

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF TAWSTOCK PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON  
TUESDAY 16<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2024 AT 7.00 p.m.**

**Present: -** Councillor Bowden (Chair)  
Councillors East, Jenkins, Knight, Lines, Lofthouse, Mason, Needham,  
Norman and Short

NDC Councillors Knight and Norman

DCC Councillor Leaver

M Isaac (Clerk)

**In Attendance:** Parishioner/Members of the Public – 1

**187. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from DCC Councillor Henderson

**188. ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE  
CHAIR SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY**

The following issues were brought forward by the Chair as a matter of urgency:

The Clerk reported that PETROC would be cutting the overgrown hedge from the College down Old Sticklepath Hill this week.

**189. PUBLIC SESSION**

A Parishioners asked the following question:

Has any measures been put in place to stop a rat run through the Bus Gate during the works at the Cedars Roundabout?

It was stated that DCC Councillor Leaver would answer the question as part of her DCC report.

**190. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Bowden declared an interest in item 13 on the agenda regarding the Grounds Maintenance Contract as she knew the proposed Contractor.

**191. RESIGNATION**

The Clerk reported that Joe Tucker had resigned from the Council and that the necessary procedures had been instigated with North Devon Council.

The Council recorded its thanks to Joe Tucker for his services to the Parish Council and the Community.

## **192. CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence reported.

## **193. DCC COUNCILLOR REPORT**

DCC Councillor Leaver reported the following:

- That the third consultation regarding funding for the Links Centres was currently being undertaken. The outcome will be considered by the Cabinet in March.
- That the budget for the next financial year was currently being prepared. Government funding for Local Authorities had been reduced by a third since 2010 (£8.4 billion). There were several budget overspends and DCC were negotiating with the Government to write off the overspends. There would however be cuts to services of circa £50 million next financial year.
- That she was willing to allocate £1,600 of her Locality budget to provide a new slide and repair the roundabout at the Tower View play area.
- In answer to the question raised by the Parishioner regarding any measures put in place to stop a rat run through the Bus Gate during the works at the Cedars Roundabout. No traffic would be diverted through the bus gate except as authorised by the Police regarding emergencies and excessive traffic build up. The new signals/pedestrian crossing at the Cedars would take approximately 20 weeks to complete at a cost of £1 million.

## **194. FINANCIAL MATTERS.**

### **a) Payments**

RESOLVED that the following payments be approved:

North Devon Council Clerks Salary + Admin Fee	£666.93
M. Isaac Clerks Expenses	£5.80
Ucanstore.com – Storage	£26.00

b) The current financial position at 5 December 2023 Current A/C £42,971.31 (includes £7,574.37 ringed fenced for Tower View Project) and Business Reserve A/C £16,213.76 was noted.

c) Precept 2024/25.

It was RESOLVED that a precept of £23,893.35 for 2024/25 be agreed.

## **195. MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

## **196. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING NOT LISTED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA**

There were no matters arising.

## **197. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

### **a) NDC Councillor Knight**

Councillor Knight stated that the public were raising issues on planning applications that were not part of the planning applications. All applications are considered on their merits. He agreed to put an explanation on the Council website explaining the process and criteria.

### **b) NDC Councillor Norman**

Councillor Norman reported the following:

- **Barnstaple Bus Station**  
That the toilets at Barnstaple bus station which had been shut after they became an anti-social hotspot could reopen by Easter. The Council leader Ian Roome had told members of the Strategy and Resources Committee that they would be presented with options next month, including a cafe, and he hoped the toilets would be open for Easter. The project was subject to funding bids being successful and was “some way off.”
- **Old Leisure Centre Site** – At the recent planning meeting it was mentioned that it was hoped to have a meeting in March to agree the initial stage of the housing development. That the Polling station review had been completed and there were no implication for the stations in Tawstock.
- **Shortfall in funding to North Devon**  
The leader of North Devon Council was calling on the Government to address a shortfall in funding to local authorities for the new financial year.  
The council had formally responded to the Provisional Local Government Financial Settlement for 2024/25 with a warning that the proposed funding did not take into account an increased demand on statutory services or the extra costs associated with delivering services in a largely rural area. North Devon Council stands to receive an increase of 4.7% in Core Spending Power if it increases council tax by the maximum amount permitted, compared to an average of 4.9% for district councils generally and 6.5% for the whole local government sector.
- **Dog fouling poses a growing challenge for ND council's Parks team**  
In recent months, North Devon Council's Parks team had encountered a rising problem with dog fouling in public areas. While the majority of dog owners were responsible and picked up after their pets, there had been a noticeable increase in dog waste left behind, causing cleanliness difficulties for the council's park maintenance team.
- **Dog PSPO 2024**  
Following an extensive public consultation that received widespread support, North Devon Council's Strategy and Resources Committee had given the green light to the updated Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for dog controls. Set to renew in 2024, the retaining and new controls aim to foster a safer and more harmonious environment within public spaces.
- **Barnstaple Town Council – Rangers**  
He had asked Tim Steer in his capacity as a Town Ranger if the team had an opportunity could they visit Sticklepath Hill and Old Sticklepath Hill to remove weed growth and on Old Sticklepath Hill – brush away leaves causing slip concerns

## **198. HIGHWAY ISSUES**

### a) Shorelands Road Roundabout

The Council noted the recent email from Matt Collins, DCC Officer regarding the Shorelands Road roundabout. It was stated that the works at the Cedars roundabout and other highway projects would be completed first.

It was agreed to reconsider at the August Parish Council meeting.

### b) Community Self Delivery of Highway Improvements Initiative/DCC Community Enhancement Fund application.

It was agreed that the Councillors Jenkins, Knight, Lofthouse and Mason be appointed to meet DCC Councillor Leaver to discuss possible funding application.

