

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF NORTH MOLTON PARISH COUNCIL

HELD REMOTELY ON WEDNESDAY 10th March, 2021 AT 7.30 P.M. USING ZOOM CLOUD MEETINGS

Present: Councillor R. Peek (Chairman); Councillor J. Dunn (Vice Chairman); Councillor C. Barron; Councillor E. Bulled; Councillor A. Darley; Councillor W. Geen; Councillor H. Jennings; Councillor Johnson; Councillor I. Milne; Councillor R. Procter; Councillor R. Smaldon; District Councillor E. Bulled, County Councillor J. Yabsley and the Parish Clerk, Noel Brooks

706/03/21.1 Apologies: — None

707/03/21.2 Declaration of Interests: None

708/03/21.3 Devon and Cornwall Constabulary: None

709/03/21.4 Representations From The Public: Councillor Milne had received representations regarding the ongoing issue of loose stones in the wall in East Street – **Action:** County Councillor Yabsley agreed to chase the matter with DCC's Highways Manager. Councillor Milne had received concerns over the works involving a digger taking place at Oakford Lea. Councillor Bulled understood that the site was being levelled for the new house and that whilst an entrance for site access had been widened, the access, once the building was completed, would be via Oakford Villas. The owner had gone to Appeal over various planning conditions stipulated by NDC.

Action: After a considered debate, members voted (10 for the motion and 1 against) for the Clerk to inform the Appeals Inspector in respect of Oakford Lea that the Parish Council supported North Devon Council's conditions with the particular recommendation that the southern hedge-bank be implemented to screen the tops of the proposed new factory units. Councillor Barron informed members of Heasley Mill Village Hall Management Committee's decision to restrict the Hall's opening times for its toilets to when the Hall was in use, weekends and school holidays only, under the discretionary powers within its contract, following over-usage of the facilities by the taxis transporting the Libra School's pupils, one incident of damage to a toilet door by such firm and regular attendant over-usage of the Hall's waste bins. The Hall did not have sufficient funding or resource to continue with full-time toilet facilities.

710/03/21.5 - Planning:

Planning Applications For Consideration Received Since Last Parish Council Meeting

Case Ref	Address & Proposal	Decision
71848	Yarde Gate Bungalow, Brayford, South Molton, Devon EX36 3HA - Grid Ref: 271913; 134221 Erection Of Store Shed And Garage	Supported

Planning Applications Advised Since Last Parish Council Meeting

None

District Councillor Bulled informed members that she had spoken with the Case Officer on **Planning Application: 72790 – Overhill/Underhill Farm, North Molton, Devon EX36 3HG**. If the Planning Officer should consider the case to be approvable then such Officer would 'call it in' to Committee.

711/03/21.6 - Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of North Molton Parish Council held on 10th February, 2021 - approved, unanimously by those councillors who had attended the meeting.

Request For Reflective Plastic Safety Posts To Be Installed Along The Stretch Of New Road Where Trees Had Been Chopped Down Recently – The Clerk had requested the Highways Manager to install such posts and was awaiting a response.

Alleged Unauthorised Development - Widening Of Gateway Onto The Farm And Siting Of Static Caravan At Land Adjacent To Coombe Farm, South Molton, Devon EX36 3RF – This refers to the issue raised by Councillor Geen during February’s meeting regarding a new entrance in the hedge at land adjoining Ashpark Farm. The Clerk had referred the matter to NDC and Enforcement Number: 12784 had been applied by NDC. NDC would respond within fifty-six days.

Caravan In Field At Newtown Bridge – NDC had asked the Clerk for clarification on the exact location of the caravan which Councillor Geen had kindly supplied. The Enforcement Case Number: 12825 had been allocated.

West Park Through Stoney Bridge Towards Nadrid – Concern Over Poor And Potentially Dangerous Condition Of The Road – The Clerk had e-mailed The Highways Manager for urgent action and was awaiting a response.

Parish Council’s Dissatisfaction With The Way In Which Planning Application Administration Was Being Handled By NDC – The Clerk had e-mailed NDC on this issue, had received an acknowledgement and was awaiting a further response.

Fallen Trees Over The River Mole Near Borners Bridge – The Clerk had logged this issue on DCC’s Problem Reporting Mapping – Case Ref: W211395130 – The Case was referred to PROW (W211395138) – There had been no update on DCC’s reporting system as at 9th March.

Loose Stones In The Pavement Wall In East Street – Action: County Councillor Yabsley is to continue to pursue this issue with DCC Highways – this is the same issue as the one raised above under ‘Representations From The Public’.

Listing Of The Raised Pavement in East Street & Cobblestones Outside the Village Shop – Action: Vice Chairman Dunn would continue to progress this matter with *Historic England*.

Missing ‘Heasley Mill’ Village Road Sign – Case Number: W201375380 &

Fyldon Cross Road Sign Buried In Hedge – Case Number: W201375405 –

The Highways Manager had reported that *‘current policy is only to maintain regulatory signs. I will not be commissioning any further sign replacements until the next financial year (budgets permitting).’*

Action: County Councillor Yabsley recommended that the Clerk remind the Highways Manager that an extra lump sum of money for street furniture was being made available in the 2021-2022 Budget and that such signage issues could be accommodated within it.

Possible Procurement, For Community Use/Maintenance Purposes, Of DCC-owned Land Adjacent To Roberts Field And Opposite The Lower Poole Phase II Development – Whilst the Chairman was awaiting the outcome of negotiations between the Administrator and other parties regarding completion of the development, it had become apparent that activity may have been taking place on the site. **Action:** The Chairman is to chase the Administrator on progress and as to the likely availability of the land in question and on what terms and conditions.

Planning Application: 70819 – Stitchpool Farm – The Clerk had chased the Case Officer again, but no response had been received to date. **Action:** District Councillor Bulled would be meeting the Case Officer on Friday 12th March, 2021 and would raise the issue, *inter alia*, at that time.

Exploration Of Funding Possibilities For Laurels Playground Project – Phase II – The Clerk was awaiting confirmation from the Project Team of the extent of Phase II with supporting quote/s.

Laurels Playground – RoSpa Safety Inspection Report – The Clerk had instructed *RoSpa* to carry out the report in March.

713/03/21.8 Matters Arising From The 10th February, 2021 Minutes Not On This Agenda: None

714/03/21.9 Items For Discussion:

- a) **Decision Required As To Whether Or Not To Make A Donation From Reserves (Barclays Business Premium Account) To The Heasley Mill Village Hall Management Committee Towards Its Intended Defibrillator Purchase** - Councillor Barron informed members that any donation from the Parish Council was no longer necessary due to successful fund-raising;
- b) **Discussion On The Future Of The Parish Council's/North Molton History Society's Joint Website** - There was broad agreement that the current website initially set up some 10+ years ago was looking tired and out of date. After a considered debate, councillors voted unanimously in favour of the setting up of a Project Team comprising Vice Chairman Dunn, Councillors Bulled & Jennings and *North Molton History Society* Chairman Richard Carder with the brief of establishing the specifications and costs for a new website – the Project Team would report back to the Parish Council with its initial findings as soon as possible;
- c) **Highways Team Update** - Councillor Milne reported that following the Clerk's investigations, the Project Team was awaiting DCC's late March decision on the overall budget for HMCEF funding and the terms on which it would be granted to parishes before making a 2021-2022 application for monies towards further Highways-related works – the Clerk had diarised the issue and would revert to the Project Team with details as soon as possible. Following advice from the Clerk and after careful consideration, members agreed, unanimously, not to pursue *Forks2U Ltd* any further over uncompleted edge-ploughing-related soil removal works in 2018 and its failure to submit an attendant invoice. Work on the flooding blackspots would be continuing. The Clerk had requested DCC to jet the drains and gullies on North Molton Hill as requested by the Highways Team. County Councillor Yabsley reported that a further £1.3m had been allocated to DCC's Highways Budget for 2021-2022 for patching (£600k), drainage works (£600k) and street furniture (£100k);
- a) **Laurels Playground S.106 Project – Update By The Laurels Team** – Councillor Darley reported that Phase I of the project had been completed with the playground open with the appropriate Covid-19 Notices in place. Plans for Phase II were being devised. The painting of the walls was being assessed. The Feoffees had agreed to make a financial contribution towards the painting of its wall. Councillor Darley proposed that the painter be employed to paint the bus stop, too – all agreed. The Sports Club had agreed to donate £100 towards the painting works which could be achieved by it buying the paints directly through Exmoor Hardware and providing them to the Parish Council. Councillor Johnson would ascertain the feasibility of the paint for the proposed mural being provided in this way by discussing the issue with Robbie Kingdon. The water meter was now accessible;
- b) **Parish Council's Main Noticeboard – Update By Councillor Geen** – Councillor Geen announced the formal arrival of the Parish Council's new noticeboard one side of which was available for general public use with the key obtainable from the shop – members acknowledged how good the new facility looked. Chairman Peek agreed to place the contractor's business details on the Parish Council's pinboard. Councillor Bulled had noticed on the Village's *Facebook*™ Page that someone had queried whether or not the noticeboard further down the bottom end of East Street was still in use and as to who operated it. After a considered debate, members concluded that it was privately-owned by the owner of the wall to which it was attached. It was not thought to be in use;

- c) **Adopted BT Phone-box (In The Square) Update** – After a considered debate, members agreed for the facility to open as soon after 12th April, 2021 as was practicable for Councillor Jennings who would be setting up the shelving. He would put in place a process for ensuring that the books available did not stagnate over time.

715/03/21.10 Chairman’s Report/Urgent Matters Brought Forward By The Chairman – None

716/03/21.11 Finance -

Barclays Community Account	Balance as at 28 th February, 2021:	£11,116.11
Barclays Business Premium Account	Balance as at 28 th February, 2021:	£ 6,058.26

- i) Receipts: **NDDC** - £12,995.00 - Re: S.106 – Received on 25th February, 2021
North Molton Victory Hall - £50.00 – Donation for use in respect of the proposed wall mural at Laurels Playground – To be banked
- ii) Payments:
- a) **Clerk’s Net Monthly Pay & Expenses** - £462.19 – Comprising: Net Pay: £432.80 plus contribution to telephone & office costs of £15.00, and **Zoom Cloud Meetings** Monthly Subscription: £14.39;
- iii) Any Other Accounts Received After Preparation of Agenda: None

Unanimously, members agreed to pay the above sum.

717/03/21.12 Correspondence – The Clerk had received a letter from Barbara Cropper of *North Molton Victory Hall* with the attendant donation cheque above – he would write to thank Barbara for this kind gesture.

718/03/21.13 Reports – Street Lighting – Councillor Procter reported that the street lighting on the walkway from Oakford Villas to Back Lane was not operating and that there was no identification number attached to the lamppost. **Action:** County Councillor Yabsley agreed to report this issue online on DCC’s website. Additionally, Councillor Procter reported that the street lighting on the walkway from the school to Roberts Field was also not functioning. Chairman Peek commented that this was a newer lamppost and would carry an identification number which could easily be reported to DCC on its problem reporting website page.

719/03/21.14 – Matters Brought Forward By The County Councillor & District Councillor – County Councillor Yabsley revisited the issue of the ‘abuse’ of Heasley Mill Village Hall’s toilets by taxis associated with the Libra School and commissioned by DCC. He said that DCC should either contribute to the annual cost of maintaining the toilets or prevent taxi usage. There was also the issue of roadside mess, road-verge damage, and parking and safety issues associated with the taxis. He recommended that *The Heasley Mill Village Hall Management Committee* write and complain to *DCC’s School Transport Division* along these lines. **Action:** The Clerk is to write to the school transport divisions of both DCC and SCC in respect of the issues and copy-in the *Exmoor National Park Planning Authority* where the decision on the proposed clud/potential breach of original planning permission in respect of the Libra School would appear to have been stalling. District Councillor Bulled had received a Planning Department briefing on the complexities of the Five-Year Housing Land Supply – essentially, whilst North Devon & Torridge’s Plan agreed by an Inspector had a 6.2% supply, a different Inspector considering a hostile planning application in Torridge had calculated the supply to be only 4.2% using different methodology. North Devon & Torridge was obliged to roll out 861 new homes per annum and in 2019 some 900 had been built and sold out. The new dog controls under the PSPO were in place. **Action:** District Councillor Bulled would obtain posters for North Molton’s usage.

Date And Time Of The Next Meeting To Be Held Remotely Over The Internet Using Zoom Cloud Meetings Software Under The Provisions Of The Coronavirus Regulations Bill 2020: Wednesday 14th April, 2021 at 7.30 p.m.. The Meeting closed at 9.30 p.m..