



Doddiscombsleigh Parish Council

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Thursday 11 November 2021 at 7.30 pm at the Sheldon Centre

Present: Cllr L Turney (Chairman), Cllr H Hanson, Cllr S Burdge, Cllr M Moorhouse, Cllr J Sawyer, County Cllr J Brook (until agenda item 3) and 4 members of the public
Clerk: A Miller

The Chairman reminded the public to follow Covid safety measures.

Open Forum

The Chairman asked the public to make their comments at the appropriate agenda items.

1 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Davis sent his apologies as he could not attend the meeting for health reasons.

Resolved The Council unanimously voted to accept the apology.

District Cllr Purser and Neighbourhood Highways Officer I Pfister also sent their apologies.

2 Declarations of Interest / Requests for Dispensations

None.

3 County and District Councillors' Report

County Cllr Jerry Brook's report. The Locality Budget has opened and suitable projects can receive funding. Seven farms from the eleven, that Devon County Council owns, will have new tenants. The scheme helps new people – including younger generations – to get into farming. Devon County Council proposed a new bus plan for Devon to the Department for Transport. The train service will also improve. Answering questions, he said that the budget for road repairs remained the same.

The question of drain maintenance at Down Lane was discussed. The opinion was that although the problem will probably never go away as the lane has an uneven surface and lose stones, with proper maintenance it would be possible to avoid the worst consequences. Currently the pipes under the driveways are overgrown, filled up and the water runs down on the road washing down stones and mud to the Triangle. The ditch needs to be cleared out, probably with a mini digger. Cllr Moorhouse offered to organize the work and volunteers for the job. After a thorough initial cleaning, property owners should be able to keep up with the maintenance.

District Cllr Purser sent his report.

There are issues with Devon County failing to keep drains clear with no regular maintenance. Christow has issues with South West Water and supply. Consultation about to start regarding potential renewable energy sites in Teignbridge - solar and wind. Good news on empty homes, the number has been reduced from 735 in 2009 down to a current 305. Changes on the executive with Andrew MacGregor going and as yet no replacement.

4 Neighbourhood Highways Officer's Report

None.

5 Ratification of Minutes of Previous Meeting

Ordinary Council meeting of 8 July 2021. **Resolved** Unanimously accepted as a true record.

6 Planning Matters

6.1 To Note Planning Decisions

The following decisions were noted.

6.1.1 21/00682/CLDE Herons Brook

Certificate Of Lawfulness For Use Of Land As Garden And Associated Domestic Outbuilding/Store – Approved

6.1.2 21/01338/FUL Coombe Park

Change Of Use To Enable Cabin To Be Used As Holiday Let / Use For Family And Physiotherapy / Tms Treatment – Refused

6.1.3 21/01480/VAR Willhayes Equestrian

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 – Refused

6.1.4 21/01274/LBC Duckspool Cottage

Replacement Windows – Refused

6.1.5 21/00566/FUL Great Mistleigh Farm

Extension Of Existing Ancillary Accommodation To Provide A Self Contained Holiday/Residential Letting Unit – permission granted

6.2 To Discuss Planning Applications

6.2.1 21/02080/LBC Duckspool Cottage

Existing concrete render over cob to be removed and replaced with breathable lime render
Resolved The Parish Council decided to support the application. Proposed Cllr Sawyer
Seconded Cllr Moorhouse All agreed

6.2.2 21/02172/HOU Lower Greystones Cottage

Two storey extension with single storey rear section, replace existing thatch roof with slate roof including new dormers, removal of stone buttresses, new window/door openings and installation of solar panels on roof

Resolved The Parish Council decided to make no observations. Proposed Cllr Turney
Seconded Cllr Hanson All agreed

6.2.3 21/01790/FUL Mistleigh Copse Cabin

Retention of wooden cabin for residential use

District Cllr Purser requested the case to go to Committee if the officer recommends refusal. The Parish Council discussed the application and decided to send the following consultation response to the Planning Authority.

Resolved The Parish Council decided to object to the proposal for the following reasons.

- The Parish Council is concerned about the principle of building first and applying for permission later. It is very likely that if permission were granted, it would create a negative precedent and similar cases would follow. This practice would have a detrimental effect on the landscape in an Area of Great Landscape Value, in close proximity to the National Park.

- The development happened on a green land, outside of the village, in a forested area without previous consultation and in an uncontrolled way. The Parish Council would like to stop uncontrolled developments and the erosion of the landscape.
 - Impact on infrastructure. The property is accessed from a very narrow road and the development has a cumulative impact on traffic.
 - Noise and impact on environment. Although there is a solar panel installed which provides some of the energy that the property needs, it is not enough and a generator is frequently in operation as well. The noise has an impact on neighbours and on the environment.
 - There are questions whether the drainage solution is adequate at this location.
- Proposed Cllr Moorhouse Seconded Cllr Sawyer All agreed

6.3 To Discuss Planning Related Concerns

To discuss the answers received from the Planning Enforcement related to previously raised issues and to discuss other possible concerns

Between May 2020 and May 2021, the Parish Council referred four concerns to the Planning Enforcement asking for clarification. As there were no reassuring answers received, the Parish Council sent an email to the Planning Committee asking to look into the cases. Since then, the Parish Council received some feedback regarding all of the issues.

6.3.1 Straithead Barn

The Parish Council asked official measurements to be taken from all dimensions of the extensions (main extension and link corridor) to ascertain whether the extensions were being built according to the approved plans. The Planning Enforcement answered that the owner's agent measured the height of the main extension and the Enforcement is satisfied with the result.

The Parish Council was of the opinion that the Council did what they could in the case and any further action is up to the neighbours and the Planning Authority.

The developer, who was present, asked the Council why this item is still on the agenda, when the question was raised in April-May. The Parish Council answered that this is the first meeting since the answer from the Planning Authority was received.

6.3.2 Little Park Farm

21/01073/FUL Retention of mobile home for use as tourist accommodation planning application was submitted. Target date was 4 August 2021. There is no decision yet.

6.3.3 Land opposite Apridge Farm

The Planning Enforcement answered that this is not an enforcement issue.

6.3.4 Mistleigh Copse Cabin

Planning application was submitted to retain the building, which was discussed under item 6.2.3.

Regarding the footings of a larger building no action will be taken if it stays as it is.

The open sided barn would have required planning permission, but if it remains in agricultural use, no action will be taken.

The Parish Council decided to discuss item 8 at that point.

Item 8. To Discuss the Renovation and Use of the BT Telephone Box

A resident, who was present at the meeting, asked the Parish Council to reconsider its position regarding the adoption of the BT telephone box. (The Council discussed the topic at its meeting on 11 July 2019 and decided not to adopt the telephone box.) The resident offered to maintain the kiosk if the Parish Council will repair it. The telephone box is in a poor condition and the estimated cost of the repair is £640+VAT+ delivery charges. Once it is refurbished, the kiosk could be used as a book exchange or plant exchange.

Resolved The Parish Council decided to adopt the BT telephone box and seek funding from the Locality Budget and through charitable fundraising for the repair.

Proposed Cllr Burdge Seconded Cllr Turney All agreed

Cllr Burdge offered to organize the project together with interested residents.

Cllr Burdge left the meeting due to her work commitments.

6.3.5 Other planning related concerns

A resident raised concerns with the Parish Council and asked to discuss the increasing number of residential developments along Ashton Lane which happened with or without permission in the last few years.

- Cumulative effect of developments. If viewed separately from each other, each of these developments might not be seen as particularly significant or contentious. However, the cumulative effect of these developments is becoming very impactful on the local environment in terms of traffic, noise pollution, light pollution and general amenity in an Area of Great Landscape Value. The Teignbridge Local Plan states that Doddiscombsleigh's infrastructure is only capable of supporting a further 5-10 news homes but the total number of individual developments are higher.

The Parish Council agreed that the cumulative effect of developments is a concern. In its response to the Local Plan consultation, the Parish Council raised the issue of individually approved developments, which are not part of the Plan, but still put a pressure on the local infrastructure.

- It is possible that the area is gaining a reputation as being a place where development can take place 'under the radar' with little regard to the planning process.

Resolved The Parish Council unanimously agreed to send an email to the Planning Enforcement Officer expressing the disappointment of the village over clear enforcement principles and that the Parish does not feel supported in its efforts to save its landscape and environment.

Clerk to draft an email.

7 To Discuss an Offer of a Land for Community Use

A piece of land at the start of footpath 2 was offered for community use to the Parish Council. The owner will fence off the area on the left side of the footpath and he is looking into options about how to utilize the remaining land on the right side of the path, which leads down to the valley of Batts Brook. The resident would retain the ownership of the land. The Parish Council discussed the offer and whether the area would be suitable for an orchard, forest school or tree planting for the Platinum Jubilee. The Council was concerned that the land would require regular maintenance after the initial planting and considering its distance from the village centre, it would be difficult to ensure that there would be volunteers to maintain the area in the long term. The Parish Council was of the opinion that the area is not really amenity land but conservation land and perhaps the Parish Council is not the most suitable body to be involved.

Resolved The Parish Council decided to decline the offer of land for community use.

Proposed Cllr Turney Seconded Cllr Hanson All agreed

8 To Discuss the Renovation and Use of the BT Telephone Box

It was discussed after item 6.3.4.

9 Village Christmas Tree

Cllr Turney was contacted by members of the public who would like to erect a Christmas tree in the Triangle and asked the help of the Parish Council.

Resolved The Parish Council unanimously agreed to lead on the Christmas tree project.

Clerk to contact the insurance company and Highways.

10 To Receive Reports

10.1 Parish Path Partnership and Footpath Update

Cllr Hanson reported that the steps on footpath 5 at Batts Brook have been repaired. Devon County Council sent £200 for the project, covering most of the full cost of £280.

On the unclassified road between Spanish Lake Cross and Leigh Cross, which is part of the registered footpath network, the hedge was cut by landowners. But there is a small section where it was not possible to cut the hedge with a machine. The path is very narrow there.

Resolved The Parish Council agreed to order hedge cutting from the contracted lengthsman and pay from the Parish Paths Partnership fund. Proposed Cllr Hanson
Seconded Cllr Turney All agreed

10.2 Highways Update

10.2.1 Drain clearing in winter

The Parish Council's application for the Highway Maintenance Community Enhancement Fund grant was successful, and £250 has already arrived to the bank account for drain clearing. The Parish Council need to contribute another £250, so there will be £500 for drain clearing in this financial year. Cllr Sawyer to make a list of the areas that need to be cleared.

10.2.2 Earth bank opposite Greystones

Cllr Moorhouse reported that the earth bank opposite Greystones was damaged by turning lorries. The bank needs a stronger support, or the water will flow on the road and freeze in winter. Clerk to contact the Neighbourhood Highways Officer.

10.2.3 Lengthsman services

The tender for lengthsman services, which was awarded at the meeting in January 2021, was valid for 2021. The Parish Council need to have a new tender process if the scheme is considered successful.

Resolved The Parish Council unanimously agreed that the lengthsman scheme was successful and decided to have a new tender to appoint a lengthsman contractor for the 2022-2024 period.

10.2.4 Down Lane

The topic was discussed under agenda item 3.

11 Finance

11.1 Report and Bank Reconciliation

The Clerk reported that the bank balance at 30 September 2021 was £6,185.83. Earmarked funds: Community Plan £511, Climate Emergency support £200, Defibrillator £0, Website £200, Office Equipment £200, Maintenance £100 and Election £40. Grants: CIL £1,402.84, Parish Path Partnership fund £461.44 and Highway Maintenance grant £250.

A Parish Path Partnership grant of £200 and £250 Highway Maintenance grant were received in August. The second half of the precept, £2,553.50 arrived in September.

The bank balance was the same at the end of October as well.

Cllr Hanson reported that she checked the bank reconciliation and found it in order.

Resolved The Parish Council accepted the bank reconciliation.

Proposed Cllr Hanson Seconded Cllr Turney All agreed

11.2 To Discuss How to Use Up the CIL Fund

There is £1402.84 CIL money on the bank account. Half of it needs to be used up in 2022, or the District Council can demand it back.

Clerk to clarify whether the bus shelter repair qualifies for CIL funding.

11.3 To Discuss the Changes to the Terms and Conditions of the HSBC Bank Account

From 1 November 2021 there are no free Community Accounts at HSBC. Parish Councils are classified as small businesses and are charged £8 per month for having a current account. There are no other charges now.

The alternative, Unity Trust Bank charges £6 per month for the basic account but they do not provide debit card with the account. A credit card can be provided through Lloyds Bank for £3 per month + £50 set up fee. Other High Street banks either do not accept account switches now or have very negative reviews for parish council accounts.

Resolved The Parish Council unanimously agreed to continue banking with HSBC.

11.4 Approval of Expenditure

Footpath 5 - Steps repair £280.00

Website Combo maintenance plan for 2 years £136.80

Envelopes £2.00

Venue hire £10.00

SLCC membership fee £80.00

Clerk's salary £765.49

DALC Conference £40.00

Hand sanitiser and cleaning wipes £6.00

Teign Unity subscription 6.00

Resolved The Council approved the expenditures.

Proposed Cllr Turney Seconded Cllr Hanson All agreed

12 Clerk's Correspondence

None.

13 Date of Next Meeting

13 January 2022

14 Chairman's Remarks

The Chairman thanked everyone for their participation.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.57 pm.

Signed.....

Chairman

Date