

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF TAWSTOCK PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
TUESDAY 18th APRIL 2023 AT 7.00 p.m.**

Present: - Councillor Bowden (Chair)
Councillors Jenkins, Lines, Lofthouse, Mason, Needham and Norman.

NDC Councillors Knight and Lofthouse

DCC Councillors Henderson and Leaver

M Isaac (Clerk)

In Attendance: Parishioner/Members of the Public – 6

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Knight, Short and Tucker.

2. PUBLIC SESSION

A Parishioner stated that since the Bus Gate was approved many years ago additional developments have been approved and with the installation of the bus gate 1,000 residents living at the southern end of Old Torrington Road would be isolated from Barnstaple. What is the value/benefit of the bus gate?

The Chair stated that the decision on the Bus Gate had been made and work would commence next month.

Councillor Lofthouse stated that people needed to engage in the Local Plan process at an early stage.

**3. ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE
CHAIR SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY**

There were no matters brought forward by the Chair

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest announced.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk reported the receipt of an email (previously circulated) from DCC regarding highways and drainage issues in response to a letter from the Parish Council.

The Chair reported that Councillor Knight had reported that the drain at the bottom of Old Torrington Road had been fixed but was not working properly when it rained heavily. DCC teams were out cleaning the drain in Old Torrington Road.

DCC Councillor Leaver stated that she would continue to raise the issue of drain clearance in Sticklepath Hill and Old Torrington Road with the DCC Neighbourhood Officer. She further stated that priority was given to areas that are a risk to life.

6. FINANCIAL MATTERS.

a) Payments

RESOLVED that the following payments be approved:

| | |
|---|---------|
| North Devon Council Clerks Salary + Admin Fee | £623.44 |
| M. Isaac Clerks Expenses | £8.13 |
| Gavin Hendry – Grounds Maintenance | £540.00 |
| DALC Annual Membership | £673.24 |
| RoSPA Annual Play Area inspections | £180.00 |
| The Idea Engine New Website | £800.00 |

It was agreed that the CPRE Membership be not renewed.

b) Financial Position

The financial position as of 5 April 2023 Current A/C £42,161.39 (included £12,001 ringed fenced for Tower View Project) and Business Reserve A/C £16,074.56 was noted.

7. MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meeting held on 21st March 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

8. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING NOT LISTED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

There were no issues raised.

9. DCC COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS

(a) DCC REPORTS

i) DCC Councillor Leaver reported the following:

- That there was a demand on Adult Social Care and Childrens Services and Central Government had greatly reduced the grant support.
- That DCC had chosen local government devolution level 2 powers that are not led by a directly- elected Mayor for the transfer of powers and funding to local government in Devon.
- That the Bus Gate legal agreement was with Solicitors
- That the Barnhenge roundabout was being re-surfaced.

ii) DCC Councillor Henderson reported the following:

- That DCC Highways had been allocated an additional £9.4 million from Central Government to get the Council roads to Amber state.
- That the Council Tax increase did not even cover the cost of the minimum wage increase for carers.

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- That the continuation of the Mobile library Service was out for public consultation.

(b) NDC Councillor Lofthouse

Councillor Lofthouse reported that the draft minutes of the Local Plan Review Working Group had been circulated to all Members. It was a focused review which it had been agreed would not include a design code and active travel. The next meet would be in June.

10. HIGHWAY ISSUES

- a) Bus Gate – Old Torrington Road: Update.

See minute 9 above.

11. STREET NAMING AND NUMBERING

The Council considered a request from North Devon Council regarding the naming and numbering of a small development in Lake.

It was agreed that the suggested name/numbering 1,2,3 Mere Close be agreed.

12. TOWER VIEW RECREATIONAL AREA PROJECT

- a) Grounds Maintenance Working Group

The recommendations of the Grounds Maintenance Working Group were agreed.

Councillor Lofthouse stated that he would be speaking to the Devon Wildlife Trust regarding the wording/text on the interpretation boards the following day.

