



Dartmoor Forest Parish Council

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting at 1930 on 13 October 2014 in Princetown Community Centre.

Present:

Hexworthy/Huccaby Ward:	Princetown Ward:	
CLr Alison Geen	CLr Emma Derham	CLr Wendy Stones
Postbridge Ward:	CLr Jackie Gee	CLr David Worth
CLr Wendy Watson	CLr Cliff Palmer	

CLr David Worth chaired the meeting.

There were 5 members of the public in attendance.

1. **Apologies.**

CLr Val Greatrex, CLr Gregg Manning and CLr Paul Turnbull tendered apologies in advance of the meeting.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

No amendments were reported.

3. **Minutes of the last meeting.**

The amended minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and signed by the Chair.

Councillors expressed their thanks for Ann Inman covering the previous meeting as Acting Clerk.

4. **Police Matters.**

PCSO Mark Canvin was unable to attend the meeting but forwarded a report to the Clerk:

An attempt was made to burn a car in the car park of the Prince of Wales on the evening of Saturday 11 October between 1945 and 2345. To date the Police have no clear evidence or suspects. Any information should be forwarded to Mark Canvin or PC Steven Halls at Tavistock Police Station quoting CR/113858/14.

In August, a caravan was stolen from a property in the centre of the village but was then returned 2 weeks later. There are no suspects at present.

In the last few days a theft of petrol took place from an outside store at an isolated property on the moors. This category of thefts from sheds and garages is the one area of crime that is firmly on the increase across the force area and flags the need for awareness on security for outbuildings and the types of property kept in them.

There have been two road traffic collisions on the Plymouth road in the past few days, both involving animals being killed and the car being written off.

There have been very few reports of thefts from cars on the moors in our area which is believed to be due to the Police's concerted efforts to deter thieves and educate moor users not to leave valuables in cars.



A public nuisance has been caused by dog faeces being dumped in carrier bags in Moor Crescent and in the park.

5. Repairs, Maintenance & Highways

Resurfacing work in DNPA car park and Station Cottages has been completed by DNPA. There is still some debate about specific boundaries of ownership and responsibility for Station Cottages maintenance between DCC, DNPA/Duchy and residents. Cllr Wendy Stones had been informed by the owner of The Old Post Office that his deeds clearly show the demarcation and she will try to obtain a copy for future reference.

Surface dressing in various locations on the roads in the Parish is ongoing, with temporary speed limits in place. It was questioned whether the 40mph roundels on the Parish roads were statutory or advisory speed limits. The Clerk confirmed they were statutory.

The Clerk has received notice that the road through Dartsmeet will be closed from 5th to 8th of December for resurfacing work.

Councillors were unhappy that the road from Princetown to Dousland had been closed without notice on 10th and 13th of October. The Clerk is to take this up with the Neighbourhood Highways Officer, John Doswell.

Highways Cuts Consultation. Devon County Council has identified that it will need to make a reduction in spending of £3.4 million in its highways budget for 2015/2016. They are running a consultation on where these cuts should fall with the following proposals being made:

1. Gritting and Snow Clearing Fleet. DCC are proposing a reduction of their fleet of vehicles used for more extreme snow conditions.
2. Gritting and Snow clearing network. From the map provided there appear to be no changes to the gritting routes affecting DFPC.
3. Grit Bins. A proposal to devolve to Parish Councils and the like the provision of salt to re-fill grit bins.
4. Closing picnic sites on the A361/A369.
5. Grass cutting of verges. Limited to keeping junction sight lines clear.
6. Weed clearing. Stopping regular weed clearance and retaining only a small budget for Community Payback volunteers.
7. Parish Lengthsmen. Reducing numbers and limiting their tasks to hand tasks only.
8. Neighbourhood Highway Team staffing. Reducing numbers, and thus their ability to respond in a timely manner.

Councillors considered that 1 and 3 would be likely to have the largest negative impact for DFPC. In the event of a severe snowfall a reduction in the number of snowploughs and snowblowers would have the greatest impact on our isolated parish. Also, given the frequency which DFPC would have to re-stock our grit bins, the proposal that Parishes should have to pay for it would have a disproportionate financial impact for the Council. Councillors agreed to make the strongest objections to proposals 1 and 3, but to accept that the other proposals would be pragmatic given the financial climate. Cllr David Worth will compile the formal response.

