

DARTMOOR FOREST PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday 7 March 2011
in the Village Hall, Postbridge at 7.30 pm**

Present

Princetown

Emma Derham
Cliff Palmer
Paul Turnbull
David Worth

Postbridge

Dave Fisher (Chair)
Wendy Watson

Hexworthy/Huccaby

Alison Geen

Apologies

Princetown

Gary Easton
Sarah Ruffles
Wendy Stones

Postbridge

None

Hexworthy/Huccaby

None

Absent without Apology

Princetown

None

Postbridge

None

Hexworthy/Huccaby

None

In Attendance

Hannah Colston (WDBC Sports Development Officer) – item 5

There was one member of the public present

A G E N D A

1.	To receive apologies
2.	Declarations of Interest
3.	Report from Beat Manager
4.	To accept the minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2011
5.	Active villages consultation
6.	Matters arising from the previous meeting and not on the Agenda
7.	Grasscutting contract
8.	Play area development
9.	Community Centre & Youth Club
10.	Repairs & maintenance
11.	Update on Highways jobs
12.	Reports from Committees
13.	Reports from meetings with other groups
14.	Correspondence
15.	Financial management
16.	Planning applications
17.	Urgent matters at the Chair's discretion
18.	Any other business

Date 4 April 2011

Signature of Chair

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1. Apologies

There were apologies from Gary and Sarah, who had work commitments and from Wendy S who was recovering from an operation

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no interests to declare

3. Report from the Beat Manager

No report available as the officers were detained en route dealing with a road traffic accident

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of 7 February were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair

5. Active Villages Consultation

Hannah explained that the Active Villages initiative was funded by DCC and Sport England and was being delivered in West Devon by Hannah in conjunction with County Sport Partnerships.

The target villages were those with a population between 500 and 2,000 residents and, in the current phase, Hannah said she was working with Dartmoor Forest, Lamerton, Chagford and North Tawton.

Funding was available for both traditional sports (e.g. football) and non-traditional (e.g. tai chi) but could not be used for capital projects. Examples of activities that could be funded were: purchase of equipment, hire fees for facilities (e.g. village halls), coach training to facilitate self-sufficiency, starting up completely new activities, supporting existing activities (e.g. replacing worn out equipment).

Hannah said that the project, which would run for three years, did not exclude any age group. She said that she would be approaching the Youth Club in September, when the present POP (Princetown Opportunities for Play) project was due to finish.

Hannah explained that, whilst she needed help to put posters up in the village, she favoured the word of mouth approach and stressed that she was available for consultation at any time.

Emma took a poster for the Post Office and Stores. The Clerk undertook to obtain some more posters for Princetown and one for Alison to display in the Forest Inn. The Clerk to keep Hannah informed of the posters' locations

6. Matters arising from the previous Meeting and not on the Agenda

- 6.1 **WDBC Arrears Collection** - Councillor Sanders was asked to enquire into the reason for WDBC arrears collection figures no longer being sent to Parish Councils. Item carried forward
- 6.2 **Parish Plan** – Martin Rich and Jo Rumble had accepted an invitation to talk at the annual Parish meeting about how to start a Parish Plan
- 6.3 **Footpath Erosion in Woodville Avenue** – The matter had been reported to the person suggested by Councillor Sanders. We had received a personal acknowledgement for our request
- 6.4 **Princetown Toilet Lights** – WDBC already had this in hand. A motion sensor system is to be installed, which will save on energy

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7. Grass Cutting Contract

The advert in the Tavistock Times had yielded four expressions of interest. Three sets of papers were sent out, as the fourth organisation did not provide an address to which the papers could be sent.

Only one quote was received, which was for £2,000 for ten cuts each year in Princetown and five cuts in Postbridge. This was well within the budget of £3,000 that was set for the forthcoming financial year

Decision: The Clerk commended acceptance of the quote and this was agreed

8. Play Area Development Group

The turf had been laid but it was currently too dry to re-seed the required areas. Mike Kinsey had sent some photographs and a few words about the project to the Tavistock Times.

Chris Jordan was talking to Sutcliffe about their invoice, which appeared to be incorrect. The 31 March deadline for spending the grant should be met.

Sutcliffe had been asked to quote for the remainder of the toddler area so that funding could be sought.

An application had been submitted for a GDLeaf grant. The full cash flow management picture was not made clear to the Clerk when the application was submitted and the necessary work to correct the situation could not be carried out before the deadline for applications to be in. The application had, nevertheless, been submitted to the awards Panel, on the basis of nothing-ventured-nothing-gained. A decision should be known in April

WDBC had re-opened its Community Project fund and the Parish Council had been invited to put in an application as the play area was within the scope of the grants being awarded. This will be done to meet the deadline in April

Cliff and Paul volunteered to organise removal of the unwanted safety matting, re-using some of it, if possible, to improve the pedestrian entrance that had been churned up during the recent wet weather

Decision: It was agreed that the top entrance could now be closed, and the Duchy will be re-instructed accordingly

9. Community Centre & Youth Club (Wendy S)

The meeting to formalise the setting up of the new group running the Community Centre was scheduled for 8 March

10. Repairs & Maintenance

Emma said that there had been an attempt to start a fire in the phone kiosk opposite the village green by lighting papers in the coin collection slot. In addition, the receiver had been smashed.

Action: David W to supply the Clerk with the kiosk's phone number so that the matter could be reported to BT

Cliff and Paul had repainted the metal supports for the notice board opposite the village green. Holes had also been drilled to allow water to run away

Dave F to make enquiries of Malcolm Waite on the history behind the piece of land opposite the village green that is currently maintained by the Parish council

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11. Update on Highways Jobs

11.1 **New Jobs**

The culvert running under the B3212 at Postbridge, just past the church, is completely blocked, which is negating the recent ditch clearing that was carried out

11.2 **Existing Jobs**

The ditch at Sherberton road is still blocked and the water running across the road is causing potholes to open up

12. Reports from Committees

12.1 **School (Wendy W)**

A parents' evening was scheduled for 10 March

The National Science and Engineering week runs from 11 to 20 March. The school is seeking volunteers to help from 1 pm to 3 pm on 17 March at an event in the school. There is also a trip to Paignton Zoo

Gardening, art and gym clubs are now up and running, led by teachers

12.2 **Playground (Cliff)**

It was confirmed that regular safety checks could now start

12.3 **Cemetery (Dave F)**

Nothing to report

12.4 **Emergency Plan (David W)**

The demonstration of a towed gritter had been interesting. The device could be hooked up to a normal caravan tow hitch. It is heavy on salt usage (five bags per mile) and can only be used for pre-salting. It is well suited to salting housing estates and small lanes. The cost is in the region of £1,200. It was agreed that, at the moment, it was not suitable for Parish needs.

It was noted that DCC was now bagging and selling salt, as the main supplier had gone out of business

It was agreed that it was now inappropriate to try to recruit snow shovellers and this action was put back until later in the year

13. Reports from Meetings with Other Groups

13.1 **South Hams & West Devon Partnership (David W) 3 February**

Notes of the meeting had been sent out and copies were distributed to all Councillors

13.2 **National Park Performance Assessment** – At short notice, the Clerk had been unable to attend the interview but will ensure that the results of the Assessment are given to Councillors as soon as they are received

Date 4 April 2011	Signature of Chair

14. Correspondence

- 14.1 **Princetown Conservation Area** – The proposed extension to the area had been discussed at the DNPA monthly meeting that day. An update will be sought for the next meeting
- 14.2 **Local Elections** – Nominations forms had arrived. They were distributed to the appropriate Councillors, together with notes to assist with their completion
Action: Clerk to clarify which address Paul should use as he was moving house on 6 April
- 14.3 **DNPA Sustainable Travel Workshop** – The Authority was holding a workshop aimed at looking at a wide range of viable options to support travel in rural communities. The workshop was on 17 March and had a morning and an afternoon session to provide flexibility for attendees
- 14.4 **Community Right to Challenge** – In furtherance of its attempt to shift power from Whitehall to local councils, the Government was carrying out a consultation to give organisations a chance to respond formally to the proposals being made. The deadline for responses was 3 May. The Clerk distributed a briefing document from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) explaining the background to the consultation
Action: Councillors to decide at the next meeting whether a formal response should be made
- 14.5 **DNPA Design Guide** – The Authority had published its draft document for consultation. The deadline for comments is 21 April. There was one hard copy, and the Guide was also available online at www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk/planning/pl-forwardplanning/pl-localdevframework/pl-designguidance
Action: Document to be passed around Councillors for comment on the sheet provided and reviewed at next month's meeting
- 14.6 **Other Correspondence** – the following had also been received:
- Neighbourhood Watch Forum on 12 April – Information sent to Mike Fitzpatrick and Wendy S
 - Community Safety Partnership – latest newsletter
 - Supply of leaflets about changes to Housing Benefits – Community Centre table
 - Posters advertising the local elections
 - Papers for WDBC Standards Committee meeting on 8 March

