

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

Present:	Chairman Margaret Hall (MH) Cllr Jo Talbot (JT) Cllr Jill Ingle (JI) Cllr Alan Cook (AC) Cllr Christopher Hall (CH) Cllr Jessica Bailey (JB)
In attendance:	Alison Carr, Parish Clerk Eileen Perkins, footpath volunteer

Item (a)	Discussion and decisions (b)	Action (c)
18/074	<p>Welcome and Chairman's announcements Chairman MH welcomed Parish Councillors, guest Ros Davies and members of the public, reminded everyone that the meeting was being recorded and started the meeting at 19.32</p>	
18/075	<p>Presentation by Ros Davies from Public Rights of Way at Devon County Council Ros presented information about the Parish Paths Partnership scheme, known as P3, which West Hill Parish Council would like to join. Through the P3 scheme, the County Council provides small grants to parish councils to enable a community approach to improving access to the countryside. Every public right of way (PROW) in West Hill is numbered and recorded on a map (The Definitive Map) and West Hill has 5 miles of PROWs – 9 footpaths, 2 bridleways and one unclassified road which is maintained to the standard of a bridleway. This road is on the new boundary line with Ottery St Mary, formed when West Hill Parish was created. The Highways Authority is responsible for signposts and waymarks, providing stiles and gates, controlling vegetation and protecting the public's use and enjoyment of PROWs. This is achieved with the help of 10 wardens, and West Hill's warden is Richard Spurway. Volunteer P3 coordinators also play a vital role due to their local knowledge. West Hill's volunteer coordinator is Eileen Perkins. The coordinators walk the paths and note any problems such as damaged signposts which they report to the PROW warden. They also undertake an annual survey report. Works can be carried out by volunteers or contractors. Advantages of joining the P3 scheme include getting help and advice from the warden and a grant for projects that help the community to look after paths and PROWs. Each parish's needs are different, so the grant enables councils to carry out work tailored to their needs. The basic grant is £30 per mile, so for West Hill £150 per year. Some limited additional funding may be available for a "special" project. The grant can be held over to the following year. Typical projects include replacing stiles with gates to improve accessibility (DCC can provide the gates free of charge), adding dog gates, signage, waymarking, cutting vegetation, repairing steps, improving surfaces. Everything must be done with the permission of the landowner. The grant can be used to pay contractors eg for cutting or it could be used to buy a strimmer for use by volunteers (the PROW team runs a free course on how to safely use a strimmer). Volunteers would be covered by the Parish Council's public liability insurance. Ros said that although she likes to receive the grant applications by mid-February, there would be no problem with West Hill Parish Council joining the P3 scheme from April onwards and she will make grants available through the year as the parish council is new.</p>	

	<p>Ros gave Councillors an example of the grant agreement to look at and MH said she would put it on the agenda for the Parish Council meeting on 3rd April</p> <p>In the meantime, Eileen was asked to complete her survey report and bring to the next Parish Council meeting for discussion</p> <p>It was mentioned that a path from Eastfield through to Bendarroch Road would be very helpful.</p>	<p>CLERK</p> <p>EP</p>
18/076	<p>Public question time (3 minutes) A resident requested to speak at item 18/085 planning appeal for The Birches, and Chairman MH said she would bring that item forward on the agenda.</p>	
18/077	<p>District and County Councillors' reports for information (items raised for decision will appear on the agenda for the next meeting). None presented.</p>	
18/078	<p>Police Report for information. None received. CH had received a reply to his letter from PCC Alison Hernandez, which was circulated to Councillors. He also received another letter from Inspector Antonia Weeks which did contain information on how to access crime information for West Hill via the website www.police.uk which contains an interactive map.</p>	
18/079	<p>Apologies Apologies were received from DCC Cllr Claire Wright, EDDC Cllr Paul Carter and Cllr Kilian Hall</p>	
18/080	<p>Declarations of Interest Chairman MH declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in the McColls development due to the proximity of her property and said she would leave the room during the discussion.</p> <p>JB declared a personal interest in item 18/085 planning appeal for The Birches and said she would not take part in the discussion.</p>	
18/081	<p>Minutes a. Minutes of the meeting of 6th February 2018 It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting of 06/02/18 be signed as a true and accurate record. b. Minutes of the meeting of 20th February 2018 It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting of 20/02/18 be signed as a true and accurate record.</p>	
18/082	<p>Updates on actions and matters arising from the last meeting (action tracker) a. Playpark refurbishment – new sign required. The Clerk informed Councillors she was getting quotes for a new sign.</p> <p>Councillors asked the Clerk to check with EDDC about who needs to be involved for a press release photo CH to ask Simon Hart or Martin Jelf about how much it would cost to get a load of bark chippings to cover the muddy areas in the play park</p> <p>b. McColls redevelopment (This item was moved to the end of the agenda) MH left the room at 21.25 and the Vice Chairman JT took the Chair for this discussion. Councillors said they were not opposed to development of the McColls site and they recognised the potential for replacing an ugly building with a more attractive one that could enhance the village “centre”. As the site sits in a pivotal location any changes should have a positive effect on the built environment and public realm. They had some specific comments as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The future of the whole site is very important and the proposals should address the whole site 	<p>CLERK</p> <p>CLERK</p> <p>CH</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Height of the building with the third storey and the pitched roof – the building will dominate the site and neighbouring properties • Balconies – overlooking neighbouring properties and potential to spoil the streetscene with outdoor “clutter”, also out of character for the village • Car park – the potential loss of public parking spaces adding to existing congestion around the school, no indication of how parking will be managed between resident/public spaces • Walking route to the village hall and school – residents from the southern end of West Hill are currently able to shorten their walk to school by cutting through the car park • The design of the building should reflect that it is in the centre of a woodland village • Landscaping – what, if anything, is being proposed? It will need to reflect the character of the woodland village and the site’s pivotal position in the village <p>Councillors said they were keen that the development should improve the whole site, not just the building. There is an opportunity to enhance this space by thinking about landscaping, seating or other potential improvements as befit the heart of a woodland village. The Parish Council has commissioned a Public Realm Study and there are other suggestions emerging from this.</p> <p>The developer indicated at the public consultation that a formal planning application would proceed “within months” so Councillors asked the Clerk to invite the developer George Turnbull from Altitude Investments to meet them in a public forum to discuss their comments and provide more detail on the plans. It would be good if more residents attended and commented.</p> <p>Councillors viewed the development positively and just wanted to make sure the village benefits as much as it could.</p> <p>As the discussion on McColls finished, MH returned and took the Chair.</p> <p>c. Website – consider setting up a Website Working Group to keep the site up to date It was resolved to set up a Website Working Group consisting of the Clerk, MH and JT. Clerk to think about what tasks need to be done and when the WWG should meet.</p> <p>UPDATES FROM THE ACTION TRACKER: Regarding the Assets of Community Value, JB will get deeds for one of the sites.</p> <p>Name badges – Clerk can go ahead and order plastic name badges as per the quote (see item 18/092 (f) below)</p> <p>Strategic Plan – on hold for the moment</p> <p>Public Realm Survey – Sophie Thompson will give a public presentation on her findings on Tuesday 20th March at the next Parish Council meeting. JB will write something about it in the school newsletter to encourage more public attendance.</p> <p>Making a clearing in Broadoak plantation (Woodland Trust land). CH had a meeting onsite with Martin Jelf and is waiting for a quote for the work. MH reminded CH that 3 quotes would be required. Several local contractors were mentioned. CH will present the quotes to Councillors and if they select one, check back with the Woodland Trust for their permission to carry out the work. The work needs to be started soon before nesting season begins. It was resolved to allow a maximum of £1,500 for the work.</p> <p>New Parish Council notice boards - still in progress, CH will put them up. If the development work at McColls means the boards have to be moved, the developer will have to put them up somewhere else.</p> <p>The free-standing public notice board – JB will email DCC about whether one can be put on the grass verge</p>	<p>CLERK</p> <p>CLERK</p> <p>JB</p> <p>CLERK</p> <p>JB</p> <p>CH</p> <p>CH</p> <p>JB</p>
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18/083	<p>Planning applications received (previously notified to Councillors) FOR INFORMATION: 18/0008/FUL Shepherds Cottage, Bendarroch Road Proposal: construction of detached car port The Parish Council had only 7 days to submit comments, so were unable to consider the matter at a full council meeting. However, the Clerk forwarded Councillors' comments to planners about protected tree T8 being felled in breach of a planning condition (5 of 17/0006) and the paved parking area being in the root protection area of a T8 replacement.</p>	
18/084	<p>Planning decisions received for information (*denotes WHPC differed)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. 17/0110/TPO Land at Whirlow, Hawkins Lane – decision not to confirm TPO b. 17/3052/FUL Lower Church Mead, Toadpit Lane. Alterations to playroom / home office and formation of undercover campervan store. Approval with conditions (WHPC supported) c. 18/0015/PDQ Babbling Brook, Lower Broad Oak Road. Application: 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). PDQB Prior Approval refused d. 18/0070/TRE West Hayes, West Hill Road. Proposal: G6 Twin stemmed Lawson Cypress, fell with replacement planting or crown raise. Decision – split (WHPC had requested site visit and report by Tree Officer) <p>ALL NOTED</p>	
18/085	<p>Planning appeal received To consider comments on APP/U1105/W/17/3191009 The Birches, Lower Broad Oak Road Proposal: Demolition of existing bungalow and construction of two detached dwellings (outline application including details of access). Original application 17/0882/OUT Deadline for comments is 19th March</p> <p>This item was moved up the agenda and considered before 18/081. A resident from a neighbouring property spoke against the appeal. He disagreed with the appellant's claim that the development would not affect neighbouring properties. He said there would be a loss of views, noise, lack of screening due to trees being felled, damage to tree roots including a mature beech and scots pine, and damage to habitats. The shortest route from the property to the village amenities is 1.2km. The development is unsuitable and will change the character of the local area. If planning permission is granted, strict conditions should be attached to mitigate damage.</p> <p>Councillors commented that the original planning application pre-dates the Villages Plan and will be a long way outside the new built-up area boundary (BUAB) in the Plan. A tree survey was not carried out and many trees were felled before the original application was submitted. Two-storey houses are too high-density as the original property is a bungalow. The Parish Council supports the position of EDDC planners.</p> <p>It was resolved that MH would draft some comments and circulate to Councillors for approval before they are submitted to the Planning Inspector.</p>	MH
18/086	<p>Parish Council Risk Assessment To consider adopting the draft Risk Assessment (previously circulated) The Risk Assessment needs more work but is largely complete. It was resolved to adopt the draft Risk Assessment.</p>	
18/087	<p>Internal Financial Controls Review To consider adopting the draft Internal Financial Controls Review (previously circulated) It was resolved to adopt the draft Internal Financial Controls Review.</p>	

18/088	<p>Personnel To consider setting up a Personnel Committee or Personnel Working Group to deal with personnel matters. The Clerk will need to have an annual appraisal and it would be good practice to have a group or committee for future personnel-related matters. It was resolved to set up a Personnel Working Group consisting of JI and MH.</p>	
18/089	<p>Motion to exclude the general public for discussion of a confidential staffing matter item 18/090 It was resolved to exclude the public to discuss a confidential staffing matter.</p>	
18/090	<p>Confidential staffing matter This item was moved to the end of the agenda. To approve the Clerk's progression on pay scale and new pay rate (details previously circulated) It was resolved to approve the Clerk's progression on the pay scale and new pay rate from 1st April 2018 in line with NALC guidelines.</p>	
18/091	<p>Meeting with Chris Rose To consider requesting a meeting with EDDC Development Manager Chris Rose to discuss various West Hill planning matters Councillors said they would like to have a meeting with Chris Rose to facilitate better working and understanding between the Parish Council and Planners. ACTION: Clerk to contact Chris Rose to arrange a meeting</p>	CLERK
18/092	<p>Finance and invoice tracker Invoices received: a. To approve payment of final invoice received from Cosmic for the website Councillors expressed irritation that Cosmic had taken nearly 6 months, and much prompting, to deliver the website. They felt that the invoice should have been appropriately discounted to reflect the long delay. A motion to approve payment was defeated. It was resolved by a majority vote to defer payment so the Clerk can contact Cosmic to ask about a goodwill gesture. The invoice will be presented again at the next Parish Council meeting on 20/03/18.</p> <p>b. To approve payment of the play park invoice from Wicksteed JB was concerned about the size of the basket swing as the sales information made it look bigger. She asked Lynne Egginton from Wicksteed to provide measurements to ensure the correct swing was supplied. It was resolved to approve payment of the invoice subject to confirmation that the correct basket swing was supplied.</p> <p>The Clerk informed Councillors that she has submitted a claim to EDDC for the S106 grant allocated for the play park enhancement.</p> <p>Pre-approved payments – for information: c. Clerk's claim for use of home office NOTED d. Reimbursement of Cllr Kilian Hall for MS Office 365 for Business (February) NOTED</p> <p>Quotations received: e. To approve quote from EDDC for play park inspections – annual and monthly APPROVED f. To approve quote for name badges APPROVED It was resolved that the Clerk should order the plastic badges</p> <p>To receive the bank reconciliation for February – for information. Signed by Cllr AC</p> <p>The Clerk informed Councillors that she has submitted a VAT return for the period 1/10/17 to 28/2/18</p>	CLERK

18/093	<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>Councillors expressed their gratitude to Craig Williams the snow warden for his hard work during the heavy snow and to Smart Build Supplies for supplying grit at short notice. The Clerk tweeted about it and put something about it on the website with a photo of the gritter being towed by Craig's vehicle.</p> <p>MH suggested paying the snow warden an honorarium and asked Councillors to think about an appropriate amount. The Clerk will put it on the agenda for the next meeting on 20/03/18.</p> <p>DCC Cllr Claire Wright had emailed about the wild flower verges. A new cutting system was agreed by Highways to ensure the wild flower verges are cut at an appropriate time. This should keep them looking attractive and will be better for insects and bees.</p> <p>The new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) comes into force on 25/05/18, replacing the Data Protection Act 1998 and will be on the agenda for the Parish Council meeting on 03/04/18 meeting.</p> <p>Highways are running a consultation on traffic-sensitive routes.</p>	<p>CLERK</p> <p>CLERK</p>
18/094	<p>Next meeting</p> <p>It was resolved that the Parish Council will meet on Tuesday 20th March 2018 to receive a presentation about the Public Realm Study and consider planning and other urgent matters There being no further business, MH thanked everyone and closed the meeting at 22.00</p>	

MINUTES SIGNED BY:**DATE:**

Signed & dated:

