

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 5th September 2017

Present: Cllrs Child, Phillips, Cox, Hyland and Warne, K Ward (clerk), Cllr Yabsley (items 1718-53 to 1718-58) and 3 members of the public. Cllr Parry was co-opted onto the Council and joined from item 1718-57.

Meeting opened 7.30pm

1718-53 Apologies – Cllrs Lamb and Mathews

1718-54 Declaration of Interests - none

1718-55 Open Forum – no items raised

1718-56 Minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2017

Subject to Minute 1718-43 being restated as “Cllr Lamb thanked Cllr Matthews”, not Cllr Phillips, the minutes were approved and signed.

1718-57 Vacancy on Rackenford & Creacombe Parish Council:

The Council considered the applications from Ian Lucas and Derek Parry, thanking them both for their interest and after voting, **RESOLVED** to co-opt Derek Parry onto the Council. He signed the acceptance of office form and joined the meeting.

Action: Clerk to forward register of interest form and other relevant documents to Cllr Parry.

1718-58 Report from District and County Councillor

Cllr Yabsley reported slow progress on Batsworthy Wind Farm noise monitoring, stating a report should be out later this week.

Apologies were offered for the failures with the black bin service which was caused by high levels of staff sickness.

He reported no further news on the Prospect Farm planning application where the Council had expressed concerns over the height of the building. He has discussed it with the planning officer to make sure the issues were correctly understood.

Cllr Yabsley explained that the Boundary Commission is reviewing North Devon and will impose ward boundary changes unless they are presented with an acceptable alternative. Having explained how the boundary rules work, Cllr Yabsley presented a map showing the draft proposal from officers which moves Rackenford and Creacombe from the Witheridge ward to the Bishops Nympton ward. There was a general discussion on the overall proposals and impact this may have on the parish. It was unanimously **AGREED** by the Council that Rackenford and Creacombe has closer ties with Witheridge and would be better served if it remained in the Witheridge ward. The Council would make representations accordingly.

Action: Clerk to write to North Devon District Council and the Boundary Commission setting out reasons why Rackenford and Creacombe Parish should remain in the Witheridge ward.

1718-59 General Power of Competence

Under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 the Council **RESOLVED** to adopt the General Power of Competence confirming that:

- At least two thirds of the Council (6 members) hold office as a result of being declared elected at the May 2015 elections
- The Clerk holds the Certificate in Local Council Administration.

1718-60 Finance 2017/18

- a. The Clerk reported the 2016/17 external audit has been completed and there are no issues arising. She then updated the Council on the current financial position as set out in the report in the agenda, noting that £6000 grant toward the Common Regeneration project has been received from Devon Communities Foundation. The Council's reserves and draft budget will be considered at the next meeting.
- b. The Clerk recommended, and the Council **RESOLVED** to appoint Alison Marshall again for internal audit services noting the price would be fixed for a 3 year contract.
- c. The Council considered the long standing contribution from Brian Morrison to the parish council, and **RESOLVED** to award a thank-you gift of up to £100.
- d. The Council **RESOLVED** to make the following payments:
 - K Ward / HMRC, clerks wages £199.46
 - K Ward, expenses £14.87
 - Information Commissioners Office £35.00
 - M Lane works to Trinity Well £77.21
 - A Francis/idata Services website and domain name £115.00
 - CPRE annual membership £TBC
- e. The Clerk noted that there were only 3 bank signatories and recommended a 4 signatory be added. It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Hyland become a bank signatory.
Action: Clerk to obtain mandate forms for signing

1718-61 Council policies

Council considered and **RESOLVED** to approve the following policies as set out in the agenda.

- Equalities policy
- Data protection and document retention policy

1718-62 Planning

- a. Council suggested that planning applications be posted on the noticeboard and website.
Action: Clerk to maintain and up to date planning list for the noticeboard and website.
- b. Council considered the following applications and **RESOLVED** to respond as set out:
 - 63597 Creacombe Parsonage retrospective application for continues used of polytunnel – “No objections”
 - 63062 Highfield Farm erection of 2 general purpose agricultural buildings including landscaping works and alterations to vehicular access – “No objections”
 - 63069 Highfield Farm outline application for erection of one replacement dwelling – “No objections”
 - 17/00445/FULL Ford Farm, Oakford installation of 16 ground mounted solar panels with wire stock proof fencing – “No comments”**Action:** Clerk to respond to planning application consultations
- c. The following planning decisions were **NOTED**:
 - 63524 Lower Bulworthy prior notification for the erection of an agricultural building for livestock housing/storage – prior approval not required
 - 63250, Little Tidderson, extensions and alterations to dwelling – approved
- d. The Clerk stated that Devon County Council were consulting on a Mineral Safeguarding Supplementary Planning Document as part of the Mineral Plans with a deadline of 16th October 2017.

