

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

Date	20 February 2018
Location	Reading Rooms, Mary Tavy
Those present	Cllr J Bright, Cllr M Fife Cook, Cllr G Hill, Cllr J Hill (Chair), Cllr P Jarvis, Cllr R Page and Cllr G Ross (7)
Others present	Mrs K Higham (Clerk) plus 7 members of the public.

Proceedings

Parishioners' Time -

Mrs Anita Prosser wish to express her concerns regarding the ways in which the PC communicate with **parishioners** She felt the article currently published in the Jubilee Newsletter did not need to be an entire page. The article could be shortened or reduced to bullet points which would reduce the cost significantly. She also felt that as the Jubilee Newsletter was bi-monthly the information from the PC was not as up to date as it could be. In response to the letter written by Cllr Page in the post resent additional of the Jubilee Newsletter in which Cllr Page stated the Blackdown News was a religious publication, Mrs Prosser disagreed. She stated she had always received the Blackdown News and never considered it to be a religious publication but simply an informative magazine full of village news. As this publication was issued monthly it was also more up to date. Mrs Prosser felt the PC website could be the most efficient way of communicating with parishioners but it was only as good as those operating it. She felt there was a lack of consistency regarding documents posted on the website. The PC was made up of enough members and the website should be manageable provided someone took responsibility, not all the work should be left to the Clerk. Cllr J Hill thanked Mrs Prosser for her feedback and stated the items would be discussed under the relevant agenda item.

A group representing residents of Station Road attended the meeting to express concerns over site traffic using Station Road to access a new development on Butchers Park Hill, Tavistock. They felt the route was inappropriate for the size and type of vehicles which would require access. They felt the road was too narrow with too few passing places which could cause serious congestion. Cllrs confirmed that they shared the residents' concerns and would discuss the matter fully under correspondence.

Mr Paul Williams attended the meeting as a Trustee of the Reading Rooms. The Trustees have submitted an application for a grant from the Parish Council which will be discuss under a specific item. Mr Williams had made himself available to answer any questions the PC may have.

The Chairman declared the meeting open at 7.30pm.

20/02/2018/1 **Apologies for absence**

There were no apologies.

20/02/2018/2 **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.

20/02/2018/3 **Clerk's resignation and appointment of a replacement**

Cllr J Hill thanked the Clerk for her hard work over the past two and a half years. Cllrs decided to hold a separate meeting to review the job description and contract before advertising for a new Clerk. Time to be confirmed.

20/02/2018/4 **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

4.1 **Council meeting, 09 January 2017**

The minutes were approved.
Proposed Cllr Ross, seconded Cllr Page, all in favour.

4.2 **Planning meeting, 09 January 2017**

The minutes were approved subject to the deletion of the line stating that DNPA were unlikely to approve an application which continued the roofline.

Proposed Cllr Bright, seconded Cllr Ross, all in favour.

20/02/2018/5 Matters arising

Cllr Fife Cook reported that news of the proposed route of site traffic had come to him and as a result the Jubilee Group had emailed all its contacts to inform them. Cllrs agreed the route was inappropriate for those types of vehicles and as a PC they should support the residents of Mary Tavy. Cllr Fife Cook proposed writing to WDBC planning department and DCC Highways outlining the PC and residents' concerns about the inadequate passing places, narrow bridges and steep declines.

20/02/2018/6 Finance

6.1 Review and approve the monthly Financial Report including payments

Cllr Page questioned whether a Cllr could invoice the PC for work undertaken to repair and refurbish the Cemetery Noticeboard. Cllr Ross had submitted an invoice as he had undertaken this work following a spate of vandalism in the Cemetery. Cllr Fife Cook agreed with Cllr Page, his understanding was that a Cllr could reclaim expenses only. The Clerk asked if she could conduct some research on this subject and suspend the payment until next month.

All payments were approved with the exception of the Cemetery noticeboard refurbishment.

Decision Proposed Cllr Page, seconded, Cllr J Hill, four in favour, 1 abstention.

A small amount of interest on the bank accounts was received this month.

Total outgoings including Clerk's wages and expenses, grounds maintenance and external audit. Total payments were £983.83.

Some items include VAT which is reclaimable by the Parish Council.

20/02/2018/7 Communication with Parishioners

7.1 Review methods of communicating with Parishioners and associated costs

Cllr Fife Cook declared an interest.

The Clerk reported she had received several letters and emails from parishioners who had praised the Jubilee Newsletter for its quality and content and stated that they hoped the Parish Council would continue to provide residents with news however, those who knew the true cost or had asked the Clerk to provide that information further stated that they felt that £600 per year was not good value for money. Some had suggested the PC take less space in the Newsletter in order to save money while others felt it was an unnecessary cost to parishioners given that the PC had a noticeboard and website as well as the article in the Blackdown News. Cllr Bright felt that the number of emails and letters expressing a similar viewpoint was very telling and those views should be taken seriously. Cllr Page disagreed. Cllr Jarvis felt that the matter needed more in-depth conversation than time allowed in this meeting. He did not wish the Parish Council to make rash decisions and suggested a working group be formed to focus solely on this subject. Methods of communicating, costs and value for money as well as ideas for improving existing methods and bringing new ideas to the table will be discussed.

Decision Proposed Cllr Jarvis, seconded Cllr J Hill, 4 in favour, 1 abstention.

20/02/2018/8 Cemetery

8.1 Report from Burial Clerk

The Burial Clerk reported having received two letters from members of the public with concerns over the removal of wreaths and other floral tributes in Mary Tavy Cemetery. Both had been mailed written responses explaining the difficulties being faced regarding theft and vandalism and that the PC had reported the matter to the Police. The Burial Clerk stated that she had not sold any plots or had any requests for interment since the last meeting.

8.2 Inscriptions

Duke – Prior to the meeting the Burial Clerk circulated a revised inscription from Mrs Duke for her late husband. The Burial Clerk read the inscription again. Cllr J Hill proposed the PC accept the inscription. Cllr Jarvis suggested a letter should go to Mrs Duke explaining the inscription had been accepted and that no further changes would be discussed, this was the final variation.

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

Petherick – The Clerk read the proposed inscription aloud for Cllrs. Cllr Page proposed the inscription was accepted.

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

Heathman – The Clerk read the proposed inscription aloud for Cllrs. Cllr Jarvis proposed the inscription was accepted.

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

20/02/2018/9 Grants and Donations

9.1 Letters of thanks, Royal British Legion & Help for Heroes

Following last year Remembrance Service the PC donated £29.40 each to the Royal British Legion and Help for Heroes, both organisations had written to the PC to thank them for their contribution.

9.2 Allotment Association

Cllr Bright declared an interest.

Mary Tavy Allotment Garden Association requested a grant of £4,149.40. Details, quotes and supporting evidence was circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting. This amount was to cover the full cost of establishing the allotment site including fencing and water supply. Cllr Bright stated that because of the location of the site it would be a community asset where he hoped people would stop and look at what was growing and talk with allotment holders and be inspired to grow their own fruit and vegetables. It would be a place where people could come and take surplus crops and provide a community style garden for the general public to use. He hoped it would be far removed from the 'old men in sheds' as over 60% of applications for allotments were from women or couples and over 75% were from people in the 50 -60 year age group. Both these groups have been identified as being at risk of poor health and would benefit from physical and mental stimulation. Having allotments would improve the Parish Councils green credential and sustainability of the village and asked that the application be approved in full. Cllr Bright then quoted from a published legal opinion from a barrister which stated that the provision of allotments is a statutory duty under S23.1 of the Allotments and Small Holdings Act 1908. Where there is a conflict between the law and published advice the law must take precedence. The Clerk confirmed that this exactly reflected the information that she had taken from the book of Local Council Administration. Cllr Page asked who the barrister was employed by and was told that he was legal consultant to the NSALG (National Allotment Association). Cllr Page felt that because the lawyer was employed by the NSALG the advice was worthless and believed he could find a lawyer who would supply an opposing view. Cllr Fife Cook asked how much money the allotment association had, to which Cllr Bright replied that there was none as they had only recently been established and despite numerous requests for finance from a large number of charitable organisations none would provide funds for a statutory provision or any other project involving a Parish Council. Cllr Fife Cook stated that he felt the sum of money requested was very large and that he had to obey a principle of protecting Parishioners' money which trumped any statutory duty that he may have. Cllr Page felt that it was a lot of money so that a relatively small number of people can grow a few vegetables. Cllr Fife Cook told Cllr Bright that he had not tried hard enough to find funding, the funds for the Jubilee Walk had been raised in a matter of days. Cllr Fife Cook suggested the Allotment Association go away and try to raise fund by other means. Cllr Fife Cook felt that because Cllrs G & J Hill are Trustees of the Recreation Ground they may want to consider whether or not they should vote on this matter as the land for allotments would be leased from the Recreation Ground. Cllr Jarvis proposed the decision on this application be postponed until the next meeting allowing the Clerk time to further research exactly what it means to provide an allotment and clear up any issues there may be surrounding voting rights.

Decision Proposed Cllr Jarvis, seconded Cllr Page, 4 in favour, 1 abstention.

Action Clerk to research allotment provision and contact Monitoring Officer for advice.

9.3 Reading Rooms

Trustees of the Reading Rooms supplied a number of quotes for works to the building including updating the electric, repainting inside and outside, window blinds and flooring. The Trustees had not supplied a specific figure but stated they had supplied supporting documentation for all the work they wished to carry out and would scale back the project dependent upon how much the Parish Council were willing to assist. They had been provided with a copy of the Grant Policy and understood the PC expected them to match fund. The overall cost of all the proposed work was in the region of £7,000. Cllr Fife Cook stated he was pleased to see an application from the Reading Rooms as the building was clearly in need of work. He suggested the Parish Council contribute an amount of £1,000. Cllr Jarvis agreed it was a worthwhile cause but doubted the amount suggested would go far enough towards improving the situation. Cllr G Hill suggested a figure of £2,000 would be closer to the mark. Cllr Ross questioned the integrity of the building having worked in the trade. He felt the building may be suffering from damp and until that was established it may be pointless to try and paint the interior.

The meeting was suspended at this point to allow the Reading Room representative to

answer Cllr Ross's concerns.

Cllr Jarvis suggested the Parish Council offer a sum of £1,500 and ask the Reading Rooms to provide a revised schedule of work taking into account that their offer should be taken as 50% of the overall spend.

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

20/02/2018/10 **Projects**

10.1 **Rural gateway**

The Clerk reported that she had asked DDC Highway if there was any scope for planters or other designs for gateways other than the example provided by Highway last month. Highway confirmed they would not consider any deviation from the standard design and size. Highways did however confirm that Cllr Pearce, WDBC had been in contact reference the entrance signs to the village which specify the community in France Mary Tavy is twinned with. Highways asked if the PC wish to add anything to the new signs should they go ahead.

10.2 **Allotments**

Cllr Bright declared an interest.

Cllr Bright had nothing further to add. All current aspects were covered under Grants & Donations.

10.3 **Gritter**

The salt spreader was delivered to Kingsett Farm on Monday 15th February. Cllr J Hill had tested the equipment and believed it worked very well.

10.4 **Annual Parish Meeting**

The Clerk confirmed the Coronation Hall had been booked. Invitations to representatives of the Borough and County Councils will be sent in the next week as well as the ranger from DNPA and the local PCSO.

20/02/2018/11 **Remembrance Sunday, procedure and timings**

The Clerk reported the due to illness she had not completed the work on this project.

20/02/2018/12 **General Data Protection Regulation**

The Clerk stated she had no further information regarding this item at the present time.

20/02/2018/13 **Planning**

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

The Clerk received the following notifications of new planning applications.

Proposed tree works

18/0012 – Reading Rooms

Fell – 1 Oak

Fell – 1 Willow

13.2 **Notification of decisions on previous applications received from DNPA**

The Clerk has received the following decisions on previous planning applications.

Planning applications

0629/17 – No. 3 Midlands Cottages

This application has been granted conditional permission.

20/02/2018/14 **Correspondence**

14.1 **Update on previous correspondence**

a Burntown Plain – layby

The Clerk stated she had reported the litter to WDBC and contacted DNPA to ask if they had a sign saying 'Please take your litter home' or words to that effect. DNPA informed the Clerk it is a Highways issue. The Clerk contacted Highways to ask the same, they said they would check the depot in Tavistock to see if they had any spare, otherwise the PC could order one.

b Mobile telephone signal

The Clerk reported she had received an email from Mr. Phil Ferris who previously contacted the PC regarding mobile telephone signal, in order to inform them that the situation had improved dramatically in recent days.

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

20/02/2018/15 **Reports from Councillors and outside organisations**

Mary Tavy Parish Council

15.1 Emergency Warden and Snow Warden

Cllr J Hill reported that the towable salt spreader arrived shortly after the last PC meeting. He has tested it and informed the PC that it works very well. Cllr J Hill informed the PC that he has produced a draft Emergency Plan which he would circulate prior to the next meeting.

15.2 Southern Parishes Link Committee representative

The next meeting of this Committee will be Thursday 8th March.

15.3 Dartmoor National Park Authority representative

No meeting of this Committee has been held.

15.4 Coronation Hall representative

Cllr Ross reported that the Committee are awaiting a quotation for improvement works to the toilet facilities. They are also looking for new ideas to improve the Spring Fair which will be held on Monday 28th May.

15.5 Police report

The Clerk reported that she would be meeting with a PCSO from Tavistock sometime in the next week to discuss incidences in Mary Tavy Cemetery.

15.6 Webmaster

Cllr J Hill reported that he had begun working on a number of issues. Cllr Fife Cook suggested waiting until a new Clerk was appointed before deciding whether a working group was required. It may transpire that the new Clerk's skills are sufficient to administer the website.

15.7 Mary Tavy Victory Memorial Recreation Ground

Cllr G Hill reported that the Trust would soon start to seriously think about improvements to the children's' play area as a lot of the wooden structures were reaching the end of their lives.

20/02/2018/16 **Maintenance**

There was nothing to discuss under this item.

20/02/2018/17 **Other matters for discussion**

There was nothing to discuss under this item.

20/02/2018/18 **Next meeting**

18.1 Items to be brought forward for inclusion on the next agenda

Appointment of a new Clerk

18.2 Date of next meeting

The date was confirmed as 13 March 2018, 7.30pm, Reading Rooms.

This meeting was recorded to assist in writing accurate minutes.

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 22.51pm.

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

Signed: Cllr J Hill

Chair of the Parish Council _____

Date _____