



MINUTES

Committee: Parish Council
Date: Tuesday, 9 January 2024
Time: 7:00pm
Venue: Community Club

Present

Cllr Mike Warner (Chairman in Cllr Fileman-Wrights absence)
Cllr John Farrand-Rogers
Cllr Rob Austin
Cllr David Bridger
Cllr Richard Short
Cllr Gordy Keep
Cllr Vivienne Hodges
Cllr Mike Jeffery
Cllr Jan Evans
Cllr Gemma Hampton
Cllr Chris Walden

Also Present

Samantha Parkin (Clerk)
Two members of the public

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

01/2024 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Fileman-Wright.

02/2024 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS / REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

No declarations of interest were received. No requests for dispensation were received. *Localism Act 2011 (sections 26-37 and Schedule 4)*

03/2024 MINUTES

It was proposed by Cllr Jeffery, seconded by Cllr Hodges, and **resolved to accept and sign** the minutes of the meeting held on 5th December 2023 as a correct record. *LGA 1972 Sch 12 para 41(1)*

04/2024 STANDING ITEM – CLIMATE AND ECOLOGY EMERGENCY:

The Council noted the Declaration to embed the climate and ecology emergency declaration across all Council services, activities, plans and other relevant work, considering the environmental impact of decisions, ensuring a fully integrated approach to mitigating the impact of climate change.

05/2024 COUNCILLOR REPORTS

District Councillor Report

District Councillor Farrand-Rogers reported that Teignbridge District Council (TDC) is in his opinion increasingly disastrous. The good news is that this week TDC is having a Peer Review Challenge, which means that 5 people come from other councils (2 Officers and 3 Councillors) and meet with both Councillors and staff and talk about how everything is working. At the end of that they come up with recommendations. There is a wish within TDC that things should change.

He also reported that TDC is currently failing in its internet communications which is not working. This means that he is not receiving parish council communications because they come through his TDC email address.

Cllr Austin asked why TDC had given themselves a pay rise (reported in the Mid Devon Advertiser) following the report given at the last meeting suggesting that TDC's finances were in dire straits. Cllr Farrand-Rogers offered to investigate and report back.

Dartmoor National Park Representative

Cllr Jeffery's report is attached at appendix 1 on page 5.

06/2023 MATTERS ARISING

It was noted the Clerk has submitted the 2024/25 precept request. The Clerk noted that TDC had queried the request which represents an increase of 30.92%. TDC were happy with the Clerk's explanation that the council had budgeted for a lengthsman to pick up the withdrawal of the District and County Council services.

It was noted a letter has been sent to Old Mill payroll terminating their service from 5th April 2024.

It was noted that the Clerk has asked Devon County Council for double yellow lines at Old Gale Saw Mills. Cllr Short asked if any response had been received to the council's request for a traffic order outside the museum. The Clerk informed the meeting that the Highways Officer has taken it to committee.

07/2024 CHAIRMANS DISCRETION

The Chairman noted that there is a full council meeting scheduled for Tuesday 16th January to discuss the Forder Farm Planning Application.

The Chairman reminded Councillors that the Clerk has arranged training for all councillors on Tuesday 12th March with Devon Association of Local Councils. The training will start promptly at 6.30pm.

08/2024 OPEN SPACES REPORT

The Open Spaces monthly report had been circulated prior to the meeting. The report was noted and is attached at appendix 2 on page 5. The council noted that volunteers were needed to paint benches. It was suggested that a bench working party be set up in the spring including councillors and members of the public. The council also discussed the Cross Tree which will be discussed at the next Open Spaces meeting; Cllr Hodges will prepare a report.

09/2024 CLIMATE CHANGE & ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY WORKING GROUP

The South West Water report had been circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Warner noted that South West Water is happy that further development can happen but surface water needs to be thought about.

Wellmoor is arranging an environment workshop for Saturday 17th February. All councillors are invited to attend. Concerns were raised about the council's involvement with Moretonhampstead Development Trust (MDT) because the council and MDT seemed to be becoming a bit indistinguishable.

10/2024 INTERNAL FINANCIAL REGULATOR REPORT

Cllr Bridger had checked the accounts for November.

11/2024 SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

The Council considered its monthly schedule of payments.

It was proposed by Cllr Jeffery, seconded by Cllr Hodges, and **resolved to approve** the schedule of payments at appendix 3 on page 6. There were two abstentions. *LGA 1972 s150(5)*

12/2024 CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence was received and circulated prior to the meeting from Devon Association of Local Councils advising the council of an increase in subscription fees in 2024/25. The correspondence was noted.

Correspondence was received and circulated prior to the meeting from the Teignbridge District Council Parking Services Manager replying to the Council's correspondence regarding parking charges in Moretonhampstead.

Cllr Farrand-Rogers noted that Cllr Short would like to see more of the thinking behind the decision that TDC had made. Cllr Farrand-Rogers had requested more information from TDC but has not received a reply. He had copied in various TDC members including the Leader of the Council; his reply was very interesting in that previously the Officer in question had said that there was no policy. Cllr Farrand-Rogers thought this was absurd as how can an Officer implement policy when there is no policy.

Cllr Farrand-Rogers suggested that the council should say exactly what it wants to happen as far as the car parks are concerned. He also suggested that the council set up a working group to draft a letter giving the reasons why Moretonhampstead is special and doesn't fit with TDC's one size fits all.

Cllr Short stated he was happy to draft a letter setting out the arguments for why car parking charges in Moretonhampstead should be less; charges should be set with regard for those in Chagford and requesting more information about what the trends are in car parking in Moretonhampstead. Cllr Evans would also like to request the revenue and expenditure for the winter months for Moretonhampstead car parks. Cllr Farrand-Rogers noted that this ward is the only ward in the whole of Teignbridge that is 100% in the National Park therefore Moretonhampstead should be compared with the West Devon areas.

It was proposed by Cllr Evans, seconded by Cllr Austin, and **resolved to delegate** the reply as stated to Cllr Short and Vice Chairman Cllr Warner. There was one abstention.

13/2024 QUEENS ROAD

Teign Housing's surveyor advised that no works are considered necessary. The Clerk has requested a copy of the surveyor's report, but Teign Housing are currently unable to provide the report because they are querying the map used.

14/2024 HIGHWAY MATTERS

The draft 20's Plenty sign had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Cllr Short provided some background information; at a previous meeting 20's Plenty signs were delegated to the Highways working group to make a recommendation. The working group recommends A3 plasticised signs displaying the 20's Plenty and the council's logo be put up on private property beside the main roads in Moretonhampstead.

It was proposed by Cllr Evans, seconded by Cllr Hodges and **resolved to approve** the production of the signs.

15/2024 LENGTHSMAN

The draft lengthsmen specification and contract had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Cllr Austin explained he is the lengthsmen in North Tawton and the drafts were based on North Tawton's lengthsmen specification and contract. He also noted that there was no mention of waste

disposal charges, and this should be added to the contract. In Cllr Austin's experience with North Tawton he didn't think that the lengthsman contract affected Devon County's responsibilities; for example, they will still clear gullies.

Cllr Short had concerns about how reactive work is agreed by the council. He thought it should be delegated to the Chair and Vice Chair to agree works. Cllr Austin thought that reactive work should be delegated to the Clerk to approve. Cllr Short was also concerned that DCC will be slow to fulfil their responsibilities.

It was proposed by Cllr Evans, seconded by Cllr Austin, and **resolved to accept** the draft contract and specification with an amendment to dispose of rubbish as required and to authorise discretionary powers relating to the contract to the Clerk. There was one abstention.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.55pm

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The member of the public mentioned that they had two close encounters with traffic. They also noted that trees can be killed by staking through their roots.

TO DO ACTIONS

- Clerk to make payments
- Cllr Short and Cllr Warner to respond to TDC's correspondence accordance with min no. 12/2024
- Clerk and Vice Chair to obtain quotes for the 20's Plenty signs and approve the production
- Clerk to amend the lengthsman contract to include waste disposal and advertise the contract

***MPC Minutes 09.01.2023 Attachment no.1 – Dartmoor National Park Representative Report
DNP meeting 5 January 2024***

Body cameras

At the meeting the continuation of body worn cameras for the rangers was raised, they have been on trial for 18 months and are worn in certain parts of the moor where conflict could occur. The cameras have been worn on 211 occasions and activated 7 times. Usually when they are worn the situation is diffused very quickly. One occasion was where a ranger was accused of knocking over a member of the public with his land rover, he was wearing his body cam and it recorded the ranger was nowhere near the accuser.

It was felt by committee that maybe the cameras should be worn more often and the trial should end and be made policy.

End of season report

2023 was characterised by a dry and warm late May early June then wet and cool from June onwards. Visitor numbers to the outdoors were significantly down due partly to the weather and the cost of living, however numbers to the visitor centres were up by 30% on 2022. A number of key messages were put out to educate public; one on dogs should be kept on a lead, this message saw 61% more shares and 40% more likes.

Litter was another topic along with why you should bag up your dog waste and litter and take it home for disposal as we don't have dog and waste bins on the moor. We offered an inexpensive box for people who do not want to take the dog mess home, the boxes are leak and odour proof. Visitor staff have also noted a reduction in the number of questions asked about litter due to the information boards.

The 3 visitor centres between them hosted 115,000 between 1st April and 30th September, the centres also hosted a number of events and activities.

School activities were back to pre pandemic numbers, ranger Ralph educational walks were also popular, not only with DNP but also with the Dartmoor Pony Heritage Trust, I have led 15 walks between the 2 groups in the last year schools are beginning to walk between February and November now whereas before only went from Easter to September. The guides give their time free only claiming for travelling expenses for which DNP are very grateful.

MPC Minutes 09.01.2024 Attachment no.2 – Open Spaces Report

Inspection carried out by: S Parkin

Date: January 2024

Area	Comments	Action
The Sentry	Looks good.	None
Churchyard	Looks good.	None
The Play Area	Looks good.	None.
The Henge	Ok	None
The Pound	Ok	None
Cross Tree	Open Spaces committee to consider replacing tree.	None.
Geneva	Looks good.	None.

Island/War Memorial		
Wheelwright's wheel	Looks good.	None
Allotment	Looks good. Correspondence received alerting the council waste soil had been dumped at the Allotment.	The Allotment Holder was asked to remove the soil.
Seats/benches/Lamp posts	A few benches in need of painting.	Seek volunteers to rub down and repaint benches
Gates and railings	Looks good.	None
Bus Shelter	Looks good.	None
Recycling bins	Looks good.	None

MPC Minutes 09.01.2024 Attachment no.3 – List of payments January 2024

Finance Report

To receive the Finance Report

On 31 December, the Accounts stood at:

Lloyds Current Account	£1,927.89
Lloyds Deposit Account	£65,861.89

Standing Orders

Moretonhampstead Development Trust Office Rent	£379.48	Date Cleared 02/01/2024
BT Telephone and Broadband	£36.80	15/12/2023

Direct Debit

Microsoft 365 subscription	£11.28	05/12/2023
Old Mill Payroll	£147.60	27/12/2023

Mandatory Payments

Staffing payments (Salary, pension and quarterly HMRC)	£2,407.70	29/12/2023
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Card Payments

Post Office (2 nd Class Stamps)	£5.25	18/12/2023
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Income

Bank Interest	£74.98	11/12/2023
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Invoices for payment – to consider and approve invoices for payment itemised on the Payment Schedule

Payment Method	Payee and reason	Budget	Power to spend	Net Payment	Payment inc VAT
Bank Transfer	Community Club <i>Hire of the Hall 05/12</i>	EX5	LGA 1972 s111	£15.00	£15.00
Bank Transfer	AR Rural Solutions <i>Sentry Hedge Cut</i>	EX6	Open Spaces Act 1906 s10	160.00	£160.00
Bank Transfer	M P Plumbing <i>2 x ashes interment 16/12</i>	EXCEM2	LGA 1972 s214	£200.00	£200.00

6. Signed.....

16 January 2024