

## **WIDECOMBE PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Zoom on Thursday 6 May 2021

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

Also present: County Cllr Gribble

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

Clerk: Suzanna Hughes

### **4669 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

It was proposed by Cllr Clare, seconded by Cllr Edwards and unanimously agreed by all members present and voting that Cllr Hassell is re-elected as Chairman.

### **4670 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

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

### **4671 DECLARATIONS OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

It was agreed that the Chairman and Vice Chairman would sign their declarations of acceptance of office at the next face to face meeting.

### **4672 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

- Cllr Whiteside
- District Cllr Parker-Khan
- District Cllr Nutley
- District Cllr Cox
- Rob Steemson, DNPA

### **4673 OPEN FORUM**

There were no comments from members of the public.

### **4674 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.

There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensation.

### **4675 RATIFICATION OF MINUTES**

Members received the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 1 April 2021 which were approved as a true and correct record.

Matters arising from those minutes:

There was no update regarding the North Hall Field lease.

The letter to TDC regarding the removal of the Dartmeet telephone box has not yet been drafted. Cllr Partridge added that she has spoken to a local resident who lives on the other side of Dartmeet bridge who informed her that, on average, people knock on his door once a month seeking to use his phone. It was also noted that the phone box was not particularly obvious in the car park.

#### 4676 REPORTS

##### (a) County Councillor

Cllr Gribble joined the meeting at the start to thank members for all that they do. He then left the meeting as it was the County Council elections.

##### (b) District Councillors

No reports.

##### (c) DNPA Representative

Rob Steemson was unable to attend the meeting but reported that he is continuing to chase Highways in regard to getting the yellow lines at Newbridge cleaned/repainted plus getting the new passing and turning bay signs in place. The Chairman offered to email Cllr Gribble to follow this up.

No report.

##### (e) Delegate Reports

Cllr Elliott wished to formally thank John and Jenny for opening the Widecombe General Store which is a fantastic community asset which should be supported.

#### 4677 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Members received proposals for the divisions of responsibility. It was agreed that it would be beneficial for members to experience different roles to ensure a good rounded knowledge of all aspects of being a Parish Councillor. After discussion, the following roles were agreed:

Projects – Cllrs Partridge and Fenton

Estates – Cllr Edwards and Elliott

Planning – Cllrs Elliott (temporarily until vacancy is filled) and Routley

Finance – Cllrs Clare and Whiteside

#### 4678 REVIEW OF PARISH COUNCIL GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS

##### (a) Standing Orders

Members reviewed the Standing Orders. There were no amendments.

##### (b) Financial Regulations

Members received the Financial Regulations. There were no amendments.

(c) General and Financial Risk Assessment

Members received the General and Financial Risk Assessment. It was agreed to add further details regarding the Parish Field and its planned uses.

(d) Statement of Internal Control

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

(e) Fixed Assets Register

Members reviewed its fixed asset register. It was agreed to add the new Poundsgate notice board (value £1,050).

(f) Investment Strategy

Members reviewed its Investment Strategy. There were no amendments.

(g) Anti-fraud and Corruption Policy

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

(h) Complaints Procedure

Members reviewed its Complaints Procedure. There were no amendments.

(i) 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.

## 4679 PROJECTS

(Lead Councillors: Cllrs Edwards & Clare)

(a) Parish Field

Cllr Clare reported that Council needs to approve the agreement for the pre-school to use a part of the Parish Field. Once the agreement has been approved, she will obtain a copy of the pre-school's risk assessment and insurance to attach to the agreement. The grazing agreement also needs to be approved and it will then need to be advertised but the access to water issue still needs to be resolved. (Members were reminded that the Council was waiting for agreement from TDC to access the water from the public toilets). If TDC approve the access to water, a drinker will need to be installed at the top end of the field.

The next project will be the orchard and autumn tree planting. This has not yet been costed and will be for the next projects team to focus on.

Cllr Fenton informed that he and Cllr Edwards had placed an advert in the Parish Link about the Parish Field Open Day on 10 July.

The clerk advised that a total of five enquiries have been received about the allotments. Again, this would be something for the next projects team to consider and would be subject to access to the water.

Cllr Fenton suggested that the field is let for grazing now on the understanding that there is no water.

Cllr Clare agreed with this suggestion.

(ii) Members received the agreements for the pre-school and grazing. Cllr Elliott raised some queries: is the pre-school allowed vehicle access through the field; is the agreement for term-time only or can the pre-school access the field all year round; is the Council happy to let it out at no charge; there is no clause in the agreement allowing the pre-school to terminate the contract should they wish; are they allowed to use it for their own open days and fund-raising events and are they allowed to wander into the rest of the field.

