

**MINUTES OF A VIRTUAL MEETING OF TAWSTOCK PARISH COUNCIL HELD
ON WEDNESDAY 16th FEBRUARY 2021 AT 7.00 pm**

Present: - Councillor Luggar (Chairman)
Councillors Blackman (In the Chair for minute 194), Bowden, Knight,
Lofthouse, Short, M. Ward and S. Ward.

NDC Councillors Knight, Lofthouse and Saxby

M Isaac (Clerk)

In Attendance: Parishioner/Members of the Public - 1

177. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Lines and DCC Councillors Edgell and Mathews

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

There were no issues raised.

179. PUBLIC SESSION

There were no issues raised by Parishioners.

180. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Luggar declared an interest in item 17 on the agenda.
He also stated that he had been advised by NDC Solicitor not to take part in the consideration
of Planning Applications as he was a Member of NDC Planning Committee.

181. DCC COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORT

a) DCC Councillors Reports

The Clerk presented a report from DCC Councillor Mathews:

That numerous complaints had been received regarding the quality of the pavement works in the
Sticklepath area that were being dealt with by DCC at Exeter.

It was noted that the pavements were in Barnstaple Longbridge ward.

Concerns had also been raised regarding buses turning from Gratton Way into OTR due to
holes being dug etc. This was being dealt with by Steve Short and Kevin Griffiths on site.

b) NDC Councillor Knight

Councillor Knight reported that he had a conversation with 2 residents in Philip Avenue
regarding the cutting of the 4 triangles of grass and that NDC had had taken back the grass
cutting in-house. He would deal with the matter under item 12 on the agenda. See minute 189.

c) NDC Councillor Lofthouse

Councillor Lofthouse report that he, Councillor Knight, NDC Leader Councillor Worden and NDC Chief Executive would be seeking a meeting with S W Water, DCC and the Environment Agency regarding flooding in Barnstaple. He would be seeking assurance from S W Water that they can deal with the additional sewerage from all the new developments.

Selaine Saxby MP requested that she be invited to attend the meeting.

Councillor Knight stated that it had become apparent that the sewage from Planning Application 61119 1st phase of Larkbear was being pumped into the sewage pipe at the top of Philip Avenue and then travelling downhill to a low point. A resident in Philip Avenue had already experienced problems. In respect of the wider network the sewage from Philip Avenue, Old Torrington Road and Gratton Way would have to be pumped elsewhere, believed to be over the hill to the Town which already had a problem. It was believed that there had been no improvements to the sewage system since the 1970's. There was a need to look at combined sewage and surface water drains.

d) NDC Councillor Saxby

Councillor Saxby reported that concerns had been raised in other Parishes that she represented regarding dog fouling. She had a series of Posters from the Dog Trust if any Parish Councillor required one.

She stated that in her capacity as MP she had concerns regarding the preparedness of the Community post lockdown in both a mental and practical way and would be working with DCC on post lockdown and had sent a letter to Rob Jenrick MP on the issue.

She also stated that in her capacity as MP she had been delighted to help in the 'connectivity' programme in Tawstock and the work of the Open Reach team. She was Chair of the All Party Working Group on Broadband, working across the Country.

Councillor Knight asked Councillor Saxby as the District Ward Member, if she would call-in planning application 72675 St Johns Garden Centre, Roundswell for consideration/determination by the NDC Planning Committee regarding highway and pedestrian access. She stated she would call-in the application if requested by the Parish Council.

182. MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meeting held on 19th January 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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

- a) Collapsed Drain outside Village Hall

The Clerk reported that he reported the problem on the DCC website.

- b) Condition of Track adjacent to the Village Hall Car Park and School
- c) Condition of Wall outside Village Hall

The Clerk reported that he had spoken to the Agent for the Wrey Estate and he was investigating the above issues.

Sue Denham, Head Teacher, Holywell School stated that the blocked/collapsed drain was a recurring problem. Flash floods had caused the lane and car park to flood and children had been unable to get into school, without either being carried or wooden planks being put down. Parents had been asked to report the problem on-line to DCC.

A tanker was sent out to pump the water away, but this was only a temporary measure. She had met a couple of DCC Officers who had also reported the problem to the Environment Agency as it was both a Highway and Environmental Agency problem.

It was considered that the problem was twofold as drain may have collapsed under the road and there was water/slurry coming off the fields. DCC Officers were speaking with the landowners to ascertain the cause of the problem.

Selaine Saxby MP stated that if the problem was not resolved, to contact her and she would investigate.

In respect of the condition of the track Sue stated that the track was basically mud and that from time to time the school put down gravel to make it easier to walk on, but this was being pushed into the ground by the farmers tractors.

It was considered that an 8" concrete platform around the well/chair area and in front of the school with drainage would solve the problem.

A point was raised as to whether there would be any funding from DCC to repair the track. It was stated that the school was part of a Multi Academy Trust and not DCC and it was a private track.

184. HOLYWELL SCHOOL: CURRENT SITUATION REGARDING ACCESS TO GOOD QUALITY TECHNOLOGY DURING COVID 3.

The Council welcomed Sue Denham, Head Teacher to the meeting.

She stated that as also the Head of Bratton Fleming School she had been able to compare the remote learning experiences at both schools. At Bratton Fleming she had been able to offer live lessons, meet and greet every day and one to one intervention with the children. However, at Holywell this had not been possible due to the bad internet connections.

Having contacted Selaine, who then contacted Open Reach, the Chief Engineer contacted the school since which the Open Reach team had been working non-stop to connect Broadband to the school.

The Open Reach team had also had a good interaction with the school children who had viewed the telegraph poles being changed and the cables spliced. They had also donated a glass tear drop where all the fibres come from, of which there were only 20 in the world.

The Open Reach team had also set up a 'just giving' page for the school to all open reach employees of which 240 donated monies to the school to purchase laptops. The school required new technology and although the Government had been providing free computers to schools the criteria was based on the number of pupils receiving free school meals. Holywell had only 8 out of 100 pupils, Bratton Fleming had nearly 30 out of 100. Bratton Fleming received 11 Government free computers and Holywell got none but managed to get 2 from the DFE.

She asked if anyone was aware of any grant opportunities to apply for funding for the additional laptops. The aim was to get 24 laptops for the children's use.

The Church congregation had also collected some money. With 2 from the DFE and 10 from the Open Reach donation and 6 from the Church donation a further 6 were required at a cost of £390 per laptop. It was suggested that an application for grant funding from the School be made to the Parish Council for some laptops.

Councillor Knight stated at present there was no internet or mobile phone service at the Village Hall and asked that discussion be held at the next Parish Council meeting regarding a possible contribution towards getting a cable connection to the Village Hall and how the provision of broadband in the Hall would be funded.

The Council recorded its thanks to Selaine Saxby MP and Open Reach for their support and work in getting broadband to Holywell School.

185. HIGHWAY ISSUES

- a) Traffic calming on OTR and proposed removal of Shorelands Road roundabout.

Councillor Knight stated that a design of the proposed amendments to the roundabout was still awaited. The funding would not be available until next financial year.

Selaine Saxby MP stated that she had written to John Hart, Leader DCC 6 months ago regarding the condition of the roads in North Devon and seeking details of the amount of expenditure but had not had a response, despite numerous attempts. She would be happy for highway complaints to be sent to her to follow up.

It was reported that the ND Ambulance Trust had closed its vehicle workshop and that Central Government was rolling out new Fiat ambulances. The nearest Fiat service depot was in Plymouth a 4 hour round journey.

- b) Pavements/Footway Crossings/Parking Restrictions, Old Torrington Road, Gratton Way – Sandringham Gardens: Updates and Pavement condition Old Torrington Road: Prioritisation of Maintenance.

Councillor Knight reported that the above pavement scheme had not been progressed as DCC did not have enough available Officers as they were concentrating on the North Devon Link Road and no one had contacted BT regarding the moving of a manhole. The scheme had been agreed and monies were available but there was no one to progress the matter. People were still having to walk in the road. He said this linked into buses still driving over the verge, due to insufficient room to turn into Gratton Way. A temporary enlargement of the junction would be appropriate. There was mud all over the road and an incident where a lady had slipped over and broke a leg.

It was agreed that Councillor Knight forward information to Selaine Saxby MP.

- c) Verge Maintenance and Pavement Obstruction, Southern End of Old Torrington Road between the Crematorium and new Larbear entrance.

Councillor Knight stated that it had previously been agreed to accept the quote from Gavin Hendry to cut the hedge from the Crematorium to the new Larkbear entrance, which it was considered belonged to the Wrey Estate.

It was agreed that the previous decision be re-affirmed and that Gavin Hendry be requested to cut the hedge.

The Clerk reported that he had spoken to the agent for the Wrey Estate and was awaiting a response.

186. TOWER VIEW RECREATIONAL AREA

Councillor Knight stated that he had collated all the information regarding the project which had been sent to all Members. There were some minor amendments to the scheme as previously agreed and additional quotes received. The amendments were:

- That the pedestrian gate for ease of disability access be not replaced but that a small concrete slope, at the park entrance supplied this instead of the gate.
- That stock fencing be provided around the 3 banks for protection fencing.

It was agreed that the amended scheme and quotes received be agreed and approved.

187. PLAY PARKS – LITTER BIN EMPTYING

Councillor Knight stated that he had spoken to NDC Officers and it appeared that there were many layers on the mapping tool where the litter bins were listed. Also, only recently litter bins not owned by NDC were being put on the mapping tool creating another layer of information. They were currently reviewing all the litter bin listings and updating the mapping system. Due to the bins not being listed properly there were inconsistency of emptying. This was however being progressed.

188. PARISH GREEN AREAS: INSTALLATION OF TEMPORARY 'KEEP OFF THE GRASS' SIGNS

The Clerk reported that he had not yet received a response from DCC.

It was agreed to chase DCC Steve Short for a response.

