

LYDFORD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Held in the Nicholls Hall
Tuesday 20th May 2008

54-2008 Election of Chairman

Ms Ellicott stood down as Chairman and the meeting was temporarily chaired by Ms Gannon. Ms Ellicott was proposed as Chairman by Ms Gannon, seconded by Mrs Holland and UNANIMOUSLY ELECTED. She took over chairmanship of the meeting.

55-2008 Election of Vice-Chairman

Ms Gannon was proposed by Ms Ellicott, seconded by Mrs Boyd and UNANIMOUSLY ELECTED.

56-2008 Election of Representatives to bodies outside the Parish

56.1 DNPA Forum

Ms Moriarty and Mrs Holland indicated that they were willing to continue in this role and it was UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that they should do so.

56.2 Police Authority

Mrs Holland and Ms Moriarty indicated that they were willing to continue in this role and it was UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that they should do so.

56.3 Southern Parishes Link Committee

Mrs Cole, having served a long term, indicated that she thought the time had come for a new representative to be chosen. Mrs Boyd agreed that she would be willing to do so, and it was UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that she become the new representative.

57-2008 Election of Representatives to bodies within the Parish

57.1 Nicholls Hall Committee

Mrs Boyd indicated that she would be willing to continue in this role, and it was UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that she should.

58-2008 Present:

Ms L Ellicott (Chairman): Ms J Gannon (Vice-Chairman), Mrs L Cole: Mrs S Holland: Mrs K Boyd: Ms C Moriarty: Mr I Hammerton: Mrs A Martin (Clerk)

Parishoners and others in attendance:

Mr P Glanville (Dartmoor Ranger)

59-2008 Apologies for Absence:

Apologies from Cllr A Hosking (DCC) and Cllr I McPhie (WDBC), both attending meetings elsewhere, were accepted.

60-2008 Declaration of Interests

There were none.

61-2008 Parishoners and Visitors Time:

61.1 The Chairman, on behalf of a Parishoner, asked Mr Glanville about a high stile in the area of Nodden Gate, which is potentially unsafe for older and more vulnerable users. The Parishoner had also approached Mr Glanville directly, and he is already dealing with it.

61.2 Mrs Holland reported that the three main tourist businesses in the village, ie the Lydford House Hotel, the Castle Inn and Downtown Farm, had all had letters from the DNPA regarding A Signs outside their premises. It was thought that the Gorge might also have had such a letter. It is understood that the brewery who own the Castle Inn may have already applied for planning permission for their signage following receipt of the letter, but for the privately owned businesses the cost is prohibitive. Councillors were extremely sympathetic to the needs of all the businesses, particularly in the current difficult economic climate. Obviously we all have to comply with planning legislation, but the following questions were raised:

If the signs are put out in the morning and taken in at night are they not temporary and therefore not requiring planning consent?

If the signs are unacceptable could they be replaced by a signwritten parked vehicle?

Has the Gorge has received the same letter, as it is known that an A Sign is used there as well?

Is this policy applied consistently throughout the National Park as it is believed that A Signs are used in other locations, Widdecombe being a quoted example?

The Clerk was instructed to write to the DNPA planning official who sent the letter, with a copy to Mr France, requesting clarification.

61.3 A number of reports of smells in the village were received during the May Bank Holiday weekend, when the weather was warm. The bungalow adjacent to the War Memorial was particularly badly affected, and this time the smells were detectable in the gardens at Hawthorn Park and both Mr Hammerton and Ms Moriarty had been aware of them. Mrs Cole advised that this is the season when farmers are muck spreading, and it was hoped that this might provide an explanation. The Clerk will, nevertheless, ensure that Mr Greenaway is kept informed. The Clerk will also contact SWW and invite a representative to attend the next meeting to update the Council on sewage issues generally.

62-2008 To approve the minutes of the previous meeting:

It was UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting on Tuesday 15th April 2008 and they were signed by the Chariman.

63-2008 Matters Arising:

63.1 Bus Services update: The Clerk has written to First Bus as instructed at the last meeting. A letter has just been received from Mr Geoffrey Cox QC MP regarding rural bus services, but he has been unable to get any changes made to the current situation, and West Devon point out that they simply do not receive enough central government funding for the current scheme. Non-residents travel to areas like ours to make use of their free passes, and the current budget is overstretched. Mr Cox has tried hard but has got nowhere in trying to improve services for local pensioners.

63.2 Highways, Parking and Traffic update – No reply has been received yet to our letter regarding the pedestrian approach to the school.

A letter has been received from Graham Cornish (for Director of Environment, Economy and Culture) at Devon CC, regarding the Granite Way, and having read it councillors considered that they were being “fobbed off”. A two pronged action plan was formulated: first that the Council will contact our Devon CC representative, Cllr Alan Hosking, and request that he champion this cause. Secondly that the Council will write to Graham Cornish asking him to confirm the compulsory purchase order. We will ask that he takes the request to committee without further delay.