The need for improvements to the track from the old station stables to the railway line was discussed. The track is narrow with cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians having difficulty in passing, particularly as the adjacent ground is boggy. Cllr David Worth will take the matter up with Jo Rumble of the DNPA to see whether this work could be included in the Granite and Gears project.

6. Review of Code of Conduct.

WDBC has updated its Code of Conduct for members, clarifying the rules about personal interests. The Clerk had produced an equivalent update for the DFPC Code of Conduct. Councillors decided that as 3 members were absent, any decisions should be deferred until the next meeting. Councillors who may be unable to attend the next meeting are to give their views to the Clerk before the meeting.

FIRST PUBLIC SESSION

A member of the public read out a statement in opposition to the Duchy of Cornwall's proposal to seek planning consent for new houses and garages to be built in Bellever Close and handed the Council an associated petition with 82 signatures. Objections focused around: road congestion and parking issues (including the lack of a direct access road); the historic lack of maintenance of garages and the proposed reduction in garages; the aesthetic clash of modern style buildings within the Cornish units; loss of views to existing properties; potential impact on wildlife; potential disruption and noise during development; and an expectation that the proposed allotments would be unsuited for growing food and would become a wasteland. The Chair agreed to look at the residents' concerns and to arrange a meeting with the Duchy.

Two members of the public briefed the Council on proposed developments at Postbridge Village Hall and the associated grant applications made to the Dartmoor Community Fund. The Chair thanked the members of the public and the Council agreed to support the Postbridge Village Hall Committee in this respect.

7. Reports from Committees, Sub-Groups and Special Interests:

Princetown Community Centre. A committee meeting was held on 11 September. The electrical work is ongoing with corridor lights repaired. No date has been decided for a Christmas fair in November. A grant has been applied for with regards the footpath. A sub-committee may be established for solar panels. The financial dispute between the Committee and the Pre-School Group is ongoing.

Pavilion Youth Club. A committee meeting was held on 6 October. The Youth Day had received good feedback from residents. An Open Day will be held at the Pavilion on 2 November, where the Youth will provide food cooked with skills they learnt during a visit to the Eden Project kitchens. Quotes are being sought for new fencing. A decision is awaited on the Heath Trust Grant application. The Youth Worker, Pam Carter, will be going on maternity leave in November and the Youth Club will be led by Paul Dobbie and Caroline until her return. Members of the youth will be invited to join the committee (6-8 members) and will be given short talks on how a committee is run before joining. The next meeting will be 19 January 2015.

Parking Committee. Nothing to report.

Princetown Primary School. After school clubs are well attended. The school harvest festival will be held on 21 October. A bring and buy sale will be held in the school on 6 November and all donations are welcome. An Arts and Craft Fair will be held in the school during half term 29-31 October.

Emergency Planning Sub-Group. The Met Office is issuing no strong guidance for the first part of the winter, but temperatures and rainfall are expected to be above average. The Environment Agency report that reserves in Devon's reservoirs have dropped to 68% full but this is not a cause for concern. It is not intended to advertise for any further volunteer snow wardens until at least next month. The Council agreed that if volunteers use their own snow-blowing equipment it will pay for the fuel.

Public Library Sub-Group. The Devon County Council has met to agree the way forward for the Library Service but no details on what this will mean for Princetown have been received. The Clerk will make enquiries.

Parish Plan Sub-Group. Nothing to report.

Play Area Sub-Group. Cllr Cliff Palmer had inspected the Play Area on Monday 13 October and all was in order other than the length of the grass (see below). Cllr Emma Derham handed over the Play Area development pack to the Clerk.

Princetown Toilets Sub-Group. Nothing to report.

Postbridge Village Hall. The Council agreed to submit the planning application for the proposed extension to the Village Hall and to meet the expected cost of £97.50.

Fire & Rescue Service. Nothing to report.

Food Bank. Nothing to report.

Emergency Committee. No activity has been needed.

1914 Commemoration Garden. Very few of the poppies have germinated. Cllr Cliff Palmer has contacted the supplier who has promised replacements seeds to sow next year. The Parish Council will be represented at the Remembrance Day Parade on 9 November by Councillors and the Clerk. Cllr Wendy Stones will lay the wreath.

