

LITTLEHAM & LANDCROSS PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT LITTLEHAM
VILLAGE HALL
ON THURSDAY 12TH AUGUST 2010.

Present: *Cllrs. Atkinson (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Beer (Chairman), Hamilton, Hassall, Heard, Hopkins, Mrs Lamb, Poole, G Smith, M Smith, Stevens, and TDC Cllr Pennington from 8.20pm.*

Apologies: *Cllrs. Mrs Galvin, and DCC Cllr Dr Robinson*

In Attendance: Lorraine Kindley [member of the public].

Members of the public wishing to address the meeting on a specific agenda item, were, in accordance with Standing Order 24 and Paragraph 12(2) of Statutory Instrument 2007/1159, permitted to do so before that Agenda Item.

Prior to the meeting Cllr Mrs Beer wished to express her thanks to Cllr Atkinson for his work during her absence.

977 - Registration of members Interests: No additional registrations were required.

978 – To confirm Minutes 964-976 of 24th June 2010: Cllr Stevens requested that he be shown as present, and that Minute 976 be amended to Thursday, not Wednesday. After said amendments the Minutes were adopted as a true record of the meeting. P: Cllr Atkinson. S: Cllr Poole. Resolved unanimously.

979 – Matters arising – not covered by today`s Agenda: None.

980 – Planning Matters:

- a- **Church lane, Landcross:** Cllr Mrs Beer advised that it appeared that work was still continuing, had spoken to TDC Cllr Pennington who will take up the matter direct with the enforcement officer. Members were asked to remain vigilant and inform Cllr Pennington accordingly.

1/0440/2010/FUL, 9, Mt. Pleasant: Refused by TDC – by reason of its overall height and scale on a site which has a topographical change the proposed two storey extension is considered not to be subordinate to the host dwelling and is out of character with the existing dwelling and the terraced row which it forms the end of. Therefore the proposal is considered contrary to policies DVT6, DVT7 and HSC4 of Torridge District Local Plan and policy C06 of the Devon Structure Plan.

Land at Edge Mill, Yeo Vale: Cllr Hassall had written a letter to members outlining his concern regarding this matter. Cllr Atkinson had consulted with members who felt that a further meeting would not contribute any more to this problem. The Clerk was asked to contact Nigel Marshall [TDC] to see if any further information was needed to help with their case. A message was duly left for Mr Marshall and [in his absence] his colleague Mr Selsby. Cllr M Smith added that he had spoken to Mr Marshall who believes that they [TDC] have a good case to refuse the application.

Protocol at TDC Planning Meetings: the Clerk had distributed the information to all members.

- b - **Planning Notifications:** None

- c – **Planning Applications:** None.

d – **Other Planning Matters:** LA Trekking Centre, Little America, Coach Drive, Bideford. The Clerk had received an e-mail from a Maggie Melville asking members to advise TDC “if they have any reason to believe that a trekking centre business has commenced on site”. **Resolved that the request be noted, and that the site was not within parish the boundary.**

Land at Whitehall opp. Willow Cottage: Cllr Hassall raised concern that rubbish was being stored on site, fires were being lit to dispose of rubbish – both matters which may impact on the environment especially as the site bordered the River Yeo. He had raised the matter [as a member of the public, not on behalf of the Parish Council] with Torridge District Council.

Resolved: The Clerk is to raise the matter with Torridge District Council and Bideford Town Council via e-mail and to submit a copy to Cllr Pennington.

981 – District & County Councillors Reports: A written report from DCC Cllr Robinson was read to Members [App. A]. He awaits further developments on Local Referenda, regrets the decision to discontinue the Mobile Library service to Landcross, and asks for any infringements of Control of Traffic Orders by HGV's to be reported to North Devon Highways. The report was noted by Members.

982 – Highways & Footpaths

- a- Direction Sign, Old Chapel, Landcross: has been repaired.
- b- Highways Parish Surgery: DCC Cllr Robinson had been unable to attend the meeting.
- c- Other matters: Hedging at Landcross Bridge: As directed the Clerk wrote to Mr Saltmarsh – the hedge has now been cut.

Cllr M Smith asked that we establish prioritisation and spending schedules for repair of minor roads by County Highways. He noted that repairs had been carried out on roads in the area with low traffic usage, whereas the road from Littleham to Abbotsham Cross – a road with high usage was in need of urgent repair. Resolved: that Cllr Heard speak to North Area Highways and report to members.

983 – Village Hall & Playing Fields: Cllr Hamilton confirmed that a biodiversity strip had been planted, and the area “roped off” whilst it becomes established.

984 – Finance & Insurance:

a – Authorisation of Payments and Report on the Bank Balance: Resolved that payments be made to The Audit Commission - £58.75, and £5 to TTVS [Torridge Voluntary Services] for membership subscription due April 2010. The Bank balance as at July 20th stood at £2170.26, with cheque #136 for £25 not yet presented.

985 – Correspondence & Communication Requiring Attention:

- a- TDC Allocation process for Rural Exception Sites: this item had been proposed by Cllr Mrs Galvin, and in her absence is deferred to the next meeting.
- b- Landscape Character Assessment for North Devon & Torridge: Cllr Hassall attended this workshop convened by DCC and held at Caddesdown Business centre on July 21st. DCC have appointed Land Use Consultants [LUC] to undertake a detailed appraisal of the landscapes to enable local councils and partner organisations to more fully understand variations in landscape character, and in so doing, guide land management activity and advice, monitor landscape change, inform planning policy content in the emerging Local Development Framework. Cllr Hassall reported that the attendees included the organisations AOND and Coast & Countryside and many Parish Councillors from the region. Group discussion brought out inter-alia – the concern that the amalgamation of small farm units had led to the use of larger farm machinery on minor roads; and a suggestion that the current Areas of Great Landscape Value might be increased. A report on the workshop conclusions is awaited.
- c- Mobile Library Services: DCC have advised that they will be changing the current routes/schedules for The Mobile Library Service wef January 2011. This review takes place with the benefit of usage statistics, the proximity of stops to permanent libraries and financial restraints to be imposed on Local Authorities under the forthcoming central Government Spending Review. Resolved: it is noted with regret that the current stop at Landcross will be discontinued.
- d- Local Referendums to Veto Excessive Council Tax increases: A consultation document issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government had been distributed prior to the meeting. It's contents have been noted by Members, and further details are awaited. It is expected that a “de minimus” principle would be adopted by Government to protect the majority of Parish Councils from these Referendum proposals. Correspondence from NALC on this topic was also noted.
- e- NALC list of Secondary Legislation being considered for Revocation: Noted.
- f- NALC draft submission on Legislative Reforms: Noted and the Clerk is asked to respond on “Electronic Notice and Agenda for Meetings” – this reform is welcomed, but service by electronic means should remain purely as an acceptable alternative to hard copy.

- g- Devon & Cornwall Police Authority Liaison meetings: there will be no Liaison meetings for the next 12 months. Instead new methods of face to face meetings will be trialled – schedule enclosed; Noted, and details of the new local meetings will be placed in the Crosslet magazine.

986 – AOB:

- a- Cllrs Poole and Hamilton informed the meeting that a new cinema system had been installed in the Village Hall. Total cost £4500, with thanks given to TDC Cllr Pennington for a contribution from TDC funds. Inaugural meeting of the Film Club to be September 11th.
- b- The next meeting of the Bio diversity group will be on 20th September, 2.30pm at South Heale.
- c- Cllr G Smith asked if there was news on the planned bus stop for Landcross; Cllr Mrs Beer advised that although the expenditure had been passed and agreed, it was not listed in the forthcoming budget.
- d- The Clerk advised that the Landcross Notice Board was in need of urgent repair. Cllr Mrs Beer will obtain quotes for the next meeting.

ON-LINE Correspondence received: DALC Newsletter; DCC Intouch July/Aug 2010; TTVS Snippets Bulletin [2]; NALC Local Government Pay Update - 2010/11 and 2011/12; Weekly Rural Focus[x5]; Information on the proposed freezing of council taxes; Biosphere Action Week; Sector Cuts - Guidance for Voluntary Groups and Public Sector Organisations; The George Award 2010; TTVS Training and Events Bulletin; The Co-operative Group – Community Fund (UK); Default retirement age to be phased out; Simple Guides to New Equalities Legislation; Parish news from the Rural Services Network; Cenotaph & Stone Cleaning.

987 – Next meeting: Thursday 30th September, 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.

Minutes for Littleham & Landcross PC 12.08.2010: Appendix

A

Report to Littleham & Landcross Parish Council, for Thursday 12th August 2010.

1/ Local referenda. Just like the county council response to the new proposals for Academies, i.e., keep a watching brief as policy evolves, so too I believe that much more meat needs to be put on the bones before we can get a proper understanding of these proposals.

So many questions come to mind: -

- Are referenda to be applied to the parish precept, or to the district portion, or to the county council tax?
- What proportion of the electorate can trigger a referendum? In this regard TDC recently adopted an arrangement whereby a form of local empowerment can be effected at the request of a proportion of the electorate; I wonder have any details been reported to parishes?
- My understanding is that at present any elections to parish councils are at the cost of the local district council. Would this still pertain for a referendum?
- Likewise, were there to be a county-wide referendum, would all the districts have to collectively meet the running costs of that referendum?

- How would the wording of any referendum be drafted – to totally annul the proposed increase or to set at a lower percentage?
- With the already tight schedule that is the tax-setting process, what would happen should a referendum be triggered (and at what time should any such take place)? If a council fails to set a balance budget by the due date, very serious consequences ensue that can lead to the suspension of that council. What then might happen?
- Will the “excess tax increase” be a percentage or in pounds and pence, e.g. to increase a parish precept by, say, 20% will mean a relatively small increase in district tax; any such increase in district or county tax is another matter entirely.

I await developments!

2/ Mobile libraries. I regret very much that the Landcross stop has been deleted from the schedule that I circulated to the parishes, in light of the fact that just over a year ago I thought I had saved that stop from being deleted. I do see the argument against it continuing when there are only two borrowers shown. I would ask for comments from the parish council about this loss, and if it is the parish council’s wish, I will raise the matter with the cabinet member concerned.

3/ HGVs and minor roads. North Devon Highways has asked us to pass on to parishes that current Control of Traffic Orders are being abused – HGVs etc. trying to negotiate roads that are prohibited to them. I would be grateful for any feedback from parish councillors of any places where such incidents occur so that I can relay that information to NAH.

Any questions?

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Sam Robinson.

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