

LITTLEHAM & LANDCROSS PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT LITTLEHAM
VILLAGE HALL ON THURSDAY 1st OCTOBER 2009

Present: Cllr, Atkinson, Mrs Beer (Vice-Chairman), Hamilton (Chairman), Hassall, Heard, Hopkins, Poole, G Smith, M Smith and Stevens, Torridge District Cllr Pennington and Devon County Cllr Dr Robinson.

Apologies: Cllrs Mrs Galvin and Ms Lamb

Members of the public and Parish Councillors wishing to address the meeting on a specific agenda item, are, in accordance with Standing Order 24 and Paragraph 12(2) of Statutory Instrument 2007/1159, permitted to do so before that Agenda Item. No members of the general public were present,

884 Registration of Members Interests: No additional registrations were required.

885 Minutes 869 - 883 of 30 July 2009:

RESOLVED, on the motion of Cllr M Smith, seconded by Cllr Poole, that Minutes 869-883 of 30 July 2009 are approved and signed as a correct record.

886 Matters arising from Minutes 869 - 883 of 30 July 2009:

(a) (Min 872a) Allotments:

Mrs Behnke has been advised that Cllr Mrs Galvin has placed an article about Allotments in Crosslet.

(b) (Min 872b) Biodiversity Audit:

The Biodiversity Audit Action Group met on 22 September and a Working Group has been formed. They will meet in Littleham Village Hall on 21st October 2009 at 7.30pm and the Parish Council is requested to meet any room hire costs that the Working Group incurs.

Members thought the poor turnout on the 22nd September indicated lack of interest locally. Mrs Percy had organised a similar group, but interest waned. Cllr Atkinson thought that there would not be enough volunteers to advance the biodiversity audit work envisaged. Cllr Stevens has been contacted by several Littleham farmers who advise that they will refuse access to their land. This would restrict future audit work in Littleham to public footpaths and the gardens of consenting owners. Cllr Stevens thought that DCC should meet the costs of biodiversity audit work, not the Parish Council. After some discussion, the Parish Council agreed to pay for the Village Hall meeting on the 21st October.

RESOLVED, on the motion of Cllr Hopkins, seconded by Cllr Mrs Beer, that the Parish Council meets the cost of hiring Littleham Village Hall on 21st October, but requests the Working Group to submit statements setting out a Work Plan, the benefits to the Parish, evidence of why the Working Group should continue and how sufficient volunteers can be found to carry out the work envisaged". No further support will be considered until this evidence has been evaluated by the Parish Council.

(c) (Min 876b) Withdrawal of DCC Mobile Library from Landcross:

Cllr Mrs Beer reported that the previous satisfactory service has resumed and looks likely to continue.

(d) (Min 877c) Precept 2010-11:

A TDC request for notification of 2010-11 Precept by 5th Jan 2010 was deferred until the next meeting.

(e) (Min 889) Mrs Jennifer Barker MBE: Members noted receipt of a letter of thanks from Mrs Barker MBE.

887 Planning Matters:

(a) Matters arising from Previous Minutes: Nothing to report.

(b) Planning Application 1/0882/2009/FUL, Spinney Cottage, Scratchface Lane, Littleham:

RESOLVED, on the motion of Cllr Atkinson, seconded by Cllr Stevens, that Planning Application 1/0882/2009/FUL, for a two-storey extension at Spinney Cottage, Scratchface Lane, Littleham is recommended for APPROVAL, subject to adequate off-track parking being provided, because several years ago, there were complaints from riders that vehicles parked on the green-road track impeded through passage and made access from Scratchface Lane difficult.

Minute 887 continued: -

(c) Planning Application 1/0635/2009/FUL, Commercial Riding Stables, Little America, Bideford:

The application relates to proposed change of use within Bideford parish. Several Parish Councillors were contacted by concerned local residents regarding the dangers likely to arise from riding-school horses using Wagon Road and other high-banked narrow roads in or bordering Littleham parish. The complaints were received after the last Parish Council Meeting and several Parish Councillors had already written to TDC expressing their concern. They had requested TDC to allow more time before the application is

determined. TDC has delayed their decision, so that further consideration can be given to highway risk and public safety.

RESOLVED, on the motion of Cllr M Smith, seconded by Cllr Heard and unanimously approved, that the Planning Application 1/0635/2009/FUL: Commercial Riding Stables, Little America, Bideford, is

RECOMMENDED FOR REFUSAL, because of the unsuitability of Wagon Road and Scratchface Lane and connecting green lanes, for horse trekking and horse riding in groups. These roads are narrow Devon-hedge flanked lanes that are frequently used by large agricultural vehicles and lorries.

Whilst the Parish Council acknowledges that there are passing places on Wagon Road, long sections have no parking refuge. It is very difficult to reverse large vehicles, or turn a group of horses on narrow roads flanked by high verges.

The Parish Council strongly disagrees with the D.C.C. recommendation signed by Mr Ian Sorenson on 21 September 2009. Wagon Road is an AA recommended sat-nav-route from Bideford to Littleham. Lorries and other large vehicles have difficulty passing through these narrow lanes and passing parked vehicles on the alternative route through Littleham village. The biggest local farming enterprise is located on the envisaged trekking route and at ploughing, silage, spraying and harvesting times large vehicles and farm machinery are constantly in use on Wagon Road. There are also engineering and manufacturing businesses in the Apps area that are accessed by lorries, farm machinery and large vans. Problems with large vehicles have already resulted in special "Tractors at Work" signs being erected at the approaches to Littleham village. It will be very dangerous to take inexperienced riding groups onto these lanes.

- (d) **SW Planning Training Course: Planning for Non Planners:** Correspondence received and noted.

888 Highways & Footpaths:

- (a) **Boundstone Cottages Parking:**

A letter from Mrs Alvis, 1 Boundstone Cottages, Littleham, had been copied to members with the agenda. Mrs Alvis noted the position following decisions at Minute 874(a). Letters from DCC also noted Minute 874(a) and pointed out that inconsiderate parking is a Police matter.

- (b) **Landcross Bus Bay:**

DCC advises that work on the bus lay-by has been deferred, due to an overspend in this year's DCC programme.

RESOLVED, on the motion of Cllr Mrs Beer, seconded by Cllr G Smith, that DCC are reminded of the Parish Council's concern, because at present, for safety reasons, buses can-not always stop in Landcross village. The Parish Council is extremely disappointed and requests DCC to give assurance that work will commence as soon as possible.

- (c) **DCC: 20 mph Zones and Limits:**

A letter was received from DCC advising that among the criteria governing the use of 20mph zones is a current record of speed- related casualties. Cllr Mrs Galvin has also received communications from DCC.

RESOLVED, that DDC is reminded of the continuing local concern over the speed of traffic on the C461 Yeo Valley road, where there was recently another accident at Edge Mills and the Police were involved.

889 Littleham Village Hall & Playing Field: Hire of Village Hall:

The Chairman reported on works at Littleham Village Hall and on progress achieved. Receipt of correspondence from Forest Fuels and TTVS' Freerunner Up-date (Wi-fi) was noted.

890 Parish Plan:

- (a) **CCD/ TDC Housing Needs Survey:**

Survey Forms were collected by Cllrs Mrs Beer and Cllr Poole for distribution to householders.

- (b) **Community Website Association:** The Association is negotiating with suppliers for more program space.

- (c) **Gt. Torrington Local Community Programme (former MCTI):** Noted that the next LCP Meeting will be on 7th October at Torrington Town Hall. The Clerk will speak on matters relating to the DCC / DAPC Town & Parish Working Group meeting on community engagement, after his meeting in Exeter on 22nd Sept.

891 Finance & Administration:

(a) Clerk's Conditions of Service & 2009 Pay Award:

The Clerk's Job Description and Contract of Employment were written in July 2002 and amended in 2005 to take account of an increase in annual worked hours. A Draft Revised Job Description and Contract of Employment had been circulated to members before the meeting. The Clerk and Chairman had discussed the wording of these documents before they were distributed. The wording is based on format recommended by SLCC and NALC. The hours to be worked and the grading remain unchanged.

RESOLVED, on the motion of Cllr M Smith, seconded by Cllr Mrs Beer, that subject to minor amendments, the revised Clerk's Job Description and Contract of Employment are approved.

The 2009 NALC/ SLCC Pay Award increases the Clerk's hourly rate from £10.097 per hour to £10.198 per hour w.e.f. 1st April 2009. The Award also revises full-time equivalent Pay in Lieu of Leave. After 5 years' service the number of full time equivalent days p.a. increases. The Clerk became entitled to "after 5 years' service entitlement" on 1st April 2007, but payment of the increase was overlooked. The Parish Council was requested to approve back pay of £24.57 for 2007/08 and £ 25.24 for 2008/09.

RESOLVED that the 1st April 2009 Pay Award and the above back-pay are approved.

(b) Authorisation of Payments, Bank Balance Report:

RESOLVED, that payments of £ 366.25 to N.H. Jackson (1/4 yr salary, plus back dated pay entitlement & expenses) and £28.50 to Thomas Westcott (photocopying) are approved.

A cleared bank balance of £1,600.56 at 20 September 2009 and receipt of HSBC advice of changes to terms and conditions were noted. The Chairman endorsed the Bank Statement.

(c) DAPC Subscription 2010/11: DAPC proposes to increase the £82 Annual Subscription by 2% in 2010/11.

892 Correspondence & communications requiring attention:

(a) Devon Rural Network (DRN): Rural Devon Profile 2009:

DRN is a partnership of voluntary and private sector organisations set up to improve links between agencies. It is responsible for the Devon Rural Strategy and the Profile forms an evidence base for the strategy document. The Profile is a snapshot of life in Rural Devon. Receipt of the document was noted.

(b) BT Adopt A Red Phone Box Scheme

BT has invited the Parish Council to adopt the red public telephone box in Littleham village (01237-474495) for £1. BT would remove the telephony and ownership of the kiosk would then be transferred. The kiosk can then be used for whatever purpose the Parish Council considers beneficial to the local community. BT is concerned because there were only 51 calls in 12 months and running costs exceed income. BT state that this shows that the facility is no longer required and they state that they have posted a notice informing that the kiosk is available for adoption.

RESOLVED, that BT is advised that, for emergency and safety reasons, Littleham still needs a public telephone kiosk and the Parish Council therefore objects to any proposal to remove this public telephone facility. Whilst the public telephone facility remains adoption is out of the question.

Minute 892 continued: -

(c) N Devon & Somerset Coastal Advisory Group: Meeting 15 October 2009-09-21: Cllr Hassall will report back.

(d) "Local Works"; More Powers for Parish & Town Councils (Sustainable Communities Act):

"Local Works" requests the Parish Council to write to MP's to campaign for an amendment to the Sustainable Communities Act to enable Local Councils to be included in the process and give them powers within the Sustainable Communities Act process. The correspondence was noted.

The Chairman reported that TDC have reviewed all of the local submissions and six proposals have submitted to the Selector. Cllr Hamilton's submission calling for "*assistance for local communities in making village halls self-sustaining*", which was supported by the Parish Council, was one of the six submitted proposals.

(e) DAPC Newsletter Sep / Oct 09 & AGM: Information about "Strengthening Local Democracy Consultation" reforms, NALC's Councillors Guide to Performance Management and other topics was noted. Notes on the successful DAPC Empowering Communities Conference held on 22 July will be circulated all parish councils and there will be a half-day follow-up conference at Kenn Village Hall on 25th November 2009.

(f) DCC Car Free Day, 22 September 2009: The Clerk car-shared to a DCC/DAPC meeting in Exeter that day.

(g) DCC Newsletter 6: Helping You To Help Yourselves: Newsletter and advice on pandemic flu was received.

893 To consider other correspondence received since the last meeting:

The Parish Council noted that a file containing RD & Express (NHS) magazine; TTVS Annual Report; Devon Countryside Access Forum Annual Report 2008/09; SLCC Cemetery Management course &

other literature; CCD Village Green magazine; Clerks & Councils Direct magazine; CCD Parish Plan course; promotional and other items was circulated at the meeting.

E-Mails relating to CCD Local Councils Review 2008/09; SLCC Devon Meeting 4th Sept; DCC In-Touch magazine Sep; TTVS Voluntary Sector Up-dates; TTVS Training Courses; ISC Parish Council Services; NALC Leadership Academy Warwick Uni.; DAPC E-Bulletins 14 Aug & 28 Aug; DAPC Autumn Training Programmes; NALC E-Bulletin; DAPC Play Building Seminar 17 Sep; Allotments Assoc Minutes and other E-mails had been made available to Members before the meeting.

894 Public Notice Boards:

The Parish Council authorised Mr Tony Brend to repair the Parish Notice Boards in Littleham and Landcross. TDC Cllr Pennington is making enquiries to find out whether he can allocate a small grant towards improving the notice boards.

895 Roadworks near Littleham Mill:

Cllr M Smith reported that S.W. Highways had failed to reinstate the “Slow” sign after completion of repair works on the C461. Cllr Heard agreed to contact Mr Elsworthy of DCC.

896 Next Meeting: Thursday 19th November 2009: 7.30 pm.

The meeting commenced at 7.30 pm and ended at 8.58 pm.