

**WEST HILL PARISH COUNCIL
 MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING
 HELD ON 6th FEBRUARY 2018 AT 7.30 P.M.
 AT WEST HILL VILLAGE HALL**

Present:	Cllr Jo Talbot (JT), Vice Chairman (in the Chair) Cllr Jill Ingle (JI) Cllr Alan Cook (AC) Cllr Christopher Hall (CH) Cllr Jessica Bailey (JB)
In attendance:	Alison Carr, Parish Clerk DCC Cllr Claire Wright EDDC Cllr Paul Carter Eileen Perkins, footpath volunteer

Item (a)	Discussion and decisions (b)	Action (c)
18/044	Welcome and Chairman's announcements The Vice Chairman took the Chair, welcomed Parish Councillors and guests, reminded everyone that the meeting was being recorded and started the meeting at 7.30pm	
18/045	Presentation by Ros Davies from DCC. Information about the P3 scheme. This item was deferred to the Council meeting on 6 th March as Ros was unable to attend.	
18/046	Public question time (3 minutes) Mr D Vallander from DBD Construction requested to speak and offered to answer questions at item 18/051 planning application 17/3050/RES Land between The Star and Shenne. West Hill resident Mr P Algar addressed Councillors about his concerns regarding progress being made by the Parish Council in certain tasks, namely: delay in having the new website up and running; ineffective communication strategy with the public; delay in publishing the strategic plan; lack of clarity on the Parish Council's plans for the future and how the precept will be used. He offered Councillors the benefit of his advice on how to engage better with the public. JT explained that Councillors were also unhappy about the website delay and had taken the designers to task, but said that content was being added by the Clerk and it will be a work in progress. The strategic plan is being worked on and will probably be revealed along with the results of the public realm study. The Parish Council was new and needed time to get systems set up. She agreed that communication could be improved and said consideration could be given to producing a leaflet informing residents about what the Parish Council is doing. She said new noticeboards had been delivered and will be put in place shortly, which should improve access to information by residents. CH explained that the precept for the current financial year was set at £55,000 by EDDC based on West Hill's previous contribution to Ottery St Mary. He said that roughly half the annual budget is operating costs and that auditors recommend holding a general reserve equal to 6 months' operating costs. In the first year of operation, West Hill Parish Council did not have reserves. The 2018-19 precept has increased by 2.5%. The Parish Council would also like to establish earmarked reserves for an open-space project, and is looking at working with the Woodland Trust to improve the woodland. In future, a precept cap may be imposed on all Parish Councils by central government and the grant received from EDDC for council tax relief will be abolished next year. JB added that a multi-use sports pitch was identified by EDDC previously as a requirement for the village.	

	Eileen Perkins expressed support for establishing a keep fit trail in the Woodland Trust woods and said that given the number of residents seen jogging around the village, it would likely be popular.	
18/047	<p>District and County Councillors' reports for information (items raised for decision will appear on the agenda for the next meeting).</p> <p>Cllr Claire Wright gave a summary of the cuts to Devon County Council's budget which will result in a total reduction of £20 million. The effect of this will be felt across the board. DCC has cut 30 health visitor posts, which will be achieved by not replacing staff who are leaving. The Schools' Counselling Service has been cut out completely, and the foster carers' allowance will also be cut considerably.</p> <p>When she attended the Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee, a GP reported that the Care at Home system is not working as there are not enough carers.</p> <p>Devon County Council will increase council tax by 6% this year.</p> <p>On a positive note, the pothole action fund will be available again this year and parish councils will be contacted by either Claire Wright or Mike Brown from Highways.</p> <p>Cllr Paul Carter reported that the planning appeal against the DMC's decision to refuse planning permission for development of The Knowle has been successful and this will allow the development by Pegasus to proceed. EDDC will move to Heathpark Industrial Estate in Honiton at the end of 2018, with some services moving to the newly refurbished Exmouth Town Hall.</p> <p>The Exmouth sea front and waterpark plan has been submitted and will be considered by DMC so Cllr Carter said the development should start to progress.</p> <p>A new green waste collection service is being started by EDDC. A wheelie bin will be collected fortnightly at a cost of £48 per annum. Householders need to sign up for it on EDDC's website or by ringing the general customer services telephone number. Councillors asked if free compost will be available but PC said he was unsure, as it would depend on how much green waste is collected.</p>	
18/048	<p>Police Report for information. NONE RECEIVED.</p> <p>Cllr P Carter agreed it was unhelpful that West Hill does not receive a monthly crime report but pointed out that the PCC Alison Hernandez is planning 27 new police officers in the district. JB reported that she looked at the police website and the information on it has not been updated since November. ACTION: CH said he would progress a letter to Alison Hernandez asking why West Hill does not receive a crime report.</p>	CH
18/049	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Apologies were received from guest speaker Ros Davies, Cllr Kilian Hall, Chairman Margaret Hall and District Cllr Matt Coppell.</p>	
18/050	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>AC declared a personal interest in planning application 17/3050/RES The Star and Shenne, as he is acquainted with the architect and said he would not take part in the discussion.</p>	
18/051	<p>Planning applications received (previously notified to Councillors)</p> <p>17/3050/RES Land between The Star and Shenne, West Hill Road</p> <p>Proposal: Demolition of 2 no. existing bungalows (The Star and Shenne) and construction of 3 no. new dwellings</p> <p>D Vallander the developer commented that he consulted neighbours and he thought they were reasonably happy with the final plans.</p> <p>Councillors had a major concern about the protection of key wildlife such as bats and badgers. Whilst noting that an ecological report had been provided, and that the developer had applied for a European Protected Species mitigation licence for bats, Councillors thought that planners should attach some specific conditions to meet the concerns raised by the ecological report.</p> <p>Councillors also expressed concern that the new properties could overlook neighbouring bungalows and about the proximity of the new properties to protected trees.</p>	

	<p>It was resolved to support the application, subject to strict conditions being imposed to meet the recommendations in the ecological report, and subject to the Tree Officer being satisfied about proximity to protected trees. (Cllr AC did not take part)</p> <p>17/2952/TRE Babbling Brook Lower Broad Oak Road Proposal: various works – supporting document on EDDC’s planning portal, prepared by Keith Rushforth Chartered Arboriculturist</p> <p>Councillors noted that some trees had been felled before they received notice of the application and said they would like confirmation that this was done with the agreement of the Tree Officer. Councillors felt unable to comment on the application as they did not know what was discussed between the applicant and the Tree Officer. It was resolved that the Clerk should write to David Lomas to request that he confirms his findings to Councillors to enable them to make an informed decision at a later date.</p> <p>17/3052/FUL Lower Church Mead, Toadpit Lane Proposal: Alterations to playroom / home office and formation of undercover campervan store</p> <p>It was resolved to support the application.</p> <p>18/0070/TRE West Hayes, West Hill Road Proposal: Specification and tree location plan on EDDC’s planning portal. Twin stemmed Lawson Cypress (G6) - felled with a replacement tree of Tree Officer’s choosing in regards to specification and location. If felling is disallowed then an alternative specification of raising the crown to a maximum height of 4m would be acceptable.</p> <p>It was resolved that the Clerk would write to D Lomas and request a site visit and report, after which Councillors will consider his findings.</p> <p>18/0008/FUL Shepherds Cottage, Bendarroch Road AMENDED PROPOSAL: Construction of detached car port (The original application was discussed at the PC meeting on 16/01/18 and was supported)</p> <p>Councillors noted that the amended proposal puts the building in the root protection zone. It was resolved to not support the application because of danger to the root protection zone.</p> <p>18/0118/TRE 1 Oak Tree Gardens Proposal: Tree 1 - sycamore - Remove lowest branch NE and lowest branch E at 5m Tree 2 - Sycamore - Remove lowest branch NE (with squirrel damage at base) Tree 3 - Sycamore - No action Tree 4 - Sycamore - Fell</p> <p>Councillors were concerned that planners have increasingly allowed buildings to be constructed too close to the bank and trees and noted that in future, they would like to see greater weight given to the protection of the environment and especially the root network of trees, allowing adequate room for growth to maturity.</p> <p>It was resolved to support the minor works on T1 and T2 but to not support the felling of T4 as Councillors felt that there was no valid justification for felling. ACTION: AC to draft a few lines to send to the Clerk for inclusion in the response.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>AC</p>
18/052	<p>Prior approval application 18/0015/PDQ Babbling Brook, Lower Broad Oak Road Prior approval for proposed change of use of agricultural building to form 1 no. dwelling and granny annexe (use class C3) and associated operational development under class Q (a) and Q (b). Consider comments drafted by Cllr Alan Cook in response</p>	

	<p>There was disagreement over the comments drafted by AC. Some thought the change of use could work well and would fit in with the current landscape. Not everyone agreed with comments that the dwelling would overlook existing properties. Some Councillors thought that the Hay Barn should be considered as a second building. Others commented on the run-down state of the current buildings and thought that the structures were likely to be not sound enough to support the additional weight of domestic building materials.</p> <p>Councillors were sceptical that the building had ever been used as an agricultural business and thought that there was no evidence to satisfy the rules on changing the use of an agricultural building. Although it may have been used to keep cows at some time in the past, Councillors thought that that did not prove a business use. Some Councillors were uneasy about what they saw as a creeping trend to convert old agricultural buildings into dwellings. Councillors also felt that the application was pushing the boundaries of what is permitted under Class Q, which has specific criteria. Questions were also raised about the lack of an ecological report, which Councillors thought should have been required as there is a distinct possibility that the site contains protected species such as bats.</p> <p>It was resolved by a majority vote that the comments drafted by AC should be adopted as the Parish Council's official response, pending some suggested amendments.</p> <p>One Councillor abstained.</p> <p>ACTION: AC to circulate the amended comments to the Clerk and Councillors and if no further amendments are required, the Clerk can forward to planners.</p> <p>It was noted that AC had already written comments to planners in a personal capacity and that this was acceptable as he was commenting as an individual and not as a representative of the Parish Council.</p>	AC/ Clerk
18/053	<p>Planning decisions received for information (*denotes WHPC differed)</p> <p>17/2969/TRE 14 Ashley Brake – T1 poplar to fell – approved with conditions*</p> <p>17/2988/VAR Barnside – changes to layout – approved with conditions</p> <p>17/2787/TRE Hawkins Cottage – T1 oak thinning, T2 & T3 oaks felled – approved with conditions*</p> <p>All noted</p> <p>Planning appeal decision received for information</p> <p>APP/TPO/U1105/6288 Broad Oak Lodge, Ford Lane – proposal to fell 10 birch trees (original application 17/1047/TRE). Appeal dismissed by the Inspector.</p> <p>Noted</p>	
18/054	<p>TPO received for information</p> <p>TPO NO: 18/0007/TPO Land at Babbling Brook, Lower Broad Oak Road</p> <p>TPO NO: 18/0005/TPO Land at White House, West Hill Road</p> <p>TPO NO: 18/0006/TPO Land at Barrymore, White Farm Lane</p> <p>TPO NO: 17/0112/TPO Land at The Star and Shenne and adjacent properties, West Hill Road</p> <p>TPO NO: 18/0008/TPO Land at Oakdene, Hawkins Lane</p> <p>TPO NO: 18/0009/TPO Land at and immediately to the north of Whirlow, Hawkins Lane</p> <p>All noted</p>	
18/055	<p>TPO confirmed for information</p> <p>TPO NO: 17/0106/TPO Land at Ashley Brake, West Hill, Devon</p> <p>Noted</p>	
18/056	<p>Minutes</p> <p>a. To approve the amended minutes of the meeting on 2nd January 2018, previously circulated</p> <p>As the minutes contained a typing error that needed to be corrected, it was resolved that the amended minutes of the meeting of 2/1/18 be signed as a true and accurate record.</p>	

	<p>b. To approve the minutes of the last meeting (16th January 2018), previously circulated It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting of 16/1/18 be signed as a true and accurate record</p>	
18/057	<p>Updates on actions from the last meeting (action tracker)</p> <p>a. Parishes Together (Clerk/JT/JB) JT notified Councillors that the joint bid was still being finalised at OsM and there was an outstanding issue that needed to be resolved but once this was done, the bid would be signed off and submitted.</p> <p>b. Public Realm Survey – Clerk reminded Councillors that Sophie Thompson would present findings on 27/2/18 at 8pm and that she had asked Sophie’s assistant to send the report in advance for Councillors to look at.</p> <p>c. Website training update (Clerk/JT/KH) JT and the Clerk told Councillors they and KH had attended training at Cosmic to learn how to load content onto the new site.</p> <p>d. Woodland Trust (Cllr CH summary of meeting previously circulated) Everyone was enthusiastic about being able to work with the Woodland Trust to tidy up the woodland. CH said he would speak to Simon Hart to scope out what might be done and the potential cost. A more detailed plan would be put to Councillors for a decision when this preliminary discussion has taken place.</p> <p>e. Snow warden meeting – (Clerk – summary previously circulated) Clerk confirmed that Craig Williams the new snow warden and had met with her and the Chairman to discuss a way forward. It is still a work in progress.</p> <p>f. Playpark renovations – latest update and request for Councillor to help Clerk monitor the work Clerk confirmed that Wicksteeds will begin work on Monday 12th Feb and she has emailed the primary school, pre-school, village hall and PTFA about the play park being closed from 9th February onwards. JT said she would help the Clerk liaise with the contractor and asked JB to provide a sketch plan of where the new equipment was agreed to be put. The village hall management has been asked to reserve a corner of the car park for the contractor’s equipment.</p>	<p>CH</p> <p>JB</p>
18/058	<p>Correspondence received To consider correspondence from a resident of Moorlands and agree appropriate actions where necessary:</p> <p>a. Dog fouling – consider whether a dog waste bin and/or signage is needed. Councillors felt that a dog bin in a residential location would not be a good idea due to foul smells in the summer and potentially being a target for vandals. They questioned whether a dog bin would be used. It was felt the best solution was to look at putting up more signage.</p> <p>b. Footpath – cleaning, trip hazard Clerk confirmed she had actioned this with Eileen Perkins who duly reported the issues to Highways. Eileen’s inspection of the path showed that it was not as mossy as usual for the time of year and she was unsure whether Highways would deem it bad enough to clean. She noted that most of the moss was around the chicane barrier.</p> <p>c. Antisocial behaviour – cold callers, youths This was outside the Parish Council’s remit, but an email could be sent to PCSO Steven Trail to see whether the police could do anything.</p> <p>d. Cyclists abusing footpath – safety issue It was felt that the complaint would carry more weight if more Moorlands residents could report it. It is difficult to gauge the scale/severity of the problem. The Clerk</p>	

	<p>could speak to e.g. the Neighbourhood Watch coordinator in Moorlands to try to gather more evidence.</p> <p>It was resolved that the Clerk would write to the resident confirming the actions taken and informing him that the situation will be kept under review.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
18/059	<p>Finance</p> <p>a. To agree payment of £50 for DALC training (8/3/18) Clerk and Cllr CH It was resolved to pay for the training</p> <p>b. To agree reimbursement of Cllr CH for purchasing the microphone It was resolved to reimburse Cllr CH for the microphone</p> <p>c. To agree reimbursement of the Clerk for use of home office It was resolved to pay the Clerk's expense claim</p> <p>d. Invoice tracker Councillors reviewed the invoice tracker.</p> <p>e. To receive the monthly bank reconciliation The bank reconciliation was received. Clerk notified Councillors that the internal auditor had recommended that once a quarter, the bank reconciliation should be signed off with the corresponding bank statement, preferably by someone who is not a signatory to the account.</p> <p>f. Clerk informed Councillors that the notice boards had been delivered and requested that a Councillor inspect them and sign for them. The supplier's terms are 30 days, therefore the invoice will have to be paid before the next full Council meeting. The expenditure had been agreed at the meeting on 2/1/18 so the Clerk does not need further authorisation to pay the invoice. CH said he would liaise with the Clerk about installing them.</p>	<p>CH</p>
18/060	<p>Councillors questions, reports and items for future agenda</p> <p>Each Councillor is requested to use this opportunity to report minor matters of information not included elsewhere on the agenda and to raise items for future agendas. <i>Councillors are respectfully reminded that this is not an opportunity for debate or decision making.</i></p> <p>JB noted that Sidmouth has notice boards where the public can put up notices. A free-standing board could be put on the verge at McColls where the planter is. As that verge is the responsibility of Highways, would need to find out from DCC if a board could be put there. ACTION: JB to open a dialogue with DCC</p> <p>AC said he agreed that the Parish Council's profile is not high enough with residents. Consideration needs to be given to a communications strategy.</p> <p>JT updated on the Neighbourhood Plan – the inspector came back with more questions, which were answered. The inspector hopes everything can be progressed without too much further ado.</p> <p>Name badges – The Clerk will obtain a quote for badges to present at the next meeting for approval. Badges are important for Councillors at public events as it helps people identify them.</p> <p>A question was raised about a potential public open space but there was little information available at this time and, due to the commercially sensitive nature of this issue, any future discussion would take place in private at the appropriate Parish Council meeting.</p>	<p>JB</p> <p>Clerk</p>
18/061	<p>Next meeting</p> <p>It was resolved that the Parish Council will meet on Tuesday 20th February if there are urgent planning matters. If there are no such matters, the Parish Council will meet on Tuesday 6th March. There being no further business, JT thanked everyone and closed the meeting at 9.10pm</p>	

MINUTES SIGNED BY:

DATE:

Signed & dated:

 @WestHillPC