

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 18th July 2017

Present: Present: Cllr J Wescott (Chair), Cllr J Andrew, Cllr M Adams, Cllr P Reed, Cllr T Conway, Cllr J Briden, Cllr P Colthorpe (Devon County Council), Cllr A Moore (Mid Devon District Council) from 9.10pm, K Ward (clerk) and 3 members of the public.

Meeting opened 8.00pm

1718-26 Apologies: Cllr B Hatton, Cllr R Stanley (MDDC)

1718-27 Declaration of Interests: None

1718-28 Minutes of the meeting held on 9th May 2017

Minute 1718-16b should read "Highways: Cllr Adams". Subject to this amendments, the minutes were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

1718-29 Open Forum

Mr B Smeeton spoke to agenda item 14b, planning application 17/01062/ARM. He stated they have been in constant consultation with MDDC planning officers and were aware of one objection. They have spoken to the objector to address their concerns and extra screening may now be included. They were happy to answer any questions from the Council.

1718-30 Report from the Devon and Cornwall Police

The Clerk read out a statement from PCSO Goodier to say the police had been called out to the parish 3 times in the last month and one crime regarding an out of control dog was reported.

1718-31 Report of the County Councillor

In the absence of MDDC councillors, Cllr Colthorpe reported on MDDC and DCC matters:

- The Premier Inn development in the Tiverton multi storey car park has been approved and there is to be a meeting with MDDC and traders to discuss access issues during construction works.
- MDDC's special purpose vehicle for property development is currently working on a site to deliver 40 homes, may affordable, behind the Tiverton Town Hall
- Culm Valley Garden Village development of 2500 homes has pilot status from the Government but will not proceed unless there are major improvements to J28.
- There is to be a public enquiry regarding the housing elements to the J27 development in September.
- A litter busting team has been set up and is planned to be in Morebath this week. Cllr Stanley has asked for feedback on its impact. The Council stated that it did its own volunteer litter picking and that the problems were not in the Morebath village but known problem areas are Blights Hill, Shillingford Lane, Timewell Hill and verges. Cllr Colthorpe will inform the team.
- The current A361 works are to clean the drains. Overnight road closures are now not expected in August.
- DCC is still in the process of reorganising portfolios, committees and directorates.
- Phase 4 of the broadband rollout has been awarded to Airband following a successful pilot in Dartmoor with the aim of addressing speed problems in the 5% of properties in very rural areas.
- Following the Grenfell fire, the Fire and Rescue Authority have survey buildings and identified 5 in the Plymouth area that are of concern. Schools and hospitals will also be surveyed.

1718-32 Improvements to the centre of Morebath

It was confirmed the Council has received £710 from Cllr Colthorpe's Locality Fund. There was a general discussion on the original plans, noted objections to any works using public funds, and a lack of volunteers to carry out works. There was general consensus that any works should only be for hard landscaping not requiring future ongoing maintenance. Any planting should be low, slow growing shrubs only. There was discussion on the poor condition of the salt bin, the trip hazard of the chain fencing and need for removable bollards. It was agreed a path to the post box and new noticeboard would be beneficial. It was recognised that any works would need consultation, and approval if necessary, of the Rothwell family, DCC and MDDC prior to starting. Residents of Valley View would also be consulted.

There was a further discussion on the deteriorating condition of the salt bags in the car park and that long term solution is needed.

It was agreed that (a) a site plan needs to be drawn up including the new noticeboard and (b) that the hard landscaping estimates need to be reviewed including costs of contracting the works, and to report back at the September meeting.

Action: Cllr Conway to prepare a site plan and review costings of the project.

1718-33 Communications Working Group

The Clerk reported on the website protocol noting that while there are statutory requirements to publish certain Council information, general news and information was discretionary. It was agreed that information on events such as those held in the village hall and church be passed to the Clerk for to put on the website.

The Clerk also stated that the ICO Publication Scheme document has been prepared for the Council and will be on the website shortly.

1718-34 Traffic calming

Cllr Adams reported that he had spoken to the owner of the house in Exebridge regarding their overgrown hedges and these had been cut, but were now growing again. Cllr Briden reported a further problem at the left turn of the junction with a property with overgrown laurel. Councillors also reported visibility hazards due to hedges at Hukely Cross, Snapbox Cross and Watchet Cross. Cllr Colthorpe agreed to refer these matters to highways.

Action: Clerk to write to agents regarding the property in Exebridge

In Cllr Hatton's absence, it was noted he had contacted Highways with the Council's proposals agreed at the May meeting, but despite chasing, had had no response from them.

1718-35 Footpaths

Cllr Hatton had provided a note from DCC stating the only works they are planning is to repair/replace the collapsed bridge/culvert at Loyton, but no timescales were given.

1718-36 Environment

a. Cllr Adams confirmed he had received 2 quotes to cut the hedge in the play area recommended the lowest quote from S Kelland be accepted.

Action: Cllr Adams to contact Mr Kelland to arrange for works to be carried out.

b. Cllr Briden reported that planning permission for the shed to house sandbags in Exebridge had been approved and that he would report on progress.

1718-37 Future S106 Schemes

The Clerk had circulated a note on the new process for applying for future S106 funding, noting it can only go towards open space and play area projects. While the Council felt there were no projects it wished to put forward, it generated a further discussion on salt bins and where the responsibility lies with repair and replacement of bins, and possible funding if the Council chose to replace them, possibly alleviating the need to store salt on the car park. Cllr Colthorpe will make further enquiries with DCC, and to investigate costs of bins, for discussion at the September meeting.

1718-38 Purchase of IT equipment

The Clerk referred to the grant of £650 received in order to purchase a laptop, software and a scanner for the Council. A number of quotes had been investigated. It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk be delegated to purchase the required equipment.

Action: Clerk to purchase the required equipment

1718-39 Planning

a. The following items were **NOTED**:

- 17/00592 Pumping Station Exebridge erection of shed for sand bags – approved.
- Exmoor Nation Park draft landscape character assessment supplementary planning documentation is out to consultation. Deadline for comments is 8 September 2017.
- Exmoor National Park Local Plan – Notification of Inspectors Report

b. Planning applications received since last meeting

- 17/01062/ARM Reserved Matters for the erection of a holiday let/workshop/therapy room following Outline approval 16/00442/OUT at Whitehall Farm, Morebath. Following considerable discussion, the Council's consultation response is:

The Council wishes to know how this application sits alongside the policy restricting new builds outside of the settlement area as, if approved, this may set a precedent within the village.

Further, the Council queried why there are no conditions attached to the reserve matters regarding the use of the property i.e. to restrict its use to holiday let, workshop and therapy room. The concern is that without these conditions being in place it could be used as a dwelling in the future.

The Council also would like further information on how parking issues have been addressed as there appears to be limited parking on site for potential customers of the business. The road to the property is narrow and has very restricted parking and regular access is needed for large vehicles to the nearby farm. Alternative car parking in the village may also not be available.

Action: Clerk to submit response to MDDC.

1718-40 Risk Management

- a. Cllr Conway has been attempting to contact the installer of the lights in the car park, but has had no response. Other electrical tester may need to be considered.
- b. The Clerk reported that fire proof boxes were expensive and that a reasonable alternative was to purchase a fire resistant "pouch" costing approx. £8, alongside making extra copies of core documents.

1718-41 Internal Audit recommendations

The recommendations and actions completed and outstanding as set out in the agenda were **NOTED**.

1718-42 Council Policies

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the following policies as set out in the agenda:

- a. Anti-fraud and corruption policy
- b. Training policy
- c. Grant awarding policy

Cllr Wescott referred to a request he had received from the church for grant funding. It was generally agreed that any grants should come from reserves and not from the revenue budget and that it is made clear any grants awarded are one-off. It was agreed to consider the request at the September meeting, and also suggested that if the village hall wishes to apply for a grant that it should be considered at the same time, and that representatives be invited.

1718-43 Finance 2017/18

- a. The Clerk reported the current financial position as set out in the agenda, noting income received from a VAT refund of £623.65 and Locality Fund grant of £710.00.
- b. Council **RESOLVED** to approve the following payments:
 - K Ward / HMRC wages £138.27
 - K Ward expenses £14.89
 - Morebath Village Hall room hire £60.00
- c. After taking into account the above decisions, the balances are £22,676, of which contingency balances are £7,605. The contingency balance is high because the precept is received in April, but will reduce as the year progresses and spending is incurred.

1718-44 Other items to note

Cllr Wescott referred to a licence agreement to use the land near the old railways site. It was acknowledged this was ratifying arrangements already in place and Cllr Wescott signed the agreement.

Cllr Adams stated the bus shelters needed re-preserving treatment, refer to next meeting.

Similarly review ongoing weed treatments to the car park.

The Clerk reported that she was now CiLCA qualified and that the Council could decide to adopt the General Power of Competence. Refer to September meeting.

Next meeting: **Tuesday 19th September 2017, 8.00pm, Morebath Village Hall**

Meeting closed 9.50pm

Signed as a correct record:

Date:
