



Doddiscombsleigh Parish Council

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Thursday 14 November 2019 at 7.30pm in Doddiscombsleigh School

Present:

Cllr L Turney (Chairman), Cllr M Moorhouse, Cllr H Hanson, Cllr E Davis, DCC Cllr J Brook and 6 members of the public

Clerk: A Miller

Open Forum:

The Council decided to hold the Open Forum at the beginning of the meeting. The following points were raised.

- The representative of the parish on the Teign Valley Community Hall refurbishment project told the Council that the TVCH Committee was grateful to receive Doddiscombsleigh's contribution to the project. The Hall is the venue for the School's Art Show, which represents a significant proportion of the Hall's income. There is not enough information available in Doddiscombsleigh about other programs in the Hall. There is a dedicated team to lead on the refurbishment project. They will improve the heating and acoustics.
- It is a shame that Teign Housing has not responded to the Parish Council's email to cut its hedge.
- There is a need for signs warning drivers that there can be horses on the road and they should slow down.

1 Apologies for Absence – Cllr S Burdge, TDC Cllr S Purser

2 Declarations of Interest / Requests for Dispensations – None

3 County and District Councillors' Report

TDC Cllr Purser sent the following information to the Parish Council.

- The provision of £250,000 for the rollout of superfast broadband in Teignbridge has now been reinstated in the future years budget. This will hopefully help the current "not spots" have coverage which are generally in our rural area.
- TDC has agreed to ban the sale of real fur in all the markets it controls and/or on council owned land.
- The Local Strategic Plan is now being reviewed along with the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan.

DCC Cllr Jerry Brook highlighted the following points.

- The Department for Transport made it clear that they are not responsible for maintaining small roads. DCC is bidding for funding successfully, but it is not enough.
- DCC overspent in young peoples and adult services. More children are coming into care and new regulations came into force adding extra responsibilities, without extra income.
- There will be an increase in council tax to provide resources for these additional tasks.

- There is a shortage in adult carers. DCC is competing with the private sector for employees.

Answering questions our county councillor promised to help solve the problem of the blocked drains on Tick Lane and at Woodah Farm and raise the issue with the Neighbourhood Highways Officer. He also promised to consider solutions for reducing speed in the village.

4 Ratification of Minutes of Previous Meeting (circulated)

Ordinary Council meeting of 5 September 2019 – Signed and accepted as a true record.
Proposed Cllr Turney Seconded Cllr Hanson All agreed

5 Councillor Resignation and considering any applications for co-option

Due to her other commitments Cllr Hornby resigned from her position on the council. The Notice of Casual Vacancy was published, but there was no request for holding an election. The Parish Council is free to co-opt new councillors.

Cllr Hornby's responsibility area was Highways and Footpaths. Cllr Hanson offered to look after the Footpaths area. There was no volunteer to take up Highways issues, but it was agreed that a general overview of the responsibility areas is necessary at the next meeting.

6 VE Day

The Parish Council discussed the options for the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of VE Day. A member of the public suggested holding a village event on Friday, 8th May 2020, which will be a bank holiday. The most popular idea was to have a street party at the Triangle. The Parish Council supported the idea and will provide insurance for the event.

7 School Playground Improvements

Cllr Turney reported that the headmistress of the School contacted the Parish Council. The playground, which is a shared responsibility of the School and the Council, has safety issues and needs to be renovated. The expected cost is about £50,000. The current softwood equipment will be replaced with hardwood, which lasts longer. The Council was concerned about the cost. A possibility of asking local volunteers to do carpentry work was discussed. Grants can be available for playground equipment, and both the Council and the School may need to apply for them. The Parish Council found the estimated price high, but in principle it supported the improvement works because the playground survey last year showed that the community supported the use of the playground by the public outside school hours.

Proposed Cllr Turney **Seconded** Cllr Davis All agreed

8 Climate Emergency Working Group Report

Cllr Turney reported that the Parish Council's Climate Emergency Working Group had its first presentation for the public on Saturday, 2nd November. 46 people turned up, which shows the support of the community. After a presentation from Elliott Fairs, an organizer of the Climate Emergency Working Group, which explained the urgency of the situation, the audience was asked to share their ideas in four areas – Built environment, Transport, Food, farming, forestry (3F's) and Ecology – what can be done within our community. There were a great number of answers for every topic, which can be categorized into the following groups.

