

HITTISLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 30th November 2022 in the village hall

Present: Ruth Curtis (clerk), Cllrs Mark Brown, Chris Dack, Gill Fisher, Brian Howell, Libby Turrell (chair), Cathy Wetherden; Beryl Watson; MDDCllr Derek Coren; DCCLr Cllr Frank Letch and two members of the public

1. Apologies: none
2. Declarations of interest – none
3. Minutes of the last meeting 5th October 2022 were approved and signed as a correct record.
4. Matters Arising
 - 4.1 Declarations of interest and rules for speaking and voting – councillors reviewed the current Code of Conduct (adopted 2012) and the details for discussion and voting on matters where a non-financial interest has been declared. The Code does not prohibit either but neither does it specify what *is* allowed. Councillors felt it would be helpful for all if the Code was clearer on these points and it was resolved to request a copy of the newest Code of Conduct from MDDC and to review it at the next meeting with a view to adopting it.
 - 4.2 Wildlife Warden Scheme update – Cllr Watson reported that eight people have signed up and the soil testing will now be done in March, so there is still time to join the scheme. The cost for the test kits is £20 per site and Cllr Watson will approach the Locality Fund for help towards the costs.
 - 4.3 Crediton Policing Patrol parish council ride-along – this will now be in January during a 5pm through to 3 am shift. Cllr Watson to attend.
 - 4.4 Shed thefts/break-ins – community safety information session – Cllr Turrell confirmed this is now likely to be a Friday morning in January. The emphasis will be on the practical matters people can undertake to improve safety and deter theft.
 - 4.5 Hittisleigh Parish Emergency Plan – Cllrs Brown and Fisher have reviewed the existing plan and completed an initial exercise to see what information we will need to gather for which scenarios and under which circumstances – eg localised and/or regional incidents. For eg if the mains water was cut off, who would suffer soonest? Who has private water supply? Generator? In the case of bad snow/ice – who has tractor etc available? Where are the various fire hydrants in the parish? How will we communicate, particularly with the most vulnerable, if phones lines/internet are down? The village hall is the designated emergency centre and it is suggested to divide the parish into 5 areas with a coordinator for each area as follows: Central (Mark Brown); Hittisleigh Mill (Gill Fisher), West (Brian Howell), North (Cathy Wetherden) and Binneford (TBC). Next steps: to make a questionnaire which the coordinators can take to households in their area to collect relevant information. Also to include MDDC and DCC emergency numbers into the plan and update the contacts (clerk, chair & one other). Once more substantial information has been gathered, a revised plan will be circulated.
 - 4.6 Green energy community advice – Chris Wood (CW) joined the meeting and reported on new charity based in Exeter set up to advise the public about practical measures to combat climate change. He runs Climate Fresk workshops [Climate Fresk Workshop – eXeterR \(extinctionrebellionexeter.org\)](https://www.climatefresk.org/) – a facilitated game based on IPCC data to inform the public about climate change which includes practical options and suggestions as to what people can do to make positive change. Councillors discussed the critical need for change at government level to achieve any significant impact whilst doing what we can personally and as a community. After discussion, it

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was agreed to invite Exeter Community Energy to facilitate a community session with emphasis on practical measures people can take up. This is likely to be Feb/March and will be advertised in advance. Councillors thanked CW for coming along and sharing ideas.

- 4.7 Parish Council files – it was resolved to recycle the hard copy versions of old Devon County Waste and Mid Devon Local Plan policy consultations and supplementary documents where they have been superseded, keeping the most current hard copy versions and details of online references.
5. Highways
- 5.1 West Studham flooding and drain clearances outside Hittisleigh Parish – in addition to drain clearance at West Studham following the recent bad weather, our road warden cleared the drains at Binneford Cross and two just beyond Summerhill Farm and councillors recorded their thanks. Following the work done a few years ago by volunteers at West Studham to improve the drainage, Highways were meant to have completed tarmac of left-hand side towards Yeoford and added a grill for the pipe to help prevent silting/blocking with leaves and debris. This has never been done. Cllr Watson offered to visit West Studham to ask if they will adopt the drain near them in the spirit of the Hittisleigh Adopt a Drain scheme. The clerk to send a note to Colebrook and Crediton Hamlets parish councils to let them know of our road warden help in their parishes.
- 5.2 Road fill tarmac request – our road warden has requested a ton of road fill tarmac in pots. The clerk to ask Highways.
6. District/County Councillor reports
- MDDCllr Coren reported that the parish boundary changes for Hittisleigh are included in the MDDC Parish Review and accepted. The new parish boundary will come into operation March 2023. There is wide-spread pressure across the council for savings and this will have an impact council-wide on services and costs. Leisure centres continue to be supported in full as they are considered important services for public health and education. The pool at Lords Meadow, Crediton will now be heated from ground source pumps. It also has its own water supply.
- DCCLr Letch reported across several areas: Health & Well-being board – covid numbers coming down but there is news of new outbreaks in care homes. Booster uptake is high. Children’s committee – the financial situation is the worst the Council has faced for many years with a £33m overspend. Work to identify savings forecasts a £6m deficit. This includes a £8m contribution from the Health Service (but no contribution next year). 78% of budget goes on children and adult care. Any 19yrs+ struggling to find work might find the online skills boot camp train4life useful. Attended the working group on speed – collisions are down but were up in covid (!) The Ukraine refugees forum meets twice a week. Several host families are coming to the end of their agreed 6 month term. Ongoing support including work opportunities and the opportunity to secure housing is essential.
7. Planning
- 7.1 22/01461/HOUSE Erection of single storey rear extension following removal of lean-to extension, installation of rear dormer and installation of a side window at first floor level Location: Old Smithy – permitted
- 7.2 22/00505/MFUL Engineering works to create a level hardstanding for an agricultural building at Swallow Tree farm – response due 1st December. Councillors discussed the application at length and resolved to object with the following comments: 1) visual impact on the environment - the original application 18/00220/PNAG stated

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that the location of the building ‘in a natural hollow’ was positive. The new levels increase the building height and will have greater visibility impact on the area. 2) unnecessary to raise the ground level – the application states agricultural machinery would not be able to reasonably access the building without the raised level. Nothing material has changed since original application in 2018 where two access routes were detailed, one from the field and one via the yard and ramp. 3) increased yard size – the proposed works will increase the yard size by 3900 sqm. There is no agricultural need for this either in terms of the 2018 permission or any new need shown. 4) leaching and pollutants – the origin of the infill material is not clear (‘general construction projects’) and there is concern about potential leaching from the materials into nearby water course 5) environmental impact on roads and increased CO2 emissions – the impact of 1200 truck movements (hourly deliveries in 6-8 wheel tipper lorries) on our single track poorly maintained lanes. We have only just had the route from Dennis Down to Swallow Tree (thinly) resurfaced, it is already showing signs of disrepair. The net carbon contribution of 1200 truck movements should also be taken into very careful consideration. A level area can be achieved as per the original 2018 plans without any need for delivery of off-site infill. MDDC should be actively supporting projects which limit – not unnecessarily increase - pollution to the environment.

- 7.3 Letter to MDDC re: communication on planning matters – it was resolved not to send a communication regarding wider planning matters at this time but to discuss again at the January meeting.
8. Enforcement matters
- 8.1 Howards Copse – the siting of a new caravan in Howards Copse had been reported by a parishioner. We have yet to receive a response from MDDC to the queries we sent in July.
- 8.2 Swallow Tree – there had been no MDDC update on the matters raised in March. The clerk to register a query re: the new caravan in Howards Copse and to follow up on outstanding matters including clarification re: the mobile home at Parsonage Lane.
- 9 Correspondence
- 9.1 For response
- MDDC Residents Survey 2022 - some councillors had already completed the survey and felt that as many residents as possible should do so
 - Free Landmark Tree – the free tree was welcomed and Cllr Brown has offered a place to plant it in the middle of his field to commemorate the coronation of King Charles.
 - Devon EV charging strategy responses by 19th December - one councillor had responded
- 9.2 For information – no comments on information circulated.
- 9.3 New correspondence – the clerk had received notification from Airband of the siting of new telegraph pole for superfast broadband and will circulate details.

Next parish council meeting 7.30 pm Wednesday 18th January 2023