

BEAFORD PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the
Wednesday 23rd February 2022

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

In attendance Cllr R Lock - District Councillors and seven members of the public

Apologies Cllr Saywell County Councillor, Cllr Clarke, PCSO Brown

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.

The Chairman welcomed Mr John Palmer the newly co-opted Parish Councillor to the meeting, we look forward to working with Cllr Palmer.

Public Participation.

Two members of the public raised the subject of the skittle alley, they attended to thank the Parish Council for the grant of £500, they reported Mr R Horner had made an excellent job of making the new alley which a lot lighter and much easier to manoeuvre. The old alley has been sold; the skittle club met on a Thursday night at 8.00pm last week 15 people attended, due to donations etc the club has £300 in funds, it is being sponsored by the Village Hall, it is hoped to use the skittle alley in the Jubilee Celebrations.

A resident of the village raised the fact that the new street lights are very imposing the one by the bus shelter shines in the property opposite of both the living room and bedroom, they are supposed to be low wattage but are very bright, the lights on the main road stay on all night when the rest of the village is turned off at approx. 12 o'clock. The pole by the bus shelter has made access to the bus shelter more difficult. A request is to be sent to DCC report a fault street lighting to see if the light can be altered, for the residents concerned.

1.i. The Minutes of the meeting held on 19th January were agreed and signed.

Web site, www.beafordvillage.org

2. Clerks Report, i. Co-option, Standing orders and emails, since the last meeting there has been concerns in the village regarding the co-option at the last meeting, TDC Solicitor Ms Staci Dorie and Mr Tom Vanstone elections officer have been contacted for advice, a response has been received from Mr Vanstone which covers all aspects of the co-option with no impropriety been undertaken. The Standing Orders were discussed and on receiving guidance it was agreed to amend the Standing Orders so all candidates are as now, asked to give a resume of themselves which has to be with the clerk 2 days prior to the meeting at which the co-option is to take place and all candidates are invited to attend the co-option meeting to speak, this was agreed by all councillors, the amended Standing Orders will be signed at the next meeting.

In future it is to be requested that all emails to the Parish Council are directed through the Parish Clerk.

3. Chairman's Report, play equipment, TDC have been contacted regarding the S106 money, as yet no response has been received.

The Rye Park seat and another on the Village Green has been put in place for which a thank you was expressed to Mr Richard Heard for an excellent job undertaken, the next seat to be installed is at **Biticombe** Lane which will need a concrete plinth.

The Youth Shelter was discussed again, all councillors have received the quotes and specifications, the first vote was where councillors in favour of having a Youth shelter, with a vote of 6 to 1 the vote was carried. The next proposal was which design, it was proposed by Cllr Huxtable to go with the Dartmouth design seconded by Cllr Steer, another proposal was put forward but not seconded, so the vote was for the Dartmouth design at a cost of £9625.80 plus VAT, so £11550.96 in total, after a vote the Dartmouth was carried by a vote of 6 to 1. It was agreed to ask Terry Warrington of TK Play to come to a site meeting with Councillors to decide on the siting of the shelter, a hardcore base will have to be laid. It was agreed to name the shelter in commemoration of the Queens Platinum Jubilee. Cllr Lock kindly said she would grant £500 towards the Youth shelter for which she was thanked.

4. Highway Issues. i. Public footpaths, Cllr Huxtable has almost completed walking all the footpaths in the parish, with most being in good order, Cllr Huxtable is to ask Cllr Saywell about the trees near Beaford Mill bridge and the fact that a lot of the trees at Mill House have gone.

iii. Road Warden paperwork has been sent to DCC for approval, then dates for the two volunteers will be organised to attend training. It was raised from a parishioner has anything been heard regarding the footpath in Beaford Wood, no response has been received by the Parish Council.

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

5. County and District Councillors items. Cllr Saywell reported on **Storm Eunice** as you all know, Storm Eunice caused severe disruption and damage over the weekend, with winds reaching up to 100mph in some places. The Highways Network Operations Control Centre took almost 1,300 calls during the storm period and a team of 150 Highways Officers, contractors and more than 70 tree surgeons cleared debris including rocks, trees, and branches from minor roads. Over 400 trees were uprooted. Gritters also had to be deployed due to falling road temperatures.

There were extensive power outages across Devon, and in particular Torrington Rural (including my home too!). At the peak of the storm on Friday, WPD were dealing with over 60,000 premises across Devon and Cornwall, and nearly 10,000 of those were registered as Priority Customers, and I know that some residents at Four Seasons who were registered as priority customers. DCC's Incident Management Team took the decision to proactively contact certain groupings of people known to DCC Adults and Childrens services, where they potentially would be vulnerable if left with no power. This happened, and a number of welfare issues were successfully resolved.

A386 landslide As you may also be aware, prior to Storm Eunice we had a major landslide on the A386, outside Torrington and just north of the junction with the A3124, which caused the road to be closed for just over a week as DCC brought in specialist contractors to stabilise the rock face and remove over 1000 tonnes of debris. The road is open again now, albeit under traffic lights, while work continues to secure the remaining rockface.

DCC Budget When not dealing with landslides, storms and power outages, the major work this month has been setting and approving the new DCC Budget for the 2022-23 financial year. In summary, the revenue budget will increase to £629 million, with a 10.5% increase (£29.6m) for Adult Social Care, 10.8% (£17m) for Children's Services. Since the provisional budget was produced, it had been possible to include another £1 million on drainage and potholes and maintain £329,000 to support community groups. In addition, there would be an £8 million contribution from the NHS to help deliver adult and social care. DCC's Council Tax precept will increase by 2.99% (the lowest since 2015).

While funding has increased for services, it has been an extremely tight budget to set. DCC is taking nearly £23 million out of reserves to help balance the budget, and according to our Chief Executive, **76% of DCC's expenditure goes on just over 3% of Devon's population**. I hope that gives you an idea of the challenges we face. There is a huge demand on our Adult and Children's Services as we now come out of the pandemic. Demographic pressures are also increasing our

spend, with an ageing population and adults with disabilities, health conditions, learning difficulties, etc. living longer. Our aim throughout as a Council and Administration is to protect the young, the old and the vulnerable. And that will remain... but I also want to see ways we can ensure we do this in the future without necessarily spending more than three quarters of our budget on just 3% of the population. That will be the big challenge in the coming years/decades....

Devolution Bid Devon has been shortlisted along with 9 other County areas for a devolution deal with the Government. Exact details remain 'TBC', with negotiations due to start shortly with Ministers. The intention is to negotiate as Team Devon – *all* the Districts, Unitary Authorities, Town and Parishes working with DCC to get more powers and decisions devolved to a local level. More details on how, as and when I get them! **DCC Strategic Plan** DCC has published its new Strategic Plan for the next four years. Those priorities, [available on the council's website](https://www.devon.gov.uk/strategic-plan/), are: Helping Devon respond to the climate and ecological emergency, and working to protect and improve our natural environment. Working together to ensure all children are safe, healthy and can thrive with opportunities to fulfil their potential. Helping Devon achieve inclusive economic recovery and sustainable growth, ensure more people can take advantage of opportunities, and invest carefully to improve infrastructure. Making Devon a fairer place, address poverty, health and other inequalities, and ensure support for those people and families struggling most. Help people to be healthier and more resilient, ensure everyone gets the care they need, and support people to live their lives well. Support all our communities to be safer, better connected and more resilient with a focus on communities at greatest risk or in greatest need. Annual plans will be produced every year to set out what the Council is doing to reach those strategic goals, and it is asking for the public's input to the annual plans, inviting people to let the council know what could and should be done in order to achieve the priorities. You can respond online by scrolling to the bottom of the webpage here - <https://www.devon.gov.uk/strategic-plan/>

Free School Meal Vouchers Families of nearly 19,000 children in Devon have been sent supermarket vouchers this February half-term thanks to one-off government funding that DCC have used to continue our drive to combat holiday hunger the county. Over the past year, DCC have invested over £4.7 million worth of government funding on providing nearly 140,000 supermarket vouchers for families who qualify for free school meals so their children don't go hungry over the school holidays. Securing additional one-off funding means the scheme is able to operate again over the upcoming February half term break and Easter holiday, with vouchers worth £15 per child per week automatically sent to families of children currently receiving free school meals to help them buy food. **Covid Update** I hope this is a promising 'sign of the times' that I have been able to leave this update until last. As of the 22nd February, Covid infection rates have been falling in Devon and are now back to pre-Omicron levels in the County. Hospitalisations have also been falling and throughout the 'Omicron wave', the numbers in intensive care have remained very low (in single figures). Cllr Saywell was thanked by the Council for the prompt action of DCC to get the A386 reopened so quickly

Cllr Lock reported the planning for Towell Meadow has not progressed. TDC have held the budget meeting to confirm the balanced budget for next year, a Band D property will rise by £5, out of every £1 collected .73p goes to DCC, .12p to the police, .4p to the fire department, .3p to town and parish councils and the remaining .8p to Torridge District Council. The lack of refuse collection last Friday due to the weather was raised.

6. Tennis Court, a meeting is to be arranged, Mr Hartford will be contacted to attend, the first item on the agenda will be to elect a chairman.

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

518	Beaford Village Hall	£12.00
519	Mr. R Horner (skittle alley)	£500.00
520	Mr. D Buswell (commemorative coins)	£434.90
521	Mr. R Heard	

8.i. Planning

P C recommendations

TDC

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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,	Passed
1/1174/2021/ FUL	Erection of single storey rear extension, Laburnum Cottage Beaford	
1/0049/2022/ FUL	Proposed new access track off existing access and associated works barn at Mount Pleasant	
1/0152/2022/ AGMB	Prior notification for the change of use of agricultural building to 1 no. dwelling house and associated building operations under Class Q building at grid reference 258210 115450 Roborough.	Cllr Underhill declared a prejudicial interest and left the room. It was agreed by all there are no objections to this application.

9. Police Report, no crimes have been recorded in the last 30 days, in the same period there have been 2 calls logged, 1 public safety and one transport related. Speedwatch was highlighted, PCSO Brown will be contacted to see what progress has been made.

10. Ways to improve the Village and Parish Environment. Cllr Millward is organising an Environmental Public Open Workshop here in Beaford Hall, in conjunction with 361 and TDC in April.

Cllr Berry has booked a meeting with "Treescape" to offer free trees to parish's, date to be confirmed.

11. Caretakers Report & Hall report. The bins are being emptied, at the last meeting a cut of the grass on the Green was requested the contractor was asked but will be contacted again. At the bench at the end of Shephard's Meadow there seems to be a lot of cans, a bin is to be positioned at the site for a trial period to ascertain the situation. Cost of resurfacing the hall car park, Mr Roberts is to be contacted again for a paper copy of the quote.

It was highlighted the flower tubs at the entrance to the village will be filled in the spring.

Hall report, Cllr Millward reported there are only 5 on the hall committee which is not sustainable, they are struggling for numbers, the store room has been rearranged to make things easier, the hall is to be redecorated in the week commencing the 21st March, broadband is installed in the hall. A quote has been obtained to mend the fence, the next jobs are to hose down the exterior to remove the algae and moss, new metal doors are to be put on the exterior of the store room and a bar is to be put across on the store room wall in the main hall to allow a screen to be dropped down to allow projection onto it.

12. Correspondence

i. The DALC newsletters have been circulated.

ii. The weekly crime reports have been circulated.

The Queen's Jubilee it was agreed at the last meeting to purchase a commemorative Copper Beech tree with a tree guard, Albion plants have none in stock at present. An email has been received regarding the trees in the Churchyard and their proximity to Green Cottage this is being dealt with by the Church PCC with a contactor coming next Wednesday. The Tommy's have arrived they will put up in due course.

It was raised regarding the development on the field towards Beaford House, Cllr Lock is to be given the precise location and to contact TDC to see if change of use is required.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 30th March 2022 Parish Council meeting 7.30pm in the Village Hall

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

Forthcoming meeting: Wednesday 27th April 2022. **The Annual Parish Meeting** in the Parish Hall Followed by a Parish Council meeting.