

**Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held 02/05/24, 19:30 at Witheridge Day Centre****PRESENT:**

Cllr Harvey	Chairman	Cllr Bibby	Cllr Fox	Cllr Richardson
Cllr Northam	Vice Chairman	Cllr Cunningham	Cllr Goodwin	Cllr Smith
		Cllr Dorow		

**In Attendance:**

County Cllr J Yabsley – part meeting	2 Members of the public
District Cllr P Jones	P G Dunn – clerk

“Minutes of proceedings of a council and of its committees must be kept. They are intended to be formal records of official acts and decisions, not reports, still less verbatim reports of speeches...” Local Council Administration.

**Annual Council Business****1. To Elect the Council Chairman.**

Cllr Harvey was nominated and accepted, there being no others,

**RESOLVED:** Cllr Northam proposed, Cllr Goodwin seconded and all were in favour appointment Cllr Harvey.

**2. To receive the Chairman’s declaration of acceptance of office in accordance with LGA72s83.**

Cllr Harvey read and signed.

**3. To Elect the Council Vice-Chairman.**

Cllr Northam was nominated and accepted, there being no others,

**RESOLVED:** Cllr Richardson proposed, Cllr Dorow seconded and all were in favour appointment Cllr Northam.

**4. To Approve Apologies for Absence.**

None.

The clerk reported due to the non-attendance at council of Mr Russel North for six months, a vacancy has arisen in the Office of Councillor for the Parish Council. If by 23/05/24 a request for an election to fill said vacancy is made in writing to the District Council Returning Officer by ten electors for the said Parish, an election will be held to fill the said vacancy, otherwise the vacancy will be filled by co-option. If an election is called, it will take place not later than 26/07/24. **Clerk to action.**

**5. To Appoint Committees and representatives for the Council Year:-****5.1. Finance & General Purposes Committee (Chair, Vice Chair + 3).**

**RESOLVED:** Cllr Dorow proposed, Cllr Northam seconded and all were in favour appointment Goodwin, Richardson and Smith.

**5.2. Parish Hall Committee Council Representatives (3 cllrs required by the Trust Deed).**

Cllrs Dorow, Richardson and Smith.

**5.3. Sports Field Management Committee (1 cllr required by the Trust Deed).**

Cllr Dorow.

**5.4. Witheridge in Bloom.**

Cllr Northam.

**5.5. Any Other Appointments.**

Cllr Smith Police Advocate.

**RESOLVED:** The Chairman proposed, the Vice-Chairman seconded and all were in favour appointments list in respect of 5.2 through 5.5.

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**Monthly Business**

**6. Public Session (maximum 3 mins per subject overall max. 15 minutes).**

(Please note in accordance with Council Standing Order 3(h) a question shall not give rise to a debate or require an immediate response).

New representations concerning Parish Council matters:-

- Drug dealing. **To be raised through the Police Advocate scheme.**
- Further issues with the Adventure Playground path. The Chairman reported these were in hand.
- Inclusion of items raised in the public session in the council minutes. The clerk reiterated the legal requirements of council minutes and further clarified a listing of new issues raised would be minuted [Clerk note: the matter of whether the parish council would monitor developer compliance with planning conditions attached to planning consent 73742 were addressed minute ref: 230313.1].

**7. To receive the following Reports (strictly maximum 15 minutes – long reports should be submitted in advance to allow circulation to councillors prior to the meeting):-**

**7.1. Police update - <https://www.police.uk/pu/your-area/devon-and-cornwall-police/south-molton/>.**

Cllr Smith reported:-

- Consideration of the provision of body worn cameras for Speedwatch volunteers was ongoing.

**7.2. District and County.**

Cllr Jones reported:-

- Thanked everyone for their support during his first year as District Councillor.
- Ongoing efforts to improve local bus service.

Cllr Yabsley reported:-

- Background to regulation of bus service provision, funding and impact of evolving generic unprecise roadworks' signage.
- Changes to new bus shelter and lay-bye at school still awaited.

Cllr Dorow sought an update on Post Office Lane drainage. Cllr Yabsley would review again with Highways Neighbourhood Officer.

Cllr Yabsley left the meeting 20:24.

**7.3. Parish Groups with Council Representatives.**

None.

**8. Minutes.**

**8.1. 04/04/24.** To sign if approved, minutes of the Council.

**RESOLVED:** Cllr Northam proposed, Cllr Smith seconded and all were in favour approval.

**9. To consider Code of Conduct Matters:-**

**9.1. Written councillor dispensation requests arising.**

None.