The Chair stated that Councillors Jenkins and Knight needed to agree the seeds to be purchased as soon as possible.

It was reported that a section of the top wildflower area required clearing before the seeds were planted and that plant in the top section required removal.

It was agreed to put an item on the next agenda for discussion.

- b) Scrape/remove Weeds along the Southern Footpath: Quote

The Clerk reported the receipt of a quote from Gavin Hendry to scrape/remove weeds and soil along the path of £174.00.

It was agreed that the quote be accepted.

The Chair reported that she had spoken to the owner of the property on the right-hand side of the path in Elizabeth Drive who had agreed to two metal 'No Poo' signs being erected on their wall.

Councillor Needham agreed to speak to NDC Ray Jones to obtain additional signs for the top and bottom of the path.

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c) Strim Bottom Wild Flower Area Twice Yearly: Quote

The Clerk reported the receipt of a quote from Gavin Hendry to strim the bottom wildflower are twice a year of £222.00

It was agreed that the quote be accepted.

d) Gate Installation: Quote

The Clerk reported the receipt of a quote from Gavin Hendry to install a gate at the bottom wild flower area of £150.00.

It was agreed that the quote be accepted and that authority be delegated to the Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Councillor Knight to agree a quote for the gate.

e) Cut back Beech Hedge between Riverton Road and Crematorium: Quote

The Clerk reported the receipt of a quote from Gavin Hendry to cut back the Beech Hedge between Riverton Road and Crematorium of £234.00

It was agreed that the quote be accepted.

f) Adjoining Property: Fencing

It was reported that the fence of an adjoining property had fallen into the park.

It was agreed to write to the owner giving them 14 days to remove the fence. Authority was delegated to the Clerk and Chair to send further letters if required.

13. REGISTER/DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

The Council noted an email from NDC Monitoring Officer regarding the declaration of Other Registerable Interest.

14. NEW WEBSITE: UPDATE.

The Chair reported that the new website was nearing completion to go live on 31st May 2023 and would be work in progress.

She reported the receipt of quotes for additional work/training and a 12-month update and maintenance plan from The Idea Engine. Additional Updates and extra pages £800; Half day training £300 and 12-month update and maintenance plan £450.

It was agreed that the above quotes be agreed and accepted.

15. LOCAL PLAN: UPDATE.

See minute 9 (b) above.

16. HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

The Clerk reported that NDC had informed that the latest Housing Needs Survey on file for the parish of Tawstock was dated 2010 and Housing needs surveys were usually valid for 5 years.

Devon Home Choice (DHC) showed there were 28 households living in the parish of Tawstock registered as being in need of affordable housing for rent as of January 2023. Not all households tended to register themselves on the housing register as they didn't think that they would have the opportunity to be housed so the figure was often significantly higher. Although DHC data identified the number of households living within the parish in housing need, it did not always provide sufficient information to firmly establish how long households had been resident in the parish or if they wished to remain in the parish; it was a snap shot in time and people's circumstances could change extremely quickly. In addition, some households may seek affordable home ownership options (shared ownership/discounted sale).

17. TAWSTOCK CEMETERY: PURCHASE OF A PLOT

The Clerk reported that he had received an email from a couple seeking to purchase a plot at the cemetery who did not live in the Parish but had a close relative buried in the cemetery and had connections to North Devon.

It was agreed to defer consideration of the request to the next PC meeting.

18. DEFIBRILLATOR TRAINING

The Clerk reported it had been agreed to hold the defibrillator training on 13th May 2023 @ 3.00 p.m. There was 6 places on the training course. 2 Councillors; Councillors Bowden and Lofthouse had expressed an interest.

It was agreed that the 4 remaining places be offered to the Church.

19. ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETING

The following issues were raised:

Parish Council Meetings in August and December

Parish priorities for the following 2-4 years – June meeting

20. DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting would be on Annual Parish Council meeting on Tuesday 16th May 2023 @ 7.00 p.m. preceded by the Annual Parish Meeting at 6.00 p.m.

Chairman

The meeting ended at 8.48 p.m.

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