

BEAFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on the Wednesday 26th April 2023

Cllr G Underhill (took the chair)

Present Four members of the public and members of the Parish Council

Cllr S Berry, Cllr J Palmer Cllr R Huxtable Cllr B Millward Cllr C Steer and Mrs A Snell clerk

In attendance Cllr R Lock District Councillor

Apologies Cllr R Pearce Cllr A Saywell County Councillor Cllr M Clarke Mr J Spilstead and Mrs J Church

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.

1. The minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on the 27th April were agreed and signed

2. Chairman' Report. This is the Annual Parish Meeting report for the year May 2022 until April 2023. Once again, the Parish Council has had a busy year, always hoping to contribute to Beaford being a pleasant village to live and work. Beaford Parish Council began the new year by updating the council's standing orders.

Highways has a new highways officer Mr Mark James with whom we are in regular contact. Mr James has so far been a frequent visitor to Beaford attending meetings in the placement of the new VAS recommending the most beneficial and legal position, the new parking regulations on Exeter Road to free up the road during the day to allow traffic to flow smoothly, this seems to be a great success so far. Mr James has also been to Beaford looking at pavements and the positioning of a grit bin which will be sited on the corner of Green Lane outside the school for all residence to use. In May the S106 money was eventually paid from the Marshalls Mead houses and this money was used to erect a Jubilee Youth Shelter on the Village Green.

The Village Green as usual has presented the annual problem of car parking! Advice was sought, old documents and Parish Council papers read and everything returned to the same conclusion, Beaford Village Green is strictly protected by historical legislation and is not a public village carpark, it is just for the access to Tricks Terrace as its the only entrance to the properties. The path along the back of the houses also proved to be private to the residence not a public cut through.

A copper beech tree was planted in early autumn on the Green to commemorate the late Queen Elizabeth 11. Wickstead have completed their yearly checks on the Village Green play area and once again passed without any major problems.

A speed watch volunteer team has been formed under the eye of Sandra Brown from Devon and Cornwall Police, official training was taken by these volunteers to allow them to be proficient in their task and to obtain insurance.

Mr. Jury kindly volunteered to be Beaford's Road Warden, he also has completed training for this and is covered under the umbrella of the Parish Council. I along with the rest of the councillors would like to offer these volunteers our gratitude.

As I am mentioning volunteers, I would also like to offer my sincere personal thanks to members of the village hall, church, the jubilee committee, the tennis court, the bowls and skittles clubs, the ladies' group, the Friday morning hub, the keep fit ladies and the clever craft group all contributing to village life and I believe to be of unmentionable importance for the village to have these wonderful groups to bring residents together. The Autumn Show was remembered, and a big thank for all their efforts and work especially for the generous monetary grants they give to other organisations in the parish. If I have not mentioned anyone, I am deeply sorry but you are also of great importance to the heart of the village.

Rubbish and dogs quite often appear on the agenda, rubbish bins are yearly replaced along with dog bins which are used but not by all!! Drains, lights and potholes are also monthly reported.

Tommys were purchased by the parish Council for the village to commemorate all those who served and were lost or injured at war, a moving display was erected outside the school and hopefully it will annual. The Tommys are stored in the church.

At the moment the Tennis Court property is in the hands of solicitors, as it was requested the freehold of the property to be transferred from Mr. Hartford into Beaford Parish Council care, a Parish Council legal entry was preferred to an individual.

In previous years the Parish Council has been proactive in supporting village enterprises, this year the parish council has supported the tennis club, the Jubilee Committee and the church to maintain the grave yard

In March of 2023, £500 was donated to the community hub, this amount is to be distributed as the members see appropriate for the education of the children. Grass and hedge cutting along with the insurance of the landing site for the air ambulance are also the responsibilities of the Parish Council. Thanks, has to be given to our District Councillors Lock and Clarke, their advice and contributions in the form of grants is needed and appreciated, meetings are regularly attended by both. Thanks also has to be given to our County Councillor Mr Andrew Saywell who is always available for advice and to assist us particularly on the matters of Highways.

Footpaths are regularly walked by our footpath councillor and the county footpath warden, issues do arise and a conclusion is hopefully reached benefitting all. Signs and dogs off leads are the most common complaints. The Parish Council has secured the S106 money if Towell Meadow is passed for planning, this money has been specified for the tarmacking of the Village Hall car park, this proved to be quite a difficult request as the Parish Council does not own the land but it was felt to be of great benefit and need for this money to be available for this purpose to enhance the hall and carpark for residents and guests. Councillor Lock was a invaluable contact in helping us achieve this request. Thanks, must also be given to our clerk Mrs Angela Snell for all her dedicated time and expertise on parish legalities. We would also like to offer our gratitude to Sandra Brown, Mr T Vanstone and Ms. S Doyle at Torridge.

To conclude my report I would like to offer my personal thanks to the members of the parish Council for their continued hard work and dedication in supporting the village and myself, to have chaired such an industrious group of people has been an honour and pleasure.

As I always say, we look forward to your support at the monthly meeting where environmental issues are discussed along with planning and all the subjects mentioned.

Regards to you all, G.S. Underhill Chair of Beaford Parish Council.

Mrs S Steer - Vice Chair

Mr R Huxtable - Footpaths, VSA maintenance, Green, Bus Shelter and Tennis Club representative and snow warden

Mr R Pearce - Village caretaker and church representative

Mr B Millward - Environmental issues and tech expert

Mr S Berry - Village hall representative

Mr J Palmer - VAS maintenance and Highways

Mr & Mrs Underhill – Snow wardens!

Cllr Underhill was thanked by the members of the Parish Council for her hard over the year.

3. Financial Report, Parish Council funds at present stand at £14,539.83

4. Village Hall report, Cllr Berry highlighted the fact that Mr Ivor Bourne gave the land on which the hall stands allowing it to move from the old Victory Hall, to this well-equipped excellent hall. Cllr Berry thanked the committee who worked hard and carried on during covid time with few bookings and a very small committee at the time. The committee has now gained new members with Rebecca Rodgers the new Chairperson. The most recent improvements being a new heating system, new fire doors, freshly decorated and money spent on the access, it is excellent to see the good number of organisations using the hall.

5. Police report, Reports will no longer be provided but general police reports for your area can be found on the [Home | Police.uk \(www.police.uk\)](http://www.police.uk) website – bespoke reports will only be produced where a specific issue or series of crimes affects your community.

6. County and District Councillors reports Cllr Saywell reported on **Potholes** from January 1st to the end of March, a total of **16,572** safety defects have been repaired. Over 40 gangs have been deployed and the Dragon Patcher also used in Torrington Rural to help with the repair backlog. From the anecdotal evidence I'm seeing locally they have now caught up, including on patching repairs – which involves planing off the top road surface and resurfacing it, not a basic pothole repair – and where there had been some delays.

Of the 16,500 repairs – 7,603 were **additional** defects identified by safety inspectors when responding to public reports. To give you an idea of the weather impact this winter has had... in December 2,431 potholes were repaired verses 7,376 for January. In January 2022 3,494 defects needed repair in comparison with the 7,000 this year. Non-safety defect repairs (i.e. small or shallow potholes) were suspended pending catching up on the backlog, however the Service is confident they can resume non-safety defect repairs starting this month in April.

In addition, in the Budget the Government awarded DCC over £9.4m of additional capital funding, the highest amount for any local authority in England. This will be used to fund further patching and resurfacing schemes. I have already recommended resurfacing on the B3227 outside High Bullen and repairs on the road to Wooleigh Bridge.

Devolution The Government have given outline approval for a Devon-wide devolution deal which could bring greater local control and allow partners to tap into additional resources to help tackle key local priorities such as affordable housing, better public transport and connectivity, and providing for the skills that the local economy needs.

More details to be confirmed but this will not involve the creation of an elected Mayor for Devon or a change to the existing democratic structures. Local partners across Devon have now been invited to work together to prepare a Final Business Case to present to Government for final approval later in the year. **Councils to receive additional funds to help support households with rising food and energy costs**

Devon has secured additional funding to help households weather the rising costs of living, to help pay for food, energy and other essential items. The latest bid amounts to a little over £10 million, to cover the period from April 2023 until March 2024. It will take Devon's total level of Household Support Funding received so far to just over £25 million.

The funding is to support households in most need that are struggling to pay for food, energy, water bills and other related essentials. And specifically, those households that may not be eligible for other support that is already available from the government. More details online here -

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/news/councils-to-receive-additional-funds-to-help-support-households-with-rising-food-and-energy-costs-2/>

Growing Communities Fund DCC has announced another round the [Growing Communities Fund](#), and are encouraging not-for-profit groups, charities, church or faith groups, schools and councils to bid for grants. Typically, these are grants of between £500 and £1,000, although funds of up to £3,000 will be considered for exemplary projects that will receive their funding when their project is completed. The Growing Communities Funding is to support projects that: could offer warm safe spaces, something to eat and drink, and a place to work, learn, socialise or encourage healthy activity, or that address hardship such as food or fuel insecurity, build greater degrees of self-reliance and community resilience, for example offering advice, peer support or guidance on budgeting, cooking low-cost nutritional meals, tackle loneliness and isolation and build self-esteem, and that have a clear and direct community and environmental benefits. More information can be found online here - www.devon.gov.uk/communities/growing-communities-fund

It is pot hole season so please keep reporting **The DCC website is devon.cc/report-it**

7. Report from the Skittles club, the group meet every Thursday evening 7pm to 9pm at Beaford Village Hall with an average of 12-14 persons attending. We provide our own refreshments. The

group have given the skittles the run and balls to the village hall enabling them to allow other groups to make use of them as and when required, report given by Rob Pearce.

Report from Beaford PCC This has been our first full year after the covid pandemic and thank all the people who continued to support the church financially during that time, through Gary the Rector and the PCC team we now have a new church warden Marleen Jury, Secretary Ellie Pearce and Ruth Castle shadowing to be able to take over next year and Rob Pearce as treasure, Kathleen Buckley and Richard Heard are also on the PCC.

The church has come quite a way over the last year with fine church speakers in Ruth Castle and Kathleen Buckley. We have an average of 14 persons attending all services, with an average of 30 at special services. It is thought to be due to a diverse selection of services. Richard Heard and Steve Jenning who maintain the churchyard do a very tough job and the support received from John Spilstead the organiser of the 200 club, give the church a very good fund-raising income, alongside the gift from the Parish Council. There is a team of volunteers who keep fresh flowers on the altar and on special occasions in the windows, along with cleaning and maintenance. During the past year the trees in the churchyard have been polled at a cost of £3000. A request has been put into the diocese to have an area in the church converted to make it suitable where tea and coffee could be served and used as a meeting area, awaiting their approval. In July there is a new curate who will be moving into the rectory in Beaford. She will be given a warm welcome, she is due to be here for three years. There is a new vicar joining the Two Rivers Team of which Beaford is part, report from Rob Pearce, Focal Minister.

A request has been made from the Beaford Bugle for the Parish Council to provide monthly a main point version of the Parish Council minutes, requested from the Editor and members of the community

8. Report from the Tennis Club The president Nick !!! has requested that Donald !!! make an update to this meeting. Donald !! has been acting as secretary since Katie Berry stepped down in January and the club has new treasurers are Dean and Chloe Brunt.

Since the first lesson that happened last year on the 17th of June the club has got 14 active memberships, 8 family and 6 adult memberships. During; warmer months we held 2 practice sessions and 1 social session a week. We also held two in-house doubles competitions for our members. During the colder months we have reduced the weekly session to Friday mornings and continued to play social matches on Sunday's weather permitting. On Tuesdays we have started playing Pickleball which is a great indoor alternative to tennis and has been very popular. We also had to do some maintenance on the court and surrounds which involved, a working bee to cut back the hedge as it had grown into the fence and made it difficult to retrieve the balls. Had the court professionally cleaned and Biocide applied to prevent mould regrowth. The mould in wet weather can make it very slippery and can contribute to cracking of the court surface. This is due to water not draining away and in colder weather freezing inside the court surface. To give the court more longevity it was also recommended that we get the court repainted which would cost roughly £3500 and we hope to raise money for this with grants and fundraising events. To wrap up I would like to say that as someone who is new to the village, I have found Beaford Tennis Club to be a great way to meet people and keep fit. I've found a new passion in tennis and you can find me at the court most days playing with friends or practicing my serve. Report prepared by Nick!!!

