

Minutes of Morebath Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday, 16 March 2021 at 7.30pm by Zoom.

Meetings are being held remotely while the advice from the National Association of Local Councils remains that face to face meetings should not be held for the safety and protection of those attending.

Present: Councillors J Wescott (Chairman), Miss L Hagenbrock, Mrs P Reed, Mrs S Shipperley, A Wilson, County Councillor Mrs P Colthorpe, District Councillor A Moore until Minute No. 2021 – 119.3.

2021 – 105 Mr Tom Keating, Licencing Officer MDDC.

Mr Keating had advised that he is unable to attend the meeting due to not having sufficient time to prepare as a result of staff shortages.

It was not possible for a member of the planning team to attend and it had been suggested that the Minutes relating to the licencing talk was provided so that a suitable reply could be given. This would no longer be the case with Mr Keating unable to attend.

2021 – 106 Apologies. Councillor Mrs S Shaw, District Councillor R Stanley.

2021 – 106 Declarations of Interest. None.

2021 – 107 Dispensation to Councillors. None.

2021 – 108 Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held by Zoom on 19 January 2021.

Approved as a correct record after it was noted that Councillor Conway was present.

Proposed by Councillor Mrs Reed

Seconded by Councillor Wilson

Actions Arising / Updates:

2021 – 109 Picnic Bench and Seat. Written permission from the landowner had been obtained and the s106 application submitted to MDDC.

Councillor Wilson advised that since the original quotation had been given, timber had significantly increased in price.

2021 - 110 Definitive Map Review. Councillors had been advised that the Reports on the two Morebath Definitive Map Review proposals would be presented to the DCC Public Rights of Way Virtual Committee meeting on 11 March 2021.

The Minutes are not yet available on the DCC website.

County Councillor Mrs Colthorpe had attended the DCC meeting and advised that officers felt there was insufficient evidence to support representations from the public. The footpaths will not be upgraded and everything will stay as it is.

2021 - 111 New HGV Traffic Sign. The signage production company had been closed during much of the pandemic and the Clerk had ascertained that the sign was ready for collection.

She enquired the cost of it being couriered to Morebath and a quotation of £15.95 + VAT had been given.

Proposed by Councillor Conway to accept the transport costs, seconded by Councillor Miss Hagenbrock and unanimously agreed.

2021 - 112 Webpage on MDDC website. After sending a number of emails to the officer at MDDC and no reply being received, the Clerk made further enquiries and was told that the officer who had assisted in the past was no longer at Mid Devon. They have a new

person starting at the end of March and the Communications Officer would be in touch with a view to getting the website completely up to date at that time.

2021 - 113 Councillor Mrs Shipperley – dog fouling in the village.

An increase in dog fouling had been noticed and neighbours had reported this to the MDDC Dog Warden.

Since the Dog Warden had left a message on Councillor Mrs Shipperley's answer machine, she had tried unsuccessfully to make contact to enquire if dog fouling signs could be provided.

District Councillor Moore will take this up with MDDC.

There was a discussion on the Parish Council providing dog waste bins and the resulting expense of emptying. It was advised that any bin can be used to dispose of dog waste.

2021 - 114 Councillor Mrs Shipperley – DCC Locality Grant for refurbishment of bus shelter (benches).

Thanks were expressed to County Councillor Mrs Colthorpe for her Locality Grant of £325 in respect of the cost of the bus shelter and the benches were in place.

Councillor Mrs Shipperley suggested that the bus shelter should now be painted, which she offered to do with materials she already had, after completing a Risk Assessment.

Councillor Mrs Shipperley suggested using some of the Parish Council resources to improve the heather patch near the Village Hall which suffers damage when grass around the area is cut.

Councillor Conway suggested a wooden surround would give the necessary protection.

Proposed by Councillor Mrs Shipperley that she obtains prices from Mr T Ellicott up to a maximum of £80.00, to proceed on that basis. Seconded by Councillor Conway and unanimously agreed.

2021 - 115 Councillor Conway – missing lids from two inspection chambers.

The precise location had been advised and the matter dealt with by DCC Highways.

Councillor Conway advised that outside the property 'Slipend', the metal framework of the inspection chamber has sunk resulting in the highway around it being damaged. DCC Highways has repaired the area three times, but what is really needed is for South West Water to raise the frame.

Action: The Clerk to request SWW to do the necessary work.

2021 – 116 Open Forum. No members of the public present.

Councillor Wilson advised he had purchased a gritter and was willing to grit roads in the Parish free of charge.

The Clerk advised this would come under Snow Warden duties for which he would need to be trained by the Neighbourhood Highway Manger.

Action: The Clerk to organise this.

2021 - 117 Reports.

2021 – 117.1 County Councillor Mrs P Colthorpe. Written Report received as follows:

In the wake of Rishi Sunak's budget (on Wednesday 3.iii.21), I should perhaps just mention that D.C.C.'s budget was agreed at the Full Council meeting held on 18th February. Unsurprisingly it had been a difficult budget to draw up: with increases prioritised for the old, the young and the vulnerable and a national increase in the minimum wage, there was little room for manoeuvre and, initially, a £100 million gap! That from this position the County Treasurer and her team were somehow able to achieve a 'balanced budget' (a legal requirement for all local authorities), must command respect and thanks are due both to the finance team and to the county's officers. Interesting statistics include: a 1% increase in D.C.C.'s council tax raises £4.25m; £14.5m will keep D.C.C. going for 4.5 days; the 2.2% rise in the minimum wage will cost D.C.C. £3.3m.

In spite of the pandemic, work on Climate Change and the Devon Carbon Reduction Plan goes on with a £300k allocation in the 21/22 budget, a meeting of the Standing Over-view Group on Tuesday 9.iii.21 and the continuing roll-out of L.E.D. street lighting expected to cover most of next year's decrease of £62k in the highways budget. Following a meeting of the Investment and Pension Fund Committee on 26.ii.21, the Devon Pension Fund – which administers the pension scheme for the majority of Devon's public sector, including local government and the emergency services – has pledged that its portfolio of investments will be net-zero by 2050 at the latest and, in the shorter term, has also committed to investing over £200m in renewable energy infra-structure funds and carbon solutions. As the chairman of the committee pointed out, however, 'the steel industry is carbon intensive but is also vital in the production of the wind turbines we need to increase the supply of renewable energy'. Such competing priorities demonstrate the complexity of the task but I hope the examples above show something of the variety of approaches D.C.C. is taking in its commitment to the 'Climate Change' agenda.

Another angle is addressed by the 'Resource and Waste Strategy for Devon and Torbay' which went out to consultation on 3.iii.21 for six weeks. Local stakeholders, residents and businesses are invited to read the draft strategy and then to respond to a series of questions on subjects including reducing carbon emissions, waste and food waste and increasing recycling and reuse. In light of the responses, an amended strategy will be presented to the Devon Authorities' Strategic Waste Committee and individual councils in the summer and the final strategy published later in the year.

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/haveyoursay/consultations/draft-resource-and-waste-management-strategy-for-devon-and-torbay/>

Following on from the Covid-19 community testing site opened at County Hall last month, two more 7-days-a-week sites are now operational, one at North Walk Car Park at the Civic Centre in Barnstaple and the other at Exe Valley Leisure Centre in Tiverton. Both have early and late opening on Mondays and Thursdays but please be aware that all community testing sites are only able to carry out on-site tests and these must be booked via the D.C.C. website: devon.cc/testing. Results within an hour by text or email. More details attached below.

Update on Devon's Community Testing Service – 3.iii.21

If you leave home to work or volunteer or if you are in contact with vulnerable people, regular testing will help to keep you and your community safe.

Testing is key to breaking the chain of coronavirus transmission, especially as around one in three people who have the virus display no symptoms and may unknowingly spread it.

Testing is important even after you have been vaccinated as you may still pass on the virus even if you have no symptoms yourself.

The offer:-

- . Free, painless and easy to book – results within an hour via text or email
- . Rapid lateral flow testing
- . For anyone who must leave home to attend work or to volunteer and people such as paid and unpaid carers who are in contact with vulnerable individuals
- . For all households with primary, secondary school and/or college-aged children and young people, including childcare and support bubbles
- . For people who do NOT have symptoms of Covid-19
- . Multiple locations now open across Devon
- . Testing available at some sites 7 days a week (County Hall, Tiverton, Barnstaple)
- . Book via: devon.cc/testing

If you are in regular contact with the public during your working week, testing twice weekly is advisable

If you are in occasional contact with the public or a vulnerable person you may wish to test on the day of the contact or the day before

Employers should not be asking members of staff to get tested before they come into the workplace

A lateral flow test is useful for picking up asymptomatic positive cases. If you prove to be one of these, you should isolate for ten days to prevent spread to others.

A negative test does not give you a 'green light' and you must continue to adhere to restrictions and 'hands, face, space' at all times

Community testing sites are only able to carry out on-site tests which must be booked in advance via the D.C.C. website. Government policy and guidance on testing is changing rapidly and the website will be updated to reflect any changes. People who are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 should NOT book a test at a community testing site. If you have any of those symptoms, you should use the GOV.UK website or call 119 to arrange an N.H.S. test

Please note that home-testing kits have to be collected from N.H.S. testing locations or ordered on-line. They cannot be collected from Devon County Council community testing sites at the moment

This was the last meeting that County Councillor Mrs Colthorpe would attend as she is not standing in the forthcoming DCC election on 6 May. She thanked Members for their friendship over many years, and in return, Councillor Mrs Colthorpe was thanked for everything she had done for Morebath.

2021 – 117.2 District Councillor A Moore reported as follows:

- The 2021/22 budget had been approved by MDDC and a shortfall of £386,000 the following year had been met with a new homes bonus
- Officers had commenced looking at the 2022/23 budget which was set to be challenging
- The 2021/22 Council Tax has been approved which involves a 59p a day increase since last year for MDDC services. Council Tax includes a Precept for Devon and Cornwall Police, Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service and the Parish Council Precept.
- The Council is on track due to government support, furloughing and government protections scheme. The MDDC Covid finance team provides grants in addition to the usual grants from the government
- In MDDC, £13.5 million has been received from the government for grants of which just over £10 million has been paid to local businesses and communities. Dean's Team at MDDC has been rated top in the South West attracting praise from all quarters. Exeter City Council has not paid out any grants.
- There has been an extraordinary Council meeting to look at changes or continue with the current system and look for efficiency and better member and community engagement.

Councillor Conway followed up on the very efficient 'Dean's Team' when he applied for a Village Hall grant which was dealt with in an exceptionally quick time.

District Councillor Moore appreciated the compliment and will feed this back to the team.

2021 – 117.3 P3 Parish Paths Partnership.

It was noted that the local co-ordinator had submitted the annual Survey Forms and the Clerk had submitted the Summary of Expenditure to DCC Public Rights of Way Department.

2021 – 117.4 Mrs S Squire, Parish Clerk.

A written Report on her attendance at an Internal Controls training course was noted.

2021 – 118 Planning. The following Planning Applications were considered:

2021 – 118.1

- **21/00484/FULL – Variation of Condition 2 of Planning Permission
20/00178/FULL to allow alterations to Unit 2 cabin only – Whitehall Farm,
Morebath**

To reply: We have concerns over windows facing the neighbouring property and the corrugated metal roof is wholly unsuitable. As the windows are facing neighbouring properties there will be light pollution contradicting the planning documents to compliment the dark sky area.

Proposed by Councillor Miss Hagenbrock, seconded by Councillor Mrs Shipperley and unanimously agreed.

District Councillor Moore will make further enquiries in relation to a copper roof, not cedar, which had been approved.

- **21/00285/HOUSE – Erection of two-storey side extension and single storey rear extension – 1 River View, Exebridge
Proposed by Councillor Mrs Reed to recommend approval, seconded by
Councillor Conway and unanimously agreed.**

2021 - 118.2 Planning Correspondence:

The following Planning Applications had been considered between meetings and responses sent to MDDC as follows:

- **20/01908/FULL – Erection of field shelter and 3 movable bird enclosures, formation of track and hardstanding, entrance gates and creation of pond at Firdown House, Morebath.** No objections.
- **20/01151/FULL – Change of use of agricultural land to a mixed agricultural and equestrian use to include the erection of a stable block/shed and formation of new vehicular access at 1 West Timewell Hill Cottage, Morebath.** Change of description. No response sent due to insufficient Councillors replying.

2021 - 118.3 Planning Decision Notices: The following Approval Notices were noted:
20/02025/HOUSE – siting of an external wood fired boiler at Combeland, Morebath
20/01815/FULL – Erection of a single storey dwelling as holiday accommodation at Warmore Farm, Morebath.

2021 - 118.4 Application 20/01789/FULL – Change of use of hall solely for use by holiday makers to public use – Duvale Priory, Bampton.

It was noted this was on the Agenda for consideration by Members at the virtual meeting of the Planning Committee on 10/3/21. Councillor Mrs Colthorpe, who is a member of MDDC Planning Committee in her capacity as a District Councillor, advised that a decision on the Application had been deferred for a more in depth Report.

2021 - 119. Finance.

2021 - 119. 1 Balances:

NatWest Current Account as at 1/3/21: £17,702.63

NatWest Reserves Account as at 1/3/21: £6,229.64

Reserves had been circulated to Councillors.

2021 - 119.2 The following payments were approved and authorised.

Proposed by Councillor Mrs Shipperley

Seconded by Councillor Mrs Reed

	Ch.No.	
• Mrs S Squire Salary and Expenses	583	£225.60
• HMRC	584	£ 50.60
• Mr W Dart Grass Cutting	585	£200.00
• G J Strong Refurbishment of bus shelter	586	£295.06
• Mr T Ellicott Work on parish footpaths	587	£155.25

2021 - 119.3 Bank Account. As a result of the Clerk's Report on her attendance at an internal controls training event, Councillors considered opening a new account with Unity Trust Bank for all transactions to be dealt with online by BACS.

A response from NatWest Bank is awaited enquiring the procedure that they adopt if the account is left with them.

Councillors preferred that this item was deferred to the May Parish Council meeting.

2021 - 119.4 Adoption of Internal Controls Policy. Councillors considered a Policy prepared for Morebath Parish Council by the Clerk, circulated separately to Councillors. This was recommended by the trainer of the internal control course, irrespective of banking arrangements.

Proposed by Councillor Mrs Shipperley to adopt.

Seconded by Councillor Wilson and unanimously agreed.

2021 - 119.5 Grass Cutting.

On the day of the meeting, MDDC had advised the Clerk that after checking, Morebath 2 map should not have been sent. The grass that is cut is on maps 1 & 3 only. The vast majority of the grass (and cost) is on map 3 with very little on map 1 and it would not be cost effective to cut area 1 without area 3 for which the total cost of £259.42 excluding VAT had been quoted.

**Councillor Conway proposed that grass cutting is carried out by Mr S Kelland at a cost of £17.00 per hour, with one area being cut by MDDC (main road area).
Seconded by Councillor Mrs Shipperley.**

Vote: 3 in favour. Carried.

One abstention.

One not in favour.

Action: The Clerk to ask MDDC to quote for Map 1 (main road) which is 90% of the area they cut. Map 3 is not the main area.

2021 - 120. Correspondence.

2021 - 120.1 Email from the Neighbourhood Highway Manager – Doing what matters.

The details had been sent separately to Councillors who had been invited in the email to list three priority areas that required attention. The following details to be forwarded:

1. Flooding issues when there is heavy rain at Lodfin Crossing and Chillthorne Farm on the B3190
2. Culvert under the road at Hayne Farm
3. Blocked drainage at the bottom of Porte Lane (200m west of Hayne Farm)

Action: Clerk to advise of these three priority items.

2021 - 120.2 Email from Mid Devon Planning Consultations. Mid Devon Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment – Call for Sites. The email was forwarded to Councillors on 8/2/21. *Noted.*

2021 - 121. Items raised by Councillors:

Councillor Mrs Shipperley spoke about mobile Vehicle Activated Speed monitor signs which had been mentioned at the last meeting. Due to the cost, this had been noted at the time. Councillor Mrs Shipperley felt this was an important issue to follow up and will research various funding streams towards one of these VAS signs.

2021 - 122. Item raised by the Clerk – Scheme of Delegation

Councillors had been forwarded a DALC Newsletter which covered remote meeting regulations and the sunset clause.

The legislation permitting Councils to meet remotely comes to an end on 6 May 2021. As it currently stands, all Council meetings held on, or after 7 May, must therefore return to a face-to-face format.

This means that the Council has to start preparing for physical meetings from 7 May. The DALC, NALC and other local government bodies are lobbying the government about this, especially as Town and Village Halls have not received details of any regulations on re-opening to the public and the fact that the rule of 6 will still apply.

It has been suggested that Councils adopt a Scheme of Delegation. The Clerk has researched model documents and had circulated details which had been tailored to Morebath Parish Council, for approval.

It is not necessary to hold an Annual Parish Meeting under the current legislation but the Parish Council will have to prepare for the Annual Parish Council Meeting (AGM) in May.

Councillors considered holding the May meeting, scheduled for Tuesday 19th, ahead of any new legislation coming in on 7 May, so that it can be held remotely.

In this situation, the Clerk had ascertained from the DALC that Annual Parish Council Meetings can be held remotely from 1 May to 6 May (including the weekend and Bank Holiday) and it may be necessary to change the May from Tuesday 19th meeting to do this.

The DALC had suggested there is merit in having a Scheme of Delegation in place, whatever the circumstances, and it could be that nearer the time, the government will extend the legislation surrounding remotely held and face-to-face meetings and the Clerk is keen for the Parish Council to be prepared for either scenario.

Councillors were receptive to a meeting between 1st and 6th May, with Monday 3rd at 8pm being suggested.

This will be the Annual Parish Council Meeting (AGM).

The accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 will be approved and the 2010/21 Annual Return completed and approved.

2021 - 123. Next meeting: Monday, 3 May 2021 at 8pm by Zoom.

The meeting ended at 9.33pm

Summary of Decisions:

- **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 19 January 2021 by Zoom**
- **Councillor Mrs Shipperley to progress a wooden surround to protect the heather bed on grass near the Village Hall subject to a maximum cost of £80.00**
- **Planning**
- **Payments**
- **Adoption of Internal Controls Policy**
- **The majority of grass cutting to be carried out by Mr S Kelland**

Chairman

Date