

WASHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 18th May 2022 in Washfield Memorial Hall at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr's Mrs A Taylor-Ross (Chair), M Balment, J Boundy, John Mock, R Webber and W Wood.

In attendance: County Cllr R Chesterton, one member of the public and the Clerk, Mrs J Larcombe.

01/05/22. Election of Officers

a) Chair. Cllr Mrs A Taylor-Ross was proposed by Cllr J Boundy and seconded by Cllr M Balment. Cllr Mrs Taylor-Ross was unanimously elected as Chair and signed the Acceptance of Office Form.

b) Vice-chair. Cllr M Balment was proposed by Cllr Mrs A Taylor-Ross and seconded by Cllr R Webber. Cllr Balment was unanimously elected as Vice-chair.

02/05/22. To receive apologies. The Clerk informed the meeting that she had received the resignation of Cllr Roger Arnold. Councillors asked that their thanks to him was formally recorded and the Chair will write and thank him for all that he has done while on the Parish Council. The Clerk will inform MDDC of the resignation and a Notice of Vacancy will be advertised.
Apologies were received from District Cllr R Stanley.

03/05/22. Disclosure of interest in item on the agenda. There were no disclosures of interest.

04/05/22. To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 16th March 2022 as an accurate record of the meeting. The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and they were duly signed by the Chair.

05/05/22. Matters arising from the minutes (not already covered by the agenda). Cllr Boundy asked if there was any update on when the streetlight outside of the Church would be repaired and Cllr Balment said he had been told it would be repaired in June.

06/05/22. Public questions. There were no questions from the member of the public.

07/05/22. Planning

a) To make a recommendation on any planning applications received before the meeting.

22/00844/FULL Change of use of agricultural barn to Class E (6) fitness use and erection of 2 holiday pods, 2 shepherds huts and 2 shower blocks. Land at NGR 292752:115325, (Lower Pitt), Washfield. Comment. Washfield Parish Council has no objection in principle to the application but is concerned about the condition of the access road to the application site and feel there might be a need for improvements if approval is granted.

b) To note any decisions on planning applications made by MDDC. No decisions received.

c) Plan Mid Devon Issues Consultation. The first consultation period has now ended but there will be a further opportunity to comment.

d) Any other planning matters. No other planning matters.

08/05/22. Highways

a) To report on any highways work carried out in the parish and to note any highways work needed. Cllr Chesterton and Russell Hookway, Neighbourhood Highways Officer have met on site at Easterlands. Funding has been allocated to patch the road this year and a bid will be put in to improve the road between Washfield and Stoodleigh. Depending on the cost and when bids have to be submitted the work might be done in 2023-24 or it might be spread over two years.

Potholes were reported on the road from Hatherland to Ennerleigh but only one is big enough to get repaired. Other roads of significant deterioration include Lower Washfield to Stoodleigh via Parkhouse Water.

Cllr Chesterton encouraged Councillors and members of the public to keep logging potholes and faults online as it makes a difference. The more officers know there are issues the more likely it is they can get the budget for the repairs. Cllr Balment noted that individual potholes have to be reported and it is difficult when there are multiple potholes. Cllr Chesterton said to let him know in that instance, with reference numbers, and he will make the Neighbourhood Highways Officer aware of the true problem. Councillors discussed the categories of potholes and the safety issues.

b) To discuss joining the DCC Road Warden Scheme and applying to the Highway Maintenance Community Enhancement Fund. Cllr Wood has looked into this scheme and information about it has been emailed to Councillors. Cllr Balment noted that any volunteers would have to complete a lot of training before they could carry out any work and they would have to collect materials from the South Molton highways depot. The Parish Council would also have to contribute 50% of the cost. No Councillors volunteered to do the training. Cllr Wood said he would be happy to do the admin involved. Volunteers do not have to be councillors so the scheme will be more widely promoted in the parish to see if there are people interested in getting involved and doing the training. Cllr Boundy asked whose public liability insurance would cover the volunteers and Cllr Chesterton explained it would be DCC's, hence the need for the training. He suggested organising a meeting with a Parish Council who are part of the Road Warden Scheme to talk about the benefits of the scheme. Other interested parishes could be invited.

c) Any other highways matters. No other highway matters.

09/05/22. Update on siting of remaining bench. Cllr Balment has spoken to the owner of the triangular wood plot who said he would contact Cllr Balment if he was willing to give permission to site the bench on this piece of land. Cllr Balment has not heard from him so another site needs to be found. The churchyard was suggested but is not a public open space, one of the requirements of the S106 funding which was used to purchase the bench. A map will be left in the village hall so that suggestions can be made by parishioners.

10/10/22. Reports

a) County Cllr. Cllr Chesterton reported that DCC's 2021/22 accounts were significantly poorer than previous years and there was a deficit. DCC has been awarded £14million funding for its Bus Service Improvement Plan, less than half the amount of its initial bid. The service element will only receive £5.2million with £8.8million for structure improvements. There is a new parking Code of Practice from the Government setting out requirements for parking operators when enforcing restrictions. One of the key components of the code is a compulsory 10 minute grace period. There is a new appeal process for council parking. 100 bids have been received from Town and Parish Councils for 20mph speed limits and a report has been made to cabinet. Not all bids will be successful. Cllr Chesterton anticipated there would be an annual or biannual call for bids. Councillors reported that the warning lights on the road outside of Bolham Community Primary School are not working.

b) District Cllr. No report. Cllr Mrs Taylor-Ross asked about proposed changes to the waste collection service and Cllr Chesterton responded because he is also a district councillor (for another ward). He said three weekly waste collections had been agreed and a feasibility report will be presented to Cabinet in July or August with the possibility of the new service starting by the autumn. Cllr Chesterton is trying to get recycling changed to a weekly service to get recycling rates where MDDC needs them to be. It was confirmed that road sweeping withing 30mph limits is the responsibility of MDDC, otherwise it is the responsibility of DCC.