15. Financial Management

15.1 Summary for February

Payments made	Ref 523	Review of play area design - Playbrokers	£240.00
	Ref 524	Grass cutting advert – Tavistock Times	£97.20
	Ref 525	Litter picking – M J Williams	£50.27
Receipts	Ref 522	Burial fees – Mrs P Hill	£228.00
Balance in bank 28 February			£6,066.80
To Receive	Ref 526	Play area scrap metal	£81.00
	Ref 527	Santander dividend	£7.92
To pay	Ref 528	Hire of Postbridge Village Hall	£15.00
	Ref 529	Play area final inspection	£300.00
	Ref 530	Litter picking – M J Williams	£50.27
	Ref 531	Cliff Palmer – paint for notice board supports	£12.59

- 15.2 **Duchy Rent Review** – Since 1997 the Council had been paying £50 per year for the three plots of land in Princetown, namely, the play area, the village green and the small, grassed area

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opposite the village green on the Tavistock Road. The Duchy had given formal notice that the rent will be reviewed in February next year

Decision: Ask the Duchy if the review could be brought forward to enable any precept implications to be known by 30 November 2011

Decision: Check the need for the piece of land opposite the village green to continue to be maintained by the Parish Council

15.3 **Payment of the Parish Clerk** – Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs (HMRC) had recently clarified the position in respect of the payment of parish clerks as follows:

- They can never be considered to be self-employed for tax or NI purposes
- They must not be paid “gross”
- They must be taxed under PAYE

In response to this change, there were three main options open to the Parish Council:

1. Some Clerks were choosing to do the work themselves, which involved registering the Parish Council as an employer and meant that the Clerk would be responsible for calculating tax and NI, as well as dealing with year-end paperwork.
2. Small accountancy firms were offering to act as the agent for Parish Councils, which meant the Parish would not need to do anything except provide the accountants with basic details, such as rate of pay etc. The accountants would deal with HMRC on the Parish’s behalf
3. WDBC currently outsources all its payroll work to South Hams District Council (SHDC) and the latter was offering to do the same for Parish Clerks in the WDBC and the SHDC area. The quote for our Council’s work was £100 per year, which equated to about 13 hours if the Clerk were to undertake the work herself.

The Clerk commended option 3 for adoption because:

- The new arrangements must be in place for the new financial year that starts on 1 April, which definitely rules out option 1, since registration as an employer can take more than four weeks
- The accountants’ route is likely to be expensive
- SHDC is completely au fait with local authority payroll and can do the necessary work very speedily, keeping costs down
- Running payroll could deter potential Clerks from applying if/when the current Clerk retires

Decision: It was agreed that option 3 should be chosen

16. Planning Applications

16.1 The following planning application correspondence was received in February

DNPA Ref. & Applic. Type	Description	Location	Comments
11/0033 DPP	Installation of photovoltaic cells on roof	Fire Station	Supported by the Council
11/0014 LBC	Replace one ground floor window on existing A Wing building	HMP Dartmoor	Granted: Work to start within 3 years

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DNPA Ref. & Applic. Type	Description	Location	Comments
11/0005 DPP	Change of use from redundant brewery to bunk house accommodation	Prince of Wales Hotel	Granted: Work to start within 3 years Rooflights to be flush with outer face of roof slope A screen to be erected to the NW edge of the terrace before it is brought into use. Screen to remain in perpetuity Cycle store wall and roof materials to be approved and retained for the store thereafter The base of the rooflights to be 1.7m above first floor level

- 16.2 **Shed at Bellever Youth Hostel** – It was reported by DNPA that the shed had been removed on 31 January. The Authority was seeking corroboration from the Parish Council
Action: Dave F said that he would check this out

17. Urgent Matters at the Chair's Discretion

- 17.1 **A-Board Siting** – It was reported that the East Dart owners are moving their A-boards well off the Hotel site, in contravention of DNPA rules
Action: Report the matter to DNPA's Enforcement Officer for attention
- 17.2 **Refuse Collection Problem** – Refuse is consistently not being collected from a property in Postbridge
Action: Report the matter to WDBC for attention
- 17.3 **Withdrawal of Transport Services** – Withdrawal/rescheduling of bus services and the cessation of the Fare Car Scheme will hit Princetown very hard. A letter of complaint to be sent to Councillor Sanders for the attention of the County Council

18. Any Other Business

Nothing to report

PUBLIC SESSION

Nothing to report

Next Meeting

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.20 pm

The next Parish Council meeting will be at **7.30 pm on Monday 4 April 2011** in the **Community Centre, Princetown** and will be preceded by the **annual Parish Meeting at 7.00 pm**

Paul said that he might be late in arriving

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