent the field.

(ii) The tenancy agreement being drafted by Tim Yonge of Stags has not yet been received.

(iii) Members agreed to defer discussion about alternative uses for the field until Cllr Fenton,
who

had drafted the report, was present. Following discussion about how the parish can make
positive contributions to the climate emergency, Cllr Booty suggested that trees could be
planted on it.

(c) North Hall Field

The clerk advised that DCC has confirmed that provisionally DNPA has no issues with the
proposed

sub-lease however this would subject to consideration of compliance with the terms of clause
13 and

any other matter that DNPA feels it reasonably relevant at the time. It was agreed that the Parish
Council should take legal advice on the lease. It was agreed that the clerk would seek
quotations for

advice and for the drafting of the sub-lease and would circulate them for agreement by email.

(d) Poundsgate Noticeboard

Cllr Partridge informed members that she was hoping that the noticeboard will be in situ by the
end of

next week. The company producing it are waiting for the interpretation panel to be sent from
DNPA.

4532 PLANNING/LOCAL LIAISON

(Lead Councillors: Cllrs Booty & Elliott)

(a) New planning applications/appeals:

Members considered the following applications:

(i) 0041/20 – Construction of manure store/covered feed area at Hatchwell Farm, Widecombe-in-the-Moor

Members agreed to support this application.

(ii) 20/0015 – Proposed tree works, Widecombe Green, Widecombe-in-the-Moor

It was noted that this was the Parish Council's application to fell the sycamore on the Green which Brian Beasley was referring to in the open forum. After discussion, members agreed that they are uncomfortable with the risk that the tree poses and agreed that the notice should not be withdrawn.

(b) Planning Decisions/Withdrawals

The following planning decisions/withdrawals were received:

(i) 0575/19 & 0576/19 – Change of use from existing home office to holiday let, Hatchwell Hall, Widecombe-in-the-Moor

Members noted that DNPA has granted conditional planning permission and listed building consent.

(ii) 20/0008 – Proposed Tree Works, The Old Rectory, Widecombe

Members noted that DNPA has not protected the trees with a Tree Preservation Order.

(c) Consultation of the Dartmoor National Park Management Plan

It was agreed that the Dartmoor National Park should be commended for its thoroughness. However,

there was a suggestion that the Plan might prioritise visitors over the needs of residents. It is important

to seek the response of younger people who will be particularly affected by this and their views should

be encouraged.

4533 FINANCE & GOVERNANCE

(Lead Councillors: Cllrs Partridge & Routley)

(a) Payments

Members received and approved the following payments for approval:

- Cheque no 001042 – Clerk's salary and disbursements (Feb) – £245.09
- Cheque no 001043 – Church House Committee (hire of Church House 2019-20) – £100

(b) Annual Parish Meeting

It was agreed to hold this on Thursday 21 May at 7.30pm. The focus of the meeting will be the Affordable Housing development and Climate Emergency. It was agreed to Mary Ridgeway (TDC) and

Colin Pike (Teign Housing) to talk about the affordable housing and a representative from ACT to address the meeting on how the parish can positively contribute to the Climate Emergency. The meeting will be preceded by the Annual Walkabout of the village at 6.30pm which will include the

affordable homes site.

4534 HIGHWAYS

There were no new issues. Members of the parish should be encouraged to report any problems direct to

DCC using the following methods:

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

4535 CORRESPONDENCE

None.

4536 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 8.50pm.

Signed Dated

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Thursday 2 April 2020 at 7.30pm in Leusdon Memorial Hall.