

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

Present: Cllrs Lamb (chair), Child, Phillips, Warne, Mathews and Cox, K Ward (clerk), and Mr R Blackburn of Airband (item 1718-117 only), Cllr J Yabsley (item 1718-123 only) and 6 members of the public.

**1718-116 Apologies:** Cllr Parry, Cllr Hyland

**1718-117 Public Forum**

A complaint was raised about dog mess around the village and what can be done about it. Cllr Child said there were poo bags for sale in the shop and a dog bin provided. If the owners can be identified then the Council has a standard letter to send. The matter should also be referred to NDDC, but it was acknowledged it was difficult to address until it is clear who the dog owners are.

Referring to the Common Regeneration project, there was a request to see the reports from the Devon Wildlife Trust. Cllr Child offered to place her copy in the shop for residents to view, otherwise contact the Clerk for an electronic copy. A further query was raised about why consideration of the landscape architects was being taken in private session. It was explained this was normal practice when discussing commercially sensitive information between competitors. It was emphasised that this was dealing only with the appointment of a landscape architect and was not in relation to any design ideas or proposals which would be subject to public consultation before any decisions are made. In response to a supplementary question, Cllr Lamb said the aim is to consult on design ideas in early Summer. There was a request that the Council produces a public document with a timeline of the project going forward, and this was **AGREED**.

**Action:** Clerk to draft a proposed timeline for the project.

A comment was made that while bikes, dogs and food were not permitted on the hard court, they have been seen and it was suggested more prominent signing be put up. Cllr Child also acknowledged the noticeboard needs cleaning.

**Action:** Clerk/Cllr Child to obtain quotes for signage and cleaning of noticeboard.

Cllr Lamb welcomed Mr Blackburn to the meeting. Mr Blackburn explained that Airband were a Worcester based firm that have received government grants to extend the broadband network in rural areas. The broadband is delivered via microwaves rather than fibre/cables requiring the installation of masts with dishes placed on top. Thirty-seven properties within the Rackenford area were identified with suboptimal broadband speed. The proposal is to install a 12m high wooden telegraph pole on the chicken farm in order to offer faster broadband. In response to questions Mr Blackburn said:

- The Airband service will be available to more than the 37 properties identified.
- Customers do not have to sign up in order to get the mast installed as this has been funded by the government.
- Customers can then choose to switch broadband providers at their own discretion, comparing speed and prices offered.
- Other broadband providers are entitled to use the installed mast, but it is unlikely in this location.
- Service interruption may occur in very heavy rain.
- Users may need to change BT or Sky email addresses if they switch provider, but that is a matter to sort out with their existing providers.

Concern was raised as to whether the wooden pole would be replaced by a "proper" mast, but Mr Blackburn said the contract regarding the wooden pole was for 10 years.

While Mr Blackburn was looking for feedback as to whether there is local support or opposition for the erection of the mast, it was explained that the Council cannot formally comment if a planning application is to be submitted as it could invalidate any formal planning consultation. Mr Blackburn was not sure of the planning needs and will investigate. He also offered to supply the post codes of the properties with slow broadband.

**Action:** Clerk to contact Airband with respect to the planning and postcodes.

**1718-118 Declaration of Interests** – Cllr Child expressed a personal interest in agenda item 22 as a school governor and remained in the meeting but did not take part in any vote.

**1718-119 Minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2018** - The minutes were approved and signed as a correct record.

#### **1718-120 The Common**

- a. Update on the regeneration project: Cllr Lamb stated that initial site visits were carried out with 4 potential landscape architects and that quotes had been received to be considered later on the agenda.
- b. Update on grass cutting long term solution: Still waiting for an invoice for 2017/18 and a quote for 2018/19.
- c. Use of the Common for organised events: It was noted that the PTA wish to use the Common for an event on the 7<sup>th</sup> July. Cllr Hyland is working on a template agreement. It was further noted users will be required to have their own insurance.