63.3 Parish Plan update – The questionnaires have been received from Devon CC and are ready for distribution. Devon CC is no longer planning to send them out by post, due to cost implications, and they will be distributed by volunteers to every household in the parish. Although only one questionnaire will be sent to each household there are spaces for multiple persons to give replies. The Clerk will help by compiling a list of occupied properties in the parish.

63.4 Progress re: Ancient Spring – The Project Manger has put the work out to tender. The Lydford Wildlife Group visited the site last Saturday, with the Project Manager in attendance, and some work has been done in lifting non-native bulbs, including Spanish bluebells. The group is keen to continue to be involved with the project.

Less good news has been received from the solicitor, who advises that to register the land the Parish Council should have enclosed it and excluded the public for a period of ten years, and simply carrying out maintenance as an owner would does not meet the criteria of the Land registry. This seemed to the Members to be missing the point entirely that the land is sought to be registered to establish Public Ownership for perpetuity. It was thought that other parishes might have some experience that would prove to be helpful, especially as regards the registration of village greens, and this line of enquiry will be pursued.

63.5 Progress re: Emergency Plan - Mr Hammerton reported that he has attempted to make contact with Mary Tavy, but has yet to hear back from them. They are ahead of us on their emergency planning, and it is hoped that we may gain from their experience. Other Parishes may also be consulted.

64-2008 Receive Reports from Councillors on respective outside bodies:

64.1 DNPA Consultative Forum – the meeting is on Friday.

64.2 Police Authority – No meeting this month.

64.3 Southern Parishes Link Committee – No meeting this month. The minutes of the last meeting have been received.

64.4 Nicholls Hall Committee – The Hall has suffered a burglary. The meter box in the vestibule was smashed into and the black box removed. It is thought that only a tiny amount of money, one or two pounds at most, may have been in the box, but its removal is of far greater consequence as it will be difficult to replace. The burglary took place whilst a meeting was taking place in the WI room, and the front door of the hall was open. Village Halls cannot really operate without this level of trust, it would be inappropriate for any meeting to have to take place within a sealed fortress.

64.5 WDBC – In the absence of Cllr McPhie the Chairman reported that she had met with Cathy Aubertin, who had detailed the toilet costs and confirmed that they are mainly standing costs including insurance, water, electricity, council tax etc. and that cleaning is only a small proportion of the costs. If the toilets were to open only at weekends the saving would be tiny in comparison with the costs, probably only around a hundred pounds, because the standing costs would remain unchanged. Cleaning can only be carried out by employees (or ex-employees) of West Devon because of the insurance. There seemed no point in bringing Ms Aubertin to a

meeting when there is so little that she can offer us. Toilets will be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

The West Devon Post Office closures have been announced, and it appears at present that both Mary Tavy and the Lydford Outreach service are safe. It was thought that Bridestowe was also on the safe list, but there was some doubt about this as Mr Boyd had visited it that morning and had received the impression that it was on the closure list.

65-2008 Receive the financial report:

65.1 The Annual Accounts were presented by the Clerk, who confirmed that they had been audited by Mr Boyd and confirmed by him as a true record. A letter of thanks will be sent to Mr Boyd, who has requested that the Audit Fee be paid directly to the Church as a donation. The motion to accept the annual accounts was proposed by Ms Gannon, seconded by Mr Hammerton and was UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED.

The Clerk read out the Annual Governance Statement, as required by the Audit Commission. The motion that the Council should sign the Annual Governance Statement was proposed by Ms Gannon, seconded by Mrs Cole and was UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED.

65.2 The monthly financial report was presented by the Clerk, detailing the following points: Application has been made to HMRC to reclaim £669 in VAT paid during the financial years 2006/07 and 2007/08.

The Insurance company has submitted a revised quotation based on new figures, as requested by the Council at the April meeting. The majority of the premium, however, arises from statutory requirements. All members had scrutinized the new documents and it was UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the quotation be accepted.

The Clerk had requested HMRC to reallocate her personal tax allowances so that her salary from Lydford Parish Council is taxed at a blanket 20%, which has been done. This will very much simplify the tax calculation and enable members to more easily discharge their duty to ensure that the correct amount of PAYE is tendered to HMRC.

Signatories completed their personal details on the application form for CAF Bank at the meeting, and as soon as they have provided the required proofs of identity the application will be submitted.

65.3 The following balances were reported:

Current Account - £701.06

Deposit account - £6351.93

Ancient Spring - £9767.80

Parish plan - £1331.38

The following cheques were authorized from the general budget: Clerk salary and expenses £269.73, HMRC (via Post office Ltd) £79.20, T Liversidge (grass cutting) £34.00, Allianz Insurance £420.49, Lydford PCC (audit fee) £30.00. A cheque for £1000.00 to open the Council's CAF Bank account was authorised, and will be signed when the signatories have their proofs of identity completed. An immediate transfer of £2000.00 from the deposit account to the current account was authorised. Provisions held as shown on the sheet circulated to members and attached to the master set of minutes.

66-2008 Correspondence

66.1 Correspondence for action, consideration or a decision:

1. CCD - Community Shop: the Chairman reported that as a result of receiving a communication from the CCD regarding the possibility of a community shop she had attended an exploratory meeting with Lorna Turner from CCD. At the moment DEFRA is keen to fund such initiatives, and it is anticipated that a total of £60,000 would be obtainable in grants and loans towards the

capital costs of such a project. First, however, it would be necessary to find a local person who would be keen to run it, the scheme normally running as a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. The person who takes it on usually ends up as a paid employee. This type of community shop generally stocks high end specialist produce as opposed to milk and bread. The Parish Magazine will be used to discover whether anyone locally is interested in taking this on, and if so then the CCD consultants will perform a feasibility study on the project.

2. Devon Rural Network – consultation and Local Development Strategy. It was not felt that a response was needed for this.
3. Devon NHS Primary Care Trust – feedback invited. Mrs Boyd was asked to respond on behalf of the council.
4. Parish Link Committee – meetings about the Local Government Review (see also 19). Information regarding the Boundary Commission Recommendations for the future of Devon is coming in from a number of sources. The consultation period has not yet begun.
5. DAPC Newsletter – The Clerk requested authorisation to attend the forthcoming course on Planning for Small PC's in June and this was unanimously agreed.
6. Letter from Graham Cornish re the Granite Way – dealt with under item 62.2
7. Letter from the Mayors of Tavistock, Okehampton and Hatherleigh – the three West Devon town mayors have got together to request support for their opposition to the huge housing plans being imposed on their towns by central government. Ms Gannon supplied the information that in Devon the birth rate exceeds the death rate by approximately 1000 per year, but that housing needs are swelled by numbers of retired people moving into the county. There was unanimous support for the three mayors' position, and a reply will be sent to this effect.

66.2 Correspondence for information only included:

1. Information from WDBC regarding free Radon Tests. It is believed that this information is in the process of being sent to individual households.
2. Information from a charity called Vitalise was noted.
3. Dartmoor Commoners Council – notice of Election Meetings. Information has been posted on the Parish Notice Board as requested.
4. An information booklet outlining the Rural South Devon and Dartmoor Unitary Authority proposal
5. Tavistock Walk and Talk: update of information about the free led walks in Tavistock on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
6. The Council has received a request from the University of London requesting permission to publish "Their Past, Your Future", the information from Lydford's Book of Memories, on the internet for educational research purposes. There was no objection in principle, and the Clerk will allow the University to send the permission forms for ratification at the next meeting. Mrs Holland was concerned about the copyright of the individual contributors, and also whether any commercial gain would be made by any party. This was thought to be unlikely, but this will also be checked ahead of next month's meeting.
7. A letter has been received from the DNPA archaeologist to the effect that an old boundary stone between Lydford and Bridestowe, at the garden at Gorse Hills. The DNPA are going to reinstate the stone and invited input as to the site from both Parishes. Members looked with interest at the enclosed old map, and in the face of the expertise of the archaeologist it was decided that Lydford would be happy for her to site it where she thinks best.

Recent correspondence received too late to be put on the agenda and requiring action was held over for the next meeting.

67-2008 Planning Applications (all DNPA)

67.1 An application to fell two semi-mature Beech trees at 7 Hawthorn Park was granted and the trees have been felled.

67.2 Amended plans for: Addition of “outer skin” to “single skin” bungalow with alterations to porch dimensions. Extension to rear of bungalow to provide extra living space (single storey) and addition of two roof lights. (0106/08)

This received retrospective permission from the DNPA Planning committee as they were not regarded as being substantially different from those passed. The Clerk was instructed to request further information from the Head of Planning at DNPA regarding the definition of “substantial”.

67.3 Extension and alterations to garage and workshop to form an attached three bedroom house with off road parking at The Croft, School Road. (0231/08)

This was dealt with at the last meeting, but reviewed following a number of representations from Parishoners. Further communication with the DNPA planning office also reveals that although the application was made under HS1 the planning officer considered that it was not a valid application under HS1 as it was for an entire new dwelling and not a conversion.

It was RESOLVED that the council agrees to a request from DNPA for the application to be dealt with by the senior planning officer under delegated powers and that no representation would be made for it to be called into committee.

67.4 An application had been received to Demolish existing woodstore and replace with larger store and extend back porch for woodburning boiler, plus install solar panels on east and west roof slopes at Larrick House, Lydford (0321/08).

The Council was fully supportive of this application to install a more energy efficient heating system, hence reducing the carbon footprint at the property. It was not felt that any further comment was called for, hence the response:

The Council SUPPORTS this application.

68-2008 Items raised at the previous meeting for inclusion on this agenda:

There were none.

69-2008 Items raised for inclusion on the next Agenda

68.1 Winter opening of the toilets

68.2 Signage around the village

68.3 Ratification of the alteration of the date of the July meeting

70-2008 To agree the date of the next meeting:

The date of **17th June 2008** was agreed commencing at 7.00 pm.

Provisionally the date of the July meeting will be put back a week to **Tuesday 22nd July**, subject to ratification at the next meeting.

There being no further business the meeting was formally closed by the Chairman at 8.50 pm.

Annie Martin
Clerk to the Parish Council

22nd May 2008

Signed as a true and accurate record..... (Chairman)

Date.....