189. NDC GRASS AREA: MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

Councillor Knight stated that NDC were taking part responsibility for its Grounds Maintenance areas. There were 4 small triangle grassed areas at the top of Elizabeth Drive, that were being cut by residents. There were also 4 triangle grassed areas at the bottom of Philip Avenue.

Councillor Lofthouse stated that NDC were keen to see areas planted with trees or wildflowers.

It was considered that the 4 areas at the bottom of Philip Avenue could have either trees or wildflowers planted in the 4 areas and that the residents in Elizabeth continue to cut those areas.

Councillors Knight and Lofthouse agreed to consult residents on the above and then liaise with NDC Estates.

190. VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE: COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Councillor Knight stated that he was not aware until recently that there was a Village Hall Committee.

Councillor Short stated that the Village Hall was a Charity run under the umbrella of the Charity Commission. All members were volunteers and relied on grants and fund raising.

Councillor Short agreed to provide members with a list of Village Committee Members and put information on the web site.

191. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE REVIEW 2020/21

Councillor Knight reported that he had received a comment from a resident congratulating the Grounds Maintenance Contractor, Gavin Hendry on his work in the park. Other members stated that they had received similar comments.

It was noted that the Contractor had advised that he would not be increasing his costs for the remainder of the contract as indicated in his tender.

192 STORAGE OF PARISH RECORDS

The Chairman stated that due to Covid it had not yet been possible for him and the Clerk to visit the storage facility.

193. NEW NOTICE BOARD: LAKE

The Clerk reported that Russell Maynard had provided a quote of £750 for an English Oak notice board with an additional cost of £89.58 to include the provision of a header board and lettering.

The quote for the notice board to include a header board of £839.58 was accepted.

194. PLANNING MATTERS

Councillor Luggar informed Council that he had been advised not to take part in planning applications as he had been appointed to the NDC Planning Committee. Councillor Blackman took the chair.

- a) 72641 Prior Approval for enlargement of a dwelling house by construction of additional storeys, 10 Elizabeth Drive, Sticklepath, Barnstaple

It was noted that this was a prior approval application that had been refused by NDC.

- b) 72675 Hybrid application for: Outline application for erection of garden to include car parking and associated ancillary infrastructure (with some matters reserved); and

Full planning for petrol filling station and associated shop with drive-thru coffee shop, St Johns Garden Centre, Roundswell, Barnstaple

Concern was expressed regarding pedestrian access to the site on health and safety grounds. People from the New Innovation Centre, the end of Old Torrington Road and the Trading Estate will visit the on-site food store and would need to cross the busy main roads with no crossing provision. Concern was also expressed regarding HGV lorries accessing the site with only parking for 2 HGV vehicles proposed and the associated traffic issues.

It was agreed to request the ward member Councillor Saxby to call in the application for consideration/determination by the NDC Planning Committee

- c) 72780 Extension and refurbishment of existing office building, East Collabear, Tawstock, Barnstaple

RECOMMENDED Approval

- d) 72800 Extension to dwelling, 5 Silver Birch Court, Roundswell, Barnstaple

RECOMMENDED Approval

- e) 72852 Erection of external lift shaft, Petroc Lifestyle Building, Old Sticklepath Hill, Sticklepath, Barnstaple

RECOMMENDED Approval

195. THE TRACKER

The Tracker was noted.

196. CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk reported the receipt of an email from Mr Wynn (previously circulated) regarding traffic speeding issues in Eastacombe.

Councillor Lofthouse reported that he had been informed that due to Covid, the Police Community awareness and speeding gun training schemes had been suspended temporarily.

It was agreed that the Parish Council supports more 20 m.p.h. speed limits and requested that DCC Councillor Edgell and the Neighbourhood Officer put the matter on the HATOC agenda for discussion.

It was also agreed that the Clerk contact Mr Wynn and explain the decision and process for consideration by HATOC.

197. FINANCE MATTERS

a) Payments

RESOLVED:

That the following payments be approved:

North Devon Council Clerks Salary		£568.74
M Isaac	Expenses	£8.07
Zoom Upgrade	Paid by Debit Card	£14.39 p. month
Chew Valley Trees	Trees for Tower View (paid by debit card).	£1,712.28
Albion Plants	Plants for Tower View	£432.60

b) Current Financial Position

That the current financial position as on 5 January 2021 was Current A/C £45,553.83 and Business Reserve £16,002.18 be noted.

c) Financial Planning Spreadsheet

Councillor Lofthouse reported that he and Councillor Bowden in conjunction with the Clerk were inputting the data into a spreadsheet to enable Members to get a better understanding of the budget for 2021/22.

198. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AT THE NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

There were no additional items put forward.

The Clerk reported that at present the legislation only permitted virtual Parish Council meetings up until 7th May 2021. Pressure was being put on the Government by all local authority bodies to extend the date. At present this had not been agreed by Government.

It was agreed to include on the agenda for the next Parish Council meeting.

199. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next virtual Parish Council meeting would be on Tuesday 16th March 2021 at 7.00 p.m.

Chairman

The meeting closed at 9.05 p.m.