

LOXHORE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

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Minutes

Date: Thursday 3rd January 2019

Venue: Loxhore Village Hall

Present: Julie Moir { Chair }
Mike Bowden { Vice Chair }
Chris Bryars { Councillor and RFO }
Carole Delve { Councillor }
Jane Vanstone { Councillor }
Malcolm Prowse { ND Councillor } arrived 18:02
Mike Young { Parishioner }
Chris Comer { Parishioner }
Ray Comer { Parishioner }

Minuted by: Priscilla Gellatly { Acting Clerk }

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

1. Apologies: There were apologies from Andrea Davis.
2. Declarations of interest: There were none.
3. All councillors present agreed that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 1st November 2018 were a true and accurate record of that spoken and the Chair signed accordingly.

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| 4.0 | Action points from previous meeting dated 1st November 2018 | |
| 4.1 | 4.1 Treasurer's Report, Broadband (see also 16 th November 2017 §6.0, 4 th January 2018 §4.5, 16 th March §4.3, 25 th May §4.3, 5 th July §4.2 and 6 th September §4.2) An email from Jane Darley (Community Fibre Partnership Manager, Openreach), sent on 28 th November, confirmed that they can supply a £30k charity grant and asked for a final list of addresses so that the cost can be calculated. BT is still working on the final costings and MB will follow this up. He does not intend pursuing Connecting Devon and Somerset any more as Matt Barrow and others have consistently been unwilling to provide answers to his questions and there seems very little likelihood that the required broadband would be supplied to Loxhore in the near future. | MB |
| 4.2 | 4.2 Snow Clearance (see also 25 th May §5.2, 5 th July §4.4 and 6 th September §4.4) The maps are not yet displayed on the notice boards but this will be done soon. It seems sensible to salt the local roads when it is deemed necessary by the parishioners rather than relying on a decision by Devon Highways to grit, because conditions would probably not be the same. | Closed |

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| 4.3 | <p>5.2 Parish Grant and Precept for 2019/2020</p> <p>The Parish Grant for 2019/2020 will be 50% of its previous value (£152) and will be fully withdrawn in 2020/2021. Therefore the Church burial grounds will be given £100 and the Village Hall £52. However, MP thought that the grant might be reinstated fully, in which case these amounts will be doubled. A Precept of £700 was requested for 2019/2020. When the final paperwork arrives PG will complete and return it.</p> | Closed |
| 4.4 | <p>5.4 Highway Community Enhancement Fund.</p> <p>JM has ordered the tarmac but has not yet been contacted to say it is in stock. She will chase this up.</p> <p>MB is keen to investigate the possibility of employing a contractor to trim back the hedges as Devon Highways only trim areas for reasons of safety. The hedges past Oak Cottage in Lower Loxhore have recently been trimmed and CD will ask Anne or Andy Tester who carried out the work.</p> <p>JM pointed out that the trimmings really need to be cleared and thrown on top of the banks to avoid the build up of vegetation and the subsequent narrowing of the roads. MP knows someone who could possibly do this and will make enquiries.</p> <p>Road signs also need to be kept clean and visible. Devon Highways have ignored JM's request for better signage at the Halsey Lake telephone box junction so that drivers treat it as a roundabout. MP said that road signs are produced by a workshop in Pottington, complete with the correct fixings. MB will investigate the cost of this.</p> <p>JM said that more working parties are needed so that the very expensive equipment stored in the shed can be put to good use. CD will organise this later in the year, when the weather improves. JV thought that many people might be keen to do one day's work but then lose their enthusiasm.</p> | <p>JM</p> <p>CD</p> <p>MP</p> <p>MB</p> <p>CD</p> |
| 4.5 | <p>7.1 Halsey Lake Phone Box</p> <p>After many phone calls and emails to BT, JM was able to report that the phone is now working and that the phone box has been cleaned. This news has been sent to parishioners via Chris Harrington. BT has requested that no notices should be fixed with sellotape on the phone box as this makes it more difficult to keep clean. BT will consult again in 2019 on whether it should be retained or removed.</p> | Closed |
| 4.6 | <p>7.2 Wall at Blackpool Farm</p> <p>As soon as he had received the letter, Mr Thorne reduced the height of the wall.</p> | Closed |
| 5.0 | <p><u>Matters arising from meeting dated 3rd January 2019</u></p> | |
| 5.1 | <p>County and District Council News</p> <p>Andrea Davis was not present but had sent a report that had been circulated to all Parish Councillors. MB pointed out that since he has been a Parish Councillor AD has only attended one meeting. (She has only attended three since taking over from Richard Edgell in May 2017.) MB wondered whether there was a requirement for County Councillors to attend a certain number of PC meetings. Other Parish Councillors pointed out that Richard Edgell attended almost every PC meeting. MB felt that this was a great pity as she is the lead member for Highways at DCC and might therefore be able to assist with issues such as those discussed in §4.4. Her report gave information about pothole repairs and this prompted CD to speak again about the large and potentially dangerous potholes at Lancey Brook. CD has contacted Devon Highways about this problem and has been told that the drain needs jetting to remove the blockages. Jetting has to be done carefully because if the blockage does not move, the high water pressure can cause the road itself to fracture. CD will contact AD to check that this location is on the 'jetting list' and to set up a site meeting with her.</p> | <p>CD</p> <p>AD</p> |

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| | <p>Malcolm Prowse spoke about the water which still flows across the road from the new concrete construction in Snapper and which will freeze when the temperature drops. The Honey Hill problem is still not resolved; there is a court case scheduled for next week.</p> <p>The Local Plan has finally been adopted, although because government guidance on affordable housing has changed, this final version bears little resemblance to the plan originally drafted several years ago. However, it should stop speculative applications in rural areas.</p> <p>There are currently two planning applications for the redevelopment of Chelfham School (which closed a couple of years ago). Problems with the access have, in MP's view, been properly addressed but the Environment Agency is still not happy with the flooding risks. There will be fewer cars using the access than when it was a school.</p> <p>Finally, there is a report to the Executive Committee at NDC to update the housing needs of local parishes. Surveys will be funded by NDC.</p> | |
| 5.2 | <p>Loxhore Parish Plan</p> <p>MB feels that it would be useful to have a parish plan, as this would be helpful when considering planning applications. He wondered if any templates were available and will investigate this. However, a special meeting is needed to fully discuss a plan and JM will organise this.</p> <p>JM reported that she has contacted the National Trust with the suggestion that old stone barns in a poor state of repair, such as those close to the Church, could possibly be sold leasehold to Loxhore people in need of affordable housing. They could then convert them into dwellings. However, she has had no positive response from NT so far. Ray Comer said the NT uses the barns by the Church for storage. MP said that about 25 years ago he also investigated possible conversions of old buildings but the NT made it very difficult so he did not pursue the idea. The NT's policy is apparently to leave buildings as they are, even though numerous NT holiday homes and some NT hotels exist. However, MP thought that if Loxhore had a Parish Plan that showed that there are local housing needs, this could support the conversion idea. He pointed out however that converting old stone buildings into viable homes is very expensive compared with building from scratch, because of modern building regulations.</p> | MB JM |
| 5.3 | <p>North Devon Record Office</p> <p>On 23rd November an email was received from Dr Janet Tall (Head of Archives & Local Studies, South West Heritage Trust, janet.tall@swheritage.org.uk 07961674067) seeking funding to enable them to continue to offer an archive service for northern Devon at the North Devon Record Office in Barnstaple. The accompanying letter gave more information about the Record Office (which opened in Barnstaple in 1988) and its funding needs and asked if the parish council would be able to play a part in ensuring its future by offering financial support over the next three-year funding period (1st April 2019 to 31st March 2022). Pledges received so far from parish councils range from £50 to £600 per year, given in relation to their size.</p> <p>JM said that in the past the Parish Council has been asked for donations to various organisations, some of which (for example for the Air Ambulance landing strip at Bratton Fleming) have been given but she felt that this should be the exception rather than the rule.</p> <p>MP added that the ND Record Office received substantial funding a few years ago in order to prevent it closing. However, extra donations are not desperately needed now so no money will be given.</p> | Closed |

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| 5.4 | <p>Parish Paths CB has been checking the parish paths in preparation for completing the annual report in February. He has had trouble contacting Simon Houghton to get the invoice for the work carried out last spring. There are two on-going issues at the moment. The first is path 31 (Red Lane) past the Seggons. While there does not seem to be effluent running onto the path any more, there is still a drain running onto it which will obviously cause erosion over time. CB has asked Simon Houghton for advice on this. The other issue is path 9 between Corner Cottage and Hammonds in Lower Loxhore, which needs a new gate and bridge. Funding is tight and the cost of reinstatement could be disproportionate to the amount of use the path gets. CB will also enquire about installing dog gates in some stiles.</p> | CB | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5.5 | <p>Planning Trevor Blatchford (NDC Solicitor) sent an email on 21st December referring to an application for a lawful development certificate for the existing use of a static caravan as residential accommodation at Horseshoe Barn, Lower Loxhore. The application was made on the basis that a static caravan has been in situ at Horseshoe Barn since 2007, in replacement of a motor home, and used continuously since then as overflow, self-contained accommodation for family and friends and for storage. The application for a Certificate of Lawfulness is made to regularise the use of the static caravan to provide ancillary, as opposed to independent and separate, accommodation. Mr Blatchford asked to be advised by January 8th whether this information accords with any knowledge the Parish Council may have in relation to the property concerned. JM has already spoken to Steve Shapland and to Sue Southcott about the background to this application and confirmed that the information given to NDC is correct. PG will email Mr Blatchford with this response.</p> | Closed | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5.6 | <p>Acting Clerk's Expenses The Acting Clerk submitted her expenses for the period 1st November 2018 to 3rd January 2019 5 x second-class stamps (58p) for letters to Philip Thorne (wall), Electoral Services NDC (Electoral Roll), National Trust (housing), Precept request to NDC and Precept acceptance to NDC, total £2.90. These expenses were agreed and a cheque for £2.90 was given to her.</p> | Closed | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6.0 | <p><u>RFO's report</u> The Responsible Financial Officer gave his report for the period 01.04.18 to 03.01.19</p> <table data-bbox="236 1523 1406 2004"> <tr> <td>Bank balance at 01.04.18</td> <td></td> <td>6134.69</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3"><u>INCOME</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>NDC Parish Grant</td> <td>304.00</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>NDC Precept</td> <td>442.91</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>NDC Grant Assistance</td> <td>5.09</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>HMRC VAT Refund</td> <td>1241.48</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>NDC Grant - Broadband</td> <td>0.00</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>DCC - Highway Maintenance Funding</td> <td>0.00</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>NDC - Grant towards WiFi</td> <td><u>0.00</u></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>1993.48</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>8128.17</td> </tr> </table> | Bank balance at 01.04.18 | | 6134.69 | <u>INCOME</u> | | | NDC Parish Grant | 304.00 | | NDC Precept | 442.91 | | NDC Grant Assistance | 5.09 | | HMRC VAT Refund | 1241.48 | | NDC Grant - Broadband | 0.00 | | DCC - Highway Maintenance Funding | 0.00 | | NDC - Grant towards WiFi | <u>0.00</u> | | | 1993.48 | | | | 8128.17 | |
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| | <p><u>EXPENDITURE</u></p> <p>DALC Subscription 59.50</p> <p>Clerk's Expenses 36.63</p> <p>Village Hall Maintenance Grant 104.00</p> <p>PCC Burial Ground Grant 200.00</p> <p>Snow Clearing 0.00</p> <p>Highway Maintenance Fund - purchase tools 0.00</p> <p>Transparency Code - website etc. 0.00</p> <p>J. Barr - Village Lengthsman 0.00</p> <p>Lineal Software - broadband <u>191.99</u></p> <p>592.12 7536.05</p> <p><u>ALLOCATED</u></p> <p>P3 fund 1075.71</p> <p>Transparency Code Fund 438.36</p> <p>Parish Maintenance Fund 509.00</p> <p>Highway Maintenance Fund <u>3589.13</u></p> <p>5612.20</p> <p><u>NON RING-FENCED FUNDS</u> 1923.85</p> <p>Per Bank Account 7536.05</p> <p>Plus VAT to be reclaimed <u>40.31</u></p> <p>7576.36</p> | Closed |
| 7.0 | <u>Chair's Business</u> | |
| 8.0 | <p><u>Next meeting</u></p> <p>The Chair closed the meeting at 19:11, thanking everyone for attending. The next meeting will be held on Thursday 7th March 2019 at 18:00 in the Village Hall, at which Mike Young will take over as full time Clerk. PG will inform NDC of the change of Clerk.</p> | Closed |

Minutes approved by Chair..... Date