

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WEST DOWN PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT WEST DOWN PARISH HALL ON 4th DECEMBER 2019.

Present: Cllr C King (Chairman), Cllrs S Ayre, M Reeves, S Squire, R Drew, R Watts, K Oades, T Verney, DCllr Wilkinson and CCllr Davis

The Chair opened the meeting at 7:30pm

4044. Public Speaking.

Mr. D Ayre spoke on behalf of the West Down Parish Hall Management Committee. He referred to a letter that they had sent with regard to the Annual Grant. They have requested an increase of £500 to £1000 for two reasons, the first being that they had not had an increase since 2005 and secondly, they have been asked by the Post Office operator for a reduction of the room rent. Their committee agreed but this gives them a short fall of £300 in a year. The Hall Committee do not feel that they should have to cover this expense as it is in the best interest of the village to keep this service.

4045. Police Report

A newsletter was received and circulated via the float file.
The main points on the Newsletter are: -

Number of Crimes reported in November 2019 in Morteohoe/Woolacombe & West Down, Includes Mullacott & Bittadon.

Violence with Injury 1, Burglary Non-Dwelling 1. Other Theft 1. Criminal Damage 1.

Police advice to people to stay safe this Christmas & New Year -

Drink responsibly – know when to stop drinking alcohol and drink water regularly during the evening. Always walk away from trouble. Stay in control and prevent one night's actions leaving you with a criminal record for years to come. Plan how to get home before you go out and pre-book a licensed taxi if you will need one at the end of the evening.

It has been reported that a scrambler bike has been left at a gate entrance up West Down Hill, it is not visible from the road. It has been reported to the police.

The reporting process is very difficult. If 101 is busy it tells you to report online. To report online you need a reference number, if you don't have one you need to ring 101 to get it. This will be taken up with Alison Hernandez requesting a response before 1st Jan. 2020.

4046. Minutes of the last meeting.

Minutes of the November meeting were approved and signed.

4047. Matters Arising.

- a. 4030 Mr. T Verney has handed in his register of interest.
- b. 4032a No man's land has been cleared by Cllr K Oades.
- c. 4032c Martin Rich is to speak at an Emergency Planning Meeting being held on 11th December 2019 at the school at 7.30pm
- d. District Councilors' grant of £250 is available for the Map Frame.

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- e. 4032f. Willingcott. A week/10-day notice was given to Morteohoe Chairman for the site visit. Items raised were; - Access roads - Highways Department. have said that road access is not a problem, this stand point would be hard to fight. Light pollution, this is not seen to be a problem; Drainage, South West Water said it is adequate. Images of surface water are to be supplied to the meeting next Wednesday, which Malcolm is attending.
- f. 4033c Ilfracombe Recycling Centre, has received 3 plus votes for Devon's recycling heroes.
- g. 4039 A Poppy Wreath was purchased and laid at the Sunday Remembrance Service. West Down Schools children laid poppies on Monday 11th on the graves of local soldiers. Cllr R. Drew was thanked for his work on getting the memorial listed.

4048. Report from County Councillor.
Connecting Devon and Somerset update

A public consultation has been launched by Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) ahead of undertaking a fresh procurement to find contractors to provide superfast broadband.

CDS, which is responsible for rolling out publicly-funded broadband across the two counties, is establishing the remaining area where there are no current or credible future plans to deliver Next Generation Access (NGA) broadband infrastructure capable of download speeds of at least 30Mbps.

Nearly one million homes and businesses in Devon and Somerset now have access to superfast broadband thanks to the Government supported CDS program and stimulation of the commercial market which is an important element of CDS's role. Of these, over 300,000 homes and businesses have access to superfast broadband as a direct result of investment by CDS.

A link to the CDS news release is attached which provides more information and links to the consultation webpage.

<https://www.devonnewscentre.info/superfast-broadband-public-consultation-launched/>

Preparations for Brexit in Devon

For information please visit: www.devon.gov.uk/brexit

Local Enterprise Partnership update

- 1) Heart of the South West LEP (HotSW) economy is as big as Birmingham or Liverpool
- 2) HotSW weekly pay is £500.00/week which is 95% of UK average excluding London
- 3) Growth driven by employment & productivity has been flat since 2018
- 4) LIS (local industrial strategy) policy of CLEAN GROWTH means doing things differently and distinctly tomorrow.
- 5) Hinkley Point has the biggest crane in the world, employs 4500 people with nearly 1000 apprentices and on track for first reactor in 2025
- 6) A303 planning inspectors report due on Stonehenge Tunnel by January 2nd 2020

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7) A358 scheme design is being progressed and will connect directly to M5 @ Junction 25

Winter month preparation for Parishes

Devon County Council and other organisations continue to invest in new and improved flood defences to help protect those locations most at risk of flooding. But heavy and sustained rainfall or other severe weather events can result in unexpected problems almost anywhere in Devon. This means self-help is a vital approach to protecting homes, property and communities. Practical advice and financial support are available to help local communities be better equipped to deal with an emergency, such as flooding. The Devon Community Resilience Forum offers two complementary grant schemes, funded by Devon County Council and the South West Regional Flood & Coastal Committee. Town and parish councils and community groups can bid up to £250 for this funding to help form their own Community Emergency Planning Group and produce Community Emergency Plans. They can also bid for up to £1,500 to improve their own resilience with equipment or one-off small-scale work, which can range from the provision of sandbag stores, flood protection equipment, road signs, tools, and protective equipment. For information and to download a simple application form go to <https://www.devoncommunities.org.uk/grant-funding-emergency-flood-resilience> Devon County Council also offers a Property Flood Resilience Funding Scheme for those households at risk of repeated flooding, but who are unlikely to be protected by a community-wide flood scheme. Flooding to roads or blocked drains should be reported via Devon County Council's Roads and Transport "report a problem" page. In the event of a flood, in particular the flooding of properties, people are being urged to record it online via the SWIM (Severe Weather Information Management) system. This enables members of the public, flood wardens and flood risk management authorities to enter details about property flooding. While this won't generate an immediate response for assistance during or after an event, it helps inform the flood investigations of local authorities to help prioritise action plans for future investment in flood improvements. For information on who to contact in a flood event visit Devon County Council's Flood risk management webpage.

Devon County Council seeking views on 5G as part of spotlight review

The County Council's Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee is investigating 5G as part of a spotlight review. Devon County Council has no current plans to make use of 5G in its ICT and is not involved with planning applications for mobile infrastructure, it is running an investigation in response to local concern and wants to hear from people to help inform its findings. An online questionnaire is now available, inviting members of the public to express their views and asking what evidence or information people feel the County Council should consider in reviewing the technology. It also asks how informed people feel about the technology and if they feel enough awareness has been raised about the use of 5G. We want to hear from as many people as possible across Devon regarding 5G technology. The information shared will be used in our Councillor-led spotlight review. While Scrutiny can only make recommendations, this work is planned to help to inform Council policy on 5G technology. This is your opportunity to let our review know your thoughts and what you feel Devon County Council might do to address any concerns you have. Anyone who fills in the questionnaire will have the opportunity to be invited to take part in a discussion with the scrutiny group at a later date. Feedback must be submitted by Monday 9 December. Ash die back cards given for information. No cure as yet.

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4049. Report from District Councillor.

Jenny Carey Wood, AONB, is offering 15 free indigenous standard trees, which come with rabbit guard and stake. Email The woodland trust. Jenny AONB link.

It was agreed that a bid would be put in for these trees as West Down Village Green Field Association would be happy to have them. It was suggested that the endangered mazzard, which is indigenous to North Devon was requested and that children from West Down school, with some elder residents, assisted in the planting and became custodians of the new trees. Both DCllr Wilkinson and CCllr Davis gave their support to this bid.

An email from Jane Williams and Peter Kelly has been received. They are keen to get their 30 oak trees planted.

Fire station closure decision is delayed until January. Jeremy Absley is looking at different plans. Many town/parish councils are still making pledges for a possible judicial review.

It has been noted that Planning Department is not giving enough time for consultation. If this is the case Malcolm should be contacted quickly if it is necessary to call it in.

4050. Footpaths.

Nothing to report. P3 Survey is due. The required forms were distributed.

4051. Fire Service Judicial Review.

Decided to leave until next meeting

4052. WDPHMC Grant increase.

Cllrs. S Ayre, K Oades and C King declared an interest and left the room.

The Parish Hall has not increased its hire charges to the community for many years and is now facing a loss of revenue due to the Post Office. However, it was stated that grants cannot be given out without justification of need and that organisations should have to show their accounts, explain what the money is to be used for and detail what other funding is being sought. It was said that grants should be based on order of merit and need and the whole grant system needs to be justified. Cllr. S. Squire proposed that accounts should be provided, specific needs explained and other funding recorded in order to obtain an increase. Cllr. R Drew seconded this and it was carried unanimously.

4053. Tender for grass cutting.

Quote received from Barry Scobling £2250. A letter will be sent to him, thanking him for his interest.

Quote received from Mike Hunt £735. Acceptance was proposed by Cllr K Oades, seconded by Cllr R Drew. Majority approval. It was noted that acceptance was dependent on provision of Public Liability Insurance. It was noted that Rotarians R. Drew and K. Oades had no connections with this quote. An acceptance letter is to be sent with the usual proviso that the two footpath wardens would check the work on a regular basis.

A letter will be sent to Gareth Hookway, thanking him for his previous works and expressing disappointment not to have had his tender this year.

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4054. Budget.

a. Grants.

The West Down Green Field grant was previously agreed to cover their insurance. Cllr S. Squire felt that grants need to be applied for in more detail. A request is needed and a set of accounts to show need with more information., Cllr M. Reeves and Cllr R. Watts agreed. Cllr S. Ayre noted that it has never been requested by our auditors in the past and that the grant recipients are important assets of the community. It was also noted that the Parish Council have lost £735 in revenue. Cllr S. Squire proposed that accounts and justification of need and specific use of the money is provided. Cllr M. Reeves seconded. Approved by Cllrs R. Watts and R. Drew. Cllrs. S. Ayre, K. Oades, T. Verney and C. King abstained.

However, the budget cannot be completed without agreeing the grants. Cllr T. Verney suggested giving grants in response to need or a flat rate to all.

Cllr C. King proposed that in order to complete the budget, it would be necessary to leave the grant amounts as they are and set up more detailed requests for next year, all were in favour apart from Cllr S. Ayre who abstained and stated that if it was the case that accounts were needed to be provided, the auditor should have advised.

The current Parish Council allowance is £24.24 per band C house. To maintain the amenities, it is necessary to raise the precept substantially. It was felt that it needed to be raised by 20% to £9000. Cllr K. Oades proposed, Cllr R. Drew seconded. Majority approval with two abstentions. Cllr S. Ayre stated that serious trouble financially could occur in the future.

4055. Salt Distribution.

This was discussed and the following sites for salt will be given to Mr. Hookway.

Top of hill by Lower Aylescott, Higher Aylescott, Car park, Shop, Parish hall, Churchpool and the footpath in front of Bay Cottage.

4056. Free Trees from NDC.

As previously discussed, the trees have been requested on behalf of WDVGFA. Cllr C. King is to draft a letter of request.

4057. Planning - Decisions from NDC.

a. 70455 - Installation of one septic tank to serve dwelling at Moore Farm West Down Ilfracombe Devon EX34 8NT – Approved.

4058. Planning Applications.

a. 70722 - Application to regularise the installation of a 64 kW Okofen biomass boiler. Little Comfort Farm Road Past Little Comfort Farm West Down EX33 2NJ. Cllr R. Drew proposed acceptance, seconded by Cllr K. Oades. Unanimous approval.

b. 70803 Listed building application for conversion and extension of existing garage / store and outside storage area to form one dwelling at The Old Stable Formerly Snowdrop Cottage West Down Ilfracombe Devon EX34 8NH.

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Concerns were raised over the windows. Cllr K. Oades proposed acceptance, Seconded by Cllr S> Squire. Unanimous approval.

c. 70824 Extension & alterations to hall at West Down Parish Hall Ilfracombe Hill West Down EX34 8NF

The following were noted. Windows missing from drawing, N/S elevations wrong. Toilets not suitable as they are. 1 less urinal? Internal layout needs re consideration. Cllr S. Squire proposed acceptance, Cllr R. Drew seconded. Unanimous approval.

d. Applications received after publishing of this agenda.
None.

4059. Correspondence.

Letter from WDVGFA re: grant.

Letter from WDPHMC re: grant.

Letter from St Calixtus PCC re: grant.

Quote from B Scobling re: Tender for grass cutting.

Quote from M Hunt re: Tender for grass cutting.

4060. Finance.

a. Bank Statements:

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|---|-----------------------|
| (1) West Down Parish Council as at 31 st October | £4,672.15 reconciled. |
| (2) 30 Day Notice Account as at 31 st October | £4,806.01 reconciled. |
| (3) Petty Cash - as at 31 st October | £23.54 reconciled. |

b. Cheques:

(1) Chq 630, £339.58 - NDC

Clerk Salary £183.58 and Dog Waste Bins £156.00

c. Letter to bank allowing access to the Safe Storage facility.

4061. Unresolved Questions.

None.

4062. Items to be added to next meeting Agenda.

a. Clerk Probation review.

b. New children's pads for ECD.

4063. Any other business.

a. RD Planning Forum (in float file)

b. Pads for ECD need replacing £75, box alarm not working.

Meeting closed 10.10pm

Next meeting 8th Jan 2020.

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