8. Reports from other meetings:

Southern Parish Link Committee Meeting 18 September. TAP Fund applications were supported for: VAS Equipment to reduce speeding in Lifton and Chillaton; and the Ward & Chowen Digital Archive. The Destination Okehampton Working Group met Claire Perry, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State in the Department for Transport and Mel Stride, Central Devon MP to push for the re-opening of the Okehampton-Tavistock railway line. A further meeting is planned with Network Rail included. The Greater Dartmoor LEAF project has been awarded a further £2M to make grants over the next 5 years to help small rural businesses looking to expand. The next meeting is 4 December.

West Devon Homes Company and Tenants Annual General Meeting 25 September. Chaired by Mrs Mary Morse for Tenants' Voice and Mr Paul Love WDH. Attended by Cllr Wendy Stones for DFPC but no-one attended from the from Princetown Tenants' Committee. DCH & WD Homes have been working together for over 2 years with good results and significant savings due to cost sharing (£0.25m). They hope an amalgamation will take place by early 2015. 96% of residents are in favour. Highlights of the year included: reduced rent loss; delivery of works programme for home improvements; achieving decent homes; increasing staff where necessary; investing in service improvement; and supporting residents. A Plough & Share Credit Union was launched in July, opening 1100-1300 each Thursday at the Tenant Resource Room in WDH Tavistock Office. The official charity for 2013-14 was CHICKS and £544.80 was raised. There was a lack of support for further fund raising and therefore no charity was put forward for next year.

Tavistock & District Local Economic Blueprint Stakeholder Workshop 6 October. Attended by the Clerk on behalf of DFPC, the Southern Parish Link and others. This initiative seeks to retain more money within the local economy and is based on a successful project in Totnes. It focuses on 3 main areas: to move demand to local businesses, away from national / international suppliers; to retrofit energy efficiency measures into local buildings; and to promote community energy generation schemes. The intent is to produce a Blueprint and an

action plan for the next 3 years by March 2015. Further Stakeholder workshops will be held in December and February.

9. Progress reports on previous actions, not on the Agenda

Defibrillators. The defibrillator cabinet and transformer have been installed in the Hexworthy telephone kiosk. The Council's insurance company strongly advises the electrical connection to be made by a certified electrician with appropriate third party insurance. The Council agreed to fund a local electrician and the Clerk will make the arrangements. Cllr Alison Geen will organize local volunteers to repaint the kiosk and the Clerk will investigate improved signage. The Postbridge cabinet has been received, but has not been mounted.

Banking arrangements. No action since last meeting

Traffic Regulation Order. This will be implemented in 2 stages: the double yellow lines will be painted in the week commencing 20 October with an implementation date of 27 October. The removal of the taxi bay and installation of the limited waiting bay will be implemented after the WDBC advertisement period ends in early November.

Grass cutting contract. The Clerk has written to Mike Druett and he has responded to Cllr David Worth, apologizing for the inactivity and reassuring the Parish Council he will continue as normal from October. However, no activity had been seen by the time of the meeting. The Council agreed that David Worth should approach Doug Jenner, who had previously offered to cut the grass around the war memorial. The Clerk will approach the Prison staff about using convicts to cut the churchyard grass. The Council agreed to pay for the fuel of equipment used by volunteers.

Investigate grants for a skate park. No further action to date

Outline plans for Play Area improvements Phase 3. No further action had been planned by this meeting. The Clerk will act as caretaker for the development project until a new lead Councillor is agreed.

Approach local businesses for chargeable links and adverts. No action since last meeting

Training. The Council agreed to fund £120 for the Clerk to attend a one day DALC intensive course for the CiLCA qualification to enable DFPC attain the General Power of Competence. The next TAP training courses are: the Management Of Parks, Open Spaces, Sports Pitches, Children's Play Parks And Halls on 22 October, which will be attended by Cllr Cliff Palmer and the Clerk; and Cemetery Management on 12 November, which will be attended by Cllr Val Greatrex and the Clerk.

10. Planning applications

a. The current status is:

With the Parish Council	0522/14	Agricultural livestock building - Smallwaters, Postbridge
Recent DNPA decisions	0351/14	Blackdown Piper Farm - refused
	0400/14	Agricultural building Dunnabridge Farm – conditional approval
	0459/14	Improvements to Princetown Football Pitch - approved
With DNPA	-	-
Awaiting enforcement action	0164/07	Beardown Farm un-authorized chalet. Clerk is awaiting update from Jo Burgess.