1718-63 The Common

- a. The Council noted that a grant of £6000 for phases 2, 3 and 4 (landscape design and consultation) has been received.
- b. The Clerk reported that quotes had been received from Devon Wildlife Trust and Blackdown Environmental for the ecological/environmental and tree survey. No quote was received from Encompass Environmental. Having considered the quotes, the Council **RESOLVED** to award the work to Devon Wildlife Trust, subject to confirmation that the tree survey work meets the Council's requirements as set out in the original request. It was further **AGREED** that Councillors should meet with DWT on site.
Action: Clerk to contact DWT regarding the tree survey work, and subject to Council awarding the contract, arrange a meeting with DWT on site.
- c. Grass cutting – long term solutions are still being investigated. The preference is to have a number of volunteers, but it was noted that there may be insurance issues with using non-council equipment. There was discussion on the pros and cons of purchasing the necessary equipment compared to getting contractors. It was **AGREED** to continue as is for the remainder of this year as the growing season will soon end, but to obtain estimates from contractors as a back-up.
Action: Clerk of obtain estimates for grass cutting on the Common.

1718-64 Batsworthy Wind Farm update

Cllr Child reiterated Cllr Yabsley's comments earlier, stating that progress was slow and there were no other matters to report.

1718-65 Footpaths

- a. Footpaths - Cllr Warne reported a gate and rotten posts have been replaced by Devon County Council. No other matters to report.
- b. Childrens play area – Cllr Warne again stated that the equipment was coming to the end of its useful life. It is still safe to use but would be monitored.
- c. Traffic issues in the village – Cllr Hyland raised a number of concerns including speeding and loud exhausts. Cllr Child provided some background at to previous discussions on traffic, but unless there is a serious accident Highways nor the Police will take any action. Cllr Parry also reported that the Chumleigh School bus was waiting in an unsafe place, and it was reported that there are untaxed vehicles parked on the road. After a general discussion it was agreed that any incidents should be reported to the Police, providing as much information as possible such as time, place, registration, description of car etc.

1718-66 War Memorial

The Clerk updated on progress with the application form noting that we are waiting for a 3rd quote for cleaning/repairs to be received. Cllr Phillips reported back on conversation with Highways which indicated that putting kerbing around the site was not feasible due to cost and disruption. After some discussion on options regarding the posts, chains and trees, it was **AGREED** that the Council would not pursue kerbing or replacing the posts and chains, but will keep this under review. It was reported that the trees were blocking the sight line for drivers at the junction, but that no works to remove trees should take place before Remembrance. The Council may consider removing and replacing the existing trees, and only applying to the War Memorial Trust for cleaning and repairs to the memorial itself. Refer back to the November meeting.

1718-67 Trinity Well

Cllr Child reported that repairs works had been carried out and the pump was now working and the bucket is no longer leaking. Other repairs to the outside are still due. Consideration will be needed to rethatching in the future.

1718-68 IT equipment

The Clerk reported back on costings for purchase of a laptop, scanner and related software to be funded from the Transparency Code grant, and the Council **RESOLVED** to purchase the necessary items. .

Action: Clerk to purchase IT equipment in accordance with the grant received.

1718-69 Correspondence

The Council **NOTED** the correspondence received as set out in the agenda, and have resolved to respond to the North Devon boundary review.

1718-70 Shop and School update

Cllr Child reported the accounts reported a small profit shop is used to provide financial support for community projects like organ and bus. No matters to report from the School.

1718-71 Matters raised for noting only

It was noted that there is a temporary building at the Toll House for staff to wash and change. A planning application would be submitted if this was to become a permanent structure.

Concern was raised about a small wooden building which has appeared in Nettleford Hoff. It was not clear whether this building is being occupied, but the Council has not seen any planning application.

1718-72 Next meeting

Tuesday 7th November 2017, 7.30pm at Rackenford School

Meeting closed 9.40pm

Signed as a correct record:

Date:
