

DARTMOOR FOREST PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday 5 December 2011
in the Community Centre, Princetown at 7.30 pm

Present

Princetown
 Emma Derham
 Gregg Manning
 Cliff Palmer
 Wendy Stones
 Paul Turnbull (joined at 9.00 pm)

Postbridge
 Val Greatrex
 Wendy Watson

Hexworthy/Huccaby
 Alison Geen (Chair)

Apologies

Princetown
 David Worth

Postbridge

Hexworthy/Huccaby

Absent without Apology

Princetown
 None

Postbridge
 None

Hexworthy/Huccaby
 None

In Attendance

Councillor Lynne Rose (WDBC and Parish Link Member for DNPA)
 Councillor Philip Sanders (DCC)
 Alison Kohler (DNPA, Director for Sustainable Communities)

There was one member of the public present

A G E N D A

1.	To receive apologies
2.	Report from Beat Manager
3.	DNPA report on parking in Princetown
4.	To accept the minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2011
5.	Matters arising from the previous meeting and not on the Agenda
6.	Precept 2012/13
7.	Councillor vacancy
8.	Community Centre & Youth Club
9.	Repairs & maintenance
10.	Update on Highways jobs
11.	Reports from Committees
12.	Reports from meetings with other groups
13.	Report from Fire and Rescue service
14.	Correspondence
15.	Financial management
16.	Planning applications
17.	Urgent matters at the Chair's discretion
18.	Any other business

Date 9 January 2012

Signature of Chair

1164

1. Apologies

There was an apology from David Worth due to family illness

Paul would join the meeting later

2. Report from Beat Manager

Dave Pickles and Mark Canvin were not on duty and had sent a report, which was distributed to Councillors.

Key points were:

About 20% of all recorded crimes reflect the key role in protecting vulnerable people, and absorbed about 80% of Neighbourhood Policing time. This was also a rapidly growing priority and an increasing area of work. The work included helping people from minority groups, young people, elderly people, and those with mental health issues with the problems they experienced in society.

Overall, there had been a slight decrease in crime across our area from 58 in the same period last year to 49 this year, a reduction of 5%. This compared with an overall increase in crime this year over the country, the Force area and the Tavistock area.

The current concern was the increase in acquisitive crime that was being seen nationwide, and to some extent, in our area. A worrying trend was theft of lead from churches and public buildings like schools and village halls. Several local churches in nearby villages had lost their lead roofs recently, and the resulting water damage to the fabric of the buildings had been very expensive. There had also been incidents of lead stolen from isolated dwellings in Princetown recently. On some occasions, local residents had said that they saw the 'builders' working on the church and thought no more about it. Officers ask residents to report any sightings of people working public buildings to the caretaker, or to the police, so that their identity can be checked.

There had been a spate of bicycles stolen in Princetown over the past few months, and some of them had been found dumped in Tavistock. A few other bicycles that had been recovered in Tavistock recently had not been reported missing, and were awaiting claimants. Officers asked that thefts be reported and caution bicycle owners to keep them safely locked.

Residents were cautioned to keep their parcels out of sight of passers by to reduce the opportunity for theft over the holiday season

3. Report from DNPA

3.1 Parking charges in Princetown

Alison Kohler said that she had presented her report on parking changes in Princetown to the Authority's members' meeting on 7 October, and the proposals had been accepted. She said that she had consulted with local businesses and noted their concerns, which had resulted in her proposals for an annual pass for regular groups (e.g. Ten Tors) and for parking charges to operate only between 1 April and 31 October each year. Work was now in progress to implement the charging system, which was unlikely to come into effect before summer 2012. Alison K said that she would forward a copy of her report to the Clerk for onward distribution to Councillors [**Post-meeting note:** the report was sent to Councillors on 10 December].

Alison K said that a cost benefit analysis would be carried out regarding parking charges in Postbridge, but this would take about two years to complete.

In response to a question, Alison K said that WDBC would monitor parking on behalf of the Park Authority and would receive the revenue from any fines imposed

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With regard to timed parking on Tavistock Road, the Clerk reported that Highways had indicated that obtaining the necessary Traffic Order (TO) for the restriction could take two years and cost £2,500 to £3,000. The Parish Council would be allowed to pay for, or make a donation towards, Highways' costs, but this would not speed up the process at all. The Parish Council had been advised to do nothing immediately and to review the situation after the new car park arrangements had been in place for six months.

Councillors believed that the case was already made for timed parking. A TO took a long time to obtain and would not, in any case, be in operation before the charging system came onto force, so the parking situation would worsen next summer. Councillor Sanders said that he thought that a TO was already in existence for the Tavistock Road. Alison K said that she could confirm with certainty that no TO currently existed.

DECISION: It was agreed that:

- A request to Highways for a TO should be made immediately
- The TO to be for a maximum of 30 minutes free parking, and no return within two hours
- The TO to operate in the shops area in Tavistock Road

3.2 Funding Opportunities

Alison K said that the Park Authority had joined forces with other organisations to prepare a bid under the Landscape Partnership Scheme (Heritage Lottery Fund), which would be focussed on conserving and enhancing the area's heritage (e.g. improving access) by developing the skills to maintain the heritage in conjunction with local people.

A preliminary funding bid would be submitted in February 2012 and a decision on whether the proposed project was judged to be worthy of funding would be announced in July. The Park Authority and its Partners would then have one year to prepare a detailed funding bid. Alison K asked Councillors to send her their ideas for work that could be carried out, if funds were to be made available.

On a different subject, Alison said that she was hoping to assemble a group of people to look at improving the Centre of Princetown to attract and retain visitors. The focus would be on quick wins. Funding would be sought for the project and it was hoped that one source would be the Sustainable Community Fund

ACTION: Alison K to seek papers from the public consultation on redesigning Duchy Square that had been carried out previously [**Post-meeting note:** It was established that nothing substantive had been produced from the consultation]

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of 5 November had been updated as a result of comments from Emma, Alison and Paul and new copies had been sent to Councillors

They were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair

5. Matters arising from the previous Meeting

5.1 Publication of Draft Minutes

The Clerk had sought guidance on this matter from the Devon Association of Local Councils. The reply is given as Annex 1 to the minutes

The Clerk pointed out that, even if draft minutes were to be published, they were too long to fit into any of the Parish notice boards, which would still leave the Community Centre as the only site capable of carrying the complete set of minutes. The Clerk said that a summary of key points would eliminate this problem.

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DECISION: The matter was discussed and a motion to publish the draft minutes was put to the vote, resulting in a unanimous decision to retain the status quo and publish minutes only when they had been signed

5.2 Station Road Confusion

WDBC had asked Royal Mail if the postcode for Royal Court could be changed, either to a completely new code, or to a code in Tavistock Road (e.g. same as the Prince of Wales). In support of this request, all residents of Royal Court needed to sign a letter to say that they were in favour of a change of code.

ACTION: Clerk to write a covering letter to Royal Mail, including residents' signatures and Wendy S to collect signatures

5.3 WDBC Affordable Housing Consultation

Councillors did not have any changes for the draft document

5.4 Weeds in Princetown (Paul)

Paul was to approach the Resettlement Unit with a view to providing resource to assist with weeding.

Action carried forward in Paul's absence

5.5 Siting of Grit Bins – Postbridge bin was now, reportedly, in the correct position after Highways had been asked to use the grid reference originally provided. For future reference, bin numbers were: GB 5088 (Postbridge), GB 5077 (Believer) and GB 5074 (Saddlesbridge)

6. Precept 2012/13

Three estimates had been requested for repair to the wall in Tavistock Road. One contractor had retired. The other two contractors provided an estimate of £700 and a quote of £1,167. The Clerk suggested that a figure of £900 should be put into the budget.

Insurance quotes had been requested from two companies with small parish council offerings, and the existing insurer had been asked to quote for inclusion of the play area equipment in the policy. At the time of the meeting, only one reply had been received. This was from one of the new insurers, who had provided estimates as follows:

- Items as covered with current insurer £569, reducing to £541 for a three year contract, plus a 5% no claims discount annually up to 20%
- Including all play area equipment £742, reducing to £705 for a three year contract, plus a 5% no claims discount as above

The current policy excluded play area equipment and cost £715 in the year June 2011 to June 2012

The list of services for potential devolution had been sent to WDBC. It would appear that very few such lists had thus far been received by WDBC, leading to an assumption that such changes would be very unlikely to have been discussed and agreed before the deadline for submission of the Parish Council's precept

It was agreed that the donation of £60 per year to each of the two parish magazines should continue

It was agreed that a donation to the Youth Club in the form of assistance with the Club's rent paid to the Duchy would be most appropriate. Wendy S will check the rent costs

Donation to Jubilee celebrations to be considered and agreed at January's meeting

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It was agreed that £250 should be put into the budget to cover any additional costs associated with further improvements to the play area. This would cover, for example, any risk assessments needed

The budget will be finalised and agreed at next month's meeting

7. **Councillor Vacancy**

The Clerk had not received any applications by the published deadline date

DECISION: Co-option process to be re-started in the new year

8. **Community Centre and Youth Club (Wendy S)**

8.1 **Community Centre**

Meetings had been held on 15 and 28 November, with the following matters covered:

- A new Trustee Board Secretary had volunteered, with another volunteer assisting as required
- The Parish Clerk continued to do the bookings and a Trustee dealt with correspondence
- A BT quote had been received for £99 reconnection and £35 per month for unlimited Broadband. Reconnection was free if a five year contract was agreed
- Events organisers will be asked to take away their rubbish in future. Extra green boxes and blue food boxes have been provided
- Additional car parking is under discussion, with the football club also looking at this
- Key management remains a problem, with keys not being returned when no longer needed
- Profit from the 5 November event was £540, to be split between the football club and the Community Centre
- The Duchy is keen for the lease to be transferred to the new Trustee Board from 1 January 2012. The Big Lottery Fund has agreed the transfer from HMCA, but there are still wind-up activities for the latter to be completed, which will take until 26 January
- The charity shop now has its own bank account

The next meeting is 16 January 2012

8.2 **Youth Club (Wendy S)**

The open meeting on 20 November had been poorly attended.
The Youth Worker was looking for additional sources of funding.

No date set for next meeting

9. **Repairs & Maintenance**

The Jubilee lamp (reference 1B) in Duchy Square was not working

10. **Update on Highways Jobs**

10.1 **Existing Jobs**

Resurfacing works at Higher Cherrybrook Bridge were now complete. The project had been carried out with minimal disruption and a letter of thanks will be sent to Highways

The Lengthsman would carry out Saddlesbridge clearance work in the next two weeks

The pothole in Duchy Square had been repaired

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All drains outside Lords were now in need of attention

10.2 **New Jobs**

There was a blocked drain between Dart Cottage and the Clapper Bridge at Postbridge

10.3 **Maintenance Leaflet** – the annual “Travelling in winter” leaflet was now available

11. Reports from Committees

11.1 **School (Wendy W)**

The Christmas Fair was being held that day, and the play would be performed on 13 and 14 December

Staff at the school did not take part in the recent strike

The school would close for the holiday on Friday 6 December, with pupils returning on Wednesday 4 January

11.2 **Play Area (Cliff)**

Cliff reported no problems from his inspection. He said that dog notices had been erected at the stile and the main entrance and noted that an unsuccessful attempt had been made to remove the stile notice

11.3 **Cemetery (Val)**

Val reported that no work was needed as a result of the memorial inspection

11.4 **Emergency Plan**

David had send a message that he was still awaiting details of the salt delivery [**Post-meeting note:** Delivery had now been made]

The Clerk reported that the Agreement with the Duchy had been signed for use of a garage in Bellever Close to store the salt. For insurance purposes, the Parish Council would ensure that the key stayed with David, or his appointee, for the delivery and use of the salt

11.5 **Parish Plan**

Alison reported that the call for volunteers had resulted in one person from Hexworthy offering to help

11.6 **Diamond Jubilee (Wendy S)**

The Parish Council had been asked about its arrangements for a Jubilee Beacon, as the scouts would like to join in. Failing that, they would organise a beacon themselves.

DECISION: The Parish Council will not be setting up a beacon

12. Reports from Meetings with Other Groups

12.1 **Southern Link Committee (Paul)**

Paul had attended the meeting on 1 December and reported as follows:

- The theft of heating oil is increasing in both Devon and Cornwall. A warning to residents will be placed in the parish magazines
- New NHS Regulations will come into force in 2013 that will require additional physiotherapists to treat patients in their own homes, thereby freeing up hospital beds
- The superfast Broadband rollout may bypass rural areas and action is being formulated to prevent this. Updates are available on www.connectingdevonandsomerset.co.uk
- Invitations to be sent out for workshops on Localism Act and affordable housing

Next meeting is on 22 March 2012

13. Fire and Rescue Service Report (Paul)

Paul reported that there would, hopefully, be one new recruit to the team next year, leaving two vacancies still to be filled.

Councillors agreed with the proposed reduction in attendance levels when automatic fire alarms were activated

14. Correspondence

- 14.1 **New Housing Partnership** – West Devon Homes is creating an alliance for shared services with Devon and Cornwall Housing Group. Full details on the West Devon Homes website www.wdh.org.uk
- 14.2 **DNPA Design Guide** – This had been adopted and published in November. Paper copies were available for a fee and the document was freely downloadable from the DNPA website. **[Post-meeting note: A copy of the Guide was sent with the minutes]**
- 14.3 **Princetown Toilets** – A complaint had been received from a visitor that the toilets were not open by 0845 one Tuesday morning. WDBC had investigated the complaint, which had resulted in a financial penalty being imposed on the contract service provider. A letter of apology had been sent to the visitor
- 14.4 **Prince of Wales Award** – For groups/organisations making improvements to their rural community in a sustainable way. Leaflet taken by Wendy S
- 14.5 **Localism Bill (Standards)** – WDBC had sent out a summary of the changes to the operation of Council Standards in the Localism Act, which was now law. The summary is given as Annex 2 to the minutes
- 14.6 **Other Correspondence** – the following had also been received:
- DNPA monthly meeting papers for 2 December
 - Village Green – winter edition
 - West Devon Connect – winter edition

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Signature of Chair

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15. Financial Management

15.1 Summary for November

Payments made	Ref 575	WDBC – dog bin servicing	£64.90
	Ref 576	Duchy of Cornwall – charity shop rent	£2,287.50
	Ref 583	South Hams DC – payroll service	£120.00
	Ref 584	F K Martin – repair of cemetery wall	£288.00
	Ref 585	M Williams – litter picking	£51.39
Receipts	Ref 577	Transfer of HMCA funds – part 1	£20,000.00
	Ref 578	Transfer of HMCA funds – part 2	£5,529.14
	Ref 579	Transfer of charity shop funds	£4,873.87
	Ref 580	Transfer of Community Fund balance	£1,994.54
	Ref 581	Community Fund grant for play area	£700.00
	Ref 582	Community Fund grant for winter grit/salt	£100.00
Balance in bank 30 November			£49,787.22
To Receive	Ref 588	Santander dividend	£8.70
To pay	Ref 586	W Stones – re-imburement for poppy wreath	£20.00
	Ref 587	Duchy of Cornwall – hall hire	£30.00
	Ref 589	M J Druett – grass cutting	£400.00
	Ref 590	M J Williams – litter picking	£51.39
	Ref 591	Chris Palmer – Christmas tree light bulbs	£28.80

- 15.2 **Prinetown Community Centre Funds** – Transfer of funds from the Parish Council's account is not likely to take place until at least 26 January 2012

16. Planning Applications

- 16.1 The following planning application correspondence was received in November

DNPA Ref. & Applic. Type	Description	Location	Comments
11/0586	Replace porch, conservatory and sheds with single storey side extension plus new front porch	44 Bellever Close Prinetown	With Councillors for comment
11/0577	Powder coated door and window frames on extension	Yellowmeade Farm Prinetown	Supported by the Council
11/0537 Prior notification	Construction of timber lean-to extension for storage of agricultural machinery	Pizwell Farm Postbridge	Granted Work to be completed within five years
11/0464 Advertisement consent	Erection of banner	South West Elevation Creativity Centre Duchy Square Prinetown PL20	The second application toned down the colour and reduced the banner's size. The Council was given until 9 November to submit its response on the changes, which supported the change. However, this item was on the DNPA Development Management agenda for its meeting on 4 November, at which it was rejected.

