

LOXHORE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

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Minutes

Date: Thursday 6th September 2018

Venue: Loxhore Village Hall

Present: Julie Moir {Chair}
David Smith {Vice Chair}
Mike Bowden {Councillor}
Andrea Davis {DC Councillor} left at 18:50
Matt Barrow {Connecting Devon and Somerset} left at 18:50
Malcolm Prowse {ND Councillor}

Minuted by: Priscilla Gellatly {Acting Clerk}

The Chair opened the meeting at 18:00, welcoming all those present.

1. Apologies: There were apologies from Chris Bryars and Carole Delve.
2. Declarations of interest: There were none.
3. All councillors present agreed that the minutes of the previous meetings held on 5th July and 9th August 2018 were true and accurate records of that spoken and the Chair signed accordingly.

4.0	<u>Action points from previous meeting dated 5th July 2018</u> NB §4.2 was dealt with at the start of the meeting	
4.1	4.1 Local Needs Survey (see also 16 th November 2017 §4.0, 4 th January 2018 §4.1, 16 th March §4.1 and 25 th May §4.1) The housing and business needs surveys are now live, either online (for housing needs at www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/8B92MFW or at www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/8G99WR2 for business needs) or via hard copies which can be obtained from Bratton Stores. Responses need to be sent by in 31 st October 2018. More information is available from the Rural Alliance Chairman, Frank Benbow (01598 710695 f.Benbow@btinternet.com) or from the Clerk, Margaret Done (margaretdone@hotmail.co.uk). This information is displayed on the parish notice boards and Chris Harrington was asked to send it to all Loxhore residents on his emailing list.	Closed

4.2	<p>4.2 Treasurer’s Report (see also 16th November 2017 §6.0, 4th January 2018 §4.5, 16th March §4.3 and 25th May §4.3)</p> <p>NB This item was dealt with at the start of the meeting</p> <p>In his absence, CB had sent a report saying that he had spoken to Mike Matthews. There was a sum of £240 unused for capital expenditure. MM used £40 of this to install a battery back-up on Bratton Fleming School as the service had been interrupted a couple of times by power cuts and needed to be re-set. He has suggested that unless the PC has a specific purpose for the remaining £200 he will retain it for any maintenance that is needed to the routers. Councillors at the meeting agreed with this suggestion.</p> <p>Broadband:</p> <p>MB organised an informal meeting between Parish Councillors and the Village Hall Committee on 25th July 2018. At this meeting he explained that he had entered into a Community Fibre Partnership with BT Openreach. He had been provided with a ballpark figure for the installation of fibre optic connections from the exchange to premises. Various discounts would be available depending on the number of charities and businesses in the community, but there would still be a shortfall of up to £10k. There would be no commitment to proceed until a contract based on the actual requirements of the community had been drawn up. At that meeting the VH Committee seemed willing, in principle, to fundraise for the shortfall but needed to have a formal committee meeting before going any further.</p> <p>Following that meeting, JM approached the County and District Councillors to ask if there was any money available from their budgets to add to this shortfall fund.</p> <p>On 30th July MB informed Parish Councillors that the money BT had set aside for the £30k grants (one of which would have been available to the Village Hall because of its status as a charity) had been used up and that the fund was currently closed. Openreach is asking BT for a second round of funding for the grants and MB has asked for the Village Hall to be put on the waiting list for new funding when it is available. He also said that more Loxhore residents had expressed an interest in faster broadband and several of these were businesses.</p> <p>At this PC meeting MB provided everyone with a printed summary of the status quo and the reasons why, in his opinion, Loxhore’s broadband provision should be future-proofed by being totally fibre to the premises (FTTP), rather than a ‘line of sight’ solution with its inherent problems caused by the topography of the parish, such as valleys and trees. Matt Barrow from Connecting Devon and Somerset outlined the current rollout of superfast broadband by Airband, whose competitive tender had secured the contract with CDS. On their current assessment, Airband could connect 58 properties in the parish with the optimal speed of 30 mb/s. Some of the remaining 18 properties may be able to have a connection by bouncing off connected properties, but this would be done later. The infrastructure for these connections would be capable of upgrade to 1 gb/s in the future, although Matt Barrow thought that the 30 mb/s supplied initially by Airband could possibly be raised to 50 mb/s later by software rather than hardware upgrades. However, there was no promise of this. There are currently two Airband masts in Loxhore, one of which is live, with the second coming online by the end of 2018. These masts are capable of connecting the 58 properties identified by Airband. Matt Barrow emphasised that connecting these 58 properties is the contractual obligation of Airband. Properties capable of connection by Airband (even if they were not actually connected) would not qualify for the government’s Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme launched in March this year. Under this scheme small businesses can claim up to £3,000 against the installation cost of a gigabit capable full fibre broadband connection, either individually or as part of a group project, and residents can benefit from the scheme with a voucher worth £500 as part of a group project. Residents in properties not listed in the</p>	Closed
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	<p>contractual list (currently 58 premises) would qualify for the new CDS voucher scheme (launching soon) or for the government's gigabit voucher scheme, but not for both. As before, the CDS scheme will provide vouchers to be spent with a list of certified suppliers. Mike Bowden will forward to Wendy at CDS a list of all the premises in Loxhore so that an up-to-date assessment can be carried out to determine which properties could be served by Airband by the end of this year. The remaining properties must be connected by the end of 2019, possibly by using different technology to reach the most difficult premises.</p> <p>Mike Bowden will be meeting with Peter Heaton-Jones (MP for North Devon) on 7th September.</p>	MB
4.3	<p>4.3 Parish Paths Partnership (see also 16th March §5.4 and 25th May §4.6)</p> <p>In his absence, CB had sent an update saying that a contractor was in the village last week grading the footpath between Lower Loxhore and Roborough and down Red Lane. CB has not had a chance to see if they have started work on diverting the water above Loxhore Mill but this should be completed shortly. The PC has funds in hand to cover this work.</p>	Closed
4.4	<p>4.4 Snow Clearance (see also 25th May §5.2)</p> <p>JM wrote a draft resilience plan and circulated it with the July issue of Loxhore Lines, inviting people's comments and asking for volunteers to be points of contact or to help with tractors or four wheel drive vehicles in the event of heavy snowfall. Several people have now agreed to go on this list. When the final resilience plan is written it will be circulated to all parishioners and published on the website.</p> <p>DCC is unable to supply additional grit/salt boxes but bags of salt can be ordered from DCC, to be delivered to the Village Hall. JM will organise this. The bags can then be taken to where they are needed in the parish. This is a more secure way of obtaining and using the salt because in the past unauthorised personnel have taken it from grit boxes. Empty sand bags are available from NDC and JM will also check this out.</p> <p>In his absence CB had sent a message saying that following repairs to the drainage in the Barton Courtyard earlier this year a substantial length of pipe was left over. Mike Matthews has suggested that this could be used to improve the flow of water from the Loxhore pump, which overflowed a couple of times last winter. CB thinks that MM has arranged for the pipe to be put by the pump, but it would need the road digging up if it was to be used. This is possibly something to think about for the future, but whether it is something the PC can do with all the health and safety regulations is not clear.</p>	JM
4.5	<p>5.2 Rural Alliance</p> <p>MB will attend the next meeting of the Rural Alliance, to be held on October 24th at Bratton Fleming Sports Club.</p>	Closed
4.6	<p>7.1 Communities Together Fund (CTS)</p> <p>This fund was investigated but it was decided that for the small sum of money available it was not worth pursuing.</p>	Closed
5.0	<u>Matters arising from meeting dated 6th September 2018</u>	
5.1	<p>County and District Council News</p> <p>Honey Hill</p> <p>In his absence, CB had sent a message saying that he is concerned by the continued occupation at Honey Hill (by Collard Bridge). A pedestrian entrance has now appeared which he thinks is no safer than the vehicle access. Malcolm Prowse reiterated these concerns and suggested that a letter should be sent to the enforcement team at NDC</p>	

