



**ROCKBEARE
PARISH COUNCIL**

Chairman: Jeremy Wollen

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MINUTES OF ROCKBEARE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 19TH APRIL 2017 AT ROCKBEARE VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr Jeremy Wollen (Chairman) and Cllrs: Colin Please, David Mason, Jonathan Allen and Ron Forrest

Also in attendance – Two members of the public

Carolyn May: Clerk

145.0 APOLOGIES: Cllr Mark Readman

146.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: none

147.0 MINUTES: The Minutes of the last meeting of Rockbeare Parish Council held on **Wednesday 15th March 2017**, at Marsh Green Village Hall were considered. It was **proposed by:** Cllr Please, **seconded** by Cllr. Mason and **RESOLVED** that these represented a correct record of that meeting and should be accepted by the Council. Unanimous. **Carried.**

The Minutes were duly signed by Cllr. Wollen (Chairman)

148.0 REPORTS:

148.1 The Chairman reported that, on the 17th March 2017, he and his wife attended a Civic Dinner, hosted by Cllr. Stuart Hughes, Chairman of East Devon District Council. The event was held at Rockbeare Manor. It was a delightful evening with approximately 75 people (mainly Council Officials) in attendance.

Rockbeare Manor is now a splendid venue for events such as this and the evening highlighted the quality of both the venue and service.

Following a national report on potholes, the Chairman was approached and a request made for a broadcasted interview, by Radio Devon. The interview topic was the pothole situation affecting the Parish of Rockbeare. The interview was aired on the Radio Devon Breakfast Show on the 28th March 2017, with the condition of Westcott Lane being highlighted as the worst in the area (notwithstanding the fact that EDDC has, in fact, closed the same). The Chairman articulated his view that Westcott Lane is, probably, now beyond repair and will, most likely, remain closed (accessible for dog walkers/ horse riders). That being the case, the Chairman suggested that money

should be expended on the maintenance of the other road, which connects Westcott to Quarter Mile Lane, so that residents are afforded better access to the hamlet.

148.2 No Police Report had been received. Members expressed their disappointment that, despite several requests having been made by the Parish Clerk, no crime statistical data/ local update had been forthcoming from the police for several months.

Cllr. Forrest stated that there had, recently been two, substantial, thefts from farms in the Westcott hamlet;

- a. The theft of 200 bales of hay (CR/ 087312/16 and;
- b. The theft of a log splitter (CR unknown)

Both incidents had been reported to Devon & Cornwall Police but there had been no communication with the victims and no visit by Officers.

It was **agreed** that the Parish Clerk would correspond with the Police and Crime Commissioner to highlight the lack of Police Liaison Reporting to the Parish Council and that the issues surrounding the thefts (detailed above) should be alluded to.

148.3 No other reports had been received.

149.0 To consider and make comment on planning applications as follows:

17/0532/MOUT- Outline planning application with all matters reserved for the provision of up to 110,000 sq. m of Use Class B8 development with ancillary Use Class B1 and associated parking, servicing, yard areas, landscaping and engineering works including demolition of existing structures within the site.

Cllr Mason advised the Members that the application, if approved, would provide a financial benefit to the land owners, whereas the original plan had provided for a sum to be split between the four parishes which adjoin the land in question.

It was **agreed** that the Parish Clerk should correspond with EDDC Planning, alluding to the potential gain for the landowners and suggesting that there should be some benefit bestowed on the adjoining communities as there will no longer be any obligation to maintain the corridor of land for the originally proposed railhead.

150.0 Planning Determinations - noted

151.0 Neighbourhood Plan Update – Things are progressing well with the Neighbourhood Plan and the draft has been uploaded to the Parish Council's website.

152.0 BUSINESS & FINANCE:

152.1 To receive the financial statement for Match 2017

The Parish Clerk advised Members that the accounts for the financial year 2016/17 had been reconciled and that the bank account currently contained the sum of £47,266.19.

The following financial information was provided to Members:

Balance B/F from 2015/16	£ 34,766.22
Income for 2016/17	£ 40,315.89
Total	£ 75,082.11
Minus Expenditure for 2016/17	£ 27,815.92
Balance in Account	£ 47,266.19

It was recommended by the Parish Clerk that a proportion of the sum should be transferred into a higher interest account, in order to satisfy the financial regulations governing Parish & Town Councils.

Cllr Allen voiced his discomfort at the amount of money that was being held by the Parish Council and pointed out that it represented approximately three times the recommended level set out by regulations.

The Parish Clerk advised Members that there had been an attempt by many Parish Councils to build up funds in preparation for potential budget capping in the next financial year (2018/19). Further to this, the sum in the bank account included a £10,000 grant from Light Source, for the benefit of the community and a grant from the Improving Communities fund (£2,242) for drain clearing in the two villages in the Parish.

It was suggested by the Parish Clerk that a work programme should be agreed in order that Parishioners could understand what work was being undertaken by the Parish Council.

It was **proposed** by Cllr. Allen and **seconded** by Cllr. Please and **RESOLVED** that the sum of £30,000 should be transferred to a higher interest rate bank account. Unanimously **CARRIED**

It was **proposed** by Cllr. Please and **seconded** by Cllr. Wollen and **RESOLVED** that the financial statement for March 2017 should be approved. Unanimously **CARRIED**

152.2 To approve payment of Invoices as follows:

400462	Rockbeare Village Hall (Youth Club) Inv.2016/17 – 73; 17/119	90.00
400463	Rockbeare Village Hall (M&T) Inv. 2016/17 - 114	30.00
400470	Carolyn Y. May (Salary)	382.68
400465	Carolyn Y. May (Expenses)	78.40
400466	William Pollard & Co Ltd (Parish News) Inv.194335	272.00
400467	DALC	182.82
400468	Groundworks (grant refund)	252.50
400469	Rockbeare Parish Hall	35.00
	TOTAL	1323.40

It was **proposed** by Cllr. Please and **seconded** by Cllr. Forrester and **RESOLVED**, that the schedule of payments should be approved. Unanimously **CARRIED**.

153.0 Highway Matters

153.1 Cllr. Forrest reported that the National Crash Repair company continues to utilise the highway for parking. Parishioners have registered their annoyance with the situation as the vehicles cause delays (through obstruction of the highway). Two vehicles are parked in the area (HY11 XCV and LM15 UEP).

As a direct result of these instances of unauthorised parking, the tarmac in the vicinity is cracking and the bank is being eroded. The vehicles have been the catalyst for two minor accidents in the recent past.

The operators of the company have been spoken to on two separate occasions and the Parish Clerk has written to the same – to no avail. Cllr Forrest was advised by management that their vehicles are entitled to unload on the highway and remain in situ for 20. However, it is felt that the company is abusing this right and vehicles are being left for lengthy periods of time.

It was **agreed** that the Parish Clerk would write to the Traffic Commissioner, copying in Highways, about the issue.

153.2 Cllr Forrest reported that, following an accident several weeks ago, damage was sustained to the barrier of the bridge, which crosses the dual carriageway (A30) at Westcott. The damage has resulted in a hole being created in the barrier and that hole represents a danger to both children and animals.

The damage has been reported but, to date, no repairs have been effected.

Cllr Allen suggested that it may be advantageous for the Parish Council to offer to pay for the repair, if Devon Highways was to carry out the same.

It was **agreed** that the Parish Clerk would contact Devon Highways in relation to the matter.

153.3 Cllr Forrest reported that the potholes at Westcott (Watery Lane) are a cause of major concern to householders. He stressed that the hamlet has only a few houses but each house has two vehicles. Householders pay (between the road fund licence charges and Council Tax) £20,000 in total, yet the area has been absolutely neglected, road wise.

Ridgeway, Westcott are rendering Quarter Mile Lane undriveable upon. There are no passing places for almost a mile and some provision needs to be made.

It was **agreed** that the Parish Clerk should convene a meeting between members of the Devon Council Highways Department and Parish Council representatives.

154.0 Correspondence

The following items of correspondence were considered:

- a. Devon Community Improvement Grant – monies received – **Noted**
- b. Letter from Mr & Mrs John Andrew – re: FAB.

Members considered the letter from Mr. & Mrs. Andrew but felt that the Parish Council was not able to assist, as the project was out of the Council's hands. It was **agreed** that the Parish Clerk would contact the Parishioners and advise them of the meeting to be held at the Flybe Academy, on 25th May at 14:15 hrs, suggesting that they may wish to attend.

- c. Groundworks Grant – the Parish Clerk advised Members that there was a request for the Council to repay £252.50 of the grant, due to failure to use the total sum before the end of the agreed period.

155.0 Clerk's Actions update – Appendix 'B' – noted

156.0 Change of Meeting Date – it was **agreed** that the date of the September 2017 meeting should be changed to 13th September (from 20th September).

157.0 Date of next meeting – Annual Meeting: 17th May 2017.

158.0 TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Mr Ivan Randall suggested that the FAB Project managers should be asked to increase the width of the Westcott/Airport Lane, for the benefit of the public, once construction has been completed. **Agreed** that the Chairman would discuss this with the FAB Project representatives at the meeting on 24th May 2017.

A member of the public asked if the Parish Council would be willing to purchase an appropriate water barrier for use at Birch End, Rockbeare during instances of flooding. It was **agreed** that a barrier would be purchased to trial the efficacy of the same but that these would not generally be made available and that a precedent would not be set. The cost of an appropriate barrier was not to greatly exceed £100.00. The Chairman is to source the barrier and the margin re: cost will be left to his discretion.

There was a short discussion in relation to the increase in the Parish Council's precept for 2017/18.

Mr Ivan Randall raised the issue of hedges overgrowing the paths in Rockbeare. It was **agreed** that Cllr Readman would be asked to raise this issue in the Parish Newsletter, again. If there is no improvement in the situation, the Parish Clerk will contact EDDC.

Mr Ivan Randall asked if a formal letter could be sent to Rockbeare Manor, requesting that they clear the drain that runs alongside the property. Mr Randall was advised that the Clerk had already written. However, it was **agreed** that the Clerk would send another letter. Within the same, it would be requested that the ground to the northside of the Manor (opposite side of the road) also requires digging out so that water, which currently runs down Wragg Lane, is directed over to the side of the lane.

The meeting closed at 20.40 hours.

SIGNED _____ **Date:** _____