11/05/22. Update on Platinum Jubilee celebrations in Washfield and agreement of any Parish Council contribution to costs. A host of activities are planned for the bank holiday weekend. No funding is needed from the Parish Council but the Parish council's offer of support was appreciated.

12/05/22. Finance:

a) To approve the national pay award for the Clerk and recommendation for backdating to 1st April 2021. The pay award was approved and will be back dated to 1st April 2022.

b) To approve any payments. It was resolved to make the following payment: Mrs J Larcombe - £92.00 Clerk's salary and backpay (Chq no 000545)

c) To approve the annual insurance cover for 2022-23. The Clerk had obtained a quote from BHIB Ltd which was far more expensive than the renewal quote from Zurich Municipal of £167.44. It was agreed to renew with Zurich Municipal (Chq no 000546).

d) To receive the Internal Audit Report. The report was noted.

e) To approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2021-22. It was resolved to approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2021-22.

f) To approve the Accounting Statement for 2021-22. It was resolved to approve the Accounting Statement for 2021-22.

g) To agree the signing of the Certificate of Exemption for 2021-22. It was agreed to sign the Certificate of Exemption for 2021-22.

13/05/22. Footpaths

a) Update on signing the Parish Paths Partnership Agreement. It was

unanimously agreed to sign the agreement between DCC and the Parish Council. The Parish Council will receive a grant towards work on the footpaths based on the mileage of footpaths and bridleways. Additional funding can be bid for if additional work is required. Tony and Ann Roberts will be the parish Footpath Wardens. The footpath item will move to earlier in the agenda for future Parish Council meetings so that they do not have to sit through so much of the meeting.

b) To discuss works to Brook Lane footpath. Tony and Ann Roberts will meet with Stuart Howell, DCC PROW Warden to see what can be done to fix a problem down through the goyle on Footpath 4. Water needs diverting. Work is also needed on Footpath 2 where there is an area of rabbit holes in a sloping field which makes the footpath dangerous. It was asked whether the old lane could be opened up. More way markers are needed on some paths. It was reported that it is difficult to get Stuart Howell out to the parish to speak to people. There was a discussion about the route of Footpath 2, which could either follow Pitt Lane from Long Lane to Barn Court House or follow Higher Pitt Lane and the track past Pitt Farmhouse and then down to Barn Court House (to avoid steep access from Long Lane into the field and changes/fences while crossing the field). Then on to New Park with a proposed better route to avoid cutting the corner to cross the field at New Park.

c) Any Footpath Matters. The Clerk reported that she had just received a letter regarding the next stage of the Definitive Map Review for Washfield. The Washfield Definitive Map Review informal consultation on proposals for change has now been published and there are two proposals for the addition of bridleways. Views, together with any relevant evidence, are sought on the 2 proposals for modifying the Definitive Map for Washfield:

- Addition of a Public Bridleway from the county road at Parkhouse Water, running generally north north eastwards through Barehills Wood and then northwards to the county road (Stoodleigh Drive) north of Dryhill Nap (GR SS9316 to SS9350 1877).
- Addition of a Public Bridleway from the county road east of Shilhay running north eastwards along a defined green lane west of Shihay Copse to the county road north of Springfield Cottage (GR SS9358 1877 to SS9404 1931).

The consultation ends on the 31st July 2022 and will be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting. Details will be posted on the Parish Council notice board. Details and a copy of the map will also be available in the village hall.

Mr and Mrs Roberts left the meeting.

14/05/22. Community Resilience Plan for Washfield. This has not been circulated yet and will be discussed at the next meeting.

15/05/22. What we can do as a village to improve our contribution to the climate emergency. Cllr Mrs Taylor-Ross told Councillors that she gets asked what the Parish Council is going to do about the climate emergency. Along with the Clerk she had attended MDDC's online planning training session on sustainability in building and climate change going forward. This included information about the installation of ground sourced heat pumps. Some parishes would like to do more, the issue is how is it paid for. Jason Ball, MDDC's Climate and Sustainability

Specialist, was asked about taking a lead on this. In Bampton Western Power Distribution and DCC are putting in some on street EV charging points. Washfield Village Hall is discussing how they could fund the installation of solar panels on the village hall roof and an EV charging point. The Parish Council support the idea in principle. An open green group is to gather informally on 16th June to discuss what can be done in the parish or with other parishes.

16/05/22. Update on plans for the 2022 Annual Parish Meeting. The date of the APM has been pushed back. Cllr Mrs Taylor-Ross is still trying to get Jason Ball, MDDC's Climate and Sustainability Specialist, to speak at the meeting.

17/05/22. Chairman's Announcements and Correspondence. New bank signatories are needed following the resignation of Cllr Arnold and they were agreed as Cllr Mrs Taylor-Ross and Cllr Webber.
The new owner of Pond House has started digging out a pond and has asked the Chair if he needs to consult the Parish Council about his plans.
Plans still need to be made to remove the Laurel around the Village Green.

18/05/22. Date of next meeting. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday July 20th 2022.

Signed:
Chair

Date: