

Minutes of Yarnscombe Parish Council Meeting
Wednesday 26 July 2023
— D R A F T —

Present: Cllrs. Brice (chair), Cooke, Ellison, Jeffery, Pengilley, Saywell (Devon County Council, DCC) and M. Dymond (Clerk)

23.78 Apologies, Declarations of Interests and Dispensations

Apologies had been received and accepted from Cllrs. Farr and Newberry, Torridge District Councillor (TDC) Elliott and PCSO Brown.

23.79 Public Participation and Feedback

Clerk had been approached at recent village fete regarding road sign at Chapelton junction which has been lying in the verge since beginning of year. It had been reported in March, but nothing had been done to rectify problem. Cllr. Saywell advised to contact North Devon Council with original reference number and ask for update.

Actions taken: Clerk to contact North Devon Council.

Paul Williams will give phone box fresh coat of paint and sort out existing book stock.

Actions taken: None at present.

23.80 Representatives Reports

1) County/District Councillors

County

The issue of devolution is being discussed once more; meetings with government have been taken place and will be ongoing. The end goal is to provide more money and power at regional/local level. There would be no elected mayors, instead a governance committee would be in control. Devolution is aiming to modernise governing procedures and increase the accountability of members who spend money. At present, 77% of DCC budget is spent on 3% of population. More control of spending is needed in bigger departments.

Cllr. Saywell announced decision that Mobile Library service is to end. The repair and upkeep of the existing bus stock is too high compared with the number of people who are using service. There have been concerns that traditional users of this service, the elderly and/or people in rural areas with limited access to transport, will find the loss of this service difficult. Cllr. Saywell pointed out that library buses could only carry a limited stock of books and a system could be put in place where any book can be ordered online. Councillors raised concerns that many elderly are not comfortable using technology, i.e. the internet; volunteers would be needed to bridge the gap. Cllr. Saywell explained that community libraries could be based in village halls or villages that have community shops can also become a link to increased use of community library. Potentially coffee mornings could be held to increase social interaction and help boost use of community library.

Councillors queried whether Elastomac (new material trialled to repair potholes) could be used in village centre. The road from Oaken Hill to Greylake is in serious need of repair, but the Dragon Patcher is too wide for road.

Question was raised by councillor how absence rate in DCC compares with the private sector. Cllr. Saywell was unable to provide exact figure, but promised to look into it. He did point out that there has been an overall improvement in work ethos at DCC and size of staff has been cut.

Actions taken: Cllr. Saywell to provide feedback re. absence rate within DCC and update on process of devolution if and when relevant.

District

Cllr. Elliott was unable to attend meeting; clerk had circulated his email report among councillors. It dealt with the PCSO attendance at parish council meetings and provided a link to more information regarding the Road Warden Scheme.

Actions taken: None at present.

2) Village Hall / Social Club — Cllr. Newberry will attend Village Hall Committee Meeting on 31 August and

provide feedback.

Actions taken: Cllr. Newberry to report back to council at September meeting.

3) Youth Club — None

4) PCSO/Police Report — Virtual meeting 5 August, 7pm

Cllr. Pengilley agreed to attend this virtual meeting via Teams.

PCSO Brown reported the following via email: Three crimes have been reported over last month, one reporting harassment, one reporting malicious comms, one reporting issue with firearms licencing. Call logs reported, one regarding Highways disruption.

Actions taken: Cllr. Pengilley to provide feedback regarding virtual meeting.

5) Playing Field

Grass Cutting — Has been carried out for fete beginning of July. No invoice yet.

Shed on playing field has now been painted.

Fencing grant — Feedback for grant received in February still to be filled in.

Cllr. Cooke is now in process of purchasing materials, will present invoice at next meeting.

Also, Cllr. Cooke strimmed playing field where necessary.

Actions taken: Invoices for fencing materials and strimming to be presented at next meeting.

23.81 Minutes of Meeting from 28 June 2023

Minutes had been approved and signed off as a true record.

23.82 Matters arising from last Meeting

Village leaflet — Contribution to cost of printing

Clerk had received an invoice for sum of £10 as council's contribution. At a previous meeting councillors had already agreed in principle. Cllr. Cooke proposed, Cllr. Brice seconded. All agreed.

Actions taken: Cheque written out and countersigned. Cllr. Ellison agreed to pass it on to member of Village Hall / Social Club Committee.

Approval of Reserves Policy and setting up of Reserves account — Cllr. Pengilley had drawn up relevant policy and circulated it among councillors.

Cllr. Brice proposed, Cllr. Cooke seconded. All agreed to accept Reserves Policy.

Councillors came to conclusion that £15,000 could form reserve, whereby £5,000 would need to be instantly accessible for bigger projects, for instance, playing field fence or purchase of lawnmower should contract with Fred Turner come to an end. £10,000 could be put in a higher interest earning account.

Actions taken: Suitable account(s) to be set up within next few weeks.

Refund for Netgear router — No solution yet, clerk had written to Netgear asking for refund as router is not fit for purpose. No reply as yet. After contacting Amazon in the first instance, they had referred her to Netgear, as 30 days returns period had expired. Cllr. Ellison offered to investigate and assist clerk in obtaining refund.

Actions taken: Clerk to send Cllr. Ellison relevant documents.

Register of Interests and Councillor's profiles

Clerk had asked TDC for copy of completed Register of Interests forms, no reply yet.

Cllrs. Jeffery and Newberry still need to have picture taken and provide short profile for website.

Actions taken: Cllr. Pengilley will take pictures, Cllrs. Jeffery and Newberry to forward profiles to Cllr. Pengilley.

23.83 New Matters

DAA landing site software update — Clerk and Cllr. Newberry will meet DAA representative at Village Hall at 10am on 1 August for software update.

23.84 PROW Monthly Report — P3 grant and work carried out

Local PROW had met with Ros Davies in late April after grant form and end of year forms had been received by DCC. Back in April Ros Davies had agreed that identified repairs were necessary and promised to arrange contractor to carry out works. When warden had inspected footpaths middle of July, no work had been carried

out. Clerk had already written to Ros Davies regarding grant, but had received no reply.

Actions taken: Clerk to contact Ros Davies and also write email to generic PROW contact at DCC.

23.85 Planning

1/0680/2023/FUL, Demolition of existing outbuilding and erection of single dwelling

Land At Northchurch, Yarnscombe, Devon

Councillors had no concerns regarding this application as long as footprint of new building was the same as that of demolished building and new build restricted to three bedrooms. New building should not be higher than existing one now.

Actions taken: Clerk to send comments to planning department.

23.86 Additional Planning

None

23.87 Accounts

Bank reconciliation April 2023 to June 2023 — Bank reconciliation had been carried out and cash book signed by chair.

Actions taken: None at present.

Meeting closed 8.15pm.

14th August 2023