



**ROCKBEARE
PARISH COUNCIL**

Chairman: Jeremy Wollen

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MINUTES OF ROCKBEARE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

HELD ON

WEDNESDAY 16TH MARCH 2022

PRESENT: Cllr Jeremy Wollen (Chairman) and Cllrs: Forrest, Susan Wollen, Brodie, Franklin and Ratcliffe

Also: Cllr Richard Lawrence (EDDC) and three members of the public

Parish Clerk: Carolyn Y. May

APOLOGIES: Cllrs. Colin Please, Cllr. Sarah Randall-Johnson (CC)

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION:

A Member of the Marsh Green Hub addressed the meeting in relation to the Millennium Field at Marsh Green. The meeting was advised that there was a desire by residents to use the field. The Millennium field matter was added to the Marsh Green Village Hall survey. Residents would like the area tidied up, so that access could be gained to the same. Once residents can see what they must work with they can see what they would like to do with the site, as a community space – there have been several ideas. It was suggested at the meeting that the entrance could have gravel laid down to facilitate easy access to the area, which might be used for community events (i.e., parties). The group would also like to be advised of any funding that the Parish Council would attribute to any ideas put forward.

The Chairman advised the Parishioner that the matter of the Millennium Field was listed as an agenda item for the extant meeting. There are currently matters in motion, in respect of the field.

AGENDA

653.0 MINUTES

653.1 The Minutes of the meeting of Rockbeare Parish Council, held on Wednesday 19th January 2022 were considered.

It was **proposed** by Cllr Susan Wollen, **seconded** by Cllr Forrest, and **RESOLVED** that the minutes for the meeting of Wednesday 16th February 2022 would be approved and signed as a correct record of that meeting. Unanimous. **Carried.**

654.0 REPORTS

654.1 Chairman's Report – no report

654.2 District Councillor Report

Properties being transferred into Cranbrook Town Council Area – following the matter raised at the February 2020 meeting, Cllr Lawrence undertook to investigate the same. He has, in the past month, sent 66 emails and engaged in 3 face – to- face meetings with EDDC Officers, on the matter.

Cllr Lawrence stated that he had now received a response. He had been advised that the Consultation on the matter had just ended and that any household which would be affected by the change, had been consulted with on the Cranbrook Plan. He was advised that 'nobody would be moved into a different Parish without there first having been a full round of public consultation as part of a formal boundary review. If any property is to change Parish, then the householder will be written to. At present, no such Boundary Review is in progress'.

Cllr Lawrence responded to this statement. Asking if the statement means that these people have already been consulted with and that they are still in Rockbeare Parish. He was then advised 'your response is correct. The notification that the Parishioners have alluded to, is the end of the consultation on the modifications to the Cranbrook Plan. Within that consultation was an updated policy map and Cranbrook Plan, which has not changed from earlier iterations in respect of this area but does propose, for planning purposes, the houses are within the Cranbrook Town boundary.' The hoses are, therefore, not in Cranbrook.

The Jubilee Oak tree has been arranged.

Triangle (Rockbeare) – this matter is progressing. EDDC have requested Title information to identify any restrictions that the Parish Council should be aware of. It is also necessary to ascertain if the consent of the original developer had to be obtained, prior to a transfer. Once the necessary documentation etc is in situ, the Heads of Terms for the transfer of the land will be prepared.

The Chairman for EDDC has corresponded with Michael Gove MP about the housing situation in East Devon. A significant problem with the area lies in the fact that 2/3 of the land is designated 'an area of outstanding natural beauty'. Consequently, the remainder is being constantly developed for housing, thus the green fields are being lost. The EDDC Chairman has advised the MP that the 'cap' which demands that 1,000 properties must be built in East Devon each year, is 'a crude and blunt instrument, which does not consider our (EDDC) case'. This requirement is resulting in an overdevelopment of this area of East Devon. With a lack of brown field sites, new housing is having to be constructed on green field sites.

Cllr Lawrence has communicated with South West Water and is taking that organisation to an EDDC Scrutiny Meeting (17th March 2022), to enquire about their plans for sewage. When there is significant rainfall, the centres of several villages are subjected to raw sewage spraying from drains, because of the excess water draining into the sewers. He added that, at present, EDDC is looking into the possibility of implementing a complete moratorium on house building anywhere in the west end of East Devon because the sewage treatment works cannot cope.

Cllr Lawrence stated that if the sewerage system cannot cope with the current 2,500 houses, currently at Cranbrook, how will it cope with a further 4,000 dwellings?

655.0 PLANNING

PA22/0034/LBC

It was **proposed** by Cllr Susan Wollen, **seconded** by Cllr Forrest, and **RESOLVED** that Parish Council would support this application. Unanimous. **Carried.**

PA22/0406/MOUT

The application and qualification had been disseminated to Members. This application related to the 'Cobden' proposal, for more than 1,400 homes and a mini town centre.

Cllr Lawrence has an invitation to a site meeting (date not yet arranged) to discuss the proposal, prior to commenting upon the same, it was agreed that his report would be forwarded to the Clerk for onward transmission to Members.

656.0 Planning Decisions – Noted

657.0 CORRESPONDENCE

- The signage for Marsh Green – invoice.
- Account for Hampton by Hilton – confirmation that the invoice was incorrect – resolved.
- Request for Millennium Field issue to be placed on the agenda.

658.0 BUSINESS AND FINANCE

658.1 Members considered the Schedule of Payments and Bank Reconciliation.

It was proposed by Cllr Susan Wollen, seconded by Cllr Forrest, and **RESOLVED** that the schedule of payments would be accepted, and the liabilities discharged. Unanimous. Carried.

658.2 The Bank Reconciliation was accepted.

659.0 PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE

659.1 Cllr. Franklin provided an update. He proposed that a new site would be commissioned with a different provider. Cllr Franklin would develop the site, preserving the information on the current site and transferring it to the new site.

659.2 Process - Once a new account is set up, a test website will be commissioned for trial and consideration by the Members. Once we are happy with the site, we will transfer the domain to the site. Costs will be £5 per month for the first 6 months, thereafter the charge will be £15.00 per month (£108 pa).

659.3 The Clerk asked if it was possible for every Member to have an email account? Cllr Franking stated that it was possible, but that would increase the costs. Cllr. Lawrence advised the Meeting that this was the preferred system, as any problems that might arise (particularly with Freedom of Information matters) could result in private email accounts being searched.

659.4 It was **proposed** by Cllr Forrest, **seconded** by Cllr. S. Wollen and **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council make a payment of £250.00 to Cllr Franklin, as compensation for his time/ effort in this matter. Unanimous. **Carried**

660.0 PROPOSAL TO PURCHASE AN APPROPRIATE SOUND/ RECORDING/ VOTING SYSTEM – deferred from February 2022 meeting.

It was **proposed** by Cllr Forrest, **seconded** by Cllr. S. Wollen and **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council would invest in an appropriate system. Unanimous. **Carried**

661.0 TRIP FUNDING APPLICATION – Deferred from February 2022

661.1 Members discussed the application made by TRIP, for financial support. The Clerk advised the meeting that she had, as requested at the Parish Councils' January 2022 meeting, sought the further information requested by Members.

661.2 The Clerk advised the meeting that there had been a great deal of discussion relating to the proportion of funding provided to the project by Rockbeare, in comparison to the funding provided by other Parish Councils in the area. She suggested that if funding was to be made available for items requested, then the procurement of those items should fall within the remit of the Parish Clerk, to ensure that the funds were being used for the benefit of Parishioners and not just being put into a general pot of money. Further to this, VAT could be reclaimed by the Parish Council.

661.3 TRIP had produced accounts. EDDC contributes £15,000, and Devon CC £27,065, Lottery £40,00, summary donations £40,000. There were several other charitable and private donations. Cllr Forrest felt that Rockbeare was the only Parish Council making a substantial donation. He added that, despite this, he was a huge supporter, providing the money donated was to be ringfenced for the benefit of the Parishioners of Rockbeare and that it does not end up being used to benefit Parishioners in Dorset (for instance). Cllr Forrest added that he wished not only to support the project, but also expand the same within the parish. It was **agreed** that the Clerk and Cllr Forrest would collaborate to provide a document, which would be delivered to every home in the Parish, and which would highlight the scheme provided by TRIP, and enable dissemination of information relating to the proposed solar farm.

661.4 It was **proposed** B by Cllr Forrest and seconded by Cllr Franklin, that a sum of £5,000 should be ringfenced for the TRIP Project, within the Parish Council bank account. Any purchases/ costs relating to the project, when operated for the benefit of Parishioners, would be managed by the Parish Clerk, who would provide details of requests, plus costs, in a monthly update to the Parish Council. Authority would then be provided to the Clerk to purchase the items/ discharge an account, with the cost being paid by cheque and deducted from the sum held for that purpose. Unanimous. **Carried**.

662.0 MILENIUM FIELD

- 662.1 Cllr Wollen advised the meeting that the Parish Council had commissioned Devon Wildlife Consultancy to provide the Council with a Habitat Management Report for the site. It was believed that this step was necessary, prior to any decision being made in respect of future use of the site. In effect, the Parish Council requires a baseline of biodiversity for the site.
- 662.2 Cllr Forrest advised that he would be meeting representatives from a wildlife volunteer group. It is hoped that local people will join with the group to reinstate the habitat. There are several trees that will have to be removed and some re-fencing to be carried out. A count of hedgehogs/ crested newts/ frogs etc. at the site will be carried out. Once the Parish Council receives the recommendations from Devon Wildlife, the work will have to be carried out by the groups, to make the area the sort of habitat that it deserves to be. This ties up with the government initiative for the re-wilding of areas for protected. Cllr. Lawrence suggested that the Parish Council might contact the Young Farmers Club to help with this work.
- 662.3 A member of the public asked if these plans would restrict the use of the field by local people? Cllr Forrest responded by stating that whilst people could walk through the site, they would not be able to permit their dogs on it. The person then asked if it would be available for a Jubilee Party – stating that was what the site was intended for. It was felt that the nature of the site would make that difficult.
- 662.4 The report was not yet available, but it was **agreed** that the document would be made public.
- 662.5 The previous maintenance of the site, by Cllr. Please, was alluded to. The Clerk advised the meeting that people had complained about the cutting, therefore, Cllr Please elected not to continue with the work. Cllr Forrest added that the site was only ever used by a few people with dogs, and that those people had never cleared up after their dog. He stated that the field was very wet.
- 662.6 It was **agreed** that the Habitat Management Report would be placed onto the PC website and that residents would be able to view the same, prior to the PC making any decision about the field.

663.0 WITHYBED LANE PROPOSAL

- 663.1 Cllr Ratcliffe raised the matter of Withybed Lane, which runs from the top of Quatermile Hill, across to Houndbeare House driveway. It is currently blocked by a South West Water emergency pump.
- 663.2 It has been suggested that a circular route for walkers and horse riders could be created, including Green Lane. It has been suggested, as part of the Solar Farm plan, that this could be opened again. Indeed, this is something that the Parish Council should be pressing for in any event, as there are no public footpaths around Marsh Green.
- 663.3 Cllr Forrest stated that Aylesbeare Parish Council is keen to work with Rockbeare PC to bring this proposal to fruition – sharing the expense of the same. However, the question that arises is ‘who is to lead on this project?’ The Clerk highlighted that she is employed part-time and that she has little to no capacity to undertake this work. To increase the Clerks’ hours would incur additional costs to the Parish.

633.4 Members were of the view that Aylesbeare Parish Council should lead on this matter. Members of our own Parish Council are heavily committed to other projects and have no spare capacity. The most difficult end of this proposed project is at Aylesbeare.

633.6 It was **proposed** by Cllr Forrest, **seconded** by Cllr Brodie, and **RESOLVED**, that Cllr Ratcliffe should spearhead this matter. On behalf of Rockbeare Parish Council, and liaises with Aylesbeare, and reports back to the full PC meeting. At this juncture, the PC cannot be committed to funding. Unanimous. **Carried**

664.0 SOUTHWOOD CROSS

664.1 Cllr. Brodie raised the issue of the fingerpost at Southwood Cross. The signpost requires cleaning. It was **agreed** that this would be reported to Highways.

665.0 GRANT APPLICATION FROM MARSH GREEN ACTION GROUP

665.1 The group enquired about funding for printing materials relating to the Solar Farm. However, there are likely to be some slight additions/ amendments to the extant document, prior to submitting the document for printing. It is anticipated that twenty copies will be required. However, to date no costs have been provided to the group. The matter will, therefore, be deferred until amendments are made (including hydrological information). A formal application is to be submitted.

666.0 WASTE AT WESTCOTT

666.1 Cllr Forrest raised the issue of contaminated waste being dumped at Westcott by Devon Council Highways Department. 100 – 120 tons have been deposited. The driver of the lorry on which this waste was transported, confirmed that the waste was being brought from another area. The waste has been dumped on top of the waste that was deposited by Devon Council Highways previously. Plants placed in the ground by local people have been destroyed and previous deposits are covered in bracken.

666.2 It was **agreed** that the Clerk would correspond with the Environment Agency on this matter, on behalf of the Parish Council, as previous complaints made by residents have not been actioned.

7.10 pm The meeting closed

Next Meeting: 16th April 2022 at Rockbeare Village Hall, commencing at 6 pm.