

Minutes of the Broadwoodwidge Parish Council meeting.

Thursday 21st September 2023 6pm at Broadwoodwidge Community Hub

Those in attendance: Cllr Worden (Chairman), Cllrs Gibson, Wonnacott, Hosken, Fry, Beazley, L Worden, Clerk, District Cllr Hackett, Guest Helen Mason – TDC Enforcement Officer.

Members of the public present: 3

5804. Apologies for absence

County Councillor James Morrish

5805. Declaration of Interests

The Chairman declared that all interests be raised as they arise.

5806. Public Open Question Time

Representatives of Ashwater Community Shop spoke to discuss additional signage they wish to erect in the Parish raising awareness of the shop and its location. Proposed locations at Ivyhouse Cross, Reservoir Cross and Roadford Lake. Councillors agreed this was acceptable subject to permission by any interested party, for example landowners and highways.

5807. Police Report

The Clerk advised that the police website was not working correctly and had not been updated with reported incidents since November 22. The Clerk has reported the issue. The most recent zoom meeting with Holsworthy Police reported that there had been an increase in crimes of equipment and trailers in rural areas.

5808. County Councillor Report

Cllr Morrish sent a written report which read 'Sorry I can't be with you tonight but please find my report. The roads team have now completed 47% of all road repairs in Devon. Much has been done in Holsworthy Rural area however there is still more to do. It is clear to me that DCC have to make some changes to reduce the costs of running the services of the council. I will keep you updated. I am sorry I couldn't be with you tonight; I do have to be careful before I have fully recovered. Of course, if I can help with any issue, please call me'. The Chairman asked the Clerk to thank him for his report and to ask him to attend the next meeting in person if possible.

5809. District Councillor Report

Cllr Gibson advised of a new grant known as the 'Levelling up grant' aimed at the North of the County. He also advised of a solar power scheme known as 'X-links' which starts in Morocco and ends in North Devon. Finally, he advised of a new hardship grant available for people struggling with costs. Cllr Gibson is happy to be contacted to assist with applications for this grant.

Cllr Hackett attended the Police & Crime commissioners meeting last week and is trying to make a strong case for more police in rural areas and more street marshalling. He confirmed there are usually 8 officers on shift. Cllr Hackett advised that Alison Hernandez has confirmed that every case will be investigated if there is evidence. He also advised that there is a planning meeting with North Devon District Council on Friday to discuss planning framework.

5810. Enforcement

The Chairman welcomed Helen Mason, enforcement officer for TDC to speak. Helen passed on apologies from Helen Smith, planning manager for TDC and advised that Laura Davies – planning officer for TDC has offered to attend a future meeting. Helen provided an overview of the enforcement department and its procedures. Confirming that there are two full time officers, and that they will be joined for 6 months by one additional officer to try and catch up on the backlog of cases. Helen advised that as enforcement issues are confidential, she could not discuss specific cases. She advised that cases are very diverse, ranging from fence disputes to new buildings and caravans on leisure plots. Helen reported that due to the number of cases reported they must investigate them based on the level of harm. Action taken is dependant on the case details and can range from no further action to requesting a planning application is submitted or eviction from the site. Helen advised that there are some changes to policies coming in to force such as the 28 days camping allowance which will be increased to 60 days and the 4-year rule for residential properties gaining exemption from enforcement action which will be extended to 10 years. Councillors thanked Helen for attending the meeting and providing an insight into the process.

5811. Council Meeting Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held 10th August 2023 were previously circulated. No adjustments needed, proposed by Cllr Gibson, seconded by Cllr Fry, all agreed.

5812. Matters Arising

None.

5813. Planning

A pre-application notice was received about a new mast at Cornerstone, Lewdown. The Clerk will forward to all Councillors, and it will be discussed in full when the application is received from TDC.

5814. Clerks Annual Review

Councillors had discussed the review ahead of the meeting and the Clerk had confirmed she is happy with all aspects of the role. An increase in salary to £13.95ph was agreed, backdated to April 2023 as per the guidance provided by NALC. Proposed by Cllr L Worden, seconded by Cllr Gibson and agreed by all.

5815. Accounts due for payment

Clerks' expenses - Postage £4.40

Councillors agreed that the Clerk would carry the expenses forward until £50 had been spent at which point a cheque would be issued.

Accounts proposed by Cllr Wonnacott and seconded by Cllr Hosken, all agreed.

5816. To Receive Correspondence

The Clerk read correspondence from a resident of Chardstock who is striving for clear skies status and is researching street light use across the County. The Clerk will respond to advise that Broadwoodwidge has 3 streetlights.

A grant request had been received from Citizens Advice Bureau. No specific amount was requested. Cllrs agreed not to contribute at this time. Proposed by Cllr Beazley, seconded by Cllr Gibson.

The Churchyard had expressed an interest in requesting a grant and Councillors agreed to discuss this at the next meeting following receipt of a written request.

5817. Any other Business

The Chairman thanked Cllr Hosken for his hard work and the time put into the repairs of the road leading to the Churchyard.

Councillors discussed Remembrance Sunday and asked the Clerk to order 3 wreaths.

Councillor Wonnacott reported that the post for the gate on Footpath 25 (Downicarey) had broken off. The Clerk will report this to DCC.

5818. Next Meeting

The next meeting proposed for Tuesday 24th October 2023 at 7:30pm. (Subject to change if the planning officer is unavailable)

5819. Close

The meeting was closed at 19.25.