

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 9th May 2017

Present: Present: Cllr J Andrew, Cllr M Adams, Cllr P Reed, Cllr J Wescott, Cllr T Conway, Cllr B Hatton, Cllr P Colthorpe (Devon County Council), Cllr A Moore (Mid Devon District Council), K Ward (clerk) and 2 members of the public.

Meeting opened 7.15pm

1718-1 Election of Chair and Vice Chair of the Council

Cllr Reed and Cllr Adams proposed and seconded Cllr Wescott as Chairman. There were no other proposers and it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Wescott be Chairman for 2017/18, and the declaration of acceptance of office form was signed. There were no proposers for a Vice-Chairman.

1718-2 Apologies

Cllr J Briden

1718-3 Declaration of Interests

All members declared an interest in agenda item 8.

1718-4 Dispensations

A dispensation was granted by the Clerk for all members regarding agenda item 8.

1718-5 Election of Working Committees

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the following working committee arrangements:

- a. Environment: the informal working group will bring any proposals to full Council for discussion and decision
- b. Road Safety: the informal working group will bring any proposals to full Council for discussion and decision
- c. Planning: the process set out in Supplementary Information 1 on the agenda will be adopted
- d. Personnel: all matters will be dealt with by full Council
- e. Finance: Cllrs Andrew and Hatton to take an overview, however all financial matters will be dealt with by full Council

1718-6 Areas of liaison for Councillors

- a. Environment including flood risk: Cllr Briden
- b. Highways: Cllr Hatton
- c. Footpaths: Cllr Hatton
- d. Communication: Cllr Hatton
- e. Church: Cllr Reed
- f. Village hall: Cllr Conway
- g. Planning: Cllr Wescott
- h. Finance: Cllrs Andrew and Hatton

1718-7 Councillors remuneration

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillors should claim reasonable expenses for attending training but not for attending meetings and that councillors receive no expenses for carrying out their duties.

1718-8 Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

- a. It was **RESOLVED** to accept the current Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. Councillors confirmed they have copies of the Code of Conduct, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
- b. Council **RESOLVED** to continue membership of the Devon Association of Local Councils.
- c. Council **RESOLVED** to accept the following documents as set out in Supplementary Information 1 to the agenda:
 - Complaints procedure
 - Procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998
 - Policy for dealing with the press/media
 - Statement of financial controls
- d. The assets held by the Council as set out in Supplementary Information 2 on the agenda were **NOTED**.
- e. The Clerk circulated the insurance renewal quote which was received from Community First after the agenda was posted. Members reviewed the insurance cover and **RESOLVED** to accept the policy as set out in the renewal quote.
- f. Council **RESOLVED** to accept the risk register as set out in Supplementary Information 3 to the agenda, and agreed the following mitigating actions:
Actions: Cllr Conway to investigate electrical testing for the car park lights. The Clerk to investigate cost of a small fire proof cabinet.

1718-9 Internal Audit report

The Clerk gave a verbal update of the internal audit that took place on 19th April 2017, and noted the auditor was happy with the accounts and has signed off the accounting statements. The auditor has issued a written report including best practice recommendations. The Clerk will provide a full report and action plan on the recommendations at the next meeting. Council **NOTED** the initial findings of the audit.

Action: Clerk to report on the full internal audit findings to the next meeting.

1718-10 Annual Governance Statement

Council reviewed and agreed the Annual Governance Statement and **RESOLVED** that the Chairman should sign it.

1718-11 Financial Statements 2016/17

Council reviewed and agreed the Financial Statements for 2016/17 and **RESOLVED** that the Chairman should sign it.

1718-12 Open Forum

No matters raised

1718-13 Minutes of the meeting held on 14th March 2017

The minutes were approved as a correct and accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

1718-14 Report of the District Councillor

Cllr Moore stated that the Local Plan was submitted at the end of March and they are looking for the Plan to be approved in September. MDDC has set a balanced budget for 2017/18 and work has already started on the 2018/19 budget. The Council has set up a Special Purpose Vehicle responsible for new housing development in order to provide a future income stream. The Council has had a peer review and the results are available on their website. Planning approval has been given for the Premier Inn in Tiverton and will soon be out to tender. Litter picking teams are working throughout the district.

Cllr Moore referred to recent correspondence from MDDC and is encouraging all parishes to consider possible medium to long term projects which may be eligible for S106 funding. The Council agreed to give this further consideration at the next meeting.

Action: Clerk to circulate guidance and correspondence from MDDC regarding S106 funding for discussion at the July meeting.

1718-15 Report of the County Councillor

Cllr Wescott congratulated Cllr Colthorpe on being re-elected onto the County Council. Cllr Colthorpe explained that as the County has been in purdah running up to last week's election there was little to report at this meeting. It was noted the number of county councillors has reduced to 60 following a boundary commission review. Cllr John Hart was likely to be reappointed as Leader of the Council.

1718-16 Improvements to the centre of Morebath

Cllr Andrew explained that the matter had been deferred from the March meeting pending a decision on whether grant funding would be awarded, and as no grant was awarded it is for the Council to decide whether to proceed with any further improvements. Cllr Andrew noted that purchase of a new noticeboard for the village has already been agreed and is on order, but he was aware that some residents were against using Council funds for other works. Council discussed the original proposal including the impact on road safety, and the nature of any possible objections. It was then **RESOLVED** to resubmit a grant application to the Locality Fund and, subject to funds being awarded, consider the proposals again including further consultation with residents of Valley View.

Action: Clerk to submit a grant application.

1718-17 Communications Working Group

Cllr Hatton explained that a lot of progress has been made with Transparency Code compliance, website updates and new noticeboard. Following discussions at previous Council meetings a parish newsletter was not being pursued, although it was noted the Council can still submit items for Signpost. Cllr Hatton suggested that a protocol for what information should go on the website be developed.

Action: Cllr Hatton and the Clerk to draft a website protocol for the next meeting.

1718-18 Traffic calming

As agreed at the March meeting, Cllr Hatton contacted Highways regarding the Council's requests for traffic calming initiatives. Cllr Hatton received a response from Highways stating that they are currently working on the transfer to the new highways contractor and that Morebath's issues were of low priority and would not be considered for several months. Cllr Hatton confirmed that the Council could not instigate any actions, such as white lining, without Highways approval, and would continue to pursue highways for a solution.

Cllr Andrew thought that new signage has been placed in Exebridge, and Cllr Colthorpe has been in contact with Dulverton Parish Council regarding problems with HGVs.

It was noted the overgrown hedge at the Toll House in Exebridge has not been addressed and is now causing a hazard to traffic. Cllr Adams agreed to contact Highways to request that they now deal with the hedge. If there is no progress, the Council will write to the owners asking them to trim the hedge.

Action: Cllr Adams to contact DCC Highways.

1718-19 Footpaths

Cllr Hatton informed the Council that there was approximately £780 in the P3 reserve, and a further £600 had been awarded from Devon County Council in March. A programme of works has been drawn up. Concern was raised over repairs needed to a concrete bridge on the Loyton footpath and DCC have been notified. Cllr Adams will follow up with DCC. Cllr Hatton said there was still a lack of communication from DCC regarding their planned footpath work in the parish.

1718-20 Play area maintenance

Cllr Andrew queried the maintenance of the hedge on the play area boundary which was now overgrown. Council confirmed the hedge was its responsibility and that it needed to be dealt with. It was **RESOLVED** that a contractor be appointed to carry out a one off job to trim the hedge to a tidy state and that ongoing maintenance would then be addressed at a future Council meeting.

Action: Cllr Adams to obtain quotes for the hedge trimming.

1718-21 Planning

a. The following items were noted:

- 17/00091 Timewell House, Morebath - Alterations to include repair of existing outbuildings, erection of a haystore, and re-profiling of garden – permitted with conditions
- 17/00092/ Timewell House, Morebath - Listed Building Consent for alterations to include demolition of a wall, repair of existing outbuildings, erection of a haystore, and re-profiling of garden – permitted with conditions
- 17/00109 Hukley Hill Farm, Bampton - Certificate of lawfulness for the existing use of a building as a residential dwelling and associated use of land as residential garden and parking area for a period in excess of 4 years – “no comments” submitted

b. 17/00592 Pumping Station Exebridge erection of shed for sand bags – Council discussed the application and **AGREED** that the application would be supported.

Action: Clerk to respond to MDCC by 12 May deadline

1718-22 Finance 2017/18

- a. The Clerk reported the current financial position as set out in the agenda. It was noted that the precept of £6093 for the year has been received and that £650 grant has been awarded from the Transparency code Fund.
- b. Council **RESOLVED** to allocate the £1070.00 contribution to reserves from the 2017/18 budget to the Amenities Reserve.
- c. Council **RESOLVED** to approve an inflationary increase of 1.7% in the Clerk’s salary in line with the NALC 2017 recommended pay rates, payable from 1 April 2017
- d. Council considered the request from Bampton Town Council for a contribution toward the lighting costs for a Devon Air Ambulance landing site. Council agreed this was a very useful service for all residents in the area and **RESOLVED** to contribute £200.00 to Bampton Town Council from the Amenity Fund.
- e. Council **RESOLVED** to ratify the following payment:
- Cheshire Sign Co Ltd 50% deposit for new noticeboard £550 (£462.50+ VAT)
- f. Council **RESOLVED** to approve the following payments:
- Adams & Ellicott work to commemorative trees £480.00 (£400.00 + VAT) (fund from Amenity and P3 reserves)
 - K Ward/ HMRC – wages £195.88 and expenses £9.87
 - Cheshire Sign Co Ltd remaining balance on new noticeboard £550.00 (£462.50 + VAT)
 - DALC for Clerk training £138.00 (£115.00 + VAT)
 - A Marshall for internal audit £104.63
 - Community First for insurance £336.52
 - Bampton Town Council £200.00 for contribution toward air ambulance landing site
- g. After taking into account the above decisions, the balance on earmarked reserves is £13,417, and Council contingency is at £8,138. The contingency balance is high because the precept is received in April, but will reduce as the year progresses and spending is incurred.

1718-23 Transparency Code

The Clerk reported that £650 had been awarded for the purchase of IT equipment. The Council agreed that a printer, software and scanner be purchased.

Action: Clerk to report back to the July meeting with estimates.

1718-24 Request by MDDC Chairman to attend a meeting

Action: Clerk to respond to MDDC extending an invite to any future meeting

1718-25 Future meeting dates and times

Following a request from the Clerk, Council **RESOLVED** to amend the future meeting dates to

Tuesday 18th July 2017, 8pm

Tuesday 19th September 2017, 8pm

Tuesday 21st November 2017, 7.30pm

Tuesday 23rd January 2018, 7.30pm

Tuesday 20th March 2018, 7.30pm

Next meeting: **Tuesday 18th July 2017, 8.00pm, Morebath Village Hall**

Meeting closed 8.50pm

Signed as a correct record:

Date:
