

LITTLEHAM & LANDCROSS PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT LITTLEHAM VILLAGE
HALL
ON THURSDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2008

Present: *Cllrs Atkinson, Mrs Galvin (Chairman), Heard, Hassall (Vice-Chairman), Ms Lamb, Poole, G. Smith, M. Smith and Stevens. County Councillor Barton was also present.*

Apologies: *Cllr Mrs Beer, Cllr Hamilton and TDC Councillor Pennington.*

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

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

775 Minutes 761 – 773 of 2nd October 2008:

RESOLVED, on the motion of Cllr Heard, seconded by Cllr M Smith, that Minutes 761 – 773 of 2nd October 2008 are approved and signed as a correct record.

776 Matters arising from Minutes 761 – 773:

(a) **(Min 763a) Landcross Parish Councillor Co-option Vacancy:** Nothing to report.

(b) **(Min 763b) Unitary Council for Devon:**

Receipt of NDDC's analysis of the submissions published by the Boundary Committee's was noted.

(c) **(Min 763f) Torridge Voluntary Services (TTVS):**

A TTVS Newsletter, with project details and grant funding notes was received and noted. TTVS advise that they will be inviting membership renewal in January.

(d) **(Min 769c) Councillors' Indemnity – Code of Conduct:**

The Parish Council have been asked whether they are interested in indemnifying members from legal costs arising from defending an allegation in respect of breaching the Code of Conduct. Parish Councils may exercise the power to indemnify members (usually by taking out an insurance policy) under Section 101 Local Govt Act 2000. The Clerk has asked Community First (the Parish Council's insurers) whether the Parish Council already has this insurance cover within the existing Parish Council insurance policy. Community First has yet to reply. The Clerk thought additional insurance cover would be required, if this type of indemnity is needed. The meeting thought it unlikely that this need would arise. The Clerk is to report back when Community First replies.

(e) **(Min 769e) Former Barnstaple – Plymouth Bus Service 86:**

County Cllr Barton reported on his investigations. First Bus has given up the DCC supported Service 86, between Barnstaple and Tavistock, but they have retained their Tavistock – Plymouth service. Beacon Bus has successfully tendered for the new subsidised Route 118 between Barnstaple and Tavistock. The First Bus Tavistock to Plymouth service runs every 15 minutes, but N Devon passengers will need to change buses in Tavistock. There have been no complaints from Littleham & Landcross residents, but Cllr M Smith pointed out that more and more NHS specialist services are being moved to Derriford.

(f) **Democracy Week: "Councillors Make a Difference":**

Cllr M. Smith and Cllr Atkinson attended an awards ceremony at County Hall, where Cllr M Smith was awarded a certificate, in recognition of his work which resulted in Littleham receiving enhanced Broadband services. Cllr Atkinson described the celebratory proceedings and summarised the comments of eminent speakers. A St Giles-on-the-Heath councillor received the main small council award.

RESOLVED that Cllr M Smith is congratulated for receiving recognition for his work which resulted in Littleham receiving enhanced Broadband services and that DAPC is requested to provide photographs and copy for articles in Crosslet and the local press.

777 Planning Matters:

(a) **Planning Notifications:**

TDC has notified that Applications 1/10874/2008/FUL and 1/1013/2008/LBC in respect of The Old Rectory, Littleham, have been refused. Application 1/0757/2008/FUL in respect of Altimira Cottage, 2-3 Mt Pleasant and 1/10444/2008/FUL Ashridge Farm agricultural building, Littleham have been approved.

(b) **Planning Applications: 1/1171/2008/LBC and 1/1172/2008/FUL: The Old Rectory, Littleham:**

These Planning Applications for a garage block modify those previously refused by TDC.

RESOLVED, on the motion of Cllr M Smith, seconded by Cllr Heard, with five votes in favour, that Planning Applications 1171 and 1172 are recommended for approval.

778 Highways & Footpaths:

(a) Matters arising from Minutes; Church Lane, Littleham:

Cllr Poole has had further discussions with Mike Newcombe of DCC. The lengthening of the white line was a DCC contractor's error. Mr Newcombe has arranged for the contractors to return to the site to reinstate a shorter white line. Cllr Poole has also advised Steve Ellsworthy of latest events and harmonious concord should soon return to Church Lane.

(b) Road Closure, Rudha Bridge:

DCC advise that the road from the junction of Orleigh Mill to Petticombe Manor junction will be closed on 10 February 2009. The work should be completed by 16 February 2009. There will be diversion routes.

(c) Flooding at Lower Webbs, Littleham:

Mrs Cooper of Lower Webbs remains concerned about flooding on her premises, due to drains near Higher Shutta being unable to cope with heavy storm water flows. Excess water runs along the verges and encroaches on to Lower Webbs' premises below the highway. For years, several Parish Councillors have, as good neighbours, helped Mrs Cooper by clearing obstructive debris. DCC officials have been considerate and supportive and Cllr Heard and Mr Ellsworthy of DCC have discussed this persistent problem. Mrs Cooper is elderly. She has contacted N Devon Gazette, because TDC will not provide free sand bags and she needs urgent help to prevent surface water encroaching onto her property. The Chairman has contacted TTVS and Torridge Home Improvement Service. They advise that "Torrage", a Torrington based voluntary organisation, could provide volunteers to carry out remedial work, if Mrs Cooper provides the materials. "Torrage" would request a modest "donation/ contribution" in return.

RESOLVED that the Clerk writes to Mrs Cooper to advise her of the voluntary support available from "Torrage" and that DCC is asked to investigate the adequacy of surface water drainage above Rose Cottage, near Higher Shutta, Littleham.

(d) Speeding: Rose Cottage Bend, Littleham

An inconsiderate local motorist, allegedly driving without due care and attention, almost caused a young horse-rider from Higher Shutta to be injured when a horse was startled. The incident was reported to the Chairman, who suggests that re-opening the green-road from the north of Hoops Cottage to Combe Cottage, Littleham (near Higher Shutta) would provide a safer route for walkers and horse-riders. This would improve safety on the main access to Littleham from Bideford. The Chairman was unsure whether this green-road was a designated public footpath, a public bridleway, or an undesignated green-road. Cllr Hassall would be interested in liaison with volunteers seeking to make better use this green-road. DCC Cllr Barton advised that the Devon Designated Footpath Map can be accessed on-line.

RESOLVED that this matter is referred to the Parish Plan Action Group and that the Clerk should contact Alison Smith of DCC to determine what needs to be done to create a designated bridleway from the north of Hoops Cottage to the highway near Combe Cottage, Littleham. The Clerk was also instructed to request the DCC Coast & Countryside Service Manager at Old Bideford Station to arrange for volunteers to clear the overgrown blocked part of this green-road, near Combe Cottage.

Minute 778 continued: -

(e) Parking on roadside verges, Mount Pleasant, Littleham:

Cllr Poole advised that a land-rover parking partly on the southern verge near the newer Mount Pleasant houses is breaking up the verge. Other vehicles are also parking there at times. Members thought that the best solution would be to replace the grass verge with tarmac. This would improve the appearance of the village, reduce maintenance and provide appropriate roadside parking.

RESOLVED that DCC is asked to consider replacing this grass verge with a tarmac strip.

(f) Mud on Wagon Road:

Both Mrs Alvis of Boundstone Cottages and Cllr Poole have complained of excessive mud on Wagon Road, partly due to hedge trimming work and partly due to building works at Ashridge Farm new barn. Members commented that the tarmac highway did not extend into the verges of the hedge-bank sufficiently and this caused the road edges to break up and turn to mud. Members also noted that it is the landowner's responsibility to keep the highway clean when his contractors are causing nuisance. The problem continues, although DCC have asked the landowner to keep Wagon Road clean.

RESOLVED that DCC is asked to consider widening the tarmac widths when appropriate and to either cleanup, or arrange for the landowner to clean up Wagon Road. DCC is also requested to contact the landowner again to ensure that the road is promptly brought back to safe and convenient usage.

(g) Junction, near Littleham Reservoir, nr Moorhead Cross:

Members noted Cllr Poole's reference to the dangers of tuning right for Littleham Court at this junction, after leaving Littleham. There is a blind bend on this junction.

779 Littleham Village Hall & Playing Field

(a) 2009/10 Grass Cutting Quotation :

Mr Wivell has quoted £30 per cut for up to 23 cuts (up to £690 +VAT) and £10 per hour for strimming. This year's terms of £27.50 per cut (up to £632.50+VAT) have remained unchanged for three years. Cllr M Smith is satisfied that Mr Wivell has adequate insurance cover for our purposes.

RESOLVED, on the motion of Cllr Heard, seconded by Cllr Poole, that Mr Wivell is thanked for his work and that his contract is extended to 31 March 2010, on the terms quoted for up to 23 cuts per year.

(b) Improvements to Littleham Playing Field & Littleham Village Hall:

Cllr Poole reported that £8,000 had been raised for Playing Field improvements and that additional play equipment would be installed by Christmas. Paul Jarrett had most effectively "championed" this project. The Village Hall Grant Application to DCC and TDC has been unsuccessful and would be resubmitted at the end of the month. The Parish Council's £1,000 contribution will not be required before 2009/10.

780 Parish Plan:

(a) Parish Plan Action Plan Review:

The Chairman proposes to convene a Steering Group meeting in January 2009 to review the Action Plan.

(b) Littleham & Landcross Community Website Assoc: Item deferred to next meeting.

781 Finance & Insurance:

(a) Authorisation of Payments and Report on Bank Balance:

The Chairman endorsed a Bank Statement showing a Bank Balance of £3,259.76 at 20th October 2008.

Resolved, on the motion of Cllr M Smith, seconded by Cllr Poole, that a payment of £ 364.76 (1/4 Yr salary + expenses) to N.H. Jackson, dated 21 December 2008, is approved.

(b) NALC/SLCC 2008/09 Clerk's Pay Award (2.45%):

Revised salary scales, applicable from 1st April 2008, have been agreed by NALC, increasing the Clerk's Annual Salary from £1238 p.a. to £1269 p. a, an amount within Budget.

RESOLVED on the motion of Cllr Poole, seconded by Cllr M Smith, that the pay award is applied.

Minute 781 continued: -

(c) Budget 2009/10:

A Revised Budget for 2008/09, Budget 2009/10 and Preliminary Forecast for 2010/11 had been distributed with the Agenda. The 2008/09 Revised Budget for "Office Services" was increased to £110 and 2009/10 Budget figures were amended to take account of Mr Wivell's new grassing cutting quotation and the £1,000 expected contribution to Littleham Village Hall Improvements. The Clerk advised that a Parish Precept of £3,150 would be required to maintain balances at prudent levels.

RESOLVED on the motion of Cllr Atkinson, seconded by Cllr Heard, that the 2009/10 Budget (attached as Appendix A), with Receipts of £3,320, Payments of £4,030 and Closing Balance of £900 is approved.

(d) Parish Precept 2009/10

RESOLVED on the motion of Cllr Atkinson, seconded by Cllr Heard, that a 2009/10 Parish Precept of £3,150 is approved.

782 Consideration of correspondence & communications requiring attention:

Members noted receipt of the following correspondence: -

(a) Department of Local Democracy, Communities & Local Govt.: Communities in Control; A Consultation:

The Chairman summarised the main content of this booklet, which was received and noted.

(b) TDC: Littleham Wheeled Bin Collections:

Members noted that Winter Collection Date details had been displayed on Littleham Village Public Notice Board. A Notice of Christmas Waste & Recycling Collections 2008/09 was also received and will be displayed on village Public Notice Boards.

(c) TDC Housing & Council Tax Benefit: Posters are on display and an article will be published in Crosslet.

- (d) **TDC: Torrington Area Advisory Group Meeting, 21 October 2008:**
Cllr Hassall presented a written report which will be distributed to Parish Councillors.
- (e) **DCC Commons Act 2006:** Notices have been displayed on village Public Notice Boards.
- (f) **DAPC Newsletter & correspondence:**
Advice regarding Members Conduct and Planning Decisions was noted.
- (g) **Royal Devon & Exeter NHS Foundation Trust:**
Receipt of the 2007/08 Annual Report and the latest copy of RD&Express bulletin were noted.
- (h) **Get set for Digital:** An information pack was made available to Parish Councillors.
- (i) **Gt Torrington Community School; Going Foundation:**
The School Governing Body thanked the Parish Council for supporting their successful campaign.

783 Consideration of other correspondence received since the last meeting:

A file was made available to Parish Councillors containing correspondence about: -
TTVS Torridge Matters Bulletin plus Projects & funding News; Clerks & Councils Direct magazine DCC; Post Office Xmas delivery objectives; Promotional and Other items. ON-LINE Parish Councillors have received DCC In Touch magazine; News from Digital UK; NALC Place Matters Conference, London

784 Date of Next Meeting: - Thursday 15th January 2009: 7.30 pm.

The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 9.30 pm