## **199. PLANNING APPLICATION - 76293 - OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR UP TO 450 DWELLINGS INCLUDING ACCESS (APPEARANCE, LANDSCAPING, LAYOUT & SCALE RESERVED) - EIA DEVELOPMENT (FURTHER INFORMATION AS REQUESTED BY REGULATION 25 OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 2017) AT LAND SOUTH OF A39 BRYNSWORTHY BARNSTAPLE**

RECOMMENDED REFUSAL for the following reasons:

- i). The site was outside the North Devon and Torridge Local Plan.
- ii). Loss of valuable agricultural land
- iii). The proposal to have a junction onto the A39 with traffic lights was considered dangerous and would cause increased congestion on an already very busy A39 a major road.
- iv). The existing infrastructure; Roads, Hospital, Doctors surgeries, dental services and schools cannot cope with the existing demand for services.
- v). The reasons as stated by the Environment Agency that the land was part of the marsh/wetland and the development could lead to flooding.
- vi). There were two grade 2 listed buildings in close proximity which would be negatively impacted
- vii). On ecological grounds as the land formed part of an important corridor for endangered bats.
- viii) North Devon Council know has a 5 year land supply.

## **200. REPORT OF THE PLANNING SUB COMMITTEE ON APPLICATIONS CONSIDERED PRIOR TO THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

The Chair updated Council on the Planning Applications considered by the Planning Sub Committee.

### **b) APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE PLANNING SUB COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED that Councillors Bowden and Mason be appointed to the Planning Sub Committee and Councillors Lofthouse and Norman as substitute Members.

**201. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTACT 2024-2027**

RESOLVED that the quote from Lewis Evely for the Grounds Maintenance Contract 2024-2027 be accepted and that Members of the Parks and Open Space Committee meet the new Contractor on site prior to the next Parish Council meeting

That thanks be recorded to Gavin Hendry for his service over the past four years.

Councillor Bowden declared an interest in the above matter as she knew the Contractor and did not vote.

Tower View Recreation Area – s106 funding

It was agreed that an application be made to draw down the remaining s106 funding to extend the existing play area and provide additional play equipment and that the Parks and Open Space Committee meet with TK Play to discuss.

**202. DONATIONS TO CHARITIES**

It was agreed that any Charity requests for funding be considered on their merits.

**203. PENINSULA TRANSPORT REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY CONSULTATION**

It was agreed that Members be encouraged to respond to the consultation via the Webinar link.

**204. PROVISION OF PLAY EQUIPMENT AT THE ENTRANCE TO TAWCROFT ON THE OPEN SPACE AREA RIGHT HAND SIDE AS YOU ENTER THE ESTATE**

The Council noted an email from Councillor Knight informing that all the open space in Larkbear was private land managed by a private maintenance company. As the developer had still not finished the first phase of Larkbear the children's play area would be delivered by application 72227. This area would join the back of Larkbear to the Highgrove site and mean that there would be 3 play areas at the southern end of Old Torrington Road.

It was agreed to write to NDC Planning Authority requesting information as to what play areas/open space areas would be delivered via Planning applications 72227 and 61119 with plans of the play areas/open space areas and the timescales for their delivery.

**205. TAWSTOCK VILLAGE HALL: GRANT**

Councillor Short stated that Tawstock Village Hall Committee Trustees were looking to install Air Source Heating at the hall. A quote had been obtained for £9660 incl. VAT.

He was seeking support from the Parish Council to act on behalf of the Village Hall Committee for the project.

The Clerk stated that he was not sure that the Council could act on their behalf and agreed to seek advice.

#### **206. TUDOR PLAY AREA**

Gate Update. Councillor Knight stated that he had spoken to residents and that at present there were no issues from residents.

#### **207. BURIAL FEES**

Deferred to the next meeting with an update regarding Phase 3 of the site

#### **208. LITCHARDON CROSS SOLAR FARM**

It was agreed that Tawstock Parish Council object to the proposal to proceed with a 3/2 split between Horwood Lovacott and Newton Tracey and Fremington and would like to proceed with the original agreement of one representative from each of the five parishes (Horwood Lovacott and Newton Tracey, Tawstock, Instow, Westleigh and Fremington) and that Councillor Philip Mason be appointed as Tawstock Parish Council's representative on the Funding Committee.

#### **209. POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

Deferred to the next meeting and that Councillors Norman and Mason look at the current policies and procedures and decide which ones need amending/updating.

#### **210. TAW/TORRIDGE ESTUARY FORUM: UPDATE**

Deferred to the next meeting

#### **211. FREE LANDMARK TREE FROM DEVON WILDLIFE TRUST**

The Clerk reported that the Council's application for a Rowan Tree had been successful and would be delivered to Councillor Lofthouse.

It was agreed:

- a) that subject to the agreement of former Councillor Joe Tucker that the tree be planted in tribute to his work as a Councillor for many years both on the District Council and Parish Councils and the Communities of North Devon
- b) that Councillor Bowden be authorised to purchase a plaque up to a value of £100

#### **212. DEFIBRILLATOR**

Councillor Mason reported that we had not been successful for the DHSC full funding but would now go forward for the match funding from them.

It was agreed that the Council match fund the purchase of a defibrillator (£750) to be located in the phone box in Harracott and that Councillor Mason authorised to purchase the defibrillator.

**213. ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETING**

The following issues were raised:

Noticeboards  
Signs at Bus Gate

**214. DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

It was noted that the next Parish Council meeting would be on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2024  
@ 7.00 p.m.

Chairman The meeting ended at 9.08 p.m.