



Dartmoor Forest Parish Council

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting at 1930 on 11 November 2014 in Princetown Community Centre.

Present:

Hexworthy/Huccaby Ward:	Princetown Ward:	
Cllr Alison Geen	Cllr Gregg Manning	Cllr Wendy Stones
Postbridge Ward:	Cllr Cliff Palmer	Cllr Paul Turnbull
Cllr Wendy Watson		Cllr David Worth

Cllr Alison Geen chaired the meeting.

There were 4 members of the public in attendance.

Mr Richard Drysdale of DNPA attended until completion of agenda item 6.

Cllr Philip Sanders of DCC, WDBC and DNPA attended from agenda item 9.

1. **Apologies.**

Cllr Emma Derham tendered apologies in advance of the meeting.

2. **Declarations of Interest.**

Cllr Gregg Manning submitted an amendment to his register of interests. The Clerk will forward this to WDBC Monitoring Officer for inclusion in the public record.

3. **Minutes of the last meeting.** The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and signed by the Chair.

4. **Police Matters.**

No report had been received from PCSO Mark Canvin.

Cllr Wendy Stones raised the issue of two children causing £2490 damage to Princetown Community Centre roof. The crime had been witnessed by two adults and a police report filed. One of the children has been involved in similar criminal damage to the Community Centre in the past, involving damage to roof slates, windows and door locks and also in other incidents around the village. The child is above the age of criminal responsibility. The Council was concerned that if the behaviour of this child is not checked the child and siblings will develop into teenage delinquents. Princetown has suffered from such delinquent families in the past and Councillors were keen to apply lessons learned from that period to prevent a recurrence. Councillors felt the Police reaction to date had been too soft. The Clerk is to liaise with Princetown Community Centre Committee and the local Police to establish the facts and then to write letters of concern to West Devon Homes and the Police.



5. Repairs, Maintenance & Highways

Highways repairs to the B3212 between Princetown and Dousland have been reported as of poor quality and incomplete. The Clerk will contact John Doswell.

The Council opposition to some measures in the DCC Highways consultation document had been submitted by Cllr David Worth.

Cllr Paul Turnbull asked how waste arisings are to be dealt with if volunteers clear blocked gullies etc now DCC Highways have cut back services and WDBC charge for non-domestic waste disposal. The Clerk will enquire.

The B3357 at Dartmeet will be closed from 5th to 8th December for resurfacing work.

The B3357 is flooding at Merrivale Bridge, just outside the Parish Boundary. The Clerk will liaise with Whitchurch Commoners and Whitchurch Parish Council to seek a resolution.

The collapsed section of devon banking at the Postbridge cemetery has been repaired.

6. Princetown Visitors Centre Update.

Richard Drysdale briefed the Council on planned developments for the High Moorland Visitors Centre and surrounding area. New notice boards are planned on Tavistock Road, Station Cottages and the car park in this financial year. Richard confirmed the Council would be consulted about the content and style of the notice boards. Funding has been applied for the new frontage to the Visitors Centre but this would not be installed before the next financial year. However, the current rain water run-off problems will be resolved before icy weather arrives. Richard will provide digital copies of the plans to the Clerk for inclusion on the Council's website.

The 2014 season had been a good one for the two Visitors Centres in the Parish. DNPA intends to further develop its programme of specific events to help attract more visitors. As a trial, the High Moorland Visitors Centre winter opening hours have been extended to include Tuesdays in addition to Thursday-Sunday, which is proving successful. The High Moorland Visitors Centre will host a Christmas Fair on 29 November 1100-1500 featuring the "Made on Dartmoor" range (the same day as the Princetown Community Centre Christmas Fair 1400-1800).

The Granite and Gears project is intending to resurface the track between the old stables and the plantation, improve the track drainage, to replace the fencing around the paddocks and repair the link from the bridleway by the lodge. Cycle parking will be created outside the Visitors Centre. Parapets are being raised on Foggintor Bridge and the new cycleway bridge across the B3212 at Peek Hill will be erected in the New Year.

Richard apologised for the misunderstandings about road maintenance responsibility for Station Cottages that delayed pothole repairs. There is still some ambiguity about responsibilities, but DNPA has completed the remedial work.

There will be an evening event on the 3rd December at Parke on a promoting business on Dartmoor. The evening will include an update on the Greater Dartmoor LEAF programme and look at how planning and business can work together to achieving a thriving Dartmoor economy.

Cllr Paul Turnbull asked about statistics for car park usage and income generated. Richard was unable to answer but agreed to forward the information via the Clerk.

FIRST PUBLIC SESSION

A member of the public stated that some of the parking congestion in Tavistock road was caused by primary school employees parking in the road and suggested DNPA consider providing a parking

permit or discounted season ticket for school employees in the car park. Richard Drysdale agreed to take the idea for consideration.

Richard also suggested local businesses provided incentives to visitors to use the car park; for example the car park ticket counterfoil might be worth a free cup of tea in cafés.

A member of the public suggested awareness of the car park should be raised by advertising £1 all day parking on DNPA event advertising and posters. Richard agreed to take the idea for consideration.

7. Review of Code of Conduct.

This item had been deferred from the October meeting. WDBC has amended its Code of Conduct to clarify the rules about personal interests. The Councillors felt the clarification represented their custom and practice and the Council agreed to update the DFPC Code of Conduct in line with WDBC.

8. Councillors

There are two volunteers for co-option to date. The second co-option notice runs until 27 November, after which the Clerk will arrange for suitability interviews. If there are more volunteers than places, the co-option will be decided by a vote (or ballot) of the Council at the December meeting.

Consideration of whether to adopt a formal eligibility criteria for Councillors who represent Wards in the Parish had been deferred from the last meeting. The Clerk put forward two options for consideration:

- (a) the Councillor must live in the Ward they represent.
- (b) the Councillor must live within 3 miles of the Ward or substantially work in the Ward (which mirrors the statutory requirement for Parish Councillors).

After significant debate, which included the Clerk reporting the views of the absent Councillor, the key issues concerning Councillors were:

Councillors need to know and understand the community they represent. This is best achieved by living in that community.

The smaller Wards of Hexworthy and Postbridge might be left without representation in future if no resident was willing to serve (there are only 61 on the electoral roll for Hexworthy and 111 for Postbridge).

The Wards are diverse, for example Princetown includes Merrivale (east), Powder Mills, Peat Cott and Whiteworks.

It was unclear whether a Ward residency eligibility could be compatible with the statutory right of people living outside but within 3 miles of the Parish boundary to stand for the Parish Council.

A third option was proposed by Cllr David Worth that the Council should keep to the statutory regulations only to ensure legal compliance.

The votes of Councillors in attendance were evenly divided between the Ward residency and the statutory regulations only options. On the Chair's casting vote the Council decided to keep to only statutory regulations to ensure legal compliance. This means the current status quo remains: there is no formal Ward eligibility criteria within Dartmoor Forest. However, the Council agreed a strong preference for Councillors to live in the Wards they represent in line with current custom and practice, while accepting this would not be mandatory.

9. Precept

The Clerk has prepared a draft precept with alternative assumptions document for discussion. Debate primarily focussed around the alternative assumptions for grass cutting: whether to contract an outside company, rely on local contractors, or buy equipment and use labourers or volunteers. It was agreed the Clerk should develop the alternative assumptions as an investment appraisal, adding further options of: employing a Parish lengthsman; and entering a partnership with another Parish (similar to Horrabridge and Buckland).

10. Fouling of Land by Dogs Order.

Despite the protests of DFPC and others, the WDBC Fouling of Land by Dogs Order has been implemented covering all open public spaces in the Borough. This means it is now illegal to leave dog faeces on the open moor, including by sheepdogs. The order does, however, leave an option for *the owner, occupier or other person or authority having control of the land* to consent to the faeces not being removed. The Council debated whether to approach the Commoners Councils and access land owners for their agreement to this. Cllr Phillip Sanders stated there was no realistic possibility of the order being enforced outside residential or town centres and areas such as the Pimple. The Council agreed not to devote any further resource to challenging the order.

11. Bellever Close and other Duchy Housing Proposals

Residents' concerns were raised at October's meeting. Cllr David Worth and the Clerk have met with Tom Stratton twice since then and have identified possible alternative proposals that meet the residents' main concerns. Tom is checking viability of these with his management chain before meeting with the residents.

Affordable housing percentages. The Duchy assess that proceeding with the development scheme would not be economically viable if 50% of the development must be 'affordable' housing in accordance with DNPA rules. The Duchy is seeking an exemption based on the fact that Princetown is already well served with 'social' and 'affordable' housing; and a range of 1 & 2 bedroom flats and 2&3 bedroom houses are planned that should suit people on a range of incomes. The Duchy would like to have the Parish Council's acquiescence to this. The Council agreed to support the Duchy in provision of 1 and 2 bedroom properties in lieu of affordable housing. Cllr Phillip Sanders stated that in Brent the proportion of affordable housing had been dropped to 35% as the developer was also undertaking other work to the benefit of the community and suggested the Duchy should be approached for a similar undertaking of community benefit. The Clerk will write to the Duchy.

