

DUNCHIDEOCK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes

Meeting of Dunchideock Parish Council, held **Tuesday 15th January 2019 at 7.30 pm at: Dunchideock Village Hall, School Lane, Dunchideock EX2 9UG**

Publication date: 25th January 2019

Present: Cllrs Sharpe, Moor, Robson and McCarthy, DCC Cllr Connett, TDC Cllr Lake, Mr N Harvey (Clerk) and 15 members of the public. Cllr Cook was co opted and present for the meeting.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced and welcomed the new Parish Clerk Mr Norman Harvey.

1) Declarations of Interest and Dispensations: (In accordance with the Code of Conduct)

All Councillors declared an interest in Item 15. The Clerk granted a general dispensation under the Localism Act 2011 for all elected and co-opted serving councillors, now and in the future to discuss:

- any **allowance, travelling expenses, payment or indemnity**
- any **ceremonial honour** to be given to Members;
- the **setting of the Council Tax or Precept**

The dispensation for item 15 was allowed on the grounds that although the setting of a precept may constitute a pecuniary advantage, without a dispensation the transaction of the Parish Council on this matter would be impeded as the meeting would be not be quorate.

2)PUBLIC DISCUSSION (not to exceed 10 minutes). - No Items raised.

3) Apologies for Absence: - Received from Cllr Bean, Cllr Ellis and TDC Cllr Goodey.

4) Minutes – To approve and sign minutes. Cllr Robson requested an amendment to the Part I minutes of 19th December 2018 to reflect that Cllr McCarthy was not present. With this amendment, the minutes from the 19th December (Employment & Complaints Committee Part I & Part II) were accepted as a true and accurate record of that meeting and signed by Cllr Moor. The minutes of the main council meetings of 20th November and 19th December were signed by Cllr Sharpe as a true and accurate record of those meetings. Proposed Cllr Sharpe Seconded Cllr Moor. All Agreed

5) Appointment of Parish Clerk – To approve the appointment of a new Clerk. Cllr Sharpe stated that the Employment & Complaints Committee (under delegated powers) interviewed and appointed Mr Norman Harvey to be the new Parish Clerk. She asked for an acknowledgement of this appointment and all present indicated their approval. Mr Harvey was welcomed to his new post. Cllr Sharpe thanked the committee and a member of the public who sat on the interview panel for their time in running this process and confirmed that the outcome was fully supported.

6) Co option of Parish Councillor - Cllr Sharpe said that there were three applicants for the vacancy as a Parish Councillor. She invited the two applicants who were at the meeting to say a few words to the public and Parish Council about their desire to be a Parish Councillor. Cllr Sharpe read out the application from the absent applicant. Councillors considered the applications against the co-option criteria and voted by way of a show of hands. All present voted in favour of co-opting Stephen Cook. There were no votes for either of the other applicants. Cllr Sharpe invited him to take a place with

the other Councillors for the rest of the meeting. Cllr Cook signed a document accepting the Office of Parish Councillor and declared an interest in item 15 on the agenda. The Clerk confirmed that he was covered by the dispensation already granted.

7) District & County Councillor Reports – Cllr Connett stated that the level of the Council Tax precept was unknown but would represent an increase. Due to increasing pressure from Children Services and Adult and Social Care, it was likely to be increased to the maximum allowed. He stated however that DCC had been given an additional £18m as a Highways grant. This is still to be allocated.

Cllr Lake said it was a pleasure to attend and support the efforts of this Parish Council. He said that there would be a likely rise in the Council Tax precept for next financial year but it was not yet set.

8) Matters Arising

a) Consultation re Parish Notice Boards – Cllr Moor said that he had received no further responses to the consultation. In view of the Parish Council financial position, he proposed that the three existing Parish Council notice boards and the Village Hall notice board (with the VH committee permission) are used for now and an additional board at Tower Court was reconsidered when finances allowed. This was supported.

b) 4x4 Drivers for Inclement Weather – On behalf of Cllr Bean, Cllr Sharpe said that posters had been placed on the parish notice boards and on the website seeking volunteers who owned 4x4 vehicles and were happy to help in an emergency in inclement weather. Articles will also go in the parish magazines. A list of volunteers will be maintained who can provide support to our residents in times of emergency or extreme need.

c) First Aid Input Arrangements – Cllr Sharpe said that posters had been displayed on the notice boards, website and will go in the parish magazines for this event on Saturday 9th February, 10 – 1pm in the Village Hall. She asked that as many Councillors as possible attend to support it. This is a free, un-certificated input from a resident paramedic. A further session on defibrillators will be delivered by the Community Heartbeat Trust who will be supplying the units. This will be arranged once the defibrillators are installed. Should parishioners not be able to attend on 9th February, there is a similar First Aid input at Shillingford St George Village Hall on Saturday 16th February at the same time. Anyone from this parish would be welcome to attend.

9) Planning Application: 18/02553/NPA

Location: Treetops, Dunchideock

Proposal: Application for prior approval under Part 3 class Q (a) & (b) paragraph W of the GDPO change of use of agricultural building to a dwelling

Cllr McCarthy outlined the planning application and relevant issues. His report can be found at Appendix A. Following discussion it was agreed that the Parish Council would offer no objections. Proposed Cllr McCarthy Seconded Cllr Moor. Resolved

10) Damage Caused to BT Fibre Cabinet – On behalf of Cllr Ellis, Cllr Sharpe stated that the protective wall around the cabinet had been damaged in the latter part of last year. The Parish Council had gone to great lengths to get this wall built in 2015. The wall has been repaired by a stone mason using new stone. It is still covered at the moment to protect it from the weather.

11) Training for new Parish Clerk and Councillor – To agree booking and payment for necessary training courses – Cllr Sharpe said that as a minimum the Clerk should attend the New Clerks course, Data protection /GDPR, and the training for the election. Cllr Cook will need to attend the New Councillor course. Usually courses cost £30 of which £5 VAT can be re claimed. There was previously an agreement for Cllr McCarthy to attend the New Councillor course but he was unable to

attend the dates offered last year, so this should also be booked. Cllr Sharpe stated that it was unrealistic for the Clerk to attend these courses and complete the work required within the contracted hours and if necessary the time for course attendance should be paid in addition. Cllr Sharpe also sought agreement to fund the proposed courses as outlined.
Proposed Cllr Sharpe Seconded Cllr Moor. Resolved

12) Community Defibrillators – To agree placing the order, installation of units and agreement on expenditure. Cllr Sharpe thanked our County and District Councillors, parishioners and resident businesses for their generosity in grants and donations. So far £3,895 has been pledged of which £550 is still to be deposited into the council bank account. There is a £300 grant application still outstanding and the February Country News newsletter will appeal for further donations. Cllr Sharpe presented 4 options (Appendix B) for Councillors to consider. She recommended locating one at the Village Hall and in anticipation of this the VH committee had arranged easy access from the road through the curtilage wall. The second concentration of our population is the area around the Lord Haldon Hotel driveway. The challenge is to find a mains power in that area. There is a reliable solar solution available but it is £700 more than a mains powered system. The benefit is that there are no ongoing electrical costs (estimated by Western Power to be approximately £30 per annum). Provisionally a 3rd unit to be at Dunchideock Barton due to the generosity of the businesses there. Our chosen provider has confirmed that HMRC view the purchase as a charitable donation and therefore the only item subject to VAT will be the annual management cost which covers insurance, replacement pads and batteries. VAT can be reclaimed and this will assist with the Parish Council cash flow. The provider will also be prepared to send all the units we require on a partial payment/donation and allow us to continue to fund raise to pay the balance. Cllr Sharpe stated that she had been given verbal pledges that suggest we have substantial funds still to come. She asked Councillors to consider the options she presented and decide how many units should be purchased, agree which solution, approve purchase and locations for installation. Following discussion it was agreed that option 1 was supported with the mains powered unit to be installed at the Village Hall and the solar powered unit to be located at the top of the Lord Haldon Hotel driveway (subject to permission). It was agreed that Cllr Sharpe should place the order and arrange installation. The expenditure of £3829 plus the delivery costs estimated to be £50 were approved.
Proposed by Cllr Sharpe Seconded Cllr Moor. Resolved.

13) Replacement of Felled Lime Tree - To consider options and decision on replacement. On behalf of Cllr Ellis, Cllr Sharpe said that previous discussions had led to a consensus that the Lime Tree should be replaced with another Lime Tree. A local person had taken some cuttings from the original tree in the hope that if successful, this could be planted to continue the commemoration of Queen Victoria’s Jubilee when it was planted in 1897 by villagers. A discussion took place and it was agreed that the Parish Council would await the outcome of this option. Cllr Sharpe said that it was a shame that the memory that the original tree was to commemorate the event had been largely forgotten and suggested that if a new tree is planted a commemorative plaque was also installed.

14) FINANCE

a. Bank Reconciliation and Statement - Consider and agree circulated documents. The Clerk stated the bank balance was £5,640.83 as of 2 January 2019. These were signed by the Chairman.

b. Expenditure –	Clerks Expenses (Carol Retallick) July – Oct 2018	= £	54.00
	Clerks Expenses (Carol Retallick) 20 November meeting	=£	58.70
	Information Commissioner Subscription	=£	35.00
	1&1 Domain Name	= £	14.72
	Stationery (envelopes and stamps)	= £	11.53
	Greentrees Arboricultural Services	= £	540.00
	Community Heartbeat Trust	= £	3,829.00

Defibrillator delivery costs estimated at no more than =£ 50.00

Total = £4,592.95

The Chair proposed the approval of the bank reconciliation and the payment of the cheques.

Seconded by Cllr Moor. Resolved

15) Setting Budget and Precept for 2019/20 – To consider and agree the budget proposal and precept request. The Clerk, as the Responsible Financial Officer, read out the Budget Statement and recommendation for the setting of the precept for 2019/20 (Appendix C). Following discussion it was agreed that the recommendations were accepted. **Proposed by Cllr Sharpe Seconded by Cllr Moor. Resolved**

16) Village Hall Report (standing item) – Cllr Robson reported that the Village Hall had erected new signs to the Village Hall. These were erected earlier today but already they had been taken down by person/s unknown. This is petty vandalism and it is not the first time that Village Hall signage has been removed. The Village Hall committee work really hard to run events and increase the bookings in the Village Hall and need support not this hindrance. Members of the public were asked to keep their eyes open for persons interfering with the signs. Future events were announced as:

- 18 January Film Night – Phantom First
- 19 January Tea Afternoon 3-5pm
- 25 January Riverford Master Chef cooking class. Places need to be booked on line. This event will be cancelled if further bookings aren't made, so please support this event.
- 9 February Free First Aid session 10-1pm
- 9 February Quiz/Party Night
- 22 February Film Night – First Man
- 23 February Tea Afternoon
- 9 March Game Show

17) Highways (standing Item) – On behalf of Cllr Ellis, Cllr Sharpe said that the collapsed drain on Blacksmith's hill had been reported to Highways as had a new hole in the vicinity with water coming through and running down the hill. Cllr Robson said that she would try to get some action from Highways to progress repairs.

18) Clerks Update - Urgent items received since the publication of Agenda – No items

19) PUBLIC DISCUSSION – (not to exceed 5 minutes) - The Chairman invited the public to comment on matters raised this evening and for any items for the next agenda.

a) A member of the public referred to Item 15 and stated that the amount of £2,900 for the grant to the Village Hall Committee was not correct. The clerk, as Responsible Financial Officer, had only included amounts paid directly out of Parish Council funds in the Budget Statement and not those from other grant funding paid to the Parish Council to be passed on to the Village Hall Committee towards the repair costs. All the figures can be seen on the official website. The Chairman and Cllr Robson, on behalf of the VHC, confirmed that £2,900 was correct. The statement of the member of the public was therefore wrong.

b) The same member of the public was reported to have made an offensive remark. The remark was apparently heard by other members of the public who objected and asked him not to use that sort of language. The Chairman asked the member of the public to moderate his language and behaviour which was disrupting Parish Council business and if he could not do so, he would be asked to leave the meeting.

c) Another member of the public raised the South Hams Motor Club overnight rally on 9th/10th February. She was concerned that it represented a significant risk to residents and property and queried whether there was adequate insurance in place and whether the event route could be challenged. Following discussion the Chairman undertook to make enquiries with the organisers and to update the residents.

d) TDC Cllr Lake stated that he and Cllr Goodey jointly had £150 that they would be happy to grant towards an additional notice board. The spending of this money did not have a time limit. On that basis, the Chairman thanked him and said that an application would be submitted.

20) Items for Information –

Non competitive cycle sportive on 9th March may cause some disruption to traffic
23rd February Community Litter Pick – 10am – Noon from the Village Hall
7th April Community Walk and Easter Egg Hunt. Details to follow
South Hams Motor Club overnight rally 9th/10th February

The next council meeting will be on Tuesday 19th March 2019 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall
There being no other business the meeting finished at 9 pm.

Due to an error in numbering on the agenda for the meeting, the numbers of the minutes are re numbered to be sequential.

Minutes Approved

Signed:

Date:

Appendix A

Planning reference 18/02553/NPA.

Dunchideock Parish Council considered this application at their meeting on the 15th January 2019. It concerns an existing modern agricultural barn which is proposed to be converted to two residential dwellings.

The following points are pertinent:

- This change of use application is classed as Permitted Development - in other words there is a presumption in favour of development, provided certain local authority conditions are complied with.

Key points:

- The existing barn has no intrinsic architectural or historic value.
- The new design is for a wooden-clad structure which is superficially similar in external appearance to the existing building.
- The dwellings would occupy broadly the same footprint as the current barn.
- Access to the new dwellings would be *via* an existing vehicular access point.
- An ecological baseline study has been completed to a high standard; this concluded there would be no impacts on protected species as a result of the proposals.
- The proposed development does not lie within or adjacent to any areas designated for their heritage, landscape or ecological interest, and there are no other relevant designations close by that might trigger the need for further surveys.
- Neither Environmental Heath, nor DCC Highways have objected.
- There are no other dwellings nearby and there is unlikely to be a noise issue.

In view of the above, I see no grounds for objection to this application.

CIr A McCarthy

Appendix B

Dunchideock Parish Council Defibrillator Options

	Quantity	Price	Net	VAT
option 1 - 1x mains powered & 1xsolar				
semi auto defib & cabinet (powered)	1	£1,350.00	£1,350.00	£0.00
semi auto defib & cabinet (solar)	1	£2,050.00	£2,050.00	£0.00
cardiac arrest response seminar	1	£175.00	£175.00	£0.00
annual support costs 1 year (4 years min)	2	£126.00	£254.00	£50.80
TOTAL			£3,829.00	£50.80

option 2 - 2x mains powered

semi auto defib & cabinet (powered)	2	£1,350.00	£2,700.00	£0.00
cardiac arrest response seminar	1	£175.00	£175.00	£0.00
annual support costs 1 year (4 years min)	2	£126.00	£254.00	£50.80
TOTAL			£3,129.00	£50.80

option 3 - 3x mains powered

semi auto defib & cabinet (powered)	3	£1,350.00	£4,050.00	£0.00
cardiac arrest response seminar	1	£175.00	£175.00	£0.00
annual support costs 1 year (4 years min)	3	£110.00	£330.00	£66.00
TOTAL			£4,555.00	£66.00

option 4 - 2x mains powered & 1 solar

semi auto defib & cabinet (powered)	2	£1,350.00	£2,700.00	£0.00
semi auto defib & cabinet (solar)	1	£2,050.00	£2,050.00	£0.00
cardiac arrest response seminar	1	£175.00	£175.00	£0.00
annual support costs 1 year (4 years min)	3	£110.00	£330.00	£66.00
TOTAL			£5,255.00	£66.00

Appendix C

Dunchideock Parish Council Budget 2019/20 Statement

Good evening everyone. May I say that I look forward to being the Clerk for your Parish Council.

I am also the responsible financial officer for the council and my first task has been to review the financial situation as part of the process to set the Precept for the financial year 2019/2020.

The Parish Council has the power to incur expenditure for the benefit of the area for all or some of its inhabitants and to do this the council obtains funds by means of a precept. This must be advised to Teignbridge District Council as the collecting council before the end of January each year.

The budget must be as accurate as possible to ensure that funds are received for the proper carrying out of its functions during the following year. It is important to emphasise that this is the only opportunity to apply for the precept to receive its income.

A very detailed reconciliation of the current financial situation and bank balances has been prepared for me together with a projection of the financial reserve as at 31/3/2019. This has revealed a serious situation.

The reserve as at 31/3/2017 was £4,735 and the projected balance and reserve as at 31/3/2019 is £925. This is a reduction of 80.5 % and is in fact below the balance for 31/3/2014 – some 5 years ago.

I have investigated the figures and the main reasons for this major reduction are:

1. In December 2017/ January 2018 the ceiling in the village hall fell down and the then Council received a request for a grant of £3,400 towards the cost of the repair. This was supported by a large number of residents who were present at the council meeting. A grant was agreed by the then council and £2,900 was paid. This was not in the budget and the amount had to come out of the reserve with the result that there was an excess of expenditure over income of £2,106.

From the Minutes it appears that the decision only considered the bank balances and did not consider the overall financial situation, especially the impact on the Reserve. In principle your Council took the right action to support your village hall which was felt necessary by the presence of a large number of residents but no financial assessment was made which was aggravated by the amount not being in the budget. It is considered in hindsight that a lower amount, say £1,500, would have been more appropriate.

2. At the start of the financial year 2018/19 there were vacancies for three councillors and a number of residents requested that an election was held. The cost charged by Teignbridge District Council was £1,258. Despite an annual recommendation by

Teignbridge District Council to include provision for a contested election in the budget, this was not done. The cost meant a further reduction in the Reserve.

3. The Lime tree at the junction of school lane had to be felled on health and safety grounds. This was unexpected and not in the budget and again the cost of £540 had to come out of the Reserve.

The total paid for these three matters is £4,698 out of a Reserve of £4,735.

Points to bear in mind are:

1. It would appear that the financial situation was not understood or anticipated in response to the request from the village hall committee. Your present Council is in discussion with the committee to try and resolve the matter. I am very pleased to advise you that the village hall committee has agreed to refund half of the grant in the sum of £1,450 in two payments.

This is an excellent example of two community groups working together and I would like to thank the committee through their Chairman Karen. This will ease the current financial situation as it will be a great help.

2. No action was taken on the annual recommendation of Teignbridge District Council to include provision in the budget for a possible challenged election. This has meant a lower precept in the past.

3. Out of the £4,698 spent, £4,158 was at the request of residents.

In setting the precept for 2019/2020 your present council has considered the following factors:

1. The much reduced Reserve of £925. A generally accepted figure is at least one years' expenditure of say £3,000 as a minimum.

2. Increases in costs that that are beyond the control of the Council.

3. Parish Council elections are due in May at a cost of say £1,250. The Council must make provision for a contested election. If an election is not held an undertaking is given to retain the amount provided as a reserve.

4. The Clerk's time in dealing with complaints and requests from residents for information is increasing and this will increase expenditure.

5. The need to be able to provide some if only basic services.

6. This is the only time that a precept can be requested; it cannot be changed and will be for the financial year to 31/3/2020.

7. A reduction in the Council Tax Base for the financial year due to an increased number of residents qualifying for single occupancy or benefits.

8. The possibility of your council becoming insolvent due to the previous decisions.

There are no excess amounts in the budget which will only allow the present Council to fulfil its basic functions. The ability of the Council to support the residents is limited due to the previous decisions and a period of stability is required to establish financial solvency. The Council is very aware of the financial impact on residents and the difficult decision has been made to include only half of the cost of a challenged election which itself carries an element of risk. Any future projects such as replacement of the Lime tree would have to be delayed or would make the Council insolvent. The budget proposal is for a precept of £4,200 which is an increase on last year of 43.84%. Having examined the background to the present situation and the items in the budget I recommend that it is approved.