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17. Urgent Matters at the Chair's Discretion

- 17.1 **A-Sign Hazard** – Signage outside the Plume of Feathers is forcing pedestrians into the road.
ACTION: Letter to be sent to Sarah Ruffles
- 17.2 **Dog Fouling in Princetown** – New residents in Tavistock Road are allowing their large dogs to foul the grass outside the Visitor Centre/Duchy office
ACTION: Letter to be sent to residents [**Post-meeting note:** no action taken after Clerk's conversation with the residents' landlord, who had already spoken to his tenants about the problem and agreed to do so again]

18. Any Other Business

The Council extended its thanks to the Duchy, for supplying the Christmas tree, to Mark and Dave Coles who cut it down and erected it, and to Emma and Chris Palmer who decorated it

PUBLIC SESSION

1. Councillor Sanders said that WDBC's open workshop on cuts in spending had been poorly attended
2. Councillor Rose said she had reported the Parish Council's concern regarding opening hours for the Princetown Visitor Centre to the Park Authority and awaited a response

Next Meeting

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10:15 pm

The next Parish Council meeting will be at **7.30 pm on Monday 9 January 2012** in the **Community Centre, Princetown**

David will chair the meeting

Sub-Committees and Groups

Jubilee Sub-Committee – Emma, Wendy S

Parish Emergency Group – Cliff, Wendy S, Paul

Parish Plan Sub-Committee – Alison, Val, Wendy S

Date 9 January 2012	Signature of Chair 1172

ANNEX 1

Guidelines from Devon Association of Local Councils regarding publication of draft minutes

“Many councils do publish their draft minutes, since people don’t like to wait until the next meeting before finding out what happened the previous month.

The minutes should be clearly marked as draft (using a watermark is best) and some councils add a note to indicate that draft minutes are subject to change and are not yet the official record of the meeting. Clerks who do this usually check with the Chair that there are no obvious errors: a question of two heads being better than one and sharing responsibility. Problems come if you have a chairman who likes to rewrite the minutes, given that radical alterations should be agreed by all the council members. If this happens then publishing the draft minutes could be a problem for you.

There are councils that prefer to publish a summary of the key points discussed and agreed at the meeting, in the same way that a reporter might, had they been present. This overcomes the problem above, whilst keeping everyone up to date, but means a bit more work for the clerk.

Legally you don’t have to publish draft minutes because under the Freedom of Information Act any document in draft, which is about to be published, does not have to be made available. But that doesn’t help people keep in touch with what is going on”

Date 9 January 2012

Signature of Chair

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ANNEX 2

Summary of Localism Act (Standards) from West Devon Borough Council

- Abolishes the Standards Board and all the machinery of dealing with complaints that we now use
- Re-enacts the duty on all authorities to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members (list includes county, borough and parish/town councils, police authorities until abolished, fire and National Park authorities)
- Requires all authorities to adopt a Code of conduct – parishes/towns may adopt their borough's
- Re-enacts the principles of public life and stipulates that the Code must abide by them, but prescribes no model
- Make arrangements for investigating and dealing with allegations, which have to include the involvement of an independent person. Note that the definition of “independent person” excludes anyone who has been a co-opted member of an authority in the last five years, which seems to exclude all current independent members from continuing
- Re-enacts provisions about registers of interests to be kept by the Monitoring Officer (for boroughs and for parish/town councils), and publish it on its website – that is new. What goes in the register is for authorities to determine
- Stipulates that pecuniary interests must be disclosed upon taking office and kept up to date, and disclosed at meetings
- Prevents members with pecuniary interests from participating in meetings unless they have a dispensation, which the authority will grant, on pain of committing an offence.

The transitional provisions will depend upon an Order being made, which we await, but can be expected to provide for continuation of existing cases under our present arrangements.

We are still getting to grips with these provisions and will keep you advised as they develop, particularly with regard to current complaints.

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