

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 19th November 2024 at 7.15.pm, at Bridgerule Village Hall.**

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

**Present :**  Chairman: D Hale

Councillors, F. Cogdell, S. Whatmore, J. McDougall, S. Cholwill, K. Bowditch, J. Trayford,

K. James,

County Councillor J. Morrish.

In Attendance : Clerk.

Apologies : M. Tape

**Declarations of Interests:** The Chairman asked that interests be declared as they arise. DH wished to declare an interest in Agenda Item 5 and asked for a Dispensation under Section 13d and 13f of the Standing Orders for this meeting only. Councillors granted the request. Written request to be filed with the Minutes for records.

**3404. Public Open Question Time :** No questions raised.

**3405. County Councillors Report :** JM reported that the council had been reviewing its investment portfolio and companies currently within those ,such as fossil fuels and those involved in manufacturing of components which can then be sold and used further along the chain supply ultimately for springs used in weaponry, for example. Pension funds had depreciated by around 3 per cent in interest and the council were seeking the best return currently for its members. Many calls had been received on this topic. Discussions have been held about future Mayors of Devon, Cornwall and Plymouth, but JM was not in favour of this and preferred what was in place now. The new Chairman of the council is doing a good job as replacement for JH, who had stood down earlier in the year. He was still receiving many emails about Highways; things were improving but Roads and Transport had financial constraints. DH asked if there was any update on the proposed 20mph scheme, JM said that the application had been accepted and would happen in due course, no timescale for this yet, but funding had been approved for this.

**3406. Conference Call with Constantine Energy :** Two representatives from the company spoke to the council detailing their proposed plans to replace the existing Turbine at Tatson Farm. The existing one was around 10 years old and would be replaced with a bigger model whose operating capacity will provide and generate more electricity for the grid. It would comply with new regulations and would connect to the existing connection already present. De-commissioning would take around 6-8 weeks. The company would be submitting a planning application to TDC. Photographic files supplied by the company had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting to demonstrate the proposed visual aspect of the new structure. There followed a brief Q and A session during which councillors asked questions. These were, “the height, will there be increased noise levels?”, “ Does it have to be so big, and the visual impact to the village?” The representatives replied that the company are currently conducting a noise study and equipment is now on site for the purpose and will be submitted with the planning application, and that generally, larger turbines do not create more noise as due to the larger surface area, rotate slower than the smaller ones. The proposed turbine is generally the standard size that is used for Onshore turbines, and they do appreciate that peoples perceptions differ. The call commenced at 7.40pm and concluded at 7.55pm. The chairman thanked the representatives for their time this evening.

Information leaflets had been produced by the company to give information to residents, but it was not clear had been distributed effectively. KJ said that the council could write to TDC and ask for this, at the time that the application was being considered. It was noted that there were around 20 properties in Merrifield and 11 at Lodgeworthy.

**3407: District Councillors Report :**  TDC were also having concerns with some ethical investments. They will still be getting up to £20 million from central government for redevelopment and will continue to go ahead with what had been currently planned but may review the delivery and timings. Funding had been confirmed. The project for the new operating centre for Refuse and Recycling is continuing and talks are ongoing for redevelopment at the old Cattle market in Holsworthy. Areas to provide better parking facilities are being considered. There are some difficulties at present with the New Local Plan as TDC have been told there needs to be 80% more housing provided and Torridge are needing to find more sites to achieve this. There has also been a recent discussion regarding hamlets and rural enterprise within the district.

The Holsworthy Area Advisory meeting will be held on Tuesday 10th December, for councillors and clerks with members of the TDC team. TDC are waiting for the outcome of the English Devolution Bill. Leaders of district councils could be offered seats at tables but no voting rights. Somerset and Dorset are proposing to join to form a new body, Wessex.

**3408 : Council Meeting Minutes :** Minutes of the meeting held on 15th October 2024 had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting and were agreed by all present and signed by the chairman as correct.( A reference to the solar panels at the Holsworthy Leisure centre, mentioned in the DC report had not been included in the draft Minutes, but this had now been amended prior to circulation.)

Proposed 1st JMD, 2nd, KB, all councillors in favour.

**3409 : Matters Arising :**  No matters arising.

**3410 :**   **To Receive Correspondence:** Received, Letter from Airband, re delivery of broadband within the area being delayed but no timeline at present for future works,

Letter from TDC Enforcement, planning breach at Macarthur Close has been resolved and case now closed,

Letter from resident re flooding at Mill Road and Culvert,

Letter from NHO DCC, in response to request for new Grit Bin at Littlebridge. Request has been sent to the Highways response team but the charge is likely to be in the region of £400. A discussion followed, siting suggestion to be placed on the pavement, rather than the grass verge opposite the bus shelter, SW will provide co-ordinates and map. Cllr. JM suggested he may be able to assist with £300 funding towards the cost from his Locality Budget and KJ said he could contribute £100 from his TDC councillor grant fund.

Sent: Requests to Highways to refill 4 Grit bins in Bridgerule, 3 had been filled to date.

Annual Rough Sleeper survey to TDC,

Letter to resident regarding flooding at Mill Road.

**3411. Chairmans Report :** Nothing of note to report this month.

**3412. Accounts and Accounts due for payment –**  Finance sheets had been circulated to councillors,

Items due for payment this month were :

SC Garden Maintenance, £102.00, Clerks expenses- Nov, £5.39

Current Account Balance agreed as of 31st October £10,568.70. Proposed 1st KB, 2nd FC, all councillors in favour.

**3413. Charitable Grants 2024 :**  Funds of £1800.00 had previously been agreed from this year’s budget, in September. Applications had been received this year for £2350.00 which exceeded funds available to allocate.

Cllrs declared an interest, KJ – Holsworthy Rural Transport, KB and SC – Village Hall, JMD – Friends Holsworthy Library. All noted. A discussion followed whereby it was agreed to allocate as follows,

£100.00, Friends of Holsworthy Library, £300.00, Holsworthy Rural Transport, FOBS, £300.00,

£700.00, St Bridgets Churchyard, £400.00, Bridgerule Village Hall.

Proposed 1st, SW, 2nd JT, chairman asked for show of hands, 4 votes in favour, 4 abstentions, Motion carried.

**3414 : Highways, Vas Signs and Speedwatch :** .

SW reported the following Vas data, from 13th October to 18th November, Sign 1 Vicarage Hill, 7120 passing vehicles recorded, with 1253 or 1 in 6 travelling over 30mph. Maximum speed recorded 45.9mph with average speed of 25.7mph. Sign 2, Middle Road, from 13th October to 18th November showed 7526 passing vehicles with 475 travelling over 30mph which equates to 1 in 16. Maximum speed recorded 44.1mph with average speed of 21.4mph. This data was collated over a 5-week period.

Speedwatch update – JT reported that some members of the group had held their first session successfully. They had 35 passing cars and very positive feedback from residents and parents. Another session was being planned but will be weather dependant as it cannot be carried out if raining. Sessions were planned to be monthly. Another site for use is being evaluated, by the bridge, to record traffic coming in the opposite direction. Councillors were delighted that the group is now operational.

No road closures or Highways notices this month.

KJ reported that the “No Through Road” adjacent to Bude DIY on the road to Merrifield at the Industrial Estate had rotted, decayed and fallen to the ground. It had been stood up several times recently but kept falling. It needed to be replaced, as vehicles saw the sign to Bridgerule from the B3254 and turned into it as they could not see the sign and did not realise it was not a through road. Clerk to report and request replacement.

Large pothole on the road from Chapel to Burnard’s House had been reported, assessed and passed to contractors to repair.

Uncollected Road signs- clerk had emailed NHO, who had collected a cone and the Slippery Road Sign, but unable to locate the other 3. SW had checked the area near the bus shelter and Littlebridge entrance and they had gone, assume they had now been collected by the original contractors.

**3415. Planning :** For Information Only, 1/0720/2024/FUL, change of use Squires Cottage to full residential and Knowle Farmhouse to holiday let, Application granted permission.

**3416. Southfields Open Space:** Councillors discussed plans to clear the area and the possibility of a volunteer gardening group formed that might maintain it in future. DH said that the area needed to be cleared initially to gain a picture of what plan might be needed. There would be costs associated with doing so and potentially a new gate and fencing would be needed in future. The volunteer group would need to come under the council’s name. Clerk would circulate some potential policies that the group may require, H&S, GDPR etc for councillors’ information. For future discussion next month. It was hoped an informal meeting with prospective volunteers could be planned for early next year. Councillors discussed the contractors quote to clear the area of £500, plus vat and decided to proceed with this to enable work to commence next year. Proposed, 1st KJ, 2nd KB, chairman asked for a show of hands, all councillors in favour.

**3417.** **Village Hall/ Shop Update :** The hall continues to operate successfully, and some new blinds have been purchased for the Committee Room. Plans for redecoration of the hall in January are being formed and if funds allow, new blinds will be purchased for the hall. Bookings continue to be consistent, and a recent Bingo function raised over £350.00 for hall/shop funds.

The Shop is now over 6 months old and has a licence to sell alcohol. No related alcohol problems have been noted. The shop has had two days of takings of £400 each day recently, which was very welcome.

KB had had discussions with SW Water regarding the pipe leakage in the playpark, underground. The company had phoned and apologised for the delay in getting in touch because they had many others to repair also. The leak was affecting the safety surface under the carousel.

**3418. Clerks Report :**

Electoral role changes this month, 13 creations, 23 deletions. Clerk had attended online Highways training course on 18th October with DCC, which was informative. DCC had this week approved funding for up to 2,000 new EV charging points within the county. No further information available at present and not known if Bridgerule’s application was successful. Clerk to email JM.

**3419. Exchange of Information :**  Would it possible to have the Vas Signs, Speedwatch and Highways at the beginning of next month’s Agenda, to fit in with a councillors work commitment? This will be arranged.

It was noted that Ripple Energy, the owners of the Solar Park, had been installing multiple poles or posts at the site, in readiness for the panels at a future date, concerns on visual impact in future.

Deer Park had been sold to a care company, Camelot, a specialised Dementia care provider.

Refuse Bin in the Playpark, was being emptied on a regular basis now with no issues.

Occasions of Dog attacks by one dog on others had been reported to a councillor. Incidents concerning should be reported to the Police.

It had been noticed that rubbish in verges and hedgerows within the village had increased and was becoming unsightly, particularly when walking up to Dux Hill and past Aquarius.

**3420: Meeting closed at 9.02pm.** Date of next meeting Wednesday 11th December at 7.15pm.

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

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

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