Cllr Clare advised that there is no vehicular access. They have to walk through the field to get to their area and Cllr Clare has informed them that there will be sheep grazing. Times of usage has not been defined because the pre-school, at this stage, do not know how often they will use it. There is consideration been given to a summer camp from which they would derive an income at which point the Parish Council should expect some remuneration.

Members agreed that the pre-school can use it free of charge and charges could be considered at a later date if water is installed. Cllr Fenton flagged up that there may be a hygiene issue with sharing water with sheep. Cllr Clare advised that the pre-school is aware of the issues and will be bringing their own water on site.

Cllr Clare agreed that she would obtain copies of the pre-school's risk assessment and insurance to attach to the agreement.

#### 4680 ESTATES

(Lead Councillors: Cllrs Fenton & Whiteside)

##### (a) Parish Trees

Cllr Fenton advised a quotation has been received for the resistograph for £295 + VAT and recommended that it is accepted. He had been unable to find anyone else to carry out that work.

A quotation has also been received from Sam Hall who has agreed to tie in the removal of the branch from the chestnut tree with the removal of the sycamore stump at a cost of £420 + VAT. This work was considered to be good value and was approved.

He also advised that he has submitted an application to DNPA for Conservation Area approval before the work can proceed.

#### 4681 PLANNING/LOCAL LIAISON

(Lead Councillors: Cllrs Booty & Elliott)

##### (a) New planning applications/appeals

(i) 0151/21 – Yonder Hayes House, Widcombe-in-the-Moor

Single storey side extension with pitched roof over

The following material considerations were noted:

- The plans are modest in size and will provide disabled access into the existing property
- The materials proposed are appropriate and in-keeping with existing

Members agreed to respond with no objections.

(ii) 0173/21 – Higher Northway Farm, Widecombe-in-the-Moor

Extension to existing agricultural building

The following material considerations were noted:

- Extension will provide appropriate space and cover for existing farm practices
- The materials proposed are appropriate and in-keeping with existing

Members agreed to respond with no objections.

(b) Planning Decisions/Withdrawals

(i) 0082/21 – Little Meadow, Widecombe-in-the-Moor

Replacement dwelling and associated outbuilding

It was noted that DNPA has granted conditional planning permission.

(c) General report and update

Cllr Elliott advised that the affordable housing application (0370/20) that since approving the application, DNPA has been tying up the necessary legal agreement that needs to be in place to control the occupancy of the dwellings and deal with contributions to education transport. Those negotiations are nearing completion and will lead to the formal issue of the planning decision notice.

#### 4682 FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE

(Lead Councillors: Cllrs Partridge & Routley)

(a) Payments

Members received and approved the following payment:

- Cheque no 001072 – Clerk's salary and disbursements (April) – £229.87
- Cheque no 001073 – Lee Accounting (SW) Ltd (internal audit of accounts) – £108
- Cheque no 001074 – Community First (insurance) – £182.94
- Cheque no 001075 – David Oglivie Engineering Ltd (commemorative benches) – £2448 (These funds have been transferred to the Parish Council by the History Group)
- DALC Annual Membership fee – £120.82 (taken from first instalment of precept)

(b) Audit 2020/21

(i) Members received and noted the year end bank reconciliation.

(ii) Members received and noted the internal audit report and confirmed that this Council is confident that the internal audit arrangements provide excellent reassurance for the public that the financial systems are robust and fit for purpose and to continue with the appointment of Lee 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 2020/21).

(v) Members received, approved and authorised the Chairman and Clerk to sign Section 2 of the Annual Return (Accounting Statements 2020/21).

#### 4683 HIGHWAYS

There were no new highways issues. Cllr Routley advised that the coping stones on the top of Newbridge have not yet been replaced. It also looks as though it has been hit again.

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](mailto:customer@devon.gov.uk)

#### 4684 CORRESPONDENCE

(a) Members noted that Widecombe Fair will not be going ahead this year due to the uncertainty of possible further Covid-19 measures.

(b) Members noted correspondence from Hastoe Housing advising that a tenant is moving out of a 3 bedroomed property at Brook Lane Cottages and that the property will be relet through the ChoiceBased Lettings scheme and will be advertised from 5 May.

#### 4685 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

(a) The Chairman advised that the commemorative benches purchased by the History Group have been delivered and he has been asked by them to meet to agree where one of those should be sited in Widecombe. The Chairman advised that he would send an email to everyone once he has met with the preferred location. The other seat will be sited in Leusdon.

(b) Cllr Routley expressed concern about the fire hazard caused by barbecues on Leusdon green and the land opposite Leusdon school and asked whether the Parish Council can obtain some warning signs from DNPA. Cllr Partridge suggested that Cllr Routley contacts Rob Steemson directly with the specific locations.

#### 4686 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting will be held in Church House on 24 June 2021 at 7.30pm. July's meeting would be held on 15 July. Meetings would then resume on the first Thursday of the month from September (no meeting in August).

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