

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

Date	12 December 2017
Location	Reading Rooms, Mary Tavy
Those present	Cllr J Bright, Cllr M Fife Cook, Cllr J Hill (Chair), Cllr P Jarvis and Cllr R Page (5)
Others present	Mrs K Higham (Clerk)

Proceedings

Parishioners' Time -

No Parishioners present wished to speak.

The Chairman declared the meeting open at 7.30pm.

- 12/12/2017/1 **Apologies for absence**
Cllrs G Hill and G Ross sent their apologies.
- 12/12/2017/2 **Declarations of interest**
Agreed that disclosure of pecuniary and other interests that may affect items on this agenda would be declared as they arise during the course of the meeting.
- 12/12/2017/3 **Approval of Meeting Minutes**
- 3.1 **Council meeting, 14 November 2017**
The minutes were approved subject to the following changes, item 7.1 change the word 'black to block'. Also a statement was made by Cllr J Hill that the blocked drain on Warne Lane had been brought to his attention by the Lengthsman. These changes were made by hand prior to approval.
Proposed Cllr Fife Cook, seconded Cllr Jarvis, all in favour.
- Decision*
- 3.2 **Planning meeting, 14 November 2017**
The minutes were approved.
Proposed Cllr Page, seconded Cllr J Hill, all in favour.
- Decision*
- 3.3 **Finance Committee meeting, 09 November 2017.**
The minutes were approved.
Proposed Cllr Jarvis, seconded Cllr Fife Cook, all in favour.
- Decision*
- 3.4 **Cemetery Committee meeting, 23 November 2017**
The minutes were approved.
Proposed Cllr Fife Cook, seconded Cllr Page, all in favour.
- Decision*
- 3.5 **Extraordinary meeting, 23 November 2017**
The minutes were approved.
Proposed Cllr Fife Cook, seconded Cllr Page, all in favour.
- Decision*
- 12/12/2017/4 **Matters arising**
The Clerk stated she had received confirmation from the insurance company that the additional premium required to cover the defibrillator and lighting column would be £95. This would be paid before the next meeting.
- 12/12/2017/5 **Finance**
- 5.1 **Review and approve the monthly Financial Report including payments**
All payments were approved.
Proposed Cllr Page, seconded, Cllr G Hill, all in favour.
A small amount of interest on the bank accounts was received this month in addition to the grant from Devon Air Ambulance Trust which was their contribution to the night landing site. A double plot in the Cemetery was sold as well as an application to erect a headstone and an application to add an additional inscription. Total Cemetery income for the month, £437. Total Parish income for the month was £2,927.
Total outgoings including Clerk's wages and expenses, grounds maintenance, MT Jubilee Newsletter, mileage claims from Cllr G Hill and Cllr Ross plus donations to the Royal British Legion and Help for Heroes came to £964. Some items include VAT which is reclaimable by the Parish Council.

5.2 **Approve 2018/19 budget**

The budget for 2018/19 was approved.

Decision Proposed Cllr Fife Cook, seconded Cllr J Hill, all in favour.

12/12/2017/6 **Co-option Policy and Procedure**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk circulated a new Co-option Policy and Procedure to be used in the future when filling casual vacancies. The Policy was approved and adopted.

Decision Proposed Cllr Page, seconded Cllr J Hill, all in favour.

12/12/2017/7 **Remembrance Sunday, Procedure and timings**

In 2016 Cllr Jarvis produced a set of timings for the Remembrance Service which was used by Cllr J Hill during the 2017 service. Cllr J Hill believed having a procedure will assist future Cllrs and standardise the service. The Clerk stated she had failed to ask Cllr Jarvis to circulate the document she produced before the meeting. Cllr Fife Cook proposed a laminated Order of Service to include the Roll of Honour which could be passed from one PC to the next. He asked the Clerk to produce the document and circulate to Cllrs.

Decision Proposed Cllr Fife Cook, seconded Cllr Jarvis, all in favour.

Action Cllr Jarvis to circulate the document which included timings. Clerk to produce the laminated version.

12/12/2017/8 **Correspondence**

8.1 **Update on previous correspondence**

8.1.a **Response to the office of Geoffrey Cox MP – Cemetery**

The PC received a letter from the office of Geoffrey Cox MP. It was reference concerns raised by a member of the public in relation to Mary Tavy Cemetery. Cllr Jarvis confirmed he would respond. However the person in question had been communicated with directly prior to the arrival of the letter.

8.2 **Receive any recent correspondence or messages passed to the Parish Council**

8.2.a **Mary Tavy Twinning Association**

Cllr J Hill reported that he had been approached by a member of the Twinning Association who informed him the town in France Mary Tavy had been twinned with has since merged with another settlement and been renamed. This means the signs at the entrance to Mary Tavy are incorrect. He asked the Clerk to research whose responsibility it would be to change the signs and associated costs. He also asked that this item be added to the agenda for January.

Action Clerk to add Mary Tavy Twinning Association – Signs to the January agenda.

8.2.b **Blocked drain**

Cllr Page received a voice message from a member of the public who reported a fallen tree blocking a drain on the moor. He investigated and removed the tree immediately.

12/12/2017/9 **Reports from Councillors and outside organisations**

9.1 **Emergency Warden and Snow Warden**

Cllr Page declared an interest in this item.

Cllr J Hill reported he had chased Gemma Cater, Flood Defence Officer at Devon County Council for the report she had promised. So far he had still received no response. He intended to contact the Environment Agency in order to ascertain whether they could assist with the issue of flooding on Blackdown Common.

9.2 **Southern Parishes Link Committee representative**

Cllr G Hill was not present at the meeting therefore could not provide a report.

9.3 **Dartmoor National Park Authority representative**

Cllr G Hill was not present at the meeting therefore could not provide a report.

9.4 **Coronation Hall representative**

Cllr Ross was not present to give his report. Cllr J Hill reported on his behalf. The Annual General Meeting was held and was well attended. The newly established website was having the desired effect with over 5000 hits and a significant increase in bookings direct from the website had been noted. Quotations for improvements to the toilet facilities were still being acquired. The Pantomime would run from Thursday 14th to Saturday 16th December.

9.5 **Police report**

There was no report.

9.6 **Webmaster**

Cllr Fife Cook stated a number of requirements of the Transparency Code were still not

being fulfilled such as the need to post Cllrs Registers of Interest. Cllr J Hill suggested a list of required documents be compiled. Once the PC had a list of documents which were required on the website under the Transparency Code the list could then be prioritised and worked through until the website met the required standard. Cllr J Hill asked if Cllr Fife Cook could compile the list. Cllr Fife Cook agreed he would.

9.7 **Mary Tavy Victory Memorial Recreation Ground**

Cllr G Hill was not present at the meeting therefore could not provide a report.

9.8 **Reports from outside organisations**

There were no reports from outside organisations.

12/12/2017/10 **Planning**

10.1 **Notification of new planning applications from DNPA**

The Clerk received the following notifications of new planning applications.

0578/17 – Meadow laws, Brentor Road

0551/17 – South Warne Farm.

Proposed tree works

17/0079 – Standard Court

Fell 8-9 Leylandii

A planning meeting was held on Tuesday 12th December 2017.

Notification of decisions on previous applications received from DNPA

The Clerk has not received any decisions on previous planning applications.

12/12/2017/11 **Cemetery**

11.1 **Report from Burial Clerk**

The Burial Clerk reported that she had received one application for Exclusive Rights of Burial for a double plot. One application for the erection of a headstone with inscription and one application for an additional headstone. Both inscriptions were read aloud. All Cllrs agreed they were appropriate and conformed to Cemetery Rules and Regulations. Having been asked by Cllr J Hill the number of grave spaces still available the Burial Clerk confirmed 27 plots remained within the area of consecrated ground.

12/12/2017/12 **Maintenance**

12.1 **Noticeboard**

The Clerk reported she had asked Mr Colin Grice to provide a quotation to refurbish the Parish Noticeboard. He agreed to look at the noticeboard and get back to the Clerk with his thoughts.

12/12/2017/13 **Grants and Donations**

13.1 **Citizens Advice Bureau**

Cllr J Bright and Cllr Page both stated that they felt the PC should support this organisation. Cllr Page proposed a donation of £150.

Decision Proposed Cllr Page, seconded Cllr Bright, all in favour.

12/12/2017/14 **Projects**

14.1 **Rural gateway**

Cllr Fife Cook on behalf of the Jubilee Group reported that the application for funding from Devon Communities Fund had been withdrawn temporarily. The level of information required to make a full application is not yet available. Cllr Page asked what type of information was required. Cllr Fife Cook stated he believed it would be preferential if the Parish Council and Jubilee Group made a joint application however certain questions such as who does the land belongs to and do we require planning permission?

14.2 **Signs and parking at Mary Tavy and Brentor School – Highways**

The Clerk reported that no further progress has been made. The agreed signs have been ordered but a timescale could not be provided.

14.3 **Allotments**

Cllr Bright declared an interest.

Cllr Bright reported that he had received confirmation via email from DNPA stating that there was no requirement for planning permission in regard to polytunnels. A draft contract had been given to the Trustees of the Recreation Ground. A meeting between Allotment Association and Recreation Ground Trustees would be arranged after the Christmas break in order to finalise the wording. Cllr Bright was in the process of designing

the allotments to incorporate a community garden. One quote for fencing had so far been acquired.

14.4 **Christmas tree festival**

The Clerk suggested that in future the PC decorate the tree with traditional decoration rather than attempting a theme as making the decorations was too time consuming.

14.5 **Gritter**

Cllr J Hill had researched quad mounted gritters and had a short list of eight possibilities. He handed printed copies of the gritters specifications to Cllrs. Cllr J Hill recommended a particular machine which was able to spread the grit/salt even if moisture had got into the grit. Cllr Page proposed the PC purchase the machine Cllr J Hill had recommended.

Decision Proposed Cllr Page, seconded Cllr Jarvis, all in favour.

Cllr Page also proposed the PC purchase appropriate safety equipment such as goggles, helmet and gloves to ensure Cllr J Hill's safety when using the machine.

Decision Proposed Cllr Page, seconded Cllr Fife Cook, all in favour.

12/12/2017/15 **Communication with Parishioners**

15.1 **Review methods of communicating with Parishioners and associated costs.**

Cllr Fife Cook declared an interest.

The Clerk prior to the meeting had asked Cllr Fife Cook if it was possible for the Jubilee Group to allow the PC sight of the group's accounts as it would aid discussion and possible decisions regarding this matter. The PC had since July 2015 been paying for a full page in each issue of the Jubilee News as well as using the website and the Blackdown News and it was time to fully review all methods of communication with Parishioners. The Clerk was also concerned that Cllr Fife Cook may have a pecuniary interest rather than a personal interest. Cllr Fife Cook stated he had a personal interest and it was for the Cllr to decide whether or not he had a pecuniary which he stated he did not.

The Clerk went on to state that she had come to realise that by posting the articles Cllr Jarvis currently writes for both Blackdown and Jubilee News the PC are already satisfying their obligation to communicate with Parishioners. The Clerk stated it was her job to ensure money is being spent correctly which is why she had placed this item on the agenda. Cllr Jarvis stated he did not feel any decisions could be made without all the necessary information. The Clerk asked Cllrs to consider the current cost of placing the article in the Jubilee News which is £600 per year excluding VAT. She asked Cllrs to consider whether they believed it was value for money taking into consideration the publication is delivered to every household while being mindful that it is a single sheet of A4 6 times a year. She asked Cllrs to consider public opinion given that the Jubilee Group is run by a Cllr and his wife and without knowledge of the cost of producing the newsletter it could be perceived as cross subsidising. Cllr Page stated that when the PC made the decision to use the Jubilee Newsletter it had considered what the PC had done previously which was to use an outside printing company which was expensive and meant the publication had to be in black and white. Cllr Fife Cook stated the PC were getting a very good deal as they purchase a full page cheaper than their going rate. The Clerk stated this was incorrect as she had taken the time to look at the rate card of the Jubilee Group website which stated a full page was £100. The Clerk stated that it had been over two years since that decision and that this was a review not only of the Jubilee News but also the use of the website, Blackdown News and noticeboards within the village. Cllr J Hill reiterated that this was a review and questions also need to be asked of the Blackdown News. Although the article in the Blackdown News was currently entered free of charge it still took considerable time to write. Cllr J Hill wanted to know the number of subscribers to the Blackdown News as this would help decide whether or not continuing this form of communication was worth that time. Cllr Fife Cook stated that an article in the Blackdown News which was purchased by those wishing to read it did not absolve the PC of its responsibility to communicate with Parishioners. It had to be a zero cost to Parishioners. Cllr Jarvis stated that Cllrs were already aware of this and it was not suggesting this was the case. Cllr Fife Cook stated that if Cllrs thought he was concerned about the possibility of losing the article from the PC and therefore the payments the PC was wrong. Again the Clerk stated this was a review and it was her job to ensure money is spent correctly and if a cheaper alternative was available such as simply posting the articles on the website and possibly printing copies from the laptop and printer in her possession and placing them in public buildings within the village she had to make the PC aware. This did not necessarily mean that Cllrs would agree this alternative was preferential to the current situation. Cllr Jarvis still felt he lacked the information required to make any decisions and asked Cllr Fife Cook what the cost of producing the Jubilee Newsletter was. Cllr Fife Cook answered that the cost of production was irrelevant to the work of the PC as it was buying advertising space. If the PC felt printing the articles on single A4 pieces and placing them around the

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village was comparable to having it in the only newsletter in the village Cllrs were kidding themselves. Cllr J Hill stated that the Jubilee Group had changed considerably since it started out. Newsletters had previously stated that everybody in receipt of the newsletter was a member of the Jubilee Group, however the most recent newsletter no longer held this statement. Cllr Fife Cook confirmed all residents were considered members. Cllr J Hill then stated that the group had previously printed the names of four Trustees they now only had two. Cllr J Hill also stated that he did not know the charity status of the group. Cllr Fife Cook stated that Cllr J Hill could try and find out for himself. Cllr J Hill stated he had checked with the Charity Commission. Cllr Fife Cook stated if that were the case Cllr J Hill would know that the Jubilee Group are registered with the Charity Commission. The Clerk stated that this was incorrect. She had searched the Charity Commission website and could not find the Jubilee Group. A phone call to the Charity Commission confirmed the Jubilee Group are not currently registered but do have an application in progress. Cllr Fife Cook then stated that he believed the reason the PC no longer wanted to advertise in the newsletter was because the editor would not give the PC editorial control. All Cllrs refuted this statement. The Clerk stated that this item was placed on the agenda by her as it had been a considerable length of time since the original decisions as well as having concerns about the clarity of the relationship between PC and Jubilee Group. Cllr Fife Cook stated that the PC have no authority to look at figures. The only person who has that authority is the Monitoring Officer. Cllr J Hill asked that if the entire village are members surely those members have a right to see some figures. Cllr Fife Cook stated no, they do not. He felt the PC had a simple decision to make either to continue paying for advertising space or to withdraw. It was decided that this item should be carried over to the January meeting.

Cllr Jarvis stated that an analysis of the cost effectiveness of the Blackdown News needed to take place also. As Cllr J Hill stated earlier the PC do not currently pay to place their article but neither do they know the number of subscribers. Writing the article takes time which could be better spent on other PC projects. He asked the Clerk to contact the editor and enquire how many subscribers they have.

Action Clerk to add this item to next month's agenda and enquire the readership of the Blackdown News.

12/12/2017/16 **Other matters for discussion**
There was nothing to discuss under this item.

12/12/2017/17 **Next meeting**

17.1 **Items to be brought forward for inclusion on the next agenda**

Review methods of communicating with Parishioners, Annual Parish Meeting, Twinning signs,

17.2 **Date of next meeting**

The date was confirmed as 9 January 2018, 7.30pm, Reading Rooms.

This meeting was recorded to assist in writing accurate minutes.

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 22.29pm.

Minutes prepared by Mrs Kerri Higham, Clerk to Mary Tavy Parish Council.

Signed: Cllr J Hill
Chair of the Parish Council _____

Date _____

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