Report on the Short Mat Bowls Club In July 2022 we started Friday evening bowling as well as continuing our normal Monday afternoon sessions. This was not a great success so we changed to Friday afternoon and have continued with this to date. At the same time, we introduced FREE bowling sessions in July and August to try to generate more members. This was successful, gaining Kim, Sandra and Steve. In March whilst the village hall was decorated, we went for a Cream Tea, everyone seemed to enjoy this! In October we organised a 'friendly' with North Tawton and also decided to join the north Devon and north Cornwall federation to gain more experience. We were too late to join the winter league so we planned to join the summer league in 2023. On Saturday 19th November we went to North Tawton for our first friendly. Although we lost on both-mats we had very tight games. We went for our Christmas lunch at the Royal hotel in Bideford on 6th December.

Later in December we had a fun afternoon with members wearing 'Christmas' attire. Also, in December we were awarded £100 from the Autumn Show towards our equipment. In early 2023 we gained two new members in Les and Paul. We now have 17 regular players. Eleven are in our summer league squad and have helped Beaford get back into the federation league where it played years ago. In February we played our second friendly match at home to High Bickington. It was an extremely close match with Beaford winning the afternoon 22-21. On March 8th we hosted the final of the Mary Kent triples competition between Winkleigh and Woolsery. After a few tight ends Winkleigh easily won the competition 23-8. We are now a member of the north Devon and north Cornwall federation and have joined its Summer League, East division, along with Anstey, Bishops Nympton, Buckland Brewer, Fremington and High Bickington, Commencing in May we will be playing these teams at home and away throughout the summer months. John organised two England trained, short mat bowling coaches, to attend one of its Monday afternoon bowling sessions to try and improve its members skills, ready for the summer season. This proved a great success and they will be monitoring our progress throughout the summer season. Hopefully, we will enter the winter bowling leagues and continue our success. We are looking for a good second-hand bowling mat to replace one of our older mats, as new ones are now over £1,100. We are also constantly on the lookout for good second-hand woods in the smaller sizes. Report given by John Spilstead.

Report from the Parent Community Hub For those of you who don't know, we are a baby and toddler group which runs on a Friday morning 9-11am in the Village Hall. For the adults attending, there is unlimited tea, coffee and biscuits. For the children, there is a range of free play activities, an adult led activity and snacks. Each session ends with a story and singing. Once a month we have a visit from the local Parish nurse who weights the babies and is there for a chat. Everybody from the local community is welcome to pop in for a cuppa despite whether they have children or not. On Friday, Beaford Parent Community Hub will have been running for a year now. Jo and I are thrilled with its popularity which has steadily increased since it began with many new parents coming not just from Beaford but also the surrounding villages too. In recent months, we have seen a bit of a baby boom with a lot more parents with new babies attending. Local residents without children have also popped up to support our venture making the group have a real sense of community. We would like to thank all those that have supported us and the Parish Council in particular for kindly donating £500 to our group. With this money, we have already bought planters which will not only benefit our group and our outdoor play but also the local community by hopefully adding to the aesthetics of the Village Hall's outdoor area. We are currently sourcing a parent first aid course which a number of our attendees have expressed a real interest in doing. With the funding from our Parish Council and the backing of our community, Jo and I feel we can sustain and improve upon the resources we provide. But most importantly we can ensure our group may continue to provide a place where our local parents, grandparents and carers can feel supported and preschool children get to socialise allowing a smooth transition into school. Report given by Gemma Underhill.

Report from The Beaford Autumn Show This year 2023 is the ninth year a group of individuals of Beaford come together to put on a show enabling residents to show off their garden produce, arts, crafts etc this comes together with entertainment and refreshments to make it an annual family day. In the last three years a family dog show has been added to the weekend which proved to be very popular. The Show started off with the group of individuals funding it, but over the years it has grown and stands alone financially. They have been able to, from the second year been able to contribute funds to other small groups in the village who could do with a little financial boost. Report given by Rob and Ellie Pearce Founders.

As there was no further business the meeting was closed.

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