	(which he considers is under-manned) adding Loxhore Parish Council's support to the removal of the development. The eviction date has passed and the occupants are claiming that there are bats roosting in a barn on the site. The issue will now have to be dealt with by the Magistrate's Court. MP also reported that the public toilets in Barnstaple Pannier Market are to be refurbished.	JM
5.2	Clerk's expenses The Acting Clerk submitted her expenses for the period 26 th May to 6 th September 2018. Paper (receipt provided) £2.75 Phone call 22 min to Devon Highways on 02/07/18 £2.09 Total £4.84 The RFO was not present but the councillors agreed these expenses. The Acting Clerk will pass the paperwork on to the RFO personally.	Closed
5.3	Planning Application 65398 Erection of Agricultural Building at South Town Farm, Loxhore Councillors had viewed the application online and had no objections to it being approved. The Acting Clerk will send this decision to Tracey Blackmore at NDC Planning Department.	Closed
6.0	<u>RFO's report</u> The RFO was not present but had sent his report saying that there had been no payments or receipts since the last meeting. The PC will be receiving an invoice for the work on the parish paths in due course. He has been warned of some changes to the way VAT is reclaimed. The Revenue is moving to insisting all claims are submitted electronically. However, at the same time they are apparently removing the ability to file returns through their web site, but instead insisting on taxpayers using other software. CB is going to explore exactly what the proposals are over the next two months to see how this will affect The PC. In a normal year, the VAT reclaimable is fairly small, but in years when there is major expenditure this can be a substantial sum.	Closed
7.0	<u>Chair's Business</u>	
7.1	Resignation David Smith will be stepping down from the Parish Council with immediate effect, as his house move is now imminent. The Acting Clerk will inform NDC of his decision and will set in motion the process to find a replacement. The Chair thanked him for his work as a Parish Councillor and Vice Chair, in particular for taking on the responsibility of dealing with highways issues, and wished him all the best in his new home. He handed over paperwork to do with road maintenance and other issues so that this can be passed on to the councillor who takes over this role.	Closed
8.0	<u>Next meeting</u> The Chair closed the meeting at 19:10, thanking everyone for attending. The next meeting will be held on November 1 st 2018 at 18:00 in the Village Hall.	Closed

Minutes approved by Chair..... Date