The Council agreed to support the Smallwaters application.

11. Correspondence

Correspondence has been uploaded to the website. Items that may have required action and were not covered elsewhere on the agenda were:

There were 3 events that had invited Parish Councillors to attend. In all cases, Councillors decided DFPC attendance was not necessary unless activities directly concerning the Parish were to be discussed. These were:

A WDBC 'Our Plan' Workshop on 15 October (subsequently cancelled).

The Mayor of West Devon Civic Service and tea on 19 October.

West Devon Connect Roadshow on 24 October.

12. Financial management

a. Cheques approved this month were:

796	A Jaques Litter Picking	£ 53.65
797	Nigel Tigwell - Pay & Defibrillator Expenses	£ 562.81
798	HMRC - Income Tax	£ 86.00
799	Wendy Stones - Mortar Expenses	£ 176.66
800	Duchy - village green rent	£ 36.00
801	Bere Ferrers PC - Defibrillator Cabinet charge	£ 18.00
802	TASS - donation	£ 75.00
803	WDBC - half yearly cemetery rates	£ 62.00
804	DNPA – PVH Planning Application	£ 97.50
805	WDBC – dog bins Apr-Sep	£ 71.76

b. Bank Reconciliation.

Balance on last statement (30 September)	£ 29277.80
Outstanding Income	
Nil	
Outstanding Cheques	
Nil	
Reconciled total	£ 29277.80

c. Princetown Charity Shop is planning to make a £170 donation towards the cost of mortar for the War Memorial granite setts.

d. **Forecast of Outturn.** The Council agreed the forecast of outturn presented by the Clerk.

e. **Precept.**

The Clerk had not started detailed precept planning but a number of precept related issues had have arisen in the last month:

Council Tax Support Grant will reduce by £255. This was noted by the Council.

Destination Okehampton have requested S137 funding up to 1% precept (about £150). The Council decided this was not to be included in precept planning.

TASS has requested consideration for S137 funding. The Council agreed this will be included in precept planning.

The Council was concerned that if Mike Druett is unable to cope with all the grass cutting now he has a new job, grass cutting costs may increase based on the recent competitive tender. As a risk reduction measure, the Council agreed to proceed with precept planning on the assumption an outside contractor may be needed.

13. Councillors

The Clerk reminded Councillors of the timescale to appoint a new Councillor to replace Emma Derham. The vacancy notice expires on 15 October and, if there is no response, the Clerk will post a co-option notice which will run until 5 November. Applicants will be interviewed and if an applicant is selected they will be invited to the Council meeting in December, with the formal induction completed within 21 days

The Council currently has no formal policy on whether a new Councillor must live in the Ward they represent. The Clerk proposed 2 alternatives:

The Councillor must live in the Ward (which represents current practice) or

The Councillor must live or substantially work within 3 miles of the Ward (mirroring the statutory regulations for the Parish).

After some debate, it was decided to defer a decision until the next meeting when all Councillors were expected to be present. Councillors who may be unable to attend the next meeting are to give their views to the Clerk before the meeting.

14. Postbridge 3G Signal

Postbridge is a complete black spot for 3G signal but Cllr Val Greatrex has determined that buildings close to the telephone exchange have sufficient broadband speed to support a Vodaphone Open Sure signal unit. This should provide a 112 emergency cover and 3G cover for Vodaphone customers from around the Visitors Centre to the Village Hall. The formal deadline to apply for the scheme has expired but the Clerk will endeavour to seek extraordinary approval for Postbridge. If successful the cost will be around £30pa, which the Council agreed to pay.

15. Urgent decisions since the last meeting

None.

16. Any other business

Cllr Wendy Stones will organise the Christmas Tree in place of Cllr Emma Derham, but for this year only. The Clerk will write to DNPA seeking approval to connect to the Visitor centre electrical supply again.

A play "On a Cold Winters Night" will be performed in St Michael & All Angels Church on 12 & 13 December.

The Prison Carol Service will be on 17 December.

17. SECOND PUBLIC SESSION.

Nothing further was raised.

18. Date of the next meeting

The next meeting will be at 1930 11 November 2014 at Princetown Community Centre.

The Chair closed the meeting at 2150.