



Doddiscombsleigh Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on Thursday 12 May 2022 at 7.30 pm at the School

Present: Cllr Turney (Chairman at agenda item 1), Cllr W Hole (Chairman from agenda item 2), Cllr M Moorhouse, Cllr J Sawyer, Cllr R Crocker, Cllr E Davis, County Cllr J Brook and 2 members of the public
Clerk: A Miller

The meeting was held following the Annual Parish Meeting of the Electors.

Annual Council Business

1 Election of Chairman

Cllr Turney indicated that due to his other commitments he intended to resign from his councillor position shortly after the annual meeting and it would be practical to elect a new chairman.

Resolved The Council elected Cllr Hole as a new chairman.
Proposed Cllr Crocker Seconded Cllr Turney All agreed

2 Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Hole signed the Acceptance of Office form.

3 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Burdge

4 Declarations of Interest / Requests for Dispensations

None.

5 County and District Councillors' Report

County Cllr Brook apologised that he could not attend some previous meetings but he was ill. He reported that regarding the budget, children and adult care services are already under pressure and there are staff shortages. Regarding Highways – costs are rising, partly because the network now operates with more environmentally friendly diesel. Devon County Council has bid for devolved power, which would mean greater capital spend and more autonomy about how to spend the capital.

Answering questions whether the increase in population in Devon will result in an increase in money for hospitals, police, schools, etc he mentioned positive examples when this happened.

Cllr Brook agreed to support the Parish Council's grant application for engraving the Jubilee Stone and he promised to provide £400 from his Locality Budget.

District Cllr Purser's report was forwarded to the councillors before the meeting.

6 To Appoint Councillors to Dedicated Responsibilities

This item was discussed at the March meeting, but since then a significant amount of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) fund was credited on the Council's bank account and there is no councillor who would be responsible for the area. The Council decided to return to the question at a later meeting.

Resolved The Council unanimously agreed that from Cllr Turney's previous responsibility areas Cllr Sawyer will be responsible for planning and Cllr Hole will be responsible for finance.

7 To Review of Governance Documents

Resolved The Council unanimously agreed to readopt without amendment the Standing Orders, Code of Conduct, Financial Regulations and Statement of Internal Control.

8 To Review the Council's Policies and Procedures

Resolved Website Advertising Policy, Complaints Procedure, Publication Scheme under the Freedom of Information Act, Privacy Policies, Website Accessibility Statement were unanimously readopted without amendment and the Risk Register was readopted with amendment.

9 To Review the Memorandum of Understanding with Doddiscombsleigh Primary School Governing Body

The playground is currently closed for the public for health and safety reasons following an incident in summer 2019. Cllr Crocker offered to liaise with the school and the new governing body of the United Schools Federation, which Doddiscombsleigh School became part of, regarding the Memorandum. It was agreed to return to the topic at a later meeting.

10 To Review the Subscriptions to Other Bodies

Resolved The Parish Council unanimously agreed to continue the existing subscriptions to the Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC), Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

11 To Decide about the Time and Place of Next Meetings until the Next Annual Meeting

At the last meeting in April it was suggested holding a Council meeting every month. Since then, it became apparent that the school increased the hire charge significantly which was not known when the budget was set. There is only £100 for venue hire in the budget.

Resolved The Council unanimously agreed to hold the next meeting on Thursday, 9 June 2022 and look for an affordable venue.

12 To Approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2021/22**12.1 Internal Auditor's Report**

The Clerk reported that the internal auditor has carried out the audit and signed the Annual Internal Audit Report for 2021/22 without comments.

12.2 Approval of Governance Statement

Resolved The Annual Governance Statement was unanimously agreed.

12.3 Approval of Statement of Accounts

Resolved The Annual Statement of Accounts was unanimously agreed.

12.4 Decision about Certifying the Parish Council as Exempt from External Audit

Resolved The Parish Council unanimously agreed to certify the Council as exempt from external audit in 2021/22.

12.5 Agree dates for Exercise of Public Rights

Resolved The Council unanimously agreed that the public will have a right to inspect the Annual Statements and the related documents between 13 June and 22 July 2022.

13 To Approve the Asset Register and Insurance Cover

Resolved It was unanimously agreed that the Asset Register was up to date and the insurance cover, reflecting the changes in assets during the last year, is fit for purpose.

Bimonthly Council Business

Open Forum

As there was no public present at the meeting at this point, no questions were raised.

14 Ratification of Minutes of Previous Meeting

Ordinary Council meeting of 4 April 2022

Resolved Unanimously accepted as a true record.