**9.2. Declarations of Interests.**

Agenda	Councillor	Reason	Dispensation
11.2.9	Cllr Harvey	Recipient	n/a

**10. To consider the following Planning & Licensing Matters.**

**10.1. Planning applications received following agenda publication.**

None.

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NDC correspondence dated 18/04/24 in response to seeking an update on a potential breach of planning raised over twelve months ago included with cllrs' papers was noted and advised:-

"As you may be aware we are currently experiencing staffing and resource issues in the Planning Enforcement Team and there are extended delays in responding to enforcement concerns. We are in the process of dealing with these resourcing issues, but please note it will be at least six months, sometimes longer, until you may hear back from us with our conclusions on the case. Illegal works to listed buildings and to protected trees will take priority"

**11. To consider the following Finance & Policy matters:-****11.1. Finance update circulated to councillors' for review (to include Cllrs Richardson & Smith's trial payments update).**

Cllrs Richardson and Smith confirmed they were able to setup but not authorise said payments. The clerk had cancelled the setup payment.

**RESOLVED:** Cllr Goodwin proposed, Cllr Dorow seconded and all were in favour to note 01/05/24 Report and Bank Reconciliation including online banking payments raised reviewed with no issues.

**11.2. Sanction payment schedule appended & instruct signatories.**

**RESOLVED:** Cllr Dorow proposed, Cllr Richardson seconded and all were in favour settlement accounts 11.2.1 through 11.2.16, **clerk to setup online payments, Cllr Smith to authorise.**

**11.3. Financial Year End 31/03/23.****11.3.1. Note VAT126 Reclaim submitted.**

Noted.

**11.3.2. Note Public Works Loan Board Annual Audit Statement.**

Noted.

**11.3.3. Re-state payees approved for payments by Standing Order & Direct Debit.**

**RESOLVED:** Cllr Dorow proposed, Cllr Northam seconded and all were in favour approval said payment methods in respect payees listed in schedule dated 01/04/24. **Clerk to action.**

**11.3.4. Review Bank Signatories.**

**RESOLVED:** Cllr Dorow proposed, Cllr Northam seconded and all were in favour Cllrs Harvey, Richardson and Smith continue.

**11.3.5. Approve Asset Register & Annual Risk Assessment \*.**

**RESOLVED:** Cllr Goodwin proposed, Cllr Richardson seconded and all were in favour approval.

**11.3.6. Approve Annual Governance Statement \*.**

**RESOLVED:** Cllr Northam proposed, Cllr Smith seconded and all were in favour completion with no qualifications. **Clerk to complete, publish on the council website and submit to External Audit.**

**11.3.7. Approve Bank Reconciliation, Accounts & Accounting Statements \*.**

**RESOLVED:** Cllr Goodwin proposed, Cllr Richardson seconded and all were in favour approval. **Clerk to publish on the council website and submit to External Audit.**

**11.3.8. Internal Audit Submission.**

Noted, Internal Audit Report awaited.

\* Documents available <https://www.middevonparish.co.uk/witheridge/finance-policy/>

**11.4. Review Parish Hall Committee response to 2023 Grounds Maintenance Re-Charge.**

Parish Hall correspondence dated 03/04 and 11/04 2024 and clerk's response were noted.

**RESOLVED:** Cllr Dorow proposed, Cllr Bibby seconded and all were in favour seeking full payment given an agreement was in place and it would be disappointing if not honoured given payment invoices already settled by the council monthly during 2023. **Clerk to action.**

**Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held 02/05/24, 19:30 at Witheridge Day Centre****11.5. Allison Homes Development (Juniper Way) Section 106 Funding Projects (Dist. Cllr Jones).**

Cllr Jones reported following further consideration and discussions with District Officers the Section 106 detail summarises the potential eligible groups and projects and he would work with those groups to bring forward their application(s).

**12. To consider the following Property/Environment matters:-****12.1. Highways, Drainage & Public Rights of Ways Issues.**

<https://devon.roadworks.org/> | <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/>

DCC correspondence dated 12/04/24 reference W241737268 pertaining to council's report of overgrown trees on county verge at Lakelands was circulated with cllrs' papers and noted advised:-

"we would only commission tree surgery to dangerous or diseased trees as they are neither we will be taking no action to your request"

The Chairman requested the item be include on the next council agenda. **Clerk to action.**

**12.2. Public Toilet Building.****12.2.1. Wallgate Service Report.**

Report dated 18/04/24 noted.

**12.2.2. Toilet door mortice lock (Cllr Northam).**

**RESOLVED:** Cllr Dorow proposed, Cllr Cunningham seconded and all were in favour the lock being replaced. **Clerk to action.**

The clerk reported office tenant's email of 02/05/24 concerning damp. **Cllr Bibby to investigate.**

**12.3. Playgrounds.****12.3.1. Skateramp Repairs Update (Cllr Dorow).**

Cllr Dorow reported discussions with a potential contractor. The clerk expressed concerns as to involvement of councillors acting as safety "ears and eyes" for the contractor stating our insurers would likely have an issue with such an arrangement, and requested the contractor's details together with Public Liability insurance documentation.

**RESOLVED:** Cllr Richardson proposed, Cllr Cunningham seconded and all were in favour **Cllr Dorow to meet contractor on site to discuss detailed requirements and report back to council with quotation and insurance details. Clerk to re-agenda.**

**12.3.2. BMX Track Restorations Update (Cllr Cunningham).**

Cllr Cunningham reported **Cllr Bibby had agreed to meet with Allison Homes on site to discuss requirements. Clerk to re-agenda.**

**12.3.3. Parish Hall Playground Lease (Cllr Dorow).**

Cllr Dorow reported discussions with the Parish Hall Chairman.

**RESOLVED:** Cllr Richardson proposed, Cllr Smith seconded and all were in favour funding 50% of the cost of drafting a lease. **Cllr Dorow to action.**

**12.3.4. Qrtly Playgrounds Inspection Reports.**

**RESOLVED:** Obtain quotations to resurface the Adventure Playground footpath with tarmac. **Clerk to action.**

**12.3.5. Vandalism.**

**RESOLVED:** Cllr Dorow proposed, Cllr Bibby seconded and all were in favour arrangements to clean the graffiti on the skateramps and replacement of the damaged litter bin at the Adventure Playground. **Clerk to contact cleaner, District Cllr Jones to seek a replacement bin & installation from the District Council.**

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**12.4. Public Defibrillator Provision Update (Cllr Fox).**

None. **Clerk to re-agenda.**

**12.5. Litter Pick insurance requirements.**

Correspondence dated 18/04/24 from the council's Insurer and Devon Association of Local Councils related to involving children and Safeguarding and Volunteers was reported.

**RESOLVED:** Cllr Goodwin proposed, Cllr Dorow seconded obtaining a quote to insure up to 12 adult volunteers only given the Safeguarding requirements if children were included. **Clerk to action.**

**13. Correspondence / Consultations Received for consideration:-**

**13.1. St Johns Fair – Grant Enquiry.**

Correspondence dated 18/04/24 noted.

**14. Dates of Next meetings recommended:-**

**14.1. Parish Council - 06/06/24 – agenda deadline noon 24/05/24.**

Noted.

**14.2. Agenda Items for consideration by the next meeting.**

- Grant Making Policy review and consequential processing of current applications received.
- Trees on County Council verge entering Lakelands.

**Clerk to action.**

Meeting closed 22:20.

**Payments**

Item	Ref	Payee	Purpose	£
11.2.1.	OB	Hooper Service Ltd	Grounds Maintenance *191	<b>636.00</b>
11.2.2.	OB	Mid Devon District Council	Trade Waste Service 01/04-30/09 *293	<b>122.10</b>
11.2.3.	OB	North Devon District Council	Dog Waste Bins Service 01/24-03/24 *135	<b>249.60</b>
11.2.4.	OB	PHS Group	Public Toilet Sanitary Waste Bin Service 16/05/24-15/05/25 *475	<b>237.18</b>
11.2.5.	OB	Wicksteed Leisure Ltd	Qtly Inspections *051	<b>338.58</b>
11.2.6.	OB	Devon Association of Local Councils	Annual Membership renewal *768	<b>555.46</b>
11.2.7.	OB	S Sandland	Toilet Management & Cleaning Contract Apr	<b>220.00</b>
11.2.8.	CC	McAfee	Livesafe Subscription Annual renewal *377	<b>74.99</b>
11.2.9.	OB	J Harvey	Chairman's Allowance Expenditure	<b>20.76</b>
11.2.10.	CC	Libraries Unlimited	19/04 Audit Printing	<b>5.30</b>
<b>** Staff Salaries &amp; Expenses **</b>				
11.2.11.		Redacted under GDPR	Total:-	<b>1006.98</b>
11.2.12.				
11.2.13.				
11.2.14.				
<b>To Ratify:-</b>				
11.2.15.	CC	Libraries Unlimited	28/03 Printing	<b>2.70</b>
<b>Invoices Received after Agenda compilation - To Be Ratified</b>				
11.2.16.	CC	Libraries Unlimited	25/04 Printing	<b>2.50</b>