

Minutes of the Virtual Council Meeting held on the Wednesday 20th January 2021

Present Cllr G Underhill (took the chair), Cllr C Steer Cllr R Huxtable Cllr R Pearce Cllr S Berry Cllr D Rogers and Mrs A Snell clerk

In attendance Cllr A Saywell – County Councillor, Cllr R Lock - District Councillor

Apologies Cllr B Millward Cllr M Clarke

Declaration of Interests – Councillors are invited to declare any discloseable pecuniary interest, including the nature and extent of such interests they may have in any items to be considered at this meeting, including protocol for audio/visual recordings a meeting. They are also reminded to consider whether in the light of recent activities any items within their Register of Interests should be updated.

Public Participation.

1.i. The Minutes of the meeting held on 25th November were agreed and signed.

ii. The Minutes of the meeting held on 29th December were agreed and signed

2. Clerks Report, i. Web site, Cllr Millward has completed the new website and it is up and running, www.beafordvillage.org please visit. Thank you to Cllr Millward for all his hard work. Cllr Millward did ask for any suggestions towards the website, the suggestions at the meeting were a link to TDC when the refuse and recycling was to be collected and to DCC when there are any road closures.

2. The Village Green signs have been delivered and were available to view at the meeting, these will be erected in due course, thank you to Cllr Clarke for all his help.

3. Benches. It has been discussed regarding purchasing new benches for the Village Green, 3 benches to sit 3 people also to include a memorial bench, quotes have been received, discussions were held, further quotes are to be obtained to be brought to the next meeting. Cllr Huxtable has kindly agreed to rub down and varnish some of the wooden pieces on the Village Green.

3. Chairman's Report.

i. Play equipment, Cllr Pearce is still spraying the equipment weekly,

4. Highway Issues. i. The public footpath through Harepath Wood owned by Halsdon Stud has been causing some controversy, the footpath is not a designated Public Right of Way, but has been used as a footpath for many years, the owners were doing some forestry work so closed the path because if an accident occurred the owners of the land are liable, signs were erected but it seems some walkers were not deterred and continued to use the path. On a subsequent occasion, a horse and rider from the landowner's stable were in an altercation with a dog with its owner, the dog owner it seems did not apologise. The landowner has now decided to close the woods to walkers. The difficulty is the path has been used for many years, on speaking to the PROW officer at DCC it seems if 6 or more families/residents/walkers could prove they had used this path for many years, they can put a case together to have the path as a provisional public right of way, it was felt a diplomatic conclusion to the problem would be a much more favourable outcome. Cllr Underhill has been speaking to the PROW officer and the owners of the woods, it is very much hoped further discussions will come to a favourable conclusion. But walkers and residents can put together evidence of use in case they are needed these can be given to Parish Councillors or left at the garage.

ii. It was reported the footpath signs at Bond Street have been vandalised, these will be reported.

The increasing problem of cars and lorries mounting the curb at Honeysuckle Cottage and Corner House is causing some concern, as the curb is very high, it was suggested that photographic evidence is needed as clear evidence of the problem to send to highways and to suggest putting up high curb signs. The road is an A class road but not legally wide enough for an A class road. The curbs that are to be installed at the new Marshall Mead development onto the A3124 were discussed,

it was suggested to ask for another web meeting with Darryl Jagger to highlight the existing problem and the new proposals. Proposed by Cllr Steer seconded by Cllr Huxtable all in favour.

ii. Snow Warden, the salt/gravel has been kindly distributed by Cllr Steer and Mr B Steer, it was asked could councillors put some of these buckets in their garages then move them to where they are needed.

iii. A street light is out at Shepherds Meadow Cllr Pearce has reported this on 6 occasions, and has had responses saying the light has been fixed but still it is not working, residents are asking when it is going to be fixed. This will be reported to Darryl Jagger.

The DCC website is devon.cc/report-it

5. County and District Councillors items, Cllr Saywell reported that the statistics, – As of 19th January DCC area of Devon now up to 16,436 coronavirus infections since the start of the pandemic. Since the 14th January that is a weekly increase of 1,567 infections. By way of comparison... in Torridge there were 52 new infections in the last 7 days, North Devon 100 in the last 7 days, West Devon 79 cases in the last 7 days. There are now over 20,000 tests a week being carried out in the County. Locally, we have done incredibly well to keep our local infection rates as low as we have. **Torridge has one of the lowest infection rate per 100,000 in England (76.2)**, along with North Devon and West Devon, and **Devon as a whole has the one of the lowest rates in Upper Tier Authorities in England (195.3 per 100,000)**. At present Devon is actually the lowest Upper Tier authority, bar North and North East Lincolnshire, but things can change quickly. However... cases are still rising. In the November lockdown we saw cases continue to rise for about 10 days after the commencement of the lockdown. So, if those trends are replicated for the January lockdown, we would anticipate seeing the impact of that in the figures next week. Cases in Devon are highest in the working age population and elderly (75yrs +), with elderly cases, sadly, mainly attributable to care home outbreaks. In Torridge cases area very much in the working age bracket, and we are seeing increases in cases and outbreaks in workplace settings and subsequently households. So while the situation is not as bad here as other areas of the country, the situation remains extremely serious. Please stay at home, and only leave home if you absolutely have to. When you do go out, don't forget to socially distance, wear a face covering in indoor public spaces and wash your hands regularly. We don't have definitive proof yet but it is extremely likely that the new variant of coronavirus is here, and this strain is much more infectious than previous strains – where there have been outbreaks, in a workplace or care home, the number of infections has been much higher.

Community Testing News just in, due to be announced formally tomorrow, but DCC will start rolling out Community Testing for coronavirus at the end of this month. Community testing will help to find individuals who have COVID-19 but do not have symptoms and need to isolate and who may inadvertently be spreading the virus. A positive or negative result will not remove the need to follow existing COVID measures socially and in the workplace. Rapid lateral flow tests will be used, which will provide a result within thirty minutes. This will not be a substitute for the national coronavirus testing – if you are symptomatic, people should book a free NHS test via the GOV.UK website or by calling 119. The first site is planned to open near the end of January, at County Hall in Exeter, with other sites planned to become available across the County in February and March. COVID

Vaccinations On the more positive side... the good news is that residents of Torrington Rural aged 80+ and residents and staff of care homes have started to receive their vaccinations. County wide, 1000s of people have received their first vaccination dose. Main points for vaccine rollout: We now have vaccination hubs up and running at all four acute hospitals in Devon -these are vaccinating hospital staff and over 80's inpatients about to go home and outpatients. 16 Primary Care Network vaccination sites up and running with 4 more coming on-stream end of this week. Mass Vaccination sites in Plymouth and Exeter to be opening before the end of January. Vaccination of care home staff and residents has started prioritising largest care homes in the first instance (50+ residents) Locally, there have been vaccination sites at Holsworthy, Okehampton and Barnstaple. This has been due to the complexities of storing the Pfizer vaccine. Now that the Oxford vaccine has arrived, I know from talking to the head of one of Torrington's GP Practices that they are looking at rolling this out more

locally so people do not have to travel long distances. Priority for Phase 1 according to JCVI priority list is: Care home residents, over 80's and frontline health and care staff. Thousands have been vaccinated already with each Primary Care Network having received at least one batch of vaccines (975 vaccines per batch); we received the Oxford vaccine last week and we have the workforce in place to undertake the vaccine programme. It is, however, a huge logistical exercise, very much dependent upon the speed and rate of vaccine supplies. Please though wait for the NHS to contact you when it is your turn.

Covid-19 Prompt Action Grant DCC's COVID-19 grants have opened again for the third lockdown. The guidance is slightly amended and can be found on this link along with the online application form. <https://www.devon.gov.uk/coronavirus-advice-in-devon/document/covid-19-fund/> The biggest difference to the first two waves is that DCC are working in partnership with Devon Community Foundation to fund food projects. So any project that is for food provision needs to apply here <http://devoncf.com/apply/community-food-programme-2/> Libraries and Recycling Centres Devon's libraries are now temporarily closed for the new lockdown. Household Waste and Recycling Centres remain open for essential use only. Can I again thank you for all you are doing to stay safe and to keep our communities safe during this difficult time. Hope is on the horizon with the vaccine... but we must not let our guard down or become complacent. Please follow the rules. DCC will do all that it can, as it has done during the first and second lockdown, to support the people of Devon during this difficult time and to protect the old, the young, and the vulnerable. We will recover from this pandemic and the lockdown. But in the meantime, please stay at home and stay safe. Locality Budget. Please note if you have any projects in mind, funding for these will need to be allocated by the end of February. Reminder the link to report potholes, blocked drains, fallen trees, etc. is here - <http://devon.gov.uk>

Cllr Lock reported on the proposed development at Towell Meadow and has received an email from Helen Smith TDC, there have been further issues raised by a local resident in respect of drainage, however I have subsequently discussed this with DCC Flood Risk and don't think there is a further problem. We obviously have the outstanding highway objection. The Conservation Officer is raising some concerns which need to be further considered with the Applicant, however as this is outline there is only so much we can address.

Planning obligations need to be agreed and Helen Smith will raise this with you as ward member Cllr Lock once we know the ability of the development to provide what is required. There is no indication that viability will be tested at this stage.

Cllr lock reported that there are new business support grants available from TDC, ND Hospital and RD&E Wonford are discussing becoming one Trust

6. Tennis Court, everything is in hand with the new set up.

7. Finance, i Approve and sign the following cheque: -

489	PFK Littlejohns Auditors	£240.00
490	Mr. M Clarke signs	£50.00
491	Mr. R Horner	£55.00

i. Set the precept, it was proposed by Cllr Steer, seconded by Cllr Huxtable to keep the precept unchanged at £6500 all in favour

8.i. Planning

P C recommendations

TDC

1/0279/2020/OUT	Outline application with all matters reserved for the erection of up to 14 dwellings (affecting a public right of way) Land at Towell Lane	
1/0863/2020/LBC	Replacement front door - The Old Parsonage Beaford	Passed

9. Police Report, Speedwatch has currently been suspended in lockdown.

10. Ways to improve the Village and Parish Environment, this will be deferred until the spring.

11. Caretakers Report & Hall report. The spraying of the play equipment is being undertaken once this week; the field is looking good and the bins are being emptied. The grass seeds are growing well. The Hall Committee have had a tree inspection on the trees along the road by Green Warren House, all are safe but annual checks will be undertaken. The Hall is having a new heating system this is hoped to be installed in the next 3-4 weeks whilst the hall is closed.

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10. Correspondence i. DALC Newsletters have been circulated.

ii. The Police newsletters have been circulated.

Cllr Pearce brought it to the attention of the meeting that the Union Jack flag is not useable so it was agreed to purchase a new one for in the region of £50 propose by Cllr Huxtable seconded by Cllr Pearce, all in agreement

Date of next meeting: **Wednesday 24th February 2021** Parish Council virtual meeting
7.30pm

.....Chairman.....Date

Forthcoming meeting: Wednesday 31st March 2021 Parish Council virtual meeting.