15 Planning Matters

15.1 To Note Planning Decisions

22/00468/NPA Coombe Park Farm

Notification Of Prior Approval Under Part 14 Class J Of The Gpdo For Installation Of Sixty Six Solar Panels To South West Facing Roof Of Building – prior approval is not required

15.2 To Discuss Planning Applications and Appeals

15.2.1 21/00063/REF Willhayes Equestrian

Appeal against the refusal of 21/01480/VAR: Removal of condition 5 on planning permission 10/01885/OUT (Outline application for a new occupational dwelling with all matters reserved for future consideration) relating to agricultural/equine occupancy

Resolved The Parish Council unanimously agreed to make no observations.

15.2.2 22/00023/ENFA Mistleigh Copse Cabin

Appeal against Grounds a, f and g for Enforcement Notice issued – the unauthorised construction of a dwelling house

Resolved The Parish Council unanimously agreed to make no observations.

15.2.3 22/00029/ENFA Mistleigh Copse Cabin

Appeal against Grounds f and g for Enforcement Notice issued – the unauthorised construction of a dwelling house

Resolved The Parish Council unanimously agreed to make no observations.

16 Finance

16.1 Report and Bank Reconciliation

The Clerk reported that the following amounts were credited on the bank account since the last meeting:

Precept first part: £3,110

VAT refund: £466.51

Laptop trade-in: £50

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): £8,654.91

The CIL fund can only be used for infrastructure, and it needs to be used up within five years.

Cllr Turney reported that the bank reconciliation for 31 March 2022 was in order.

Resolved The Council unanimously accepted the accounts.

The Clerk reported that the bank balance at 5 May 2022 was £13,308.70. After deducting the amount of earmarked funds and grants, the general reserve was £3,326.35.

16.2 Review of the Banking Arrangements

With the resignation of Cllr Hanson and the co-option of two new councillors the bank mandate needs to be updated, which in the past always proved to be a very difficult process with HSBC.

HSBC charges £8/month for its services and it cannot provide two-person authorization with its online banking. The Parish Council was in a difficult situation at the beginning of the pandemic when the online payment facility was set up, but now, considering the high fee and the not ideal online payment system, there are viable alternatives and the Council can consider changing bank.

The Unity Trust Bank is specialized for the local council and charity sector and can provide two-person authorization for online payments. It costs £6/month. Currently it does not provide a debit card with its account but they are working on introducing a debit card later this year. The cost of this service is unknown yet. The bank switch facility can only be used if the signatories remain the same, but the mandate needs to be changed before or after the switch.

Resolved The Council unanimously agreed to open a bank account with Unity Trust Bank and when the new account is operating, close the existing bank account with HSBC.

16.3 Approval of Expenditure

Information Commissioner fee £35.00

HSBC bank account fee for 4 months x £8, total of £32.00

Fir tree fertilizer £137.98

Clerk's salary £868.33

DALC New councillor course Part 2 for Cllr Hole £18.00

Insurance £268.10

Resolved The Council unanimously approved the expenditures.

17 To Discuss the Annual Maintenance Plan for Drain Clearing

The Parish Council discussed the draft Annual Maintenance Plan for Drain Clearing and agreed that the drains need regular maintenance, but the Council was concerned that the funding of the proposed number of hours would not be sustainable in the long term.

Resolved The Parish Council unanimously agreed to ask the contractor to propose an annual drain clearing program for 40 hours work per year.

18 To Discuss the Celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee

18.1 Jubilee Party

Cllr Hole reported that the organisation of the Jubilee Party is under way. The Clerk asked to clarify some details which were needed for the insurance.

18.2 Plaque for the new Flagpole

Cllr Sawyer proposed to place a plaque on the newly installed flagpole to commemorate that it was replaced for the Platinum Jubilee.

Resolved The Council unanimously agreed to install a commemorative plaque on the new flagpole at the Triangle.

Clerk to ask for quotes.

18.3 Tree Planting – Queen's Green Canopy

The Neighbourhood Highways Officer and a local landlord met with the Clerk and a possible location for three trees was identified on a road verge close to the T junction at Half Acre.

The smallest free tree pack for communities contains 15 tree samplings, so if the Council plants only three trees, the samplings need to be purchased. The Wildlife Warden suggested crab apple trees, which are also on Devon County Council's list of suitable trees for road verges. The Clerk has contacted the landowner whether he would agree with planting crab apple trees on his road verge and is waiting for response.

18.4 Engraving the Jubilee Stone

As it was mentioned at agenda item 5, County Cllr Brook agreed to support the Parish Council's grant application for engraving the Jubilee Stone and he promised to provide £400 from his Locality Budget. The grant application process has not been opened yet, but it is expected to open shortly.

19 Clerk's Correspondence

None.

20 Chairman's Remarks

The Chairman thanked Cllr Turney for his work for the Parish Council and thanked everybody for their participation.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 10.29 pm.

Signed.....
Chair

Date