

Minutes of the Broadwoodwidge Parish Council meeting.

Tuesday 7th March 2023 7.00pm at Broadwoodwidge Community Hub

Those in attendance: Cllr James (Chairman), Cllrs Perkin, Worden, Wonnacott, Hawken, Nobbs, Brayley, Gibson, Crocombe, Stratton, District Councillor Hackett, County Cllr Morrish, Staci Dorey – Head of Legal Torridge District Council, Clerk.

Members of the public present: 17

5682. Apologies for absence

District Cllr Watson.

5683. Chairman's Announcement

The Chairman opened the meeting with a statement that read 'I would like to say that it has been very disappointing that emails containing unfactual, untrue and derogatory comments about the Parish Council and its members have been circulated since the meeting last Monday. Many of the members of the Parish Council have done a great deal to serve this Parish, over many years. I know that feelings are running high over a planning application submitted for discussion again tonight but as is often the case half-truth and speculation does not help considered sensible debate.' The Chairman advised that planning application 1/0033/2023/OUT would be moved to the top of the agenda following public questions.

5684. Clerks Announcement

The Clerk made the following statement: 'The meeting tonight, as with every Parish Council meeting will be held under The Devon Association of Local Council Guidelines. No person may be allowed to record or photograph any part of the meeting unless prior notice has been given. Under the code relating to conduct in the meeting, any comments or questions from members of the public tonight must not be offensive or deemed to be improper in any way. This will include any personal comments directed at Council members. If the Chairman believes that this is the case, the person will be asked to moderate their comments. If this does not happen, they may be asked to leave the meeting'.

5685. Declaration of Interests

Interests were declared by Cllr Worden, Cllr Hawken and Cllr Brayley in relation to application 1/0033/2023/OUT. As Cllr Worden had a disclosable pecuniary interest, he would not be permitted to participate in discussion or to vote on the application. As Cllrs Hawken and Brayley had a non-registered interest they would only be permitted to participate as members of the public and not as Councillors, they would both withdraw from voting. Cllr Worden questioned whether he would be asked to leave the room, the Chairman confirmed he would be required to move to the public seating. The Chairman advised that contrary to previous understanding 'leave the meeting' should be interpreted as leaving the table of Councillors. Cllrs Worden, Brayley and Hawken moved to the public seating area for discussions regarding 1/0033/2023/OUT.

5686. Public Open Question Time

The Chairman opened the meeting to the public requesting that hands were raised by those who wished to speak and confirming that the meeting allowed for 2 minutes per speaker.

Anne Worden spoke to express her grievances regarding being asked to leave the room at the previous meeting; however she did acknowledge she had received a letter of apology from the Chairman and Clerk for mistakenly asking her to do so. Mrs Worden also mentioned that in the January meeting the two co-opted members of the Parish Council were not asked to leave the room during the vote. Mrs Worden responded to Cllr Nobbs comment at the site meeting relating to social housing and suggested the Chairman look up the definition of social and local needs housing. The Chairman said he would do this. Cllr Nobbs clarified her query was as to whether the properties would be given to a housing association.

Mark Worden expressed his grievances regarding the comments and emails that have been circulating amongst Parishioners. Mr Worden commented that any objections to planning applications should not be personal. In relation to the concerns raised Mr Worden acknowledged them stating that matters relating to Southwest Water have been resolved, if the access is an issue then it could be moved to the bottom of the site, and the view approaching the Village is the view from land owned by the applicants. Mr Worden stated that he felt the writing on the planning notice sign was inappropriate and comments regarding him not being permitted to live in the properties are out of order as he is a local man with a young family and has always considered Broadwoodwidge as his home and he should not be singled out.

David Willey expressed his reasons for objecting against the application which were made up of the following concerns: The letter suggests that the Burwood appeal decision of March 2020 demonstrates that a 'lack of a 5YHLS is a material planning consideration' with the implication that the development should be approved because it would help Torridge to meet its housing targets. However, the Burwood appeal means that Torridge has an additional 181 homes that it did not anticipate so there is no clear need for an additional 2 houses in Broadwoodwidge which the letter acknowledges is 'not an identified Village or Rural Settlement within the terms of Policy ST07: Spatial Development Strategy for Northern Devon's Rural Area.' Therefore, in principle the application should be refused. The covering letter seeks the views of the Local Authority 'on the policy basis that the site is well related to the existing village.' It is true that the development site is adjacent to the existing village, but I presume that if that were a sufficient definition of 'well related' then 'next to' would suffice. Broadwoodwidge is a 'Churchtown.' Church Towns have never had large populations and are limited to the South-West and therefore are an important component of our local character. Broadwoodwidge is also a Hillslope town whose origins go back beyond Doomsday. At no time is there any evidence for development on the south of the category III road into the village. The 'Town' has always been made up from the Church in the east, the farmhouses and cottages adjacent to the Green and those associated with what became in the nineteenth century Town Farm, and finally in the twentieth century from housing along the road to the west from the Green. It could be argued that development within the existing village or infill along the road to the west would be well related but development further down the hill from the clearly defined lower limit to the village is clearly not well related. Therefore on the policy principle that the proposed development is not 'well related to the existing village' the application should be refused.

The Chairman stated that Mr Willey had been allowed a fair time to make his comments and we must move on to allow for other speakers.

David Tovey spoke to add on comments from the previous meeting stating that he will be employing a planning agent to act in the interest of the Village to address this matter and suggested the Parish Council should be doing the same. Mr Tovey also asked why there was no local connections report and reported that District Councillor Pete Watson who has connections with the applicants had already called the application into the plans committee and suggested that Mr Worden had connections on the committee at Torridge District Council and therefore the decision would be made there.

The Chairman said these comments were not appropriate and reminded members of the public that all comments should be with regards to the planning and not of a personal nature.

The Chairman announced that additional correspondence had been received by email, but they did not add any comments that have not already been made and closed the public question time.

5687. Planning

1/0033/2023/OUT - Outline application for proposed 2 no. local needs dwellings with all matters reserved except for access - Land At Grid Reference 241152 089002, Broadwoodwidger

Councillors discussed the application following comments from the public and a response from TDC to the previous questions raised. Cllr Crocombe commented that he was surprised the District Cllr had called the application into the Plans Committee prior to receiving Parish Council comments. Cllr Stratton asked the Chairman whether if the application has already been called into the Plans Committee will Parish Council comments still be considered. The Chairman confirmed that all comments will be considered by the planning officer. Cllr Nobbs asked if conditions for the properties use could be applied. The Chairman felt it would not be possible and certainly not at this point as we were only commenting on outline planning.. The Chairman read the TDC response to whether Highways had visited the site which was 'DCC Highways are a consultee in this application. The Council is awaiting their comments.' Cllr Crocombe mentioned that if the splays meet the requirements, then there is no issue with that. Cllr Nobbs said that whether the decision is to support or object it should refer to local need. The Chairman read a section of the North Devon & Torridge Local plan 2011-2031 relating to Local needs housing. Cllr Perkin highlighted some matters from the application which stated that the proposal was for social, affordable, or immediate rent, there was an unanswered question on the application form regarding whether there were existing properties on the site and in relation to drainage it is not clear whether it is joining the existing system. Cllr Wonnacott asked if the Council knew enough about the planning to make a vote, the Chairman said that we had already sought extra advice and clarification from TDC and the Parish Council is only a consultee on the application, not a decision maker. The Chairman said that the Local Plan points are a concern. Cllr Stratton commented that most of the concerns raised could be overcome, including the access, the utilities and evidence of the housing need. However, he considered the location of the site itself was not suitable for any development. Cllr Stratton proposed the Parish Council object to the application due to the location of the site. Cllr Nobbs seconded this, Cllrs James, Perkin, Crocombe and Gibson agreed. Cllr Wonnacott abstained due to not being present during the previous meeting discussion. The Clerk will submit the comment.

Cllr Stratton expressed his feelings of disgust and shame regarding behaviour and comments made amongst the community towards the applicants and the Parish Council. Cllr Perkin supported the comment.

Cllrs Worden, Hawken and Brayley returned to the table. Staci Dorey and 8 members of the public left the meeting.

5688. Police Report

The Clerk reported that the latest TEAMs meeting is due to take place on Thursday 9th March and she would circulate the invitation to all Councillors. 0 incidents were reported in December 2022.

5689. County Councillor Report

County Councillor Morrish thanked members for their patience as he had been through some health issues for more than 2 years. Cllr Morrish urged the Council to attend the Torridge plans

committee meeting in relation to application 1/0033/2023/OUT and said that the Parish Council comment would be at the top of the list for review. Moving on to potholes, Cllr Morrish acknowledged that the condition of roads is worsening and funding is getting smaller, however an extra £1 million has been budgeted for potholes. He stated that unfortunately it is too big of a problem for Devon County Council alone. Cllr Morrish advised that Devon County Council have set a budget with the biggest part being put to adult and children's health. Cllr Morrish reported that the Councillors budget has been reduced from £10000 to £5000 however he is able to carry over his remaining £4500 from the previous year. Cllr Morrish said that Devon County Council receives numerous comments regarding investments in Shell, Texaco etc but for every objection there is 10 in favour from those just wanting their pension protected. Cllr Morrish ended by thanking the Parish Council for their work, highlighting that it is voluntary and that although there may be some disgruntled comments from Parishioners there are always so many more that appreciate the time the Councillors invest.

5690. District Councillor Report

Councillor Hackett asked County Councillor Morrish to clarify his email address as he had received reports that emails were bouncing back, County Councillor Morrish confirmed the issue had been fixed. Cllr Hackett reported that the Police and Crime Commissioner wants to attend some Parish Council meetings and will do his best to do so. Cllr Hackett reported that the front desk in Bude will be reopening shortly. Finally, Cllr Hackett stated that a lot of issues being raised are regarding speed and rural crime.

5691. Council Meeting Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held 17th January and 27th February were previously circulated. Minutes of the meeting held 17th January were agreed as a true record of the meeting, proposed by Cllr Brayley, seconded by Cllr Wonnacott and agreed by all. Cllr Worden did not agree to the minutes of the meeting held 27th February requesting that section **5678** was amended to include the names of other Cllrs alongside the comments they made. The Clerk will amend and recirculate the minutes.

5692. Matters Arising

None.

5693. Planning

1/1072/2023/FUL - Retrospective application for use of flat as residential dwelling - Evergreen Farm Shop, Ashwater, Devon, EX21 5HE – Councillors discussed the application and agreed to comment with 'no objection'. Proposed by Cllr Stratton, seconded by Cllr Nobbs, agreed by all.

5694. Grass cutting tender

The Clerk had previously circulated all tenders to the Councillors, five tenders had been received. Councillors considered the tenders and agreed in principle to proceed with Martin Ashley subject to confirmation that the quote provided was covering the cost of both the Village Green and the Community Hub grass and if he could provide separate invoices. Proposed by Cllr Brayley, seconded by Cllr Wonnacott, agreed by all. The Chairman asked the Clerk to contact Lifton Parish Council for a reference ahead of proceeding.

5695. Footpath maintenance

The Clerk had been advised that work on the Downicarey footpath gate had been completed; however Cllr Perkin reported that a contractor had visited the site but had not undertaken any work to date. The Clerk will follow it up with DCC.

5696. First Aid Course

The Clerk confirmed that there were 12 residents signed up for each of the two courses with some places still available. Cllr Nobbs said she would distribute some leaflets to try and raise the numbers. The invoice had been received but Councillors agreed this would be paid following the courses.

5697. King Charles Coronation

Cllr Brayley reported as follows:

Update Post Coronation Fete Meeting 21st February 2023 -Again, very well attended. Committee Members agreed as 2 Cllrs and 4 "Organizers":- Cllr Dean James, Cllr Sue Brayley, Tanya James, Julie Gowar, Jason Ward, Sam Palmer, Firm offers of help on the day and before from a further 10 people.

Event Suggestions: - 2.00 – 5.00pm: - (On the Green) Children's Games and Activities - Games; Treasure Hunt; Activities (design a crown; colour a keepsake); Best "Crown" competition (3 age ranges); Lucky Dip; Fancy dress. Adult coronation flower arrangement competition with the public asked to vote for favourites Stalls – 5 confirmed (Ivy House Nursery; Wood Turning: Kellacott Honey; handmade Cards & Pictures; Church – books & bric-a-brac. Cream Teas with cake stall Raffle – already some good prizes promised, Vineyard tours. Music – advertise for local musicians on a rota basis. 5.30 – 7.30pm (At the Hub), BBQ (Sam with Tanya overseeing food hygiene requirements), Raffle Draw, Music, "Beer Tent" - Pub initially approached, unable to help due to own village commitments. Others are being approached; however, alternative could be free drink offered with purchase from BBQ, 1st Coffee Morning raised £82 after expenses; 2nd which also sold donated cakes, scones and goodies raised £110, totalling £192. Contingency Plans if raining will use Church/Hub, Proposed Advertising – Posters; delivery of flyers round parish; PC website; Facebook; ad in community link newsletter. Next Meeting – Tues 11th April, 7pm in Hub – to confirm assigned roles, preparation timings and similar.

Cllr Brayley thanked Anne Worden for the funds raised from the coffee mornings.

5698. Possible employment of a Lengthsman

The Chairman reported that since the January meeting Highways had done a large amount of clearance and the ditches are now in much better condition. Councillors agreed to discuss the employment of a Lengthsman again at the August meeting. Cllr Perkin thanked Cllr Wonnacott for distributing grit salt, Cllr Wonnacott confirmed there was plenty remaining for future cold spells.

5699. Airband notice of installation of poles

Councillors reviewed the notices received and agreed no response was required.

5700. Councillor contact details

Following an increase in spam emails Cllrs discussed whether it was necessary for contact details of all Cllrs to be on the Parish Council website. The Chairman proposed that the website show the names of all Cllrs but the full contact details of only the Chairman and the Clerk, seconded by Cllr Brayley, all agreed. Cllr Worden advised that the Cllrs declarations of interest should be available on the website.

5701. Condition of access to Churchyard

Cllr Worden declared an interest in the item. Cllr Perkin advised they were waiting for the Priest to call a meeting so the matter can be discussed; he will let the Clerk know once a date is in place. The Chairman suggested that due to the Church needing to hold a meeting the item should be moved to the next meeting. All agreed.

Three members of the public left the meeting.

5702. Dog litter bin

The Chairman suggested it would be useful to have a dog litter bin in the Rixon Cross area. The Clerk will look to order a bin and register it for emptying and Cllr Worden will find a suitable location to site it.

5703. Accounts due for payment

Clerks Wages £335.40

Clerks Expenses £49.75 colour ink, £69.99 replacement defibrillator pads total £119.74.

Accounts proposed by Cllr Brayley and seconded by Cllr Perkin, all agreed.

5704. To Receive Correspondence

None.

5705. Parish Clerk's Report

None.

5706. Any other Business

Cllr Nobbs asked what the position was regarding the restoration of the Cross Green phone box. The Clerk reported that she had struggled to contact the contractor. Cllrs agreed to give the contractor seven days' notice to respond to confirm he will carry out the works or the Parish Council will look to find a different contractor.

5707. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 18th April 2023 at 7pm.

5708. Close

The meeting was closed at 8.37pm.