12. Reports from Committees, Sub-Groups and Special Interests.

Princetown Community Centre. Children have caused £2490 damage to the roof (see item 4). Electrical work is still ongoing, the outside areas and changing room remain unlit. No prisoner is available for cleaning duties at the moment and PCC Trustees are cleaning on a rota. The dispute with the Pre-School Group is ongoing. The Community Centre will hold a Christmas Fair on 29 November 1400-1800 (the same day as the Visitors Centre Christmas Fair 1100-1500).

Pavilion Youth Club. The next meeting will be on 19 January.

Parking Committee. The Traffic Order works are continuing. The double yellow lines on the Bellever Close turning corner have helped the visibility issue when leaving Bellever Close. However, this has had the side effect of displacing school run drop off and collection traffic

further along the road. This will need to be monitored, and if necessary we may need to discuss further measures with the School Authorities if this becomes an issue.

Princetown Primary School. The school has launched a new website page giving reports and information for the benefit of parents. A family workshop will be held on 13 November to inform parents. A new anti-bullying playground policy has been developed by the pupils and will be implemented next week. The Christmas play will be on 17 December.

Emergency Planning Sub-Group. All of the volunteers for the snow clearance group have indicated that they will be available to help out this year. Cllr David Worth proposed the Council provide some kind of high-visibility clothing for the volunteers. Cllr Paul Turnbull agreed to provide some.

The ongoing issue of storage for the Council's salt supply continues to evolve. The DNPA has been considering improvements to the area approaching the cycle track adjacent to the old railway station. This includes the old stable block and its surroundings. There remains the possibility of the old stable block becoming a community asset. This would be an ideal building for the Council to use as a storage facility. Cllr David Worth will approach the Duchy. The DFPC website now carries a link to Devon Highways road monitoring station at Rundlestone Corner to view the road conditions via the there.

Public Library Sub-Group. Cllr Wendy Stones introduced Brian **** as the Princetown representative on the Devon County External Strategic Review Board considering the development, piloting and implementation and of DCC's new library policy. Brian explained that the libraries were being moved to a charitable Social Enterprise Model that would save around £400,000 per year in tax. Three library models were envisaged, which will be proved by running 10 pilot schemes:

Devon Centres, where all DCC services are collocated in a single building.

Community Libraries, 50% funded from the Social Enterprise and 50% funded from the community.

Mobile Libraries, which will continue for a minimum of one year but are prohibitively expensive.

Princetown will be a Community Library and will need to achieve income generation of around £6500pa on the current cost base. Statistically, Princetown is classed as an inefficient library with poor utilisation. Brian is investigating the options of electronic book returns; inclusion of a small café; the use of volunteers; developing the library as a source of local history information; and is seeking advice from the Prison library. The proposed business model is to be submitted to DCC by 1 December. DCC will then select which libraries to run as pilots.

The Council expressed support for Brian's work but advised him to also look at the library cost base as an option to reduce revenue generation requirements. The Council did not consider Princetown would be an ideal pilot, but acknowledge this was for DCC to decide.

Parish Plan Sub-Group. Nothing to report.

Play Area Sub-Group. Cllr Cliff Palmer had inspected the play area and reported all was in order. However, the new see-saw was beginning to show signs of rust coming through on welds and frames. The Clerk will check on the warranty.

Princetown Toilets Sub-Group. Nothing to report

Postbridge Village Hall. The car park is now half completed with asphalt. The new planning application, supported by the Parish Council, has been accepted by DNPA. It has been established a bat report will not be required. The new Village Hall sign is complete and we are waiting for the oak post from Anton Coaker.

Fire & Rescue Service. Nothing to report.

Food Bank. Nothing to report
Emergency Committee. Nothing to report

13. Reports from other meetings

A Super Parish Link Committee Meeting will be held at 1830 on 8 December at Meldon Village Hall, with a single agenda item for Cllr John Hart, leader of DCC, to brief WDBC Parish Councils on the DCC budgetary position next year.

The Council agreed to sponsor the TAP fund application for the Tavistock & District Local Economic Blueprint, in addition to the shared asset projector and laptop bid.

14. Planning applications

a. The current status is:

With the Parish Council	0619/14	Conversion to bunkhouse Postbridge Telephone Exchange
Recent DNPA decisions		
With DNPA	0609/14 0577/14 0522/14	Rear extension 10 Moor Crescent Princetown Single Story Extension Dartmoor Brewery Princetown Agricultural livestock building - Smallwaters, Postbridge
Awaiting enforcement action	0164/07	Beardown Farm un-authorized chalet. Clerk is awaiting update from Jo Burgess.
Outside Parish		Foggintor bridge

The Council agreed to object to 0619/14 on the grounds that water and sewage arrangements had not been addressed (including drainage across neighbouring land), the parking space may obstruct the lane for larger vehicles, the neighbouring property owners are concerned about privacy issues and the Ward is well served with bunkhouse accommodation.

15. Correspondence

Correspondence has been uploaded to the website. Items that may require action and are not covered elsewhere on the agenda are:

Evidence sought by HoC Select Committee inquiry on rural broadband. Councillors were asked to encourage Parishioners to contribute evidence.

Healthwatch Devon care and support services survey. Postbridge Councillors were asked to encourage residents to respond with regards Moretonhampstead Hospital.

Councillors decided not to attend the WDBC Our Plan workshop as the business did not directly affect the Parish.

West Devon Business Survey 2014. Councillors were asked to encourage businesses in the Parish to contribute.

16. Financial management

a. Cheques approved this month were:

806	A Jaques - Litter Picking	£ 56.33
807	Around and About - donation	£ 60.00
808	Parish Link - donation	£ 60.00
809	West Devon CAB - donation	£ 60.00
810	Nigel Tigwell - Southern Link Dec	£ 150.00
812	Pavilion Youth Club - Rent & Loan	£ 1,000.00
813	D Coles - Cemetery bank repair	£ 28.00
814	Nigel Tigwell - administrative expenses	£ 10.00
815	Wendy Stones - Poppy Wreath	£ 17.00
816	PCC - Hall Hire 2015	£ 150.00
817	Steve Ball - Defibrillator Electrics	£ 96.65

b. Bank Reconciliation.

Balance on last statement (28 October)		£ 28322.77
Outstanding Income		
Outstanding Cheques		
801	Bere Ferrers PC - Defibrillator Cabinet charge	£ 18.00
804	DNPA – PVH Planning Application	£ 97.50
Reconciled total		£28,207.27

c. **Forecast of Outturn.** Underspend on grass cutting and repairs will lead to an overall underspend on the year.

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

Defibrillators. The Hexworthy defibrillator has been connected by a certified electrician. Letters containing the access code have been sent to all properties in the Ward. The best route to getting the cabinet codes onto the 999 system appears to be through Community Heartbeat, provided we meet the mandated governance regime for conducting and reporting weekly checks/maintenance.

Postbridge 3G Signal. Application submitted with 29 suitable properties signed up as volunteers to house the aerial boxes. Vodaphone have acknowledged receipt and are assessing applications with the intention of selecting 100 project nationwide to proceed.

Banking arrangements. The Clerk has been unable to find a bank willing to offer the Council an account with free banking and interest on the reserves. The Council agreed to remain with Lloyds but to seek some form of investment for the reserves.

Grass cutting contract. Mike Druett has cut the play area and the village green in November. The Prison is unable to provide help in bringing the Churchyard under control. Cllr David Worth will approach the Dartmoor Preservation Society to see if their volunteer working group could help.

Outline plans for Play Area improvements Phase 3 and investigate grants for a skate park. The Clerk is still assessing options.

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

Training. The evening course on Management Of Parks, Open Spaces, Sports Pitches, Children's Play Parks Plus Halls on 22 October was cancelled as too many attendees pulled out at the last minute. The next course is an all-day course on Cemetery Management on 12 November that will be attended by Cllr Val Greatrex and the Clerk. There will be no further TAP Fund training until after the May 2015 election, when the focus will be on training new councilors.

18. **Urgent decisions since the last meeting.** None.

19. **Any Other Business.**

There will be a talk about the Land Girls in the High Moorland Visitors centre 1900 11 November 2014.

SECOND PUBLIC SESSION

Nothing was raised.

20. **Valedictories.** The Chair recorded a formal big thank you to Cllr Emma Derham and Cllr Jackie Gee for the time and enthusiasm they have given to the Council and the community as a whole. They will both be missed and the Council wished them every luck for the future.

21. **Meeting dates and venues 2015.**

The Council agreed the proposed dates and venues for 2015.

22. **Date of the next meeting**

The next meeting will be at 1930 Monday 8 December 2014 at Princetown.