

## WASHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

### The minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday November 15th 2023 in Washfield Memorial Hall at 7.30pm.

**Present:** Cllr Mrs A Taylor-Ross (Chair), M Balment, J Boundy, J Mock, R Webber, W Wood and Mrs A Wych.

**In attendance:** County Cllr R Chesterton, District Cllr's C Adcock & R Gilmour, and the Clerk, Mrs J Larcombe.

**47/11/23. To receive apologies.** Apologies were received from Mr and Mrs Roberts, (Footpath Wardens).

**48/11/23. Disclosure of interest in item on the agenda.** No disclosures.

**49/11/23. To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2023 as an accurate record of the meeting.** The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and they were duly signed by the Chair.

**50/11/23. Matters arising from the minutes (not already covered by the agenda).** No matters arising.

**51/11/23. Public questions.** None.

**52/11/23. Footpaths:**

**a) P3 update.** Mr & Mrs Roberts, Footpath Wardens, are putting together information about walks in the parish and this will go online.

Cllr Mrs Taylor-Ross reported she had walked most of the footpaths.

Ros Davies, PROW Parish Paths Liaison Officer, is moving jobs within the PROW Team and a new officer will be appointed. Mrs Davies has been very helpful to the Footpaths Wardens and the Parish Council in getting the P3 scheme set up and running in the parish and there was disappointment that she was changing roles.

**b) Proposal 2 from the Definitive Map Review for Washfield: report for DCC Public Rights of Way Committee meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> November.** The recommendation is for a Modification Order be made to modify the Definitive Map and Statement by the addition of a Bridleway along Green Lane between Shilhay and Springfield.

Cllr Chesterton is a member of the PROW Committee so hasn't made any comments. He said he would listen to comments. The Parish Council has not received any further comments. It was noted the owner of Springfield Cottage doesn't want people driving past his property. Local people are already walking and riding along the footpath and he doesn't see the need to make it a bridleway.

**c) Any other footpaths matters.** No other footpath matters.

Cllr Mrs Wych joined the meeting.

### 53/11/23. Planning

**a) To make a recommendation on any planning applications received before the meeting.** No applications received.

**b) To note the comment made for DCC/4370/2023** Proposed Extension to Waste Sorting Building at Existing Waste Transfer Station. Location: Swinesbridge Cottage, Road From Warren Cross to Steepholme, Washfield, Devon, EX16 5NA.

Comment: Given the alleged consistent breach of planning conditions and breaches of the business's environmental permit Washfield Parish Council have concerns about plans for the expansion of this business by extending the existing waste sorting building and do not support the application. Where working practices are legal and in good order Washfield Parish Council supports rural businesses. Should the planning authority be minded to approve this application the Parish Council would like to see planning conditions for:

- the hours in which the business is permitted to operate
- the installation of all necessary supporting infrastructure to ensure compliance with the conditions of their environmental permit
- no illegal landfill
- surface water drainage to ensure there are no runoffs given the proximity to the water course

Cllr Chesterton reported that he had 'called' the application in to be decided by committee. Cllr Mrs Taylor-Ross asked his advice about a site visit. The Parish Council would need to contact the applicants and obtain their permission.

**c) To note any decisions on planning applications made by MDDC.**

**23/00970/Full** Erection of a workshop/office/showroom following demolition of existing workshop/office. Location: Land and Buildings at NGR 292059 117079 (Lakeside Court) Ennerleigh, Washfield. Decision: conditional approval granted.

**23/01621/NMA** Non-Material Amendment for 22/00429/FULL to allow repositioning of windows and doors on 2 dwellings Location: Land and Buildings at NGR 292771 117216 (Pylemoor Farm), Washfield. Decision: permission granted.

**d) Any other planning matters.** No other planning matters.

### 54/11/23. Highways

**a) To report on any highways work carried out in the parish and to note any highways work needed.** Potholes and blocked drains were reported. Cllr Chesterton told councillors to report these online, explaining that he needs the log numbers to follow up on any issues with officers.

The salt bins haven't been topped up yet.

**b) Update on request for notice of SWW road closures and for workable diversions to be in place (for as short a time as possible).** Mrs Moore has phoned SWW and spoken to them at length about recent work. This was believed to be planned work but no advance notice was given. A diversion was signposted but there was no 'Road Closed Ahead' sign in an appropriate place and lorries had nowhere to turn around when they got to the road closure. It was reported that the people carrying out the work had come from Bournemouth.

**c) Any other highways matters.** No other highways matters.

## 55/11/23. Reports

**a) County Cllr.** Cllr Chesterton noted the definitive map review and DCC planning application had already been discussed earlier in the meeting. He reported on the emergency major road closure between Tiverton and Bickleigh. When the gas supply was being updated contractors found a chamber had been created under the road from a culvert where a stone had moved. It could have resulted in a sink hole had it not been spotted. As this is an A road the recognised diversion was via the Motorway. Locals used minor roads in the area which caused chaos. The road is now open.

**b) District Cllr.** A written report from the District Councillors was circulated by email prior to the meeting. The District Councillors will be circulating a written report at the start of each month. Points to note were:

Emergency Planning & Flood Plan: MDDC Councillors received a briefing on Emergency Planning from Simon Newcombe (Corporate Manager) and the new Emergency Response Officer Lewis Dyson. Lewis Dyson plans to work with Parish Councils to help ensure their emergency plans are up to date and can be implemented promptly when needed.

Alleged planning breaches in local woodland: The lack of enforcement officers is causing difficulties in getting this investigated. Only enforcement officers have the right to enter the site.

State of the District Debate: This is likely to take place around March. Rather than a presentation/Q&A format, the aim is to involve Town and Parish councils to work closely with MDDC councillors and officers. More information to follow.

MDDC Governance: This was discussed at length at Full Council on 1<sup>st</sup> November, following a resolution in February to look at changing to a 'modernised committee' system next year. Since the current system (enshrined in the Constitution) is working well with a high degree of openness under the new administration and change would be a costly distraction, Council decided to retain the current Cabinet/strong leader system.

EV Chargers: DCC has some government funding (£7M) and is consulting Town and Parish Councils on regarding sites models for siting EV chargers on their land including car parks. They need to apply to the Government by the end of November. Decisions made regarding 3 Rivers Developments Ltd: The Scrutiny Committee has set up a sub-group to study the history of 3RDL and produce a report on 'Lessons Learnt' from the experience. Cllr Gilmour is Chair and is determined that this report will come to the Committee by Christmas, before going to Cabinet very early in the New Year. Consideration is being given to Mid Devon Housing purchasing St Georges Court for social housing.

Full Council Motion on Roads: At the full Council meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> September, Motion 596 from Cllr Gilmour was passed calling on Devon County Council to fix the dangerous roads in Mid Devon and if they do not have sufficient funding to demand this from Central Government.

The communication to DCC has been made and the Petition is now live.

The District Councillors invited the Parish Councillors and Clerk to a Christmas drinks evening at Cllr Gilmour's home on 15<sup>th</sup> December.

## 56/11/23. Finance:

**a) To approve the pay award for the Clerk as agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services.** The Clerk's pay award was approved.

**b) To approve any payments.** It was resolved to make the following payments:  
Mrs J Larcombe – £110.08 Clerk’s salary and backpay (Payment ref: 2324/01)  
H M Revenue & Customs – £27.60 PAYE (Payment ref: 2324/02)  
MDDC – £127.35 non contested election expenses (Payment ref: 2324/03)  
Washfield Village Hall - £60.00 room hire (Payment ref: 2324/04)

**c) Update on moving the bank accounts to Unity Trust Bank.** The bank has asked for the Cllr Mrs Taylor-Ross’s contact details and date of birth because she is termed a related party as Chair. That will now be sent to them and is the final information needed before the accounts are opened.

**57/11/23. Update on replacement of fencing around the village green.** The work will be carried out next week. Once the fencing has been replaced a working party will be arranged to tidy up the Village Green.

**58/11/23. Finalisation of Community Resilience Plan for Washfield.** The completed plan was circulated prior to the meeting. Permission has been obtained for any personal details included in the plan to comply with GDPR.  
The plan will now be logged with DCC and it will be put on the parish website. The Parish Council could apply for funding for emergency equipment.  
Cllr Mrs Taylor-Ross was thanked for all the work she put in to compile the plan.

**59/11/23. Chair’s Announcements and Correspondence.** The Chair had no announcements.  
Cllr Mrs Taylor-Ross asked whether anything had changed regarding refugees being housed in hotels without councils being notified. It is Home Office policy and there was nothing councils could do. She also expressed concern about the quality of water in the River Exe and asked who is responsible. The Environment Agency checks the water quality.

There was no further correspondence.

**60/11/23. Date of the next meeting.** The next meeting will be held on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

Signed:  
Chair

Date: