

# LOXHORE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

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## Minutes

Date: Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2019

Venue: Loxhore Village Hall

Present: Chris Bryars {Chair}  
Mike Young {Vice Chair and Clerk}  
Carole Delve {Councillor}  
Jane Vanstone {Councillor}  
Trevor Batson {Councillor}  
Andrea Davis {Devon County Councillor}  
Malcolm Prowse {North Devon District Councillor – arrived 1845}  
Michael Batson {Parishioner}  
Ray Comer {Parishioner}  
Lauri Golds {Parishioner}

Minutes taken by: Mike Young {Clerk}

The Chair opened the meeting at 18:00.

1. Apologies: Trevor Batson apologised for absence due to travel
2. Declarations of interest: None
3. All councillors present agreed that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2019 were a true and accurate record of that spoken and the Chair signed accordingly.

4.0	<b><u>Action points from previous meeting dated 5<sup>th</sup> September 2019</u></b>	
4.1	<p>Highway Community Enhancement Fund. (7<sup>th</sup> March §5.4, 9<sup>th</sup> May and 5 July §4.2 and 5 Sept §5.2)</p> <p>Drains have been cleaned on 3 July by Chris and Jim. Potholes will be done soon. MY has given CD's contacts to Darren (07768 736232) who can clean verges as he is still busy farming. AD advised that it is preferable not to contact Martin at Highways direct but to use website or general phone numbers, she also said that road signs will not be cleaned as that is something the Parish should do. CD reported that large potholes have been done by Highways and the small ones will be done soon by the Parish team. Devon Highways visited Halsey Lake junction and have written to say they will not install signs or markings as there have been no reported accidents. As BT has applied to NDDC to remove 20 phone boxes from North Devon including the one at Halsey lake. Council will wait on decision and potential removal of the box before final decision on potential signage at the junction. Still no progress on verges. CD will chase Darren. Darren has been contacted but a mutual date has yet to be agreed.</p> <p>Council discussed the flood water over road between Oak and Corner cottages. It has</p>	CD

	<p>been flowing across the road from where the RAM is. Ownership of the RAM and the land associated needs to be verified. CD will seek information and legal documents. Additional potential flooding is possible and potential road closure due to erosion of edge of road near Oak Cottage. Clerk to log the problem on the DCC interactive reporting system which AD informed the PC goes straight to the contractor. Post meeting the clerk did this and DCC reference is W 191274282.</p>	<p>CD</p> <p>MY</p>
4.2	<p>National Trust Accommodation Opportunity (7<sup>th</sup> March §5.2 (b))</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> <p>JM has received an email from Kelly Bezer of NT stating that they will consider this and are aware of local needs. However, they cannot do anything until Autumn 2019 when they hope to be in a position to confirm or otherwise.</p> <p>Clerk to send copy of Rural Alliance Parishes Housing Needs survey 2019 when it is finalised as it highlights the need for affordable housing in the area. Clerk wrote with survey on 23 October and received following reply from Kelly. "I confirm the National Trust is still working through options for the adaptive reuse of the barn at Loxhore (next to Borough farmhouse) and the Old Smithy opposite. We have instructed an architect to provide us with three options to enable internal approval for a re-use scheme. We are hoping to be able to progress with the next stage of surveys e.g. ecology in the spring of 2020. As I have mentioned before due to the properties being inalienable, we cannot dispose of the freehold and due to proposed changes to the Leasehold legislation the Trust does not consider these buildings to be appropriate for a long lease fully repairing arrangement. Therefore, the end use would be rental on the open market with the National Trust being the Landlord; again as per my previous emails to Mrs Moir I confirm the National Trust at Arlington has always favoured local families / people from the local community.</p> <p>I hope this answers your questions but should you have any further queries please do contact me. Regards Kelly</p>	<p>Closed</p>
4.3	<p>Parish Paths (7<sup>th</sup> March §5.4)</p> <p>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> <p>7th March 2019</p> <p>The annual survey of Parish paths has been submitted. Apart from the continuing problem with the path from Corner Cottage in Lower Loxhore to Hammonds, CB reported no problems.</p> <p>He is still having trouble contacting Simon Houghton at DCC who is responsible for our</p>	

	<p>area. CB mentioned this to Ros Davies when submitting the report and she said she would get Simon to contact him but, as yet, he has not heard from him. Ros could not see any reason why we shouldn't install dog gates, subject to contacting the landowners first. CB will continue to chase Simon about the water being piped onto path 31 – Red Lane. CB has asked Simon for advice regarding this and about the dog gates. CB also want to get the invoice for work done in the spring on our paths and would like to get this before the end of our accounting year so that we can reclaim the VAT. 9 May 2019 Still no response or invoice received. 4 July no change. 5 September no progress. 7 November still no invoice. JV reported that the pathways are in good repair notwithstanding the very wet weather and also that the P3 newsletter of 18 Oct makes it clear that Parishes are on their own with regards to maintaining paths. Walkers are kindly asked to take secateurs with them to remove offending brambles etc as they ramble. Council asked AD about possible downgrading of two Byways to bridleways to stop motorcycles spoiling the surface. Clerk to write to AD with details. Post meeting Clerk did this and the following reply was received from Devon Highways. "We periodically get requests to downgrade Byways Open to All Traffic. The Byways were originally recorded as roads, and were only brought onto the Definitive Map at the time of the review to give them some protection, in line with Devon County Council's policy at the time. To downgrade them to Bridleways only would require the vehicular rights to be stopped up or extinguished. As such, I think this would have to be done through the Magistrates Court, and any order made by the Council would be subject to public consultation and possible objection too. If this is something you wish to investigate further, please let me know and I can ask my colleagues at County Hall to provide a more detailed picture." This to be discussed further at January meeting.</p>	JV
4.4	<p>(7<sup>th</sup> March §9.2) JM raised the observation about possible unplanned development at Blackpool farm and in the field up the Bridleway at the side of Barton Court. Council agreed that Chair should send an email to NDDC Planning Enforcement raising the issue. This has been done and two incident numbers allocated. Reminder sent to planning as their 8-week response promise had passed. No update received. MP offered to investigate with planning. MY chased and reply received 24 June "At this stage the owners of the land have not been written out to, but we aim to complete that action before your council meeting on the 4th July. For your information if you can advise the councillors that the enforcement team are working below capacity at the moment and therefore progress may be slowed down in the near future." Nothing has been further received. MY spoke with Senior Enforcement Officer 4 Sept. He confirmed that NDDC enforcement have been instructed to seek to remedy the planning breaches at both sites and are negotiating with the owners of the land to secure compliance. Email received October 2019 from NDDC Enforcement and the matter at Blackpool farm is resolved and closed. They are still trying to locate the tenants of the other site.</p>	Clerk
4.5	<p>Chris and Ray Comer have done a great job refurbishing the telephone box. Council agreed to recognise the efforts Ray stated that most had been done by Chris and CB offered to arrange a suitable gift of thanks. Council will think and welcome any ideas that the box could be used for. Appeal for ideas will be put in Loxhore Lines.</p>	Closed
5.0	<p><b><u>Matters arising from meeting dated 5<sup>th</sup> September 2019</u></b></p>	
5.1	<p>County Council News. AD provided a report which is attached as an annex. Additionally, she was pleased to report that the A361 N Devon link road is on budget and on time. 20,000 trees are about to be planted and all compulsory purchases have been made without contention. (unheard of which possibly shows that people fully support the upgrade.)</p>	Closed
5.2	<p>District Council News. MP reported that NDDC has a crisis with waste management. High sickness rates and vehicle malfunctions is causing many missed collections. The council is working hard to mitigate and investigating leasing vehicles rather than purchase. Also, a lot of effort into parking options to encourage the re vitalisation of</p>	

	Barnstaple town centre	Closed
5.3	<p>TB report on the North Devon Parish Forum held on Thursday 19th September 2019, Tony Davies - Police:</p> <p>Reported on crime in the area 10.5 K crimes in the area last year makes ND and West Cornwall one of the safest places around. Missing persons equate to a lot of incidents as well as wildlife incidents [poaching, hunting etc having drain on resources] There has been a rise of 70% in incidents last year. They are dealt with by severity, threat, harm and risk. Not enough police officers but it was stated that it was hoped that more officers would be recruited. Still recruiting specials if anyone interested. They have more viability and drop in around the parishes to advise on crime prevention.</p> <p>Domestic crime accounted for 1/3 of violent crime but drugs coming into the county from gangs outside and sexual crime was highlighted and anyone having information, addresses were again encouraged to come forward. Representatives from Bishops Nympton parish said how scams involving telephone calls had been received in their parish and warned other parishes, especially those of the older generation.</p> <p>Cara Stobart - Gave Basics for Parish Councillors and reminded them of their responsibilities, some listed below:</p> <p>Deliver services for local needs  Work with others to develop the community  Parish Councillors are summoned not requested to attend  No attendance within 6 months they are struck off  Do not discuss confidential matters in front of public  Minutes are considered a legal document once approved.</p>	Closed
5.4	MY reported that the Air Ambulance emergency site is on hold as the cost of burying power lines is too high. DAAT will see towards end of FY if money not allocated and then perhaps fund our site rather than hand finances back to government.	Closed
5.5	MB asked about possible unauthorised dwellings in Smythapark wood. He reported that possibly one person had a wood burner fire. CD offered to investigate with help to ascertain whether this might be the case and if it is in our Parish. CD reported that there is a cabin with a wood burner but nobody is living there permanently. Another parishioner who can see the woods from his house also informed that he has seen no activity.	Closed
6.0	<b>Finance</b>	
6.1	The Annual Internal audit 2018-9 has to be completed and promulgated.	CB
6.2	<p><b>Treasurer's report 01.04.19 – 07-11-19</b> <span style="float: right;">Year to Date</span></p> <p>Bank balance 01.04.19 <span style="float: right;">7,155.29</span></p> <p><b>INCOME</b></p> <p>N.D.D.C Parish Grant <span style="float: right;">304.00</span></p> <p>N.D.D.C. - Precept <span style="float: right;">700.00</span></p> <p>N.D.D.C. - Grant assistance <span style="float: right;">2.54</span></p> <p>HMRC - VAT refund <span style="float: right;">0.00</span></p> <p>N.D.D.C.- grant re broadband <span style="float: right;">0.00</span></p> <p>Devon C.C. - Highway maintenance funding <span style="float: right;">0.00</span></p> <p>N.D.D.C. - Grant towards WiFi <span style="float: right;">0.00</span></p> <hr style="width: 10%; margin-left: auto; margin-right: 0;"/> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>1,006.54</u></p> <p style="text-align: right;">8,161.83</p>	

<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
DALC subscription	60.79	
Clerk's expenses	165.96	
Repairs to Village Phone box	109.80	
Village Hall - Maintenance grant	104.00	
P.C.C. - Burial ground grant	200.00	
Loxhore Village Broadband CIC	250.00	
Highway Maintenance Fund – Tarmac	0.00	
Transparency code (website etc.)	0.00	
Lineal Software – re broadband	0.00	
		<u>890.55</u>
		<u>7,271.28</u>
<b>Allocated:</b>		
P3 money		1,075.71
Transparency Code Funding		438.36
Parish maintenance fund		509.00
Highway maintenance fund		<u>3,389.93</u>
		5,413.00
<b>Non-Ring-fenced Funds</b>		<u>1,858.28</u>
Per Bank Account		7,271.28
Plus VAT to be reclaimed		<u>85.51</u>
		<u>7,356.79</u>
<b>Treasurer's report 01.04.19 – 05-09-20</b>	<b>Year to Date</b>	
Bank balance 01.04.19		7,155.29
<b>INCOME</b>		
N.D.D.C Parish Grant	152.00	
N.D.D.C. - Precept	350.00	
N.D.D.C. - Grant assistance	1.27	
HMRC - VAT refund	0.00	
N.D.D.C.- grant re broadband	0.00	
Devon C.C. - Highway maintenance funding	0.00	
N.D.D.C. - Grant towards WiFi	0.00	
		<u>503.27</u>
		7,658.56
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
DALC subscription	60.79	
Clerk's expenses	90.97	
Repairs to Village Phone box	109.80	
Village Hall - Maintenance grant	0.00	
P.C.C. - Burial ground grant	0.00	
Snow clearing	0.00	
Highway Maintenance Fund – Tarmac	0.00	
Transparency code (website etc.)	0.00	

	Lineal Software – re broadband	0.00	
		<u>261.56</u>	
		<u>7,397.00</u>	
	<b>Allocated:</b>		
	P3 money	1,075.71	
	Transparency Code Funding	438.36	
	Parish maintenance fund	509.00	
	Highway maintenance fund	<u>3,389.93</u>	
		5,413.00	
	<b>Non-Ring-fenced Funds</b>	<u>1,984.00</u>	
	Per Bank Account	7,397.00	
	Plus, VAT to be reclaimed	<u>85.51</u>	
		<u>7,482.51</u>	Closed
7.0	<b><u>Chair's Business</u></b>		
7.1	CD reported that the shed where the Parish Tools are kept has been found open. It is suggested we buy a sturdy metal box that can be anchored and secured with a good lock. This will cost about £300. CB stated funds were available in the Highway Maintenance fund. CD to further investigate and order provided cost is as stated. CD will also check if items are insured by village hall policy.		CD
7.2	NDDC are conducting a Community Governance Review which includes Parish boundaries. MY asked whether it would be appropriate to ask to include the residences; Coombeshead, Tidecombe Farm and Tidecombe who geographically are closer to Loxhore than Arlington. Councillors discussed and decided that the current boundary should stay as is.		Closed
7.3	DCC have asked if we have a snow Warden and if our grit bins are full and useable? The answer is no to the warden and we do not need one and yes, the bins have been checked and are good. MY will write to DCC.		Closed
7.4	The South West Heritage Trust is currently seeking funding to enable them to continue to offer an archive service for northern Devon at the North Devon Record Office in Barnstaple. Council agreed to donate £50 as it is felt that this is an important asset to retain in Barnstaple. CB to send cheque.		CB
7.5	Devon Climate Emergency: Devon Carbon Plan. Council has been asked to consider endorsement for the County initiatives which the Councillors all agreed to. Further discussion ensued as to what Loxhore could do to help reduce the carbon footprint. MP said one of the things NDC is considering is to cease Green Bin (garden waste) pick up in rural areas as it is illogical to send diesel lorries out to move garden waste that can be composted at home or locally. It was decided that much more discussion is needed and this item will be minuted for the next council meeting at least. We need to see how the Devon plan evolves as well.		ALL
7.6	The Rural Alliance Housing Survey has been received, distributed to Councillors and is attached as an annex.		Closed
8.0	<b><u>Next meeting</u></b> The Chair closed the meeting at 19:20, thanking everyone for attending. The next meeting will be held on Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> January 2020 at 18:00 in the Village Hall.		Closed

Minutes approved by Chair..... Date .....