- Actions that the community can carry out by coming together and volunteering their time, e.g. food growing or sharing deliveries.
- Holding events and giving information on how to do things, e.g. how to install solar panels or asking Devon Recycling how to recycle better. If somebody has an experience in a specific area, please share the knowledge.
- Planning – how to build ecofriendly houses. This topic can be continued in the Village Plan Working Group.
- More difficult issues, e.g. bigger community projects which require additional funding – electric charging points, energy generation. The group can evaluate viable options.

- Policies – lobbying local or central government level, e.g. public transport.

Elliott Fairs from the Climate Emergency Working Group added that he received positive feedback from other parts of the Teign Valley as well, altogether from more than 300 people. Farms invited them to ask their opinion about how to improve their practices. The Parish Council can support the events organized by the Group by providing public liability insurance. The first question that the Parish Council asked from the Working Group was to give their opinion about a government consultation regarding Future Home Standards within the building regulations. Following the recommendation of the Working Group, the Parish Council decided to support the consultation response, proposed by the ACTION on Climate in Teignbridge, because the Climate Change event showed the support of the community to improve the standards of the built environment.

Proposed Cllr Turney **Seconded** Cllr Moorhouse All agreed

9 Matters Arising

9.1 Dog Control in the Village

It was reported that last month the volunteers found 2 dog messes on the path behind the School. Either the campaign was successful or the rain washed away the evidence.

9.2 Defibrillator Repair

Cllr Turney reported that the electric connection of the defibrillator cabinet was repaired and the defibrillator is in a working condition. The invoice was sent to the Council and it is under agenda item 12.4.

10 Parish Path Partnership Works and Walk

Cllr Hanson reported that she walked the path after the contractor finished the work and she confirmed that it was done to a very good standard. The final invoice is under agenda item 12.4. The Village Walk will be on Saturday, starting at 11 am from the School. There will be refreshments at Eastern Hill.

Next year the unclassified road between Leigh Cross and Spanish Lake Cross needs attention. It is used by walkers, bikes and horses but it is in a bad condition. There are deep ruts on the lane and it is not easy even to walk in some places. It will be necessary to use machinery and dig up the bad bit. The Council has to obtain the landowners' permission to carry out the improvement works.

11 Highways and Footpaths update

Blocked drains. The Clerk reported 3 blocked drains – one on Tick Lane and two around Woodah Farm – on the Devon County Council website. These drains are on DCC's list of jobs but it will take time to solve the problem because Highways has a lot of issues after the bad weather. It was discussed that the drains at Woodah Farm have been causing problems for several years and a simple clearing is unlikely to solve the situation. There was a precedent in another parish when DCC used cameras to investigate the pipes and replaced the broken infrastructure. This might also be necessary at Woodah Farm.

Road sweeping. Following the Council's decision in September, the Clerk contacted three contractors asking quotes for road sweeping and cleaning the drains on Tick Lane, Willhayes Hill and on the road between Sheldon Lane and the Triangle. Two estimates arrived. The Council discussed the quotes and the following points were raised.

- The cost is high for the Parish Council. A grant from DCC would cover only a maximum of 50% of the invoice.
- Maintaining the roads and clearing the drains is Highways responsibility. It is difficult to justify why the Parish Council is taking up this responsibility and paying for it.
- There might be more efficient ways to spend the precept.

- After cutting the hedges, the clippings often go into the gullies, even blocking them. Road sweeping once in a year might not be the best way to solve the problem.

The Council decided not to accept either of the quotes, not to carry out road sweeping and not apply for grant this year.

Proposed Cllr Turney **Seconded** Cllr Hanson All agreed

Snow warden. The snow warden, Nick Cupper, resigned from his position. It was agreed to ask for a volunteer in the Magazine to take up the role, which involves making routine checks of the grit bins and advising DCC when additional supplies are needed.

Hedge cutting. Teign Housing has not answered the Council's request to cut the hedge on its property. A general reminder was placed in the November issue of the Magazine for every landowner.

Sheldon Bridge. Cllr Hanson informed the Council that there was an incident recently at the bridge. A reversing vehicle slid down from the road in the sharp bend before the bridge and had to be lifted back. It is an eroded road, there is a big drop at the edge and the fence is not effective. Sheldon has contacted Historical Railways Estate, the authority whose responsibility it is to maintain the bridge. They do not plan to solve the issue soon, because this bridge is not a priority for them. The authority tried to reinstate the fence earlier but lorries keep ruining it. It is not the first incident at this location. If a serious accident happens eventually, the road will be closed. This is the main access road for the village and it will cause a lot of damage for residents and businesses. It was agreed to write to Highways, highlight the issue and the need for urgent action. The possible solution could be to improve the road surface and install more effective barriers in order to prevent serious accidents.

12 Finance

12.1 Report and Bank Reconciliation

Cllr Hanson reported that she checked the bank reconciliation for 30 September 2019 and it was in order. The Council resolved to accept the accounts.

Proposed Cllr Hanson **Seconded** Cllr Turney All agreed

The bank balance at 31 October 2019 was £6,574.03. After deducting the amount of unpresented cheques, the net bank balance was £6,450.43. Earmarked funds: Elections £1,147 Emergency Fund £1,200 CIL £1,402.84 and Parish Path Partnership Grant £178.78. The second half of the precept, £1,811 has been received.

12.2 Bank Mandate Update

The Council decided to add Cllr Burdge and Cllr Moorhouse to the existing signatories on the bank account to increase the number of available councillors who can sign cheques.

Proposed Cllr Turney **Seconded** Cllr Hanson All agreed

12.3 Financial Regulations

New model Financial Regulations were published by NALC. The Parish Council decided to adopt the new model Regulations.

Proposed Cllr Turney **Seconded** Cllr Hanson All agreed

12.4 Approval of Expenditure

Previously paid:

- Parish Path Partnership Works, Footpath 2 – final payment £1060.84
- Donation for the refurbishment of Teign Valley Community Hall £100.00

Payments:

- Website maintenance for 2 years £136.80
- Room hire £20.00
- Clerk's salary and expenses £747.81
- DALC New Councillor Course – Cllr Moorhouse £36.00

- SLCC Membership £76.00
- Defibrillator repair £206.38
- Replacement pads for defibrillator £123.60

A cheque for the last item – Replacement pads for defibrillator – had been issued on 9 May 2019, but the cheque has not been banked yet and it has now expired. This cheque will be cancelled and the amount will be shown as income in the Cash Book. A new cheque can be issued for the same amount.

Proposed Cllr Turney **Seconded** Cllr Hanson All agreed

13 Clerk’s Correspondence

There is a change in planning rules. Parish Councils are now able to call in applications to Planning Committee. The Council has to request this procedure within 21 days of the application appearing on the Weekly List of the Planning Department.

On 11th September 2019 the Parish Council received a consultation email regarding the planning application for Coombe Park. As at that time the Council was not aware of any particular issue with the application and it was difficult to find a suitable date for a meeting in September – the ordinary Council meeting had to be brought forward by a week in order to hold a quorate meeting – the Council did not hold an extraordinary planning meeting for this application. A resident sent an email to the Council asking for an explanation. The Planning Department has not made a decision in this case, but this Monday a revised site location plan, elevations and floor plan was uploaded to their website. The proposal changed to such an extent that even if the Council had held a meeting earlier, it would be necessary to look at the application again. Also this week TDC extended the publicity period from 10 October 2019 to 10 December 2019. Considering that it is still possible to comment on the application and the proposal proved to be controversial, the Parish Council decided to hold a planning meeting on 22nd November 2019 about the Coombe Park planning application.

14 Chairman’s Remarks – The Chairman thanked everyone for their participation.

15 Date of Next Meeting – Friday 22 November 2019

The Chairman closed the meeting at 10.25 pm.

Signed.....

Chairman

Date