

## **WIDECOMBE PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday 16 May 2019 in Church House, Widecombe

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

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

Clerk: Suzanna Hughes

### **4420 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

It was proposed by Cllr Fenton, seconded by Cllr Morley and unanimously agreed by all members present and voting that Cllr Hassell is elected as Chairman.

### **4421 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

It was proposed by Cllr Hassell, seconded by Cllr Elliott and unanimously agreed by all members present and voting that Cllr Booty is elected as Vice Chairman.

### **4422 DECLARATIONS OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

These were signed by all members. The Parish Council's newest members were welcomed.

### **4423 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

- County Cllr Gribble
- District Cllr Parker-Khan

### **4424 OPEN FORUM**

A parishioner referred to further correspondence he had sent to the Council regarding the proposed Parish Poll objecting to an increase in the precept to help fund a new community hall in Widecombe. A question was also asked about what would happen if the cost of the project overruns. It was confirmed that the Widecombe Community Hall CIO would be responsible for any project overspend. The term of the loan was also discussed though this has not yet been agreed. A loan over a 50-year term would reduce the annual cost to parishioners. Whilst members noted the objection, it was agreed that the Parish Council should follow due process as planned and would be guided by the results of the Parish Poll. Cllr Elliott advised that the noticeboard in Poundsgate is falling to pieces and needs either repairing or replacing.

### **4425 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

All members were reminded to complete a new Register of Interests and return it to TDC's Deputy Monitoring Officer ([comsec@teignbridge.gov.uk](mailto:comsec@teignbridge.gov.uk)) within 28 days of election, appointment or co-option. Members were also 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 4431(b). Cllrs Elliott and Hassell declared an interest in item 4431(a).

### **4426 RATIFICATION OF MINUTES**

Members received the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 4 April 2019 which were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

### **4427 POLICE REPORT**

No report.

### **4428 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

Cllr Gribble was not present at the meeting. Members were advised that Cllr Gribble had met with then Highways officer and Richard Casey to discuss maintenance of the historic leat opposite the tennis courts. The emails from the Highways officer and Richard Casey following

the visit would be recirculated to all members for discussion next meeting.

#### 4429 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

The clerk advised that Cllr Sarah Parker-Khan hoped to attend the next meeting.

#### 4430 ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

(a) Members received and discussed a proposal from the Chairman regarding roles and responsibilities. The aim is that members become more engaged with the community, become more active between meetings and share responsibilities. The proposal was to split duties into four main areas: Estates, Projects, Finance and Local Liaison/Planning. The proposal was generally supported though time was highlighted as a possible issue due to work and family commitments. Cllr Partridge was also concerned about her involvement in the Affordable Housing project and how this might be perceived by parishioners. It was therefore agreed that she would swap roles with Cllr Edwards. It was agreed that other roles would be agreed at a future meeting. These include: Sports Group rep, Church House Committee rep, Educational Foundation rep, Widecombe Fair rep, responsibility for highways, sandbags, defibrillator, parish trees and snow warden.

(b) Members received and discussed a proposal from the Chairman suggesting monthly drop-in sessions for parishioners to meet with Councillors in a setting other than a Parish Council meeting. It was suggested that these are held on a Saturday morning at a local venue (that would change regularly). Only two councillors would attend each session. After discussion, it was agreed to try out the proposal and review it in three months.

#### 4431 MATTERS ARISING

##### (a) New Community Hall

(i) Cllr Elliott advised that the charity has now been officially registered and all assets have now been transferred to the charity. Richard Casey is no longer a Trustee as he owns the land which is the preferred site for the hall. The grant from Bright Ideas will need to be transferred from the Parish Council's account to the Charity's account and Cllr Elliott would enquire as to how this can be achieved.

(ii) Members received correspondence from Leusdon Memorial Hall in response to the proposal to increase the precept sufficiently to allow funds to also be available for the upkeep of Leusdon Memorial Hall as well as the building of a new community hall in Widecombe. The Committee are not able to meet until 18 June but, informally, Cllr Routley advised that it was unlikely that the Hall would support this funding proposal. It was therefore agreed to proceed with the Poll without including funding for Leusdon Memorial Hall.

(iii) It was agreed to demand a parish meeting to be held on 6 June at 6.30pm.

##### (b) Parish Field

Having declared an interest in this item, Cllr Partridge left the meeting for this item. Members received and considered two quotations for work in the Parish Field (though the quotations were not comparative as each provided for different work). Members also discussed an offer to rent the field for a period of five years in return for the maintaining the field for that period. After discussion it was agreed that:

- The lease should not be given in return for maintenance. The two should be kept separate.
- That much of the work which needs doing in the field was in the licence agreement.
- That the licence agreement needs to be reviewed. A copy to be circulated to all members.
- That Rupert Baker should be commissioned to inspect the trees in the Parish Field. Members also discussed an offer to purchase the field. It was agreed that the Council had already agreed previously not to sell the field. Members were also informed that the owner of an adjacent field had advised the Chairman that the Parish Council or its tenants do not have a right to take water from their stream. It was agreed that this would need to be explored legally. In the meantime,



Accounting (South West) Ltd as the internal auditor to the Parish Council.

(iii) Members agreed that this Council is exempt from a limited assurance review under s9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015 and authorised the Chairman and Clerk to sign the Certificate of Exemption.

(iv) Members completed, approved and authorised the Chairman and Clerk to sign Section 1 of the Annual Return (Annual Governance Statement 2018/19).

(v) Members received, approved and authorised the Chairman and Clerk to sign Section 2 of the Annual Return (Accounting Statements 2018/19).

(c) Insurance 2019/20

Members received the insurance renewal quotation from Community First at a total cost of £192.56. It was agreed to accept the quotation.

(d) Signatories Members reviewed the account signatories. It was agreed to remove Roderick Newbolt-Young and add Claire Partridge.

(e) Review of Parish Council Governance Documents

(i) Standing Orders

Members reviewed the Standing Orders. There were no amendments.

(ii) Financial Regulations

Members received the Financial Regulations. The Chairman proposed the following change: For goods/services less than £250, the Council needs only seek one quotation. Three quotations would need to be sought if the Chairman and Clerk are to agree works outside the meeting. These amendments were unanimously approved.

(iii) General and Financial Risk Assessment

Members received the General and Financial Risk Assessment. There were no amendments.

(iv) Statement of Internal Control

Members received the Statement of Internal Control. There were no amendments.

(v) Fixed Assets Register

Members reviewed its fixed asset register. There were no amendments.

(vi) Investment Strategy

Members reviewed its Investment Strategy. There were no amendments.

(vii) Anti-fraud and Corruption Policy

Members reviewed its Anti-fraud and Corruption Policy. There were no amendments.

(viii) Complaints Procedure

Members reviewed its Complaints Procedure. There were no amendments.

(ix) GDPR documents (Privacy Notices, Subject Access Request Policy & Data Breach Response Plan & Retention of Documents Policy)

Members reviewed its GDPR documents. There were no amendments. It was agreed that in accordance with the Council's Retention of Documents Policy, former Councillors should be reminded to delete Council related emails from their computers.

4434 HIGHWAYS

Cllr Routley reported that the broken sign at Leusdon has still not been repaired. It was agreed that the clerk would write again to DCC Highways. It was also reported that vehicles are ignoring the double yellow lines at Newbridge and Deeper Marsh. It was agreed that the issue is lack of enforcement. The gate at Newbridge is still being blocked by vehicles parking in front of it. Again, this is a matter of enforcement and it was agreed that the police should be reminded.

4435 CORRESPONDENCE

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

(a) Operation London Bridge – it was agreed that the clergy and the Parish Council should meet to form a Operation London Bridge Committee.

- (b) Letter from a parishioner in Lower Town, Poundsgate, regarding proposed community hall and increasing the precept. This had been discussed in the open forum and at item 4431 (a)(ii).
- (c) Members received a letter of thanks from Leusdon PCC for grant received.

4436 MATTERS OF INFORMATION AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN

None.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 10.05pm.

Signed ..... Dated .....

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Thursday 6 June 2019 at 7.30pm.

The walkabout of the village will now take place on Thursday 4 July 2019 at 6.30pm.