

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 2nd May 2017

Present: Cllr G Lamb, Cllr S Child (from 7.08pm), Cllr F Phillips, Cllr J Cox, Cllr R Mathews, Cllr S Warne, K Ward (clerk), Cllr Yabsley (items 1718-19 to 1718-21) and 5 members of the public.

Meeting opened 7.10pm

1718-1 Election of Chair and Vice Chair of the Council

Cllr Child and Cllr Warne proposed and seconded Cllr Lamb as Chairman.

Cllr Lamb and Cllr Cox proposed and seconded Cllr Child as Vice-Chairman.

It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Lamb and Cllr Child be Chairman and vice-Chairman for 2017/18, and the declaration of acceptance of office forms were signed.

1718-2 Apologies

Cllr B Morrison

1718-3 Declaration of Interests

Cllr Lamb declared an interest in Agenda item 18.2.

1718-4 Open Forum

No matters raised

1718-5 Minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2017

The minutes were approved and no issues arising not already covered on the agenda.

1718-6 Planning Committee

- a. It was **RESOLVED** to accept Standing Order 14 as set out in the agenda as the terms of reference for the planning committee.
- b. Council **RESOLVED** the members of the Planning Committee for 2017/18 will be Cllrs Lamb, Child, Cox, Phillips and Mathews.

1718-7 Representation of external bodies

- a. School representative: Cllr Child
- b. Shop representative: Cllr Child
- c. Batsworthy Cross: Cllr Lamb or Cllr Child as required.

1718-8 Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

- a. It was **RESOLVED** to accept the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and complaints procedure as set out in the agenda, subject to:
- b. Cllr Lamb proposed an amendment to the Standing Orders to clarify the role of members and the Clerk in obtaining quotes, attending site visits and agreeing any changes to works, including stipulating minimum numbers of members in attendance and the need for written notes. The proposal was welcomed by the Council and it was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk should draft the amendment for approval at the next Council meeting.

Action: Clerk to draft an amendment to Standing Orders regarding contracts and tendering.

1718-9 Membership of external bodies

Council **RESOLVED** to continue membership of the CPRE, Parish-online and Devon Association of Local Councils.

1718-10 Land and assets

- a. The assets held by the Council as set out in the agenda were **NOTED**.
- b. There was a brief discussion on the insurance renewal quote received, noting the Council was tied into the current insurers until May 2018. It was **RESOLVED** to delegate authority to the Clerk to arrange insurance cover in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman, having reviewed the extent of the cover and obtained alternative estimates, up to a maximum of £864.01.

Action: Clerk to arrange insurance cover by 1st June 2017.

1718-11 Risk management

Council **RESOLVED** to accept the risk register as set out in the agenda.

1718-12 Internal Audit report

The Clerk gave a verbal update of the internal audit that took place on 19th April 2017, and noted the auditor was happy with the accounts and has signed off the accounting statements. The auditor has just issued a written report including best practice recommendations. The Clerk will provide a full report and action plan on the recommendations at the next meeting. Council **NOTED** the initial findings of the audit.

Action: Clerk to report on the full internal audit finding to the next meetings.

1718-13 Annual Governance Statement

Council reviewed and agreed the Annual Governance Statement and **RESOLVED** that the Chairman should sign it.

1718-14 Financial Statements 2016/17

Council reviewed and agreed the Financial Statements for 2016/17 and **RESOLVED** that the Chairman should sign it.

1718-15 Finance 2017/18

- a. The Clerk updated the Council on the current financial position as set out in the budget report in the agenda, noting the first instalment of the precept has been received and transparency grant awarded. No issues of concern to report.
- b. It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the NALC 2017 recommended pay scales from 1 April 2017.
- c. It was **RESOLVED** to amend the Clerk's salary to SCP20 to reflect completion of the probation period and current progress towards obtaining the CiLCA qualification.
- d. The Council **RESOLVED** to make the following payments:
 - K Ward / HMRC for clerk wages £198.00
 - K Ward for expenses £9.71
 - Stuart Hagley Ltd for works to hard court £97.00
 - Mrs S Squire for contribution towards room hire for councillor Code of Conduct training £2.75
 - DALC subscription 2017/18 £82.63 (£72.00 + VAT)
 - A Marshall internal Audit £104.63

And ratified the following:

- Playsafety Ltd for ROSPA inspection £100.80 (£84.00 + VAT)

1718-16 Transparency Code

The Clerk reported that £650 had been awarded for the purchase of IT equipment (March meeting refers).

1718-17 Planning matters

- a. Comments on the following applications awaiting NDDC decision were **NOTED**:
- 62394 Reserved matters for erection of dwelling at Plot 2, Prospect Farm – “concerns about the “harsh” appearance”
 - 62724 Reserved matters for erection of dwelling at Plot 3, Prospect Farm - “concerns on roof height, print quality poor on the plans provided”
 - 62829 Demolition of existing dwelling and adjacent barn and erection of new dwelling with ancillary accommodation at East Nutcott – “no objections, but would like more details on the external finish”
- b. Planning application 62724 - Reserved matters for erection of dwelling at Plot 3, Prospect Farm (additional information/amended plans): the Council considered the amended application but **RESOLVED** to respond stating they still have concerns on the size and height of the property compared to surrounding properties and the visual impact on those properties.
Action: Clerk to respond to NDDC on application 62724
- c. The following decisions since last meeting were **NOTED**:
- 62497: Middle Mogworthy change of use from agricultural building to dwelling house – refused
 - 62498: Middle Mogworthy erection of livestock/equestrian building – refused
 - 62483: Crossways erection of dwelling & demolition of existing garage – outline planning permission approved
 - 62394 Reserved matters for erection of dwelling at Plot 2, Prospect Farm – approved
- d. Planning application 62940 poultry houses and feedbins at Hollyfield Farm: Council members stated this farm was in Witheridge parish, not Rackenford. However they did not have any objections.
Action: Clerk to contact NDDC with Council comments.

