

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

held on

Wednesday 8th November 2023

at 7.30pm at the Village Hall

Present: Cllr A Birmingham, Cllr S Luxton, Cllr R Tillett, Cllr E Hollingsworth, Cllr W Honan, Cllr B Hillson, Cllr J Kemp (EDDC) and Cllr H Gent (DCC).

In Attendance: Tracy Watkins (Clerk) and six members of the public, one written expression of interest but could not attend and had also received two similar expressions in person.

No		Action
41/23	Apologies: Cllr N Vickers and Cllr S Randall Johnson (DCC)	
42/23	Declarations of interest Cllr E Hollingsworth in item 15 – Village Community Space and Cllr Luxton in item 16 – Affordable and Open Market Housing	
43/23	Minutes The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 6th September 2023 were agreed as a true record and SIGNED by the Vice Chair.	
44/23	Public Question Time No questions were raised.	
45/23	First Responder and Defibrillator Pete Smiley was introduced to the meeting as the new custodian of the defibrillator. Pete also gave everyone a brief overview of what his role as a first responder for SWAST involves. It was suggested that a sign was put in the locked notice board and on the school gates advising the location of the defibrillator. Pete happy to do this. He will carry out monthly checks and also order parts for the defibrillator. He will organise a familiarisation session for anyone interested and also include some basic life support training. The Council is keen to encourage people in the village to join a local first responder team. Cllr J Kemp also happy to help with this. To be advertised in Speke Up and details sent out through the email and WhatsApp groups to ascertain interest in a Saturday morning session in the village hall.	JK and PS RT and NV

	<p>needs re-painting. This has already been reported to Highways. Cllr Gent will chase.</p> <p>There have been several reports that silage drivers, not local farmers, have been going too fast through the village. Confirmed they are going over to the anaerobic digestion plant at Clyst St Mary. Cllr Gent will report these concerns to Devon County Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and Development– Cllr Honan – There have been two new applications since the last meeting. One application was previously objected to by the Parish Council but this has been remodelled and all councillors agreed that the previous concerns has been allayed so no need to hold a site meeting. <p>A maple tree is being felled. Cllr Hollingsworth’s comments have been adopted by the Council.. All comments will be loaded onto the planning portal.</p> <p>Agricultural Inn – The Chair has been advised that the outstanding planning condition to replace the pergola roof has yet to be completed. EDDC Planning team are pursuing this with the owner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications – Cllr Vickers was not present at the meeting and no update has been provided. • Footpaths and Open Spaces – Update from the Footpath Warden/Cllr Hillson – Cllr Hillson will make the Footpath Warden aware of the comments made in the meeting regarding the footpath from the church to the riverside being in need of some maintenance. 	<p>SL</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>EH</p> <p>HG</p> <p>HG/Clerk /WH</p> <p>BH</p>
51/23	<p>Village Hall</p> <p>The next meeting of the of the Trustees is next week. Minutes to be provided to the Parish Council when available.</p> <p>Some electrical upgrading has been completed. Cllr Tillet was pleased to report that since the new roof has been completed there are no leaks evident.</p> <p>Thank you to Cllr Luxton for sourcing the roofing contractors.</p>	<p>RT</p>
52/23	<p>Financial Items</p> <p>The accounts summary to October 31st 2023 (previously approved by Cllr A Birmingham) was NOTED</p> <p>2 x Payments to Tracy Watkins (September and October)</p> <p>2 x Payments to HMRC (September and October)</p> <p>2 x Payments of £11.73 to BT for Village Hall WiFi (paid by DD on 28.09.2023 and 28.10.2023)</p> <p>1 x payment of £40 to ICO for GDPR subscription</p> <p>1 x payment to Zurich for Council Insurance Policy of £264.00</p>	

	<p>1 x payment for the reimbursement of payment for Defibrillator pads of £65.64</p> <p>1 x payment to BHSVT as the annual donation of £2000.00</p> <p>1 x payment to Bernaville Nurseries for the Coronation Bench of £499.00</p> <p>1 x receipt of Precept payment from EDDC of £4000.00</p> <p>Note: Payments approved by Councillors S Luxton, A Birmingham and R Tillett in accordance with the Financial Regulations</p> <p>Council to approve the use of internal auditor Penny Clapham, Parish Clerk, Bampton for the municipal year 2023-2024 at a cost of £65. This motion was PROPOSED by Cllr E Hollingsworth and SECONDED by Cllr R Tillett.</p> <p>Cllr Birmingham PROPOSED a motion for Cllr E Hollingsworth to approve the roofing invoice as the third signatory, SECONDED by Cllr Tillett</p>	
<p>53/23</p>	<p>EDDC</p> <p>Cllr Kemp was present at the meeting but did not have anything to update.</p>	
<p>54/23</p>	<p>County Councillor update</p> <p>A summary of Cllr Randall Johnson’s update is below. The full version will be made available on the Parish Council website:</p> <p>Devon County Council is going through a major restructure currently of how the ‘business’ operates.</p> <p>Setting a balanced budget early next year is going to very difficult, resulting in some very difficult choices having to be made where core spending power has reduced in real terms by 27 per cent since 2010/11.</p> <p>The Levelling up & Regeneration Bill recently received Royal Assent, a raft of new measures came into force which the government says will “put local people at the heart of development”. County and District Councils will be expected to work with a faster and less bureaucratic planning system with developers held to account.</p> <p>DCC Highways teams have taken an absolute battering this year with wet weather and flooding events in particular have decimated planned maintenance but despite that are pressing on with as much of the programme as possible when not dealing with ‘risk to life’ events or clearing up after flooding, fallen trees and damaged buildings.</p>	

<p>55/23</p>	<p>Village Community Space Proposal</p> <p>Mr and Mrs Matthews, the residents of Station Halt own some land by the riverside. They have put a proposal to the Parish Council to consider making space available on their land for the village to use as a dedicated Community Space Area. Initial thoughts are that this could be used for nature trails, school education visits, Forest School events, film nights, village social events and a children’s safe play area. As the land is close to the school, this would provide easy and safe access for the children to use the area for PE activities.</p> <p>It was acknowledged that this is a very generous offer and the Council expressed thanks to the owners.</p> <p>A member of the public advised that this is a triple SSSI site and this aspect would need to be taken into account.</p> <p>The Councillors agreed this is something that should actively be explored as it offers significant potential benefits to the village. It was agreed that a working group be established lead this forward, working with the owners to develop how it would work and be established. Cllrs Birmingham and Hillson offered to join the working group and Cllr Kemp advised he is also happy to help. A member of the public also offered their support on the working group.</p>	<p>AB/BH /JK</p>
<p>56/23</p>	<p>Affordable and Open Market Housing</p> <p>Cllr Luxton was invited to brief the meeting. He informed the meeting that the Brampford Speke Upton Pyne and Cowley Community Land Trust (CLT) had approached him to see if he was interested in bringing forward a proposal to build a mixed housing development of open market and affordable housing on greenbelt land at Stonilands field in the village. Cllr Luxton reported that the negotiations between himself and the CLT are currently on-going. He confirmed that there are no details available yet about designs, layout and the number of properties. Discussions with Homes for England, a funding provider are on-going. Cllr Luxton wants to ensure that any possible provider will be offering the affordable properties with rentals set in line with Council rents, not at market rent levels, with anticipated rentals being based at 65% of the appropriate rental rate. No agreement with providers has been reached yet. Cllr Luxton said he is very keen for the affordable housing properties to be available for local residents who meet local eligibility criteria and for the proposal to be in the best interests of all of the village before it can proceed.</p>	

Cllr Luxton then left the meeting in accordance with Council's Standing Orders.

The Chair brought to the attention of the meeting that as no plans have been made public yet, as such there are no details of a proposal that can be discussed at this meeting. If and when a proposal comes to light at a later date, then this will be fully discussed at a future Council meeting. The purpose of the Chair's update was to report on what information has so far been provided, the process that has been followed to date and to recognise the Council's duty to communicate to villagers and its accountability for transparency in doing so. The Chair had been made aware that there were some rumours circulating in the village and it was important for the Parish Council to share at the earliest opportunity with villagers what information was available.

The Chair reported that he was first made aware of the proposal when the Chairman of CLT, Stewart Wass, met Cllr Birmingham on 8th October 2023 to advise that there have been discussions ongoing between the CLT and Cllr Luxton, these had commenced in Summer 2022. He advised this was just a concept at the moment and agreement for the sale of the land with the landowner had not yet been finalised.

To provide some context to the meeting, the Chair gave a brief history of proposals for mixed open market and affordable housing within the village. A proposal was brought forward on a brownfield site in the middle of the village in early 2000s, this was not progressed. A Village Design document was produced which set out guiding principles to building development within the village. In 2013 a proposal at Stonilands field was brought forward by the landowner (Cllr Luxton) for consideration. This proposal was withdrawn following strong reactions and significant concerns voiced by many villagers. In 2022, a proposal at Long View in Brampford Speke (Paws A While) was brought forward by the CLT but withdrawn after a lot of negative feedback expressed by villagers and questions raised over the Housing Needs Survey data being used.

The Chair reminded Councillors that at the July and September Council 2022 meetings, it was agreed and minuted that the Council continues to support the principle of affordable housing but that the 'Parish Council would not support applications to develop on previously proposed sites that had subsequently been withdrawn'.

The Chair explained that Cllr Tillett is the nominated representative of Brampford Speke Parish Council on the CLT and attends the regular meetings of the CLT. Cllr Tillett had reported to the Chair that he was originally made aware of discussions via the CLT on the

Stonilands site during 2022. Due to confidentiality restrictions imposed by the landowner and agreed by the CLT, Cllr Tillet was unable to brief the Chair and the rest of the Council, as would be usual practice, in accordance with the Council's operating code. As a result, Cllr Tillet believed that he had been put in a conflicted position by being restricted and unable to carry out his reporting duties to the Council and to the village. The meeting needed to be made aware of this lack of transparency.

Council determined to discuss these issues further at a separate session.

The CLT has been asked about the possibility of conducting an updated housing needs study with greater focus on the needs for Brampford Speke, but this request has been declined.

The Chair then summarised the current position, as he understood it, following the latest update provided to him by the CLT on 2 November 2023:-

- The CLT have engaged in discussions with EDDC Planning Department
- Housing Associations have been approached and one is interested in the proposal
- Concept and draft site layout plans, not drawn to scale, have been prepared but the details for the sale of the land have yet to be agreed with the landowner
- The CLT are aware that there are applicants applying for the current two vacancies at the Lakes Down site in Upton Pyne

The Chair reiterated that the purpose of the briefing at the meeting tonight has been to share what information has so far been made available, for the public to be made aware of this and also to be aware of the processes followed to date.

To ensure transparency on the process, the Chair had asked for the CLT to provide copies of the CLT meeting minutes for open circulation but this request had been declined in accordance with the CLT's operating practices. It is understood that the next steps are likely to be:

- If and when the CLT reach an agreement with the landowner, the CLT will hold a Village Consultation meeting to communicate the proposal
- The Parish Council will consider any proposal brought forward to it at a future Council meeting(s), including listening carefully to villagers' views and comments

	<p>Cllr Tillett stated that he believes the CLT would be very reluctant to progress further if the Parish Council did not offer support to any proposal brought for consideration by the Parish Council.</p> <p>Cllr Tillett also confirmed that a housing need survey is considered to have a lifespan of five years. He confirmed that the CLT have advised they will not conduct another one.</p> <p>The following points were raised from the public, noted but not discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the CLT be asked to be transparent, open and be timely in their responses and giving information to villagers? • Will the CLT be asked if they do conduct another housing needs survey that they ensure there is a clear definition on the survey as to what the term “affordable” actually means • A member of the public had asked if they could attend the next CLT meeting and had been told no • There needs to be open, transparent and timely communication • How does this proposal fit into the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan? Cllr Gent advised this is now defunct but it has opened up other locations that developers can build on • Is there a list of the CLT members? Cllr Tillett advised that the secretary for the CLT would know this information <p>A RESOLUTION was made to ask the public to leave at this point. PROPOSED by Cllr Birmingham and SECONDED by Cllr Hollingsworth.</p>	
57/23	<p>Affordable Housing Communication</p> <p>The council discussed the lack of communication about the CLT proposal for affordable housing and unanimously agreed to write to the landowner to express their concern and regret that the council had not been made aware of the proposal at an earlier stage and kept apprised of developments, in line with the Council’s agreed operating code, working practices and duty of transparency and openness.</p> <p>Councillors thanked the Chair for his update report. In discussion with the Councillors present, the Chair offered to stand aside from his role as Chair. Councillors unanimously affirmed their confidence in the Chair and agreed that they were in favour of the Chair continuing in his role.</p> <p>The Chair acknowledged that with regard to future discussions at Council regarding the Stonilands field affordable housing item, if necessary, he would step aside from his role as Chair for these agenda items. If required, it was agreed that Cllr Tillett as Vice Chair or any of the other eligible Councillors, may take over the Chair for this part of a meeting.</p>	

58/23	<p>Other information/correspondence received for possible action/discussion/attendance /action items pending or carried forward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action Points review and have been circulated • Speke Up Submissions – to be drafted and sent to councillors • The Coronation Bench is now in situ and a plaque is being sourced. Very grateful to the few generous villagers who kindly made donations towards the bench. Cllr Tillet will speak with local residents who have indicated their willingness to maintain the area around the bench • The Agricultural Inn – see comments in point 50/23 • Silage Contractors – see comments in point 50/23 • Update on first responder training – see point 45/23 	RT RT
59/23	<p>Next Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting closed at 9.15 pm. Next Meeting on Wednesday 3rd January 2024 – Village Hall. 	

Signed:.....

Date:.....