**Action:** Clerk to contact Cllr Hyland regarding the Council's own insurance policy.

#### **1718-121 Highways and Footpaths**

- a. Footpaths: Cllr Warne reported works will be undertaken in the summer to repair a concrete path. No other matters to report.
- b. Play area & Hard Court: Cllr Warne said the annual ROSPA inspection will be carried out shortly. Cllr Phillips still to remove the sandpit. The hard court has been professionally cleaned.
- c. DCC consultation on traffic sensitive routes: defer  
**Action:** Clerk to resend consultation information
- d. Cllr Lamb reported he had received a complaint regarding the road markings around the school. It is understood children are now permitted to use the front entrance only and not the side entrance. Highways have promised zig-zag lines to be put in front of the school and lines are to be removed from the side entrance.

#### **1718-122 War Memorial**

- a. War Memorial: The Clerk reported that a grant of £1420 has been awarded from the War Memorials Trust for cleaning and repairs. The terms and conditions are rather comprehensive and will need confirmation from the stonemason that conditions can be met. They also include applying Smart Water after works are completed. Noting that the Council has set aside £500 in a reserve for the Council's contribution to works, it was **RESOLVED** to accept the grant award and delegate authority to the Clerk to appoint and liaise with Richard Grant Memorials to carry out the work, keeping the Council informed of progress.

**Action:** Clerk to progress works

Cllr Lamb reported he had spoken to Mr Coles regarding the poor condition of the trees and he had no objections to them being replaced once this year's flowering is over.

Cllr Child commented that the traffic signage around the war memorial was inaccurate and intrusive and enquired if they could be reviewed by Devon County Council. It was noted there had been an accident at the junction recently.

**Actions:** Clerk to contact DCC and request a review of all traffic signage around the village.

- b. Commemoration for the centenary of end of WWI: Cllr Child reported a book on local soldiers mainly from Rackenford and Witheridge had been published on wartime events and noted Witheridge Parish Council were looking to hold a commemoration of the end of the War. It was queried whether the Council could do something jointly with Witheridge and also if the School would like to be involved.

**Actions:** Cllr Child to contact the school and investigate joint event options with Witheridge.

### **1718-123 Report from the District and County Councillor**

Items regarding dog mess and traffic signage raised earlier in the meeting were discussed with Cllr Yabsley. He stated that signs regarding fines for not picking up dog mess had been put up elsewhere and he would enquire if some could also be put up in Rackenford.

Cllr Yabsley reported extra funds had been made available by DCC for patching and repairs especially on minor roads and Rackenford works were planned for next month. Residents are requested to report burst water pipes in the road. There will be no catch up on black bin collections affected by last week's heavy snow fall, the next collection will be as per NDDC's regular schedule. The Local Plan is progressing and is out to consultation again, with NDDC looking to adopt the plan by the end of May.

Cllr Warne reported collapsed drains around the Common, which Cllr Phillips has already reported to DCC, and Cllr Yabsley noted.

Cllr Yabsley has also attended the recent meeting between NDDC and residents regarding noise from Batsworthy wind farm and reported NDDC will take enforcement action unless the developers provide further noise readings. Residents have requested recordings from an additional 4<sup>th</sup> site as well as additional funds for further recordings. A response from the developers is awaited.

### **1718-124 Trinity Well**

It was reported that both submersible lights had been removed as they were rotten and should be replaced. It was further reported the Council may need to carry out thatching works soon. Cllr Child stated that Viridor provided a grant for the original thatching so funds may still be available.

**Action:** Clerk to enquire about Viridor grants

### **1718-125 Request for Grant Funding**

The Council considered a request from the Church for £200 towards grass cutting, noting that support had been provided in previous years. It was **RESOLVED** to award £200 for 2017/18, and for the next 3 financial years, with a review in March 2021.

### **1718-126 Planning**

- a. It was **RESOLVED** to submit the following planning application responses:
- 64484: Erection of detached garage at The Barn Lane past Blindwell Farm – “no objections”

- 64498: Erection of one agricultural livestock building & associated works at land west of Rackenford Green Lane – “conditions should be included to state that (a) the existing old barn be removed, and (b) that a landscaping scheme be put in place to reduce the visible impact of the building to the surrounding area.”

The Clerk stated that the consultation on the NDDC Local Plan has been forwarded to Council members for comment.

- b. The following planning decisions were **NOTED**:
- 63979: Erection of one agricultural workers dwelling, Thornfield Farm, Higher Thorn, Rackenford – Granted
  - 64280: Change of use of land from agriculture to equine and erection of one building (to provide 3 stables, tack room and store), Rookwood - Granted
  - Enforcement notification 10524: Unauthorised change of use: siting and residential occupation of a caravan, Rookwood - Regularised by applicant
- c. Airband mast: Item **NOTED** with reference to the public forum discussion.

#### **1718-127 Finance 2017/18**

- a. Financial report: The Clerk reported there was £30,751 in reserves before tonight’s meeting mainly in earmarked reserves or grants which are planned for spending in the coming year.
- b. The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the following payments:
- K Ward / HMRC clerks wages £226.39
  - K Ward expenses £85.36
  - Halberton Parish Council contribution towards Clerk’s training on new data protection rules £30.00
  - Rackenford Parochial Church grant toward grass cutting £200.00

#### **1718-128 Assets**

The asset list as set out in the agenda was reviewed and **RESOLVED** as correct. It was noted that the Council’s 3 year insurance contact is ending and alternative quotes will be sought for the next meeting.

**Action:** Clerk to obtain insurance quotes

#### **1718-129 Risk register / Data Protection Regulations**

- a. Risk Register: after reviewing the document it was **RESOLVED** to approve the risk register as set out in the agenda.
- b. Data protection legislation: The Clerk reported that new legislation was coming in from May 2018 and this will include a requirement to appoint an external Data Protection Officer. An audit of data held by the Council may also be required. Final guidance on the changes has yet to be produced and the Clerk is to attend further training.
- Action:** Clerk to assess new data protection requirements

**1718-130 Batsworthy Wind Farm:** nothing further to report (see minute 1718-123)

#### **1718-131 Shop / School update**

Cllr Child reported the shop had its best trading day ever when there was heavy snow last week!

**1718-132 Correspondence**

The following correspondence was **NOTED**:

- Email regarding painting of white lines / access to the school and resulting traffic problems
- Email from Templeton PC regarding pollution at Gibbet Moor

**1718-133 Other matters (not for decision):** None

**1718-134 Future meeting dates**

The following meeting dates for the Council were **APPROVED** for 2018/19:

Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2018: Annual Parish Meeting, and Annual Meeting of the Council

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2018, Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2018, Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2018, Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2019, Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2019

**1718-135 Next meeting:**

Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2018: Annual Parish Meeting at 7pm, followed by the and Annual Meeting of the Council, Rackenford School

**1718-136 Exclusion of Public and Press**

It was **RESOLVED** to exclusion of public and press to:

- Consider quotes for landscape architectural services on the Common
- Consider the rental agreement on the hard court

**1718-137 The Common**

Cllr Lamb reported that 4 landscape architects had expressed an interest in the project and initial site visits were arranged with them. He gave a brief overview of the site visits, emphasising that the same route and information was provided to each. Hard copies of the quotes received from the 4 landscape architects were presented. The Clerk reported that 3 of the 4 quotes had only been received on the 5<sup>th</sup> March so it was not practical to circulate them before the meeting. It was therefore **RESOLVED** to defer the item to allow members to read the quotes fully, and that an extraordinary meeting be held to review the quotes.

**Action:** Clerk to arrange an extraordinary meeting.

**1718-138 Hard Court**

It was noted that the rental of the hard court by the school had not been reviewed for many years and was based on the assumption that it was being used daily. The school had informed the Council that it is only used for 1.5 days per week. Cllr Lamb has investigated hire charges for similar spaces, and after discussion it was **RESOLVED** to offer a revised rental of £400 per annum for 1.5 days per week during term time only. It was further **RESOLVED** that the invoicing to the school should be realigned with the fiscal year.

**Action:** Clerk to invoice the school accordingly

Meeting closed 10.05pm

**Signed as a correct record:**

**Date:**

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