1718-18 Report from NDDC councillor

Cllr Yabsley reported that the Local Plan was making progress and it is anticipated it will be adopted in November. County Council elections will be taking place on Thursday 4th May.

1718-19 Batsworthy Wind Farm update

Cllr Child stated that the measurement of noise report was produced at the end of March and is currently being assessed by an expert employed by the NDDC . The report found only one property where the noise was slightly over the limit. The objectors' group however is questioning both the accuracy of the data as not all 9 turbines have been working, and the methodology of measurement. A different methodology would show four properties over the noise limit.

Cllr Yabsley has been in contact with the planning officers and is pushing for a deadline when they will have completed their review of the report.

It is intended a further meeting between the planners and the residents will then take place.

1718-20 Highways

Cllr Phillips highlighted a number of potholes, particularly the route to Nomansland which need to be addressed and Cllr Yabsley agreed to report these back to DCC Highways. Cllr Phillips also mentioned two overgrown hedges on a boundary road and Cllr Yabsley agreed to report these to Witheridge parish.

1718-21 The Common

- a. Common Regeneration: Cllr Lamb reported that £2000 has been awarded from Devon Communities Foundation for the ecological survey, being phase 1 of the Common Regeneration. Cllr Lamb also reported that 3 initial quotes were received for the survey last year but are now out of time.
The Clerk reported that a stage 1 application for £6000 has been submitted for phases 2 to 4 – initial landscape designs, public consultation and final layout design. A stage 2 application now needs to be submitted, and a decision on the grant would not be expected before the end of July.
Following discussion on the overall process and expertise in managing the project it was **RESOLVED** to draw up a scoping document covering phases 1 to 4, based on an initial draft read out by Cllr Lamb, and approach a number of landscape architects for expressions of interest in the project and report back to the next meeting.
Action: Clerk to prepare a scoping document which will be circulated to all members for comment before contacting architects.
- b. Grass cutting: Cllr Lamb thanked Cllr Warne for his ongoing grass cutting on the Common, but it was noted that this was causing damage to Cllr Warne's machinery. There was some discussion as to whether the Council should appoint an external contractor, but it was **AGREED** to look for further volunteers first, with the Council reimbursing any fuel costs.
Action: Cllrs Warne and Phillips to approach local contacts
- c. Weed clearance: Cllr Lamb reported that dock weeds behind the car park needed clearing and it was proposed that Glendales should be appointed to carry out the works as it was near to the knotweed treatment site and they would be familiar with chemical treatments already present in the area. It was **RESOLVED** that Glendales be appointed to carry out works, estimated to cost less than £70.
Action: Cllr Lamb to contact Glendales.

1718-22 Footpaths

Cllr Cox said a local landowner had concerns about a gate which has been damaged for over a year. The land owner has offered to install the gate if the Council provided a replacement. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council would look to replace the gate, being funded from the P3 reserve.

Action: Cllr Warne to look into obtaining gate replacement.

1718-23 Play area

Cllr Warne gave a brief outline of the recent ROSPA report on the play area noting that the play equipment was getting close to end of its useful life in the next few years. There are some areas of decay noted but these were not of immediate concern and no urgent repairs were currently needed. It was acknowledged that replacement of the play equipment is a key part of the Common regeneration.

1718-24 War Memorial

It was noted that the War Memorials Trust were inviting applications for repair and conservation of memorials. Council discussed works needed to clean and repair the memorial (estimated at under £2000), also replacement of the posts and chain, removal and replacement of the cherry tree, and curbing around the site to protect from vehicle damage. It was further noted that if a grant were awarded, it would only be for 75% of costs, with the remainder being funded by the parish. It was **RESOLVED** to make an application to the Trust for the above works.

Action: Cllr Phillips to obtain an estimate for the posts, chain and curbing works. The Clerk to obtain an estimate for the tree works. Once obtained, the Clerk to submit an application in consultation with Cllr Cox.

1718-25 Correspondence

Correspondence was noted.

Action: Clerk to contact the North Devon Against Domestic Abuse indicating where they may site their Restore Bus:

1718-26 Shop update

Cllr Child reported that while turnover was lower, footfall was good and new volunteers have come forward for the shop. She thanked the Warnes for helping with the leaflet drop. The shop will be applying for planning permission to extend the store room in order to make a café/ committee room.

1718-27 Trinity Well

Cllr Lamb reported that there has been damage to the outside seating, render and perspex information holders. Minimal urgent repairs using wood have been carried out, but further works are needed. An initial estimate of £275 has been received from a local contractor for the walls and render which Council believes to be extremely competitive, but a quote was needed for the remaining work. It was **RESOLVED** to award the work to Stuart Hagley subject to further quotes being acceptable to the Council.

Action: Cllr Lamb to obtain further quotes for the remaining work needed and circulate this to all members for comment.

1718-28 Matter of urgency for noting only

The fly tipping has been reported, as has the abandoned car.

Cllr Mathews said he had received complaints about dog mess.

Action: Clerk to draft a general letter to dog owners; councillors to investigate getting replacement signage for the Common.

1718-29 Open forum

Cllr Lamb invited late comers to the meeting to speak if they had any matters they wanted raised. They asked what the Council's view was on the sale of the garages behind Meadow View regarding alternative development. Cllr Lamb stated that alternative development would not be in keeping with the Village Plan and Cllr Child noted it would reduce parking spaces further. The Council would be likely to object strongly to any alternative proposals.

1718-30 Next meeting

Tuesday 4th July 2017, 7.30pm at Rackenford School

Meeting closed 9.10pm

Signed as a correct record:

Date:
