

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 21st November 2023 at 7.30.pm, at Bridgerule Village Hall.**

These minutes are provisional until signed by the Chairman at the next meeting.

**Present :**  Chairman: D Hale

Councillors: M. Tape, J. McDougall, K. Bowditch, S. Cholwill, K. James, S. Whatmore, J. Philpott,

J. Trayford,

In Attendance : Clerk.

**Apologies :** F. Cogdell.

**Declarations of Interests:** The Chairman asked that interests be declared as they arise.

**Public Session :**  No questions raised.

**3208. County Councillors Report :** No report received.

**3209. District Councillors Report :** KJ reported that Torridge were currently managing and overseeing 3 or 4 big projects within the district, the cost of these were just under £20 million pounds. The council have been allocated £20 million pounds from central government toward these, and Torridge are being assisted in the project management by the MP for the Area, Sir Geoffrey Cox. Torridge have produced a plan to include educational benefit and an improvement strategy, these being the Marine Project at Bideford, land around the Cattle Market at Holsworthy, already underway and progress has been made regarding the new proposed Refuse and Recycling Centre in Bideford, which has been ongoing for the last 2 years, but contracts to purchase land for this had now become available, at a cost of around £1 million. TDC were balancing the costs of the projects from an available fund of £30 million. There was still a small amount left in the “Hardship Fund”.

**3210. Council Meeting Minutes. :** The Minutes of 17th October had been circulated to councillors and the Minutes were agreed by councillors present and signed by the Chairman as correct. Proposed 1st SC, 2nd KJ, all councillors in favour.

**3211. Matters Arising:** No matters arising this month.

**3212. To Receive Correspondence :** Clerk had received:

Notice from TDC, regarding two vacancies for a Parish Representative on the TDC Standards Committee,

Clerk had submitted a Register of Interest form to DCC for an EV Charging Point at the Hall Carpark,

Email from DAAT, requesting updated details for contacts regarding the landing site, clerks detailed had been changed, but it was felt the second contact would need to be in Bridgerule, councillors nominated SW for this role, who accepted the proposal. Access to the Grey Mat electrics box would be needed by DAAT soon, for a software update for lighting. MT would locate this within the Football club and inform clerk, to relay to DAAT together with the new contact details. An annual site inspection was scheduled for May, but this would not need someone present to be carried out.

Email from Resident regarding flooding on the road adjacent to property, clerk to reply to resident. DH said that flooding of over 4 inches of water had been seen recently on the road near the new development Meadowside, White line markings had been noted. Clerk to write to NHO and relay problems.

**3213.** **Chairman’s Report :** DH reported that he had received a letter from Sir. Geoffrey Cox MP and a letter drop requesting views. The letter said that monies had become available to the CC from central funds now that the HS2 project had been amended and funds could be used for the repair of potholes within the county. Money had been allocated into the Local Hub in conjunction with Torridge and were being considered by that committee.

**3214.**  **Accounts and Accounts due for payment –**  Finance sheets had been circulated to councillors,

Items due for payment this month were :

Notice Board , £59.95, S.C Garden Services, grass cutting £204.00,

A. Foster, annual Website hosting and costs, £168.87 and Clerks expenses, Ink, stationary, £39.56

Current account balance on 31st October agreed at £10,640.44.

Proposed 1st, JT, 2nd, KJ, chairman asked for show of hands, all councillors in favour.

**3215.** **Highways, Vas Signs and Speedwatch :** SW had provided data harvested for the two VAS signs for the last month, Sign 1 on Vicarage Hill revealed that the highest percentage of vehicles passing were travelling at 25-30mph, a huge reduction in speed. The highest recording was between 45-50mph at 1.am on a particular morning. Sign 2 at Middle Road showed that less than 10% of passing vehicles were exceeding 30mph. Both signs had been temporarily removed for compliance with DCC and would return to the poles next month and there would be no data for this period. Clerk had written to NHO with new suggestion of alternate pole position at the verge of the Hall carpark, but no reply had been received yet.

Road closures at Chapel Corner to Furze Cross on Thursday 30th November to Friday 1st December, for Airband,

B3254 Bevills Hill Farm to Jewells Cross, Monday 11th December to Tuesday 19th December for re-surfacing on behalf of DCC, Diversionary routes to be signed.

It was noted there were some temporary traffic lights in situ along this stretch currently, on repair works to Bridge before the above works commence.

Defective signs, Derril crossroads to Hillsborough, Finger posts faults had been forwarded to Highways team for repair according to current policy, W23167740,

Dux Cross to Derril, Highways team to assess by the 17th November, W23167743,

Bridgemoor Cross to Dux Cross, Highways team to assess by the 31st October, W231671983.

JT, Speedwatch Organiser, reported that some online training by the volunteers still needed to be completed and submitted to HQ. This would be done as soon as possible, as time constraints allow, but needed to be done correctly, before the group could become operational. Support and advice were continuing from the Holsworthy Hamlets Organiser which was proving extremely helpful. Clerk to email PC Morgan and introduce JT, so that further involvement could be obtained when needed, due to PSCO being on long-term leave.

SW reported that cars were parking on grassed areas around the Chapel carpark and adjacent to the Lodgeworthy . Cars were also parking on the middle of the pavement in that area. All councillors agreed that parking at these times in the school area was an ongoing problem and could not be immediately solved.

The No Campervans Sign placed on the Carpark sign had been removed by persons unknown and the sign had been turned around recently. The sign had now been returned to its original position and FC was looking into the replacement of the Campervan sign.

DH had delivered a signed letter to the vehicle permanently parking a campervan to ask for its removal. A query regarding an untaxed and no Mot vehicle was raised, this could be reported on the DVLA website and clerk would forward to Holsworthy RP team when vehicle details received.

**3216. Charitable Grants for 2023:**  Eight applications had been received for a consideration for a payment from the Charitable Grants fund for this year, the Amount allocated for these grants from the Annual Council budget presented and agreed by councillors at the September meeting was £1900.00. ( Minute item number 3187.) The budget and grant funding had been agreed by councillors unanimously and the amount allocated for grants represented a generous almost 19 per cent or a fifth of the council’s annual income. At this meeting, DH reminded councillors that the council had pledged £300 for 3 years to assist the Holsworthy Ring and Ride Transport with its funding needs, rather than a large payment which would not have been affordable last year.

The total amount requested by applicants this year amounted to £3550.

Councillors discussed the summary list of applications and KJ queried the amount requested by the Village Hall to offset the Business Rates which they had paid recently. He queried that the amount that should have been paid was £184 after rebates from TDC. KB, JP and SC declared an interest at this point. KJ also queried the eligibility of the new Shop for a Charitable grant, as it should be generating its own income as a Limited business, either owned by shareholders or a community venture which is self- funding. The FOBS had requested £1000 with several items listed, but no costings.

Clerk as RFO, suggested that for future years, work needed to be done on the application forms to make them more relevant to budgets now and could include parameters of minimum and maximum amounts to be requested, rather than what has happened this year to give guidelines and manage expectations of what may be paid if the request was successful and that applications may receive a donation rather than the whole amount requested.

This would be similar to what other comparable parishes have in place for Charitable Grants. Clerk to present future Grant policy and new application form to councillors for their consideration, as soon as possible at a future meeting.

DH proposed that the council defer any decisions on funding amounts until the next meeting and the council could re-visit this as it there was a limited amount of funding to be given. 1st DH, 2nd, SW, all councillors in favour. Clerk to Agenda this for next month.

**3217. Planning:**

**1/1021/2023/FUL- Erection of a garden room, Pale Park, Marhamchurch, Bude,**

Council feedback comment to TDC,

“The council support the application.” All councillors in favour.

**1/1022/2023/LBC – Erection of a garden room, Pale Park, Marhamchurch, Bude,**

Council feedback comment to TDC,

“The council support the application”. All councillors in favour.

**3218.**  **New Unity Bank Account :**  The account had become live on the 14th November and all funds held at the NatWest had been switched across to Unity and the Natwest accounts closed. Only two Signatories had been verified by the bank to date, the other three would need to be done as soon as possible. Reserve accounts were now in the Unity current account and a discussion followed for the amount to be transferred from the current account into the recently opened deposit account. KJ proposed that a sum of £600 from the Reserves be donated to the Community Shop towards its initial building and set up costs, as a one-time only payment, JP, KB and SC declared an interest and refrained from voting. Proposed 1st KJ, 2nd DH, Votes for 6, by show of hands. Against 0, 3 abstentions. Motion carried.

It was then decided to transfer £12,000 into the reserve account as soon as was practically possible when the signatories had verified themselves for the banking mandate. Proposed 1st, JMD, 2nd JT, Chairman asked for a show of hands, all councillors in favour.

**3219. Village Hall/Shop Update:**  The shop building is up and going well. Rendering on the shop exterior is due to commence shortly, but this may be weather dependant and dry conditions for this work would be required. The total building costs have escalated from initial cost projections due to the higher price of building materials generally. The share issue take-up was not as big as expected. There is around a £10k shortfall at present and grant monies towards the project’s costs are becoming more difficult to obtain at present. The committee are looking at other ways to achieve the financing and completion. It is hoped that the shop would be opening in Early Spring next year. Electricity quotations are now being sought and prices quoted are high. A live music event had been held recently to raise funds for the project and was well attended, but the total amount raised from the event had not yet been finalised.

**3220. Clerks Report:** Clerk had attended the Holsworthy RP teams meeting on the 19th October. Topics discussed were the abandoned Beige Discovery at the Chapel Carpark and assistance with Speedwatch for groups and how to proceed with this at present. The December meeting is due on the 12th, and clerk will give apologies.

**3221: Exchange of Information: -**. A wall next to the garages owned by Westward Housing had been knocked down, possibly hit by a car and about 20 concrete blocks were piled up and needed to be cemented back in place as they represented a trip and safety hazard, clerk to write to Westward ,

Bus shelter , still needs repair and councillors agreed it would be a shame to remove, repairs would be done when weather conditions allow,

The new Notice Board near the school/chapel area had been installed and KB and FC each had keys,

Cars were parking on land by the river and due to wet conditions, the grassland was becoming in a bad state, DH said that this was private land owned by council.

**3222 : Meeting closed at 9.05pm.** Date of next meeting Tuesday 12th December at 7.30pm.

**Signed by Meeting Chairman : …………………………………………………………………………………..**

**Date of signing : …………………………………………………………………………………….**

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