

DARTMOOR FOREST PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Council meeting held on Tuesday 11 March 2014
in the Community Centre, Princetown at 7.30 pm

Present:**Princetown Ward**

David Worth (Chair)
 Emma Derham
 Gregg Manning (first part)
 Cliff Palmer
 Jackie Gee
 Wendy Stones
 Paul Turnbull

Postbridge Ward

Wendy Watson

Hexworthy/Huccaby Ward

Alison Geen (Chair)

Apologies:**Princetown Ward****Postbridge Ward**

Val Greatrex

Hexworthy/Huccaby Ward**In Attendance:**

Ann Inman (Retiring Parish Clerk)

There were 2 members of the public present

1. Apologies

Val Greatrex had apologised for this meeting and subsequent meetings on 13 May, 9 June and 13 October 2014.

2. Declarations of interest

There were no changes announced to existing declarations. No new declarations were made against the agenda.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of 10 February were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

4. Induction of a Co-opted Councillor.

Jackie Gee made her declaration as a Parish Councillor to the meeting and submitted her formal Declaration of Interest.

5. Matters arising from the previous Meeting

5.1 **Traffic Order.** The Clerk raised the matter by email with Cllr Philip Sanders and discussed it with him in the margins of the Southern Link meeting. Cllr Sanders is confident the Traffic Order has gone forward in a package with Newberry Hill and would check with DNPA at their monthly meeting on 7 March. The letter to Geoffrey Cox has not been sent, pending Cllr Sanders reply.

5.2 **Defibrillator Funding.** This has been approved by the Southern Link meeting. The defibrillator is planned to be fitted externally to the Forest Inn, but as this is not currently trading the Clerk will approach the Duchy for permission to mount it.

5.3 **Princetown Toilets.** The Clerk has raised the matter by email with Ally Kohler and discussed it with Cllr Sanders. There should be an update following the DNPA meeting on 7 March, but signs are not hopeful.

5.4 **Re-opening of the Tavistock Okehampton Railway.** The clerk has written to the Rt Hon Patrick McLoughlin MP, Secretary of State for Transport; Geoffrey Cox MP; and David Higgins, Chief Executive of Network Rail giving DFPC's support for the reopening of this rail link.

5.5 **Police Restructuring.** The Clerk has written to Tony Hogg, the Police and Crime Commissioner, seeking assurance that the current, effective level of policing in Princetown will continue following the restructuring of the Police.

6. Police Matters

6.1 PC David Pickles has left his post as Neighbourhood Beat Manager. The council decided to send him a letter of thanks for his good work in the Parish.

6.2 A Police operation had reportedly arrested 3 non-residents in Princetown and impounded their car on suspicion of drug dealing.

6.3 A dispute between neighbours in Princetown developed into a serious disorder. Police worked with a private landlord, social services, mental health team, domestic violence unit, RSPCA, WDBC and Positive Aspects outreach services. Those concerned were rehoused and there has been no recurrence of problems.

7. Community Centre and Youth Club

7.1 **Youth Club.** A Youth Club meeting was held on Wednesday, 12 February. The Tuesday session has about 20 juniors attending and 12 seniors. A new session on Thursday is starting for over 11 years and they are interviewing for a part-time youth worker to cover these sessions. They are also looking at community-based trips one Sunday per month and also once a week during the summer for younger children, families and carers. The Youth Club continues to look for funding. They plan to improve the centre by painting the inside and out, and are seeking a dishwasher and a freezer to support the cooking classes. Funding so far has come from DFPC, Microsoft UK Youth, DCC and DNPA; and applications have been made to the Grow Wild Lottery, Awards for All and potentially the Local Youth Network when it becomes available again. In future the committee will invite a minimum of two young people to attend meetings. The youth would like to put on a fete type activity in August and will invite other groups to take part. The next meeting will be 23 March.

7.2 **Community Centre.** A committee meeting was held on 18 February, 6 attended. They discussed the possibility of PV panels and solar tubes and have applied for more information and costings. Roofing repairs are now taking place. The committee is short of a secretary, and also needs more volunteers and trustees. The new cleaner from the prison has started, and is doing a good job. The charity shop has given the Community Centre a cheque for £4000. Further payments will be quarterly. The issue of the Pre-School non-payment of utility bills continues. Next meeting will be on Thursday, 13 March.

8. Repairs & Maintenance

8.1 The telephone kiosk door on Tavistock Road has been replaced.

8.2 The Postbridge noticeboard is wobbly and in need of refurbishment.

8.3 The annual Play Area RoSPA inspection is due, but it was uncertain whether it was needed this year as most of the equipment was less than a year old. It was agreed Cliff Palmer and the Clerk would inspect the playground and make the decision on behalf of the council.

9. Highways.

9.1 The Clerk reported that John Doswell had informed him 7,000 Devon potholes were reported in January alone and Highways are struggling to meet repair targets despite increasing repair teams. South Hams has been particularly badly hit. The Highways budget is now centralised at DCC and focused on reactive work prioritised by the danger posed and the size of road. All routine work, including patching and Leadsman, has been stopped for this financial year. All road defects reported are held on the computer system and will be repaired according to their prioritisation. His advice is to report all new defects, including lists compiled by the Parish Council, via the MyDevon number and to record the defect reference numbers. This will ensure the defect details will go directly to the contractor.

9.2 Once the new financial year starts Highways hope to continue with routine work but their budget has been reduced to £29M and there is still £5M backlog from the 2012 storms. Planned work in Dartmoor Forest comprises:

Replacing the drain along the shop frontage in Princetown (possibly April/May?).

Resurfacing Plymouth Hill from the roundabout to the cattle grid (possibly May?).

Resurfacing at Devil's Elbow, but this will be after Western Power Distribution trenching has completed.

Patching around the Warren House Inn and Cherrybrook Hotel in preparation for surface dressing in 2015.

9.3 The Lengthsman will be allocated to Dartmoor Forest one day per week. Blocked ditches and gullies can be reported either via MyDevon or email. Given the size of Dartmoor Forest, John Doswell encourages a degree of self-help by encouraging residents to scuff leaves out of drains and to pull weeds. He also reports that Peter Tavy and Horrabridge Parish Councils now employ their own Lengthsman/Handyman and Bere Ferris Parish Council is considering the same.

9.4 A short discussion was held over the relative merits and costs of employing a Lengthsman. The Clerk was actioned to investigate whether TAP funding might be available if we club together with neighbouring Parishes.

10. First Public Session

10.1 Alison Geen, on behalf of the council, thanked Ann Inman for her unfailing dedication to the clerk's role and to Dartmoor Forest Parish over the last 9 years. The co-chairs both agreed that having Ann at their elbow during the meetings has been enormously reassuring and that her preparation for, and advice during, meetings has always been helpful. Ann has always shown 100% commitment to the role and has followed tasks through, terrier like, until completion, unfazed by the complex legalities and paperwork. Inevitably, extra minutes and hours were put in to some jobs but the council had never heard a complaint. Ann has also been willing to get involved in other, often voluntary tasks, locally such as acting booking clerk for the Community Centre which kept things running through a difficult time for the Centre.

10.2 The council presented Ann with a painting by local artist John Stones of a landscape within the Dartmoor Forest to commemorate her time serving the Parish.

11. Grass Cutting Contracting Strategy.

The Clerk reported time is running out to achieve a new grass cutting contract let by 1 June 2014 and presented a draft contracting strategy previously circulated to councillors detailing the available options. A detailed debate ensued after which the council decided to: proceed to negotiate terms for a combined contract with the Duchy, with each organisation being invoiced for its respective

areas and advertise for tenders before the next meeting. The Clerk is to contact DNPA again, seeking improved service, particularly around the High Moorland Visitors Centre.

12. Website Launch.

The new website is sufficiently complete for it to be launched, although additional information will be added progressively. There were 2 options for the launch: to keep the existing www.dartmoorparishpc.net address at additional cost, or to adopt a new 'Weebly' address at no cost. After some discussion, the council decided to keep the existing address but to subsidise the cost by charging a small fee to provide links to businesses in the Parish.

13. Planning Applications.

13.1 The current status of planning applications is shown in the table below:

Status	DNPA Ref. & Applic. Type	Description	Location	Comments
Awaiting DNPA	14/0086	Finger Posts	Princetown	Supported by DFPC
Awaiting DNPA	14/0085	Finger Posts	Princetown	Supported by DFPC
Awaiting DNPA	14/0084	Finger Posts	Princetown	Supported by DFPC
Awaiting DNPA	14/0065 Full PP	Installation of ground-mounted solar panels at Peat Cot Cottage, Peat Cot, Princetown	Peat Cot Cottage, Peat Cot, Princetown	Supported by DFPC
Awaiting DNPA	13/0581 Full PP	Conversion of former Methodist chapel to form three open market dwellings, incorporating new access onto highway	Wesley House Two Bridges Road Princetown	Supported by the Parish Council, but with reservations about displaced parking in the immediate vicinity
Newly Granted	14/0010 Full PP	Provision of new steps and ramp access to the front entrance	National Park Visitor Centre Tavistock Road Princetown	Work starts within 3 years Existing granite steps to remain in situ DNPA to pre-approve: Railings, all materials, lighting details <i>(no mention of tree lights - monitor)</i>
Newly Granted	13/0598 DPP	Erection of two storey extension to rear of existing property	2 Station Road Princetown	Work to start within 3 years Roof to be natural slate forever Door & window frames to be timber forever

13.2 Outstanding planning matters

Status	DNPA Ref. & Applic. Type	Description	Location	Comments
Refused	0164/07	Unauthorised Chalet at Beardown Farm	Two Bridges	Removal ordered by 12 Aug 08 after unsuccessful appeal. Awaiting Duchy & Tenant action.

The Clerk is to raise 0164/07 with the Duchy.

14. Sub Groups and Special Interest Groups.

14.1 **School (Wendy Watson).** One new community Governor has been recruited but 1-2 more are still needed. Repairs to roof leaks have commenced.

14.2 **Play Area (Cliff Palmer).** Cliff Palmer had replaced the rotten wood and inspected the play area 2 days previously. Cliff and the Clerk will decide whether a RoSPA inspection is merited this year.

14.3 **Cemetery (Val Greatrex).** Nothing to report.

14.4 **Emergency Plan (David Worth).** A cold snap is expected later in the month but no disruption is anticipated.

14.5 **Parish Plan Sub-Group (Alison Geen).** Alison intended to re-convene the Parish Plan subcommittee and was reviewing previous minutes and draft plans. Paul Turnbull reported that at the Southern Links meeting Simon Kitchen, Head of Policy, Strategy and Organisational Change at DCC, had offered to assist Parishes developing Parish Plans

14.6 **Parking Sub-Group (Gregg Manning).** The dominant issue remains the outstanding Traffic Order for Tavistock Road (see para 5.1).

At this point, Gregg Manning unavoidably left the meeting.

14.7 **Fire & Rescue Service (Paul Turnbull).** There has been a manpower turnover with 2 firemen leaving and 3 recruited into training.

15. Reports from Other Meetings.

15.1 **Housing Needs Survey (John Steel).** Prior to his retirement from the council, John Steele had attended a meeting with Alex Rehaag of WDBC about affordable housing within the Parish. She has suggested a Housing Needs Survey of all households be conducted in the Parish to determine the type of housing to be built on land earmarked for development. DNPA is also considering affordable housing across the National Park, but the WDBC survey would be specific to the Dartmoor Forest Parish. The council agreed to invite Alex Rehaag to be the guest speaker at the Annual Parish Meeting.

15.2 **Southern Link (Paul Turnbull).** All TAP fund money has been allocated this year. Alan Robinson, Corporate Director of WDBC, had reported WDBC was seeking to improve links between Parish, Borough and County Councils. Tim Hall of Health Watch Devon reported a 'rights based' approach to involving public groups with NHS decisions and used the consultation for the Moretonhampstead Health Hub as a good example. Broadband improvement plans appear patchy. Parishes are encouraged to register with www.superfast.me.uk. Next meeting will be on 12 June.

16. Correspondence.

16.1 **Holming Beam.** More trees need to be taken out of Long Plantation than expected. The Southerly leg will be clear felled.

16.2 **West Devon Parish & Town Councillor Development & Training Events.** Financed by Southern Links TAP Fund, a programme of 7 Development events are organised in 2014. A copy of the programme is attached. All bookings are via the Parish Clerk, requests to be in by 15 March.

16.3 **Certificate in Local Council Administration (CILCA).** Fees will increase from £150 to £250 in April 2014. It was decided the Clerk should register before the end of March.

16.4 **West Devon Communities Coming Together.** A free 2 hour workshop to be held at Bridestowe Village Hall 3rd April 2014 7-9pm to provide help and guidance to get local projects off the ground.

16.5 **Search for the Rees Family.** Pieter Schlebaum, a Dutch History Teacher, is researching the crew of a Wellington bomber lost in 1942. One of the crew was Alwyne Edward Rees, the son of Thomas and Elizabeth Rees of Princetown, and he is trying to trace any relatives or records about the family. It is possible Thomas Rees was on the prison staff.

16.6 **Council Tax.** WDBC agreed a 1.9% increase in council tax, £3.81 per year for the average Band D home, to help protect frontline services. Councillors declined the government's Council Tax Freeze Grant, equivalent to 1% rise in council tax, as the grant was only available for 2 years. Plans to save £1.3M pa by 2016 are underway by adopting latest technology and developing a new way of delivering services with a smaller workforce. By 2017/18, WDBC will have had to find savings of £2M from a budget of £7.8M.

16.7 **Business Rate Relief.** WDBC is implementing the Government scheme for £1,000 businesses rate relief on all occupied retail properties with a rateable value of up to £50,000 for two years. The scheme will be reviewed after the first year.

16.8 **Devon Remembers WW1.** The memorial grant panel are inviting applications by 31st May. Applicants need to find 25% of the cost of their projects. The Clerk will inform Jo Rumble DNPA of this source of funding for the repairing the granite sets around Princetown War Memorial.

17. Financial Management.

	Ref	Details	Amount
Payments last month	743	A Jaques – litter picking	£53.65
	744	PCC Hire Oct, Nov, Dec	£45.00
	745	PCC Hire Jan Interviews	£24.38
Receipts last month		Nil	£0.00
Balance in bank 28 Feb			£21259.17
Planned payments this month	746	Diane Malley - half-year payroll fee	£20.25
	747	Duchy half yearly rental	£36.00
	748	A Jaques – litter picking	£53.65
	749	Planning application fee for Postbridge Village Hall	£97.50
	750	C Palmer –Expenses – Play Area wood repairs.	£9.42
Planned receipts this month		Nil	£0.00

18. Any Other Business.

18.1 Wendy Stones stated that Alison Knight of West Devon Homes was prepared to donate £200 to the Youth Club to support snacks for the children.

18.2 Wendy Stones suggested the council look again at the possibility of starting a food bank in the Parish.

18.3 Wendy Stones reported the HMWI has organised a fancy dress Sports Relief walk from Princetown centre to the Prison and back (1 mile). Entry is £1.

19. Second Public Session. Nothing further was raised.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 2152.

20. Next Meetings.

20.1 The Annual Parish Meeting will be held in the Community Centre, Princetown at 1900 on MONDAY 14 APRIL 2014. David Worth will chair the meeting.

20.2 The next Parish Council meeting will be held at 1930 on MONDAY 14 APRIL 2014 in the Community Centre, Princetown. David Worth will chair the meeting.

List of Sub-Groups and Special Interests

Parish Emergency Group	Cliff Palmer, Paul Turnbull and David Worth
Parish Plan Sub-Group	Alison Geen, Val Greatrex and Wendy Stones
Parking Sub-Group	Gregg Manning and Paul Turnbull
Play Area Sub-Group	Emma Derham and Cliff Palmer
Princetown Toilets Sub Group	Paul Turnbull and Wendy Stones
Website Sub-Group	Gregg Manning and David Worth
Princetown Community Centre - Special Interest	Jackie Gee and Wendy Stones
Princetown Primary School - Special Interest	Wendy Watson
Southern Link - Special Interest	Paul Turnbull
Youth Club - Special Interest	Jackie Gee and Wendy Stones