



# Dartmoor Forest Parish Council

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2 December 2020

## Minutes for the Parish Council Meeting at 1930 on 24 November 2020

Held using Zoom remote video conferencing

Present:

<b>Hexworthy/Huccaby Ward:</b> Cllr. Alison Geen*	<b>Princetown Ward:</b> Cllr. David Worth** Cllr. Stephen King Cllr. Phil Henson	Cllr. Nigel Tigwell Cllr. Wendy Stones Cllr. Emma Byrom Cllr. Gregg Manning
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\* Chair, \*\*Vice-Chair

There were 3 members of the public present, including Cllr. Philip Sanders (DCC & DNPA), Cllr. Mark Renders (WDBC & DNPA).

Abbreviations used: **DFPC**: Dartmoor Forest Parish Council, **DNPA**: Dartmoor National Park Authority, **WDBC**: West Devon Borough Council, **DCC**: Devon County Council.

### PART 1

- 1. Apologies Received** Cllr. Julian Greatrex (technical issues), Cllr. Wendy Watson (technical issues)
- 2. Declarations of Interest** No further interests declared.
- 3. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting 27 October 2020** the minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.
- 4. Councillor Identification Card** The draft ID card was approved by the council and it was agreed to issue to all councillors. Councillors to send Clerk a photo of themselves if they would like an alternative to the photo that is used on the website.
- 5. Princetown CCTV Project (Part 1)** Cllr. Manning updated the council on status of project. DNPA planning confirmed that planning permission was not required, however as the Visitor's Centre in Princetown is a historic building then they would need to check the physical appearance of the cameras and specific locations to confirm that it was appropriate for the building. DNPA as tenants, and Duchy of Cornwall as owners of the building, had given permission for cameras to be located on this building, subject to the necessary permissions. DNPA are also supporting the project by agreeing to allow the council to use power and broadband within the Visitor's Centre for the necessary equipment. The project sub group had also received confirmation from Inspector Sloman at Cornwall & Devon Police and John Ward, Anti-Social Behaviour officer, at West Devon Borough Council that they remained supportive of the initiative. Progress had been made reviewing the compliance requirement for of operating a CCTV system, however further documentation, including a data protection impact assessment and operating manual will be required. The commercial proposals were dealt with by the council in Part 2 of the meeting.
- 6. Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Councillor Advocate Scheme** it was resolved that Cllr. Manning would represent the council on this scheme.



7. **Natural England's proposal to reduce grazing on Dartmoor** Clerk updated council on response to letter approved by council in November's meeting and issued to local organisation and media outlets. The following table summarises the responses received:

Tavistock Times	Published
The Moorlander	Acknowledged by the editor who advised it may be used in a future edition.
Farmer's Weekly	Published
Dartmoor Magazine	Published (since meeting)
Western Morning News	No response received.
Natural England	Response received stating: <i>'It looks like you have been duped along with many others to this poorly reported article in the Moorlander magazine. I attach NE's rebuttal which has now been printed in the Magazine. For a bit more detail Okehampton Common was never asked to remove all its sheep, we simply asked for a reduction of livestock due to poor condition having spent near £2m on this agreement since 2001. The SSSI is actually in worse condition than it was in 2001. Surely that's not a good use of Tax payers money and Natural England is only doing its job in protecting the environment and the public purse.'</i> Clerk to circulate full response to council.
Duchy of Cornwall	Acknowledged and advised they were monitoring discussions between the commoners and Natural England.
Dartmoor National Park Authority	No response received.

8. **Dartmoor Local Plan – Settlement Profiles** Cllr. Worth advised the following changes to the Princetown settlement profile; which Clerk will communicate to DNPA:
- Profile still shows a bank in the village. This closed several years ago.
  - Jubilee Field, to the rear of St Michael's and All Angels, is not designated as amenity land.
  - Land at the top of Moorland View, which was formerly a DCC/DNPA depot, has been identified by WDBC as a potential site for affordable housing.
- Cllr. Watson had checked the Postbridge profile and communicated there were no changes to the Clerk. However, she asked the Clerk to check whether it shows St Gabriel's Church correctly. The Clerk has confirmed that the profile does and therefore no changes are required.

**FIRST PUBLIC SESSION** No issues raised:

9. **Planning** the Council determined the following applications
- 0507/20 Tor View Bungalow, Postbridge** – the council resolved to OBJECT to this application on the following grounds: concern at the layout and density of proposed new building, potential overlooking/lack of privacy to the neighbouring property, concern that design, appearance and materials are not in keeping with the traditional style of Dartmoor housing.  
In addition, concern was raised at the new access that had been built onto the lane. This includes concern at the loss of the Devon bank and installation of gate posts, which suggest that this is a permanent opening onto the lane. There are also questions whether this is a safe access onto the highway. Clerk to check with DNPA advise whether the applicant has sought permission or advice on this access.

- b) **0508/20 Tor View Bungalow, Postbridge** – the council resolved to SUPPORT this application. However, concern at new access onto the lane is also relevant for this application.
- c) **0524/20 Longhouse at Babeny Farm, Babeny** – the council resolved to SUPPORT this application.

Clerk updated the council on potential planning breach at Dartmoor Inn, Merrivale (in neighbouring parish of Plasterdown), where the owners had installed wooden structures on the green outside the pub. The majority of these had been removed by the time of the meeting, and discussions between planning and the owners was ongoing.

## 10. Financial Management

- a) Cheques authorised this month were:

Ref	Chq. No.	Date	Payee & Details	Amount
1376	1617	24/11/20	DALC - New Councillor Training - Phil Henson	£ 18.00
1377	1618	24/11/20	Nigel Tigwell - Expenses	£ 60.95
1378	1619	24/11/20	Duchy of Cornwall - Village Green/Play Area half year rent	£ 42.00
1379	1620	24/11/20	Steve Cox – Pay	£ 422.82
1380	1621	24/11/20	David Cole - Pay & Expenses	£ 528.00
1381	1622	24/11/20	DALC - New Councillor Training - Phil Henson & Stephen King	£ 72.00
1382	1623	24/11/20	PKF Littlejohn LLP - Audit Fees	£ 240.00
1383	1624	24/11/20	WDBC - Cemetery Rates	£ 199.98
1384	1625	24/11/20	Josh Cook – Litter Pick Fee	£ 40.00

- b) Monthly Report of Accounts was considered and accepted. Key consideration remains the Princetown toilets which have not yet been invoiced by WDBC.
- c) The external audit has been returned and our financial management arrangements and accounting passed cleanly. We did get an observation that we were late in making the accounts available for public viewing. The Clerk will need to provide a commentary on that for next year's audit documentation (his illness will be sufficient explanation).
- d) It was resolved that the Information Commissioners registration in future would be paid by direct debit as that reduces the current annual cost from £40 to £35.
- e) Clerk's Pay: The Clerk's contract of employment entitles him to a pay increment each year subject to satisfactory performance, a resolution by the full Council and a maximum spine point. The Clerk was eligible to apply for his final increment (to the maximum spine point) in May 2019 but went on long term sick absence from August 2019. He has now made an application for the increment to be effective from 1 December 2020, raising his pay from £12.24ph to £12.73ph (£205.80pa). This was decided in Part 2 of the meeting.
- 11. Draft Budget 2021-22** draft budget was accepted by the council. It is broadly similar to 2020/21 and proposes a 2.13% increase in the Precept (£1.03 per house per year). Separately, WDBC have written warning of a possible 2% reduction in the tax base owing to reduced collection rates linked to Covid-19. Formal approval of the final budget and precept will be required at January's meeting.
- 12. Committees, Sub-Groups & Special Interests:** None.

- 13. Reports from other meetings:** None.
- 14. Other Issues Requiring Decisions** None.
- 15. Urgent decision since last meeting** None.
- 16. Exchange of Information** Limited to the exchange of information & items for next meeting:
- a) Speeding on Two Bridges road continues to be a concern. Highways have attended and have agreed to lay a detector wire to measure speeds.
  - b) Sandbags are now available to households in the parish.
  - c) The Duchy of Cornwall have been asked for the long-term loan of another garage to replace one of our current garages which is not watertight due to storm damage.
  - d) Christmas Tree is going to be erected in Princetown this coming weekend.
  - e) Princetown Noticeboard – new cork board can be collected from school.
  - f) Council's financial regulations and standing orders are not consistent and will need to be reviewed in the New Year.
  - g) Proposed that new governor of HMP Dartmoor to be invited to a future parish council meeting.
  - h) DNPA Trees Officer has advised of a number of ash trees that require