

BEAFORD PARISH COUNCIL  
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the  
Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2021

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

In attendance Four members of the public

Apologies Cllr Saywell County Councillor Cllr Clarke, Cllr R Lock - District Councillor

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.

Cllr Pearce declared an interest in the matter raised from the floor in public participation.

It was raised from the floor issues regarding the planning application at Laburnum Cottage, the main concern is the proposed balcony which will overlook the neighbouring properties, definitely resulting in a loss of privacy and being overlooked which is a material consideration. Work has started prior to getting planning permission, a wall has been removed in the lane which has given extra parking, (but on closer inspection this was covered in the design and access statement), significant exaction has been undertaken, as the wall is covered in the statement and initial work is not an offence, a letter regarding the balcony and loss of privacy will be sent.

The public were thanked for attending.

1.i. The Minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> October were agreed and signed.

Web site, [www.beafordvillage.org](http://www.beafordvillage.org)

2. Clerks Report, i. Co-option of a Parish councillor, this has been highlighted in the Parish Council meeting article in the Bugle with a separate Notice also included a further notice will be put on the Notice Board for co-option at the January meeting.

Mr Dan Rodgers has repaired the bench Coombe Lane end of the Village for which he will be thanked

3. Chairman's Report Play equipment, TDC are to be contacted regarding the S106 money to ascertain if the criteria has been met for the Parish Council to utilise it. Mr Warrington is to be contacted to given an update on finances.

Mr C Snell has cut the Village Green hedge and the tennis court hedge. The Rye Park seat application been submitted again.

Regarding the benches only one concrete base has been laid another one is to be laid; the siting is to be agreed. A response has been received from the school regarding the purchase of a Youth shelter "With regards to the outside shelter on the green, I would like to think that this would be something that we would use. It would be an opportunity to do carols on the green, take groups to do reading in over the spring and summer months, and to take the children to do outside learning if we needed to. It certainly would be a resource that the school could utilise as we move forward and it is lovely to be consulted on such an investment for the local community". The purchase will be assessed when the first and possibly second S106 money has been received.

The proposed development at Towell Lane if passed would generate another S106 contribution to the Parish, the correspondence read "The built facilities calculator generates a contribution of £26,830.66

towards community hall provision. I am aware that the Parish has aspirations for car parking at the existing hall to be improved so it would be helpful to understand if this is a confirmed project and likely costs etc so I can establish whether such a contribution could be justified.”

The Parish Council will respond to TDC with the first quote and the confirmation that this is the desired project. The Parish Council does not feel another play area in the village at this site would help the community to integrate together it was also noted that the Parish Council does not want to take on another green area at this site as it will be at a maintenance cost to the community.

4. Highway Issues. i. Public footpaths, the path by the river under North Harepath has been reported. It was highlighted that **“please can walkers shut gates and keep their dogs on leads where stock/cattle are in the vicinity when using public footpaths”**

ii. The DCC Highways Conference was held via teams on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> November, which unfortunately Cllr Underhill was unable to access but the reports will be received and circulated.

iii. Road/snow warden two members of the community are willing to undergo the training so Mr Russell Hookway High Superintendent will be contacted for advice.

**The DCC website is [devon.cc/report-it](https://www.devon.gov.uk/report-it)**

5. County and District Councillors items. Cllr Saywell I am sorry I cannot be with you tonight; I am attending the ‘Torrington Together’ community meeting in Torrington, and have 4 Parish Council meetings on all at the same time too! I hope those Parishes still not on ‘hybrid’ technology will be able to convert soon that that if these clashes happen again I’ll be able to attend more meetings than what I can do physically tonight.

Main developments/updates from DCC: **Devon secures £9.3m for skills, training and jobs** – DCC’s bid to the Government’s Community Renewal Fund has been successful and we’ve been awarded £9.3m by the Government for investment in innovation and employment projects. There will be 13 pilot projects across Devon, backed by the largest funding allocation to any local authority area in England. Project benefits will include retraining for 3,500 people.

**Covid** – Case rates in Devon (630 per 100K) and Torridge (1001 per 100K) are above the England average of 414 per 100,000. Rates are still rising across the whole of the country with hotspots generally being in areas which previously had lower infection rates during the summer. We are seeing rates highest in young people/children with outbreaks in education settings being the driver of local infection rates including Torridge. There was always an expectation that a couple of weeks after the half term we would see an increase in rates particularly amongst young people and then the parents of these individuals so the higher figures are not a surprise. Hospital rates have increased gradually over the past few weeks with 168 inpatients within Devon. Currently 30 inpatients in North Devon, again a slight rise over the past couple of weeks. ***BUT***, Hospital cases are not increasing and are levelling, and the proportion in HDU/ICUs is lower. Currently have 114 people in hospital in total across Devon. In North Devon District Hospital it is 15, with 0 in HDU/ICU.

Anyone who is eligible for a booster jab, please book one now.

**Funding for self-isolating residents** – A reminder that with Covid rates being high, DCC have launched a new fund to help community organisations provide practical, social and emotional support to Devon residents self-isolating due to COVID-19. The grants of up to £5,000 for small projects and £20,000 for larger projects can be used to help those self-isolating with any caring responsibilities; accessing food and other supplies; practical tasks such as dog walking; and mental health and wellbeing support to address things like loneliness and boredom.

More information available online - [The COVID-19 Outbreak Management Grant \(Self-Isolation\) - Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) \(devon.gov.uk\)](https://www.devon.gov.uk/covid-19-outbreak-management-grant-self-isolation)

**Free school meal vouchers** - DCC will be doubling the value of supermarket vouchers for families with children on free school meals from £15 a week to £30 a week for the Christmas holidays. Families will receive a £60 voucher per child for the two-weeks to help with the additional financial

pressure the festive period can bring. More information online here - [Free school meals holiday voucher scheme - Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) \(devon.gov.uk\)](https://www.devon.gov.uk/news/free-school-meals-holiday-voucher-scheme-coronavirus-covid-19)

**DCC Buildings to get ‘green makeover’** – DCC is planning retrofit schemes for Council owned buildings to help cut carbon emissions and reduce energy use. Plans are to improve building insulation and install solar panels and air source heat pumps, along with mechanical ventilation that recovers heat and LED lighting.

**Future workforce arrangements** – One of the main issues I am working on as Cabinet Member for Workforce is how we manage the return to the Office. The Council will not return to the old model of everyone in the office ‘9-5’, but will introduce a more flexible working arrangements for staff and officers, depending on their role in the Council. Homeworking will continue but people will be encouraged to use office facilities for team meetings, ideas sharing etc.

I hope this update is useful, please let me know if there’s anything else you need me to look into.

Cllr Millward attended a workshop looking at a Low Carbon Future.

This is a precis of the events aims and work. Climate change aggravated by human development is now the consensus within the scientific and international community. The effect of climate change can be best seen in sea level rise and, if unchecked, a significant proportion of the Devon coastline will be lost to the sea. Inundation would be along the Torridge valley and portions of the Taw valley would also be submerged. One method of reducing the effect will be through the reduction of “greenhouse gas” compounds such as nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). This event is focused on three elements. On reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from all sources; domestic, business and general rural; moving to sequester carbon out of the atmosphere and finally increasing biodiversity. Recent research shows that applying all three of these elements has the best effect on reducing carbon in the atmosphere. The aim is for us to halve our emission of carbon by 2030, but the desire is move more quickly than that. To this end, North Devon District Council and Torridge District Council have jointly approved the “North Devon Biosphere Nature Recovery Plan and Declaration”. This is an ambitious plan that has a number of aims. Firstly, the intention is to increase woodland coverage of the area from its’ existing 12%. Obviously, this would be achieved by planting trees however, the emphasis is on planting the right trees in the right places and managing the subsequent woodland in an effective and sustainable manner. It is accepted that trees sequester carbon once over their lives and then release, so the focus on the land with the trees is just as important as the trees themselves. The area of north Devon which is covered by this was once a temperate rain forest and was home to a very large diversity of flora and fauna. This is clear from soil and water studies in the area. Returning the land to that is neither practical nor desirable but, a rewilding process must take place and the intention is to cover 30% of the non-domestic land with indigenous plants and thus improve biodiversity overall. Parish and Town Councils are being asked to produce plans to enact such a process and that will be written into planning criteria to aid sustainable development. Secondly, there will be a focus on reducing emissions by private and corporate entities. This may be easier than it looks as recent work by 361 energy has shown that a reduction of between 20-28% in household emissions can be achieved by behavioural changes alone. When coupled with lighting and heating investment then the figures are much higher. This, of course, results in a reduction of cost to the household and it is that fact that is being used as leverage for those individuals who may be more sceptical of the project. There is a suggestion that local communities could run events where advice, guidance and other information could be made available to assist in this. Both 361 Energy and TDC are keen for this to happen. Businesses, including farms and other land owners, will be approached separately. However, the response so far has been very positive. Cllr Millward was thanked for attending

6. Tennis Court, a zoom meeting has been suggested to appoint Trustees.

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

513	Mr. C Snell hedge cutting	£80.00
514	Wicksteed	£72.00

ii. Grass cutting tender, Mr Bakers quote was discussed it was proposed by Cllr Huxtable seconded by Cllr Steer to accept the quote of £970 for the contract requirement and £20 per cut for the Tennis court, all in favour.

iii. Set the Precept, after discussion it was proposed by Cllr Huxtable seconded by Cllr Millward 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 18 dwellings (affecting a public right of way) Land at Towell Lane		
1/0181/2021/ LBC	Part retrospective application for conversion of additional barn into ancillary accommodation, retention of patio, erection of wooden fence, alterations to front wall and roof lights, demolition of lean to agricultural building and implementation of new boundary wall. The Old Corn Barn, Beaford,		Being considered
1/1174/2021/ FUL	Erection of single storey rear extension, Laburnum Cottage Beaford	This application was discussed, it was agreed by all to respond that the balcony will result in neighbours being overlooked and loss of privacy.	

9. Police Report, two crimes have been recorded, a public order offence and another offence in the same period no calls were logged.

10. Ways to improve the Village and Parish Environment. Report has been given.

11. Caretakers Report & Hall report. It has been highlighted regarding the Governance of the hall, the Chairman is to look into this, regarding the purchase of the new skittle alley it is anticipated that the hall will take over the sponsorship to enable the application of grants. There is a Christmas Fair in the Hall on the 11<sup>th</sup> December.

12. Correspondence

i. The DALC newsletters have been circulated.

ii. The weekly crime reports have been circulated.

The Queen's Jubilee was discussed, and events registered with Tom Vanstone at TDC, the programme is the lighting of the Beacon on the Thursday, Cricket Match on the Friday and a social event in the hall on the Saturday, the Pub is to run 2 nights for fund raising.

Fly tipping of bags of tiles and rubble has been reported between Cuppers Piece and Cow Flop Cross this will be reported to TDC.

Cllr Millward is giving up editing The Bugle, for which he was thanked very much for all his hard work.

**Date of next meeting: Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2022 Parish Council meeting 7.30pm in the Village Hall**

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

Forthcoming meeting: Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2022 in the Parish Hall to be agreed.