

HITTISLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 17th March 2021 by Zoom

Present: Cllrs Mark Brown, Ruth Curtis (clerk), Chris Dack, Gill Fisher, Richard Gard (chairman), Brian Howell, Libby Turrell, Cathy Wetherden; DCCLr Nick Way

1. Apologies: MDDCllrs Derek Coren, Stuart Penny, Cllr Brian Howell
2. Declarations of interest – Cllr Fisher declared an interest in planning application 20/01780/FULL.
3. Minutes of the last meeting 20th January 2021 - were approved and signed.
4. Matters Arising

4.1 Correspondence with DCC

The chairman wrote to Barnaby Grubb (BG) with relevant minutes from January parish council meeting including asking when the Dennis Down to Quince Cross road will be repaired. BG is not directly responsible for highways maintenance and had passed query on to Highways (Steve Tucker) for response. The chairman will follow up. It was disappointing that BG had so far made no comment on the amount of highways volunteering within the parish which deserves acknowledgement.

4.2 May meeting – Annual Parish meeting and Annual General Parish Council meeting.

Having discussed the advice from DALC regarding the holding of meetings from 7th May and the ending of legislation permitting virtual meetings, councillors agreed that the May meetings could be held on 19th May subject to government lockdown legislation, outside is preferable weather permitting. Councillors asked to keep Weds 5th May in reserve in case needed.

5. Highways

Two Moors Way signpost - the signpost for the Two Moors Way has been repaired by parishioner John Painter on behalf of the parish council. It was noted that these way markers may be responsibility of Two Moors Way and that the Footpaths officer should be able to clarify.

6. Planning

6.1 Howards Copse

Adrian Deveraux (AD), MDDC Planning Officer, joined the meeting and, with his permission, the discussion was recorded.

Cllr Gard gave some background to parishioners' concerns about the erection of different structures within Howard Copse, including a caravan, and also about the recent retrospective planning application in neighbouring Bow parish for a log cabin in a field, on the edge of ancient woodland, as a holiday let (20/02084/FULL).

Hittisleigh Parish Council had not received any notifications of planning applications for the structures in the woodland and had only been alerted to the retrospective planning application for the nearby log cabin by parishioners.

With Howards Copse, it was noted that there are 7 different plots within the 25 acre site and the turnover of ownership for individual plots seems to be on average every 2-3 years. Cllr Turrell has been in contact with the enforcement officer to seek clarification about the

HITTISLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

structures being erected and the officer has already indicated that the caravan in the first plot should not be there and has asked for it to be removed.

It was also noted that the plots in Howards Copse (www.woodlands.co.uk) are sold for recreational use and under the terms of covenant/sale, owners are not allowed to use them for commercial purposes.

AD then clarified the regulations regarding the erection of structures/caravans/buildings in the open countryside and in woodland.

There are permitted development rights for dwellings such as caravans and log cabins (some log cabins fall into definition of a caravan) being on site for agricultural or forestry work but planning permission is needed. Proving the need to be on site for woodland work is potentially more difficult than for agricultural activity. You can camp on piece of land for 28 days, any longer is a change of use and needs a planning application. A touring caravan can stay up to 2 nights. There are a number of restrictions.

Any kind of building for forestry development/use needs an application – either prior notification or a planning application. Permitted development for forestry purposes assumes prior approval whereby the structure being erected is considered ‘reasonably necessary’ for that forestry management activity. There are restrictions and AD referred councillors to Part 6 Class E of the Town & Country General Permitted Development Order October 2015 (amended) for full details.

Parish councils are not normally notified of permitted development applications. AD will arrange for the parish council to receive any prior notification applications in future. AD reminded councillors that they can visit the MDDC website and do a search on the map for planning application information and related records.

In the case of buildings being erected for dwelling (either in the open countryside or in woodland) and retrospective planning permission being sought to regularise the activity, AD stressed that MDDC would never advise this approach. This is entirely at the applicants’ risk and could result in enforcement to remove the building.

It was noted that applicants can go to appeal if their application is refused by the local authority. If the case is dismissed at appeal, then the local authority can enforce removal.

In terms of the retrospective application for the neighbourin log cabin holiday let, Treefield Farm (20/02084/FULL), AD confirmed that the issues around the impact on the ancient woodland and ecological systems have been raised with the applicants and they are seeking specialist advice.

6.2 Binneford response

20/01780/FULL | Erection of 2 dwellings following removal of agricultural buildings. Land and Buildings at NGR 276014 96794 (Binneford) Revised drawings.

The revised drawings now limit the proposed properties to (almost) the existing footprint rather than extending out into field as per original application. This also responds to comments made about nearness to Higher Binneford It was felt that as this revision accommodated comments made by the parish council, we have no further comments.

6.3 Treefield Farm

Erection of log cabin as holiday let and associated shower/wc building - woodland at NGR 273448 97276 (north of Teighholt Cross) 20/02084/FULL

The application is in Bow parish but very near to Hittisleigh boundary and is retrospective – the cabin has already been erected. Our response was submitted by Cllr Turrell 6th March. No decision has been made as yet.

HITTISLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

6.4 Woodside bungalow

21/00489/CLU Woodside (Colebrooke parish council) – application for a certificate of lawfulness for the existing use of a dwelling house in breach of agricultural tie condition (g) of Planning Permission 87/02435/OUT for a period in excess of 10 years. The bungalow was originally part of Road Down Farm erected in 1993 with an agricultural tie. Councillors to review the application and send comments to the chairman who will collate for response.

7. DCC Update

- Covid-19. Over 50% of adults in Devon have now had first vaccinations.
- Elections (County Council) are 6th May. DCCLr NW has decided not to stand this time. Councillors thanked NW for his support for the parish over the years and will plan an appropriate Hittisleigh thank you when conditions permit.

8. MDDC Update

No update as MDCCllrs were not able to be present.

9. Payments

All agreed to the following payment:

John Painter £10

10. Any Other Business

- a) Parish Council noticeboard – this was blown down in recent gale. It was made for the council about 30 years ago. Councillors agreed to replace the board and Cllr Fisher will ask Will Fisher in the first instance.
- b) Chris Wood emailed asking whether parish council would like to endorse the Devon Climate Declaration. Cllr Dack to circulate link to councillors. It was agreed to include proposal on agenda for next meeting.
- c) Proposed market dates are Saturday 17th July and Saturday 14th August
- d) Councillors were pleased to note that drain clearance had been completed and encouraged each other to continue to report pot holes around the parish.

Next parish council meeting Wednesday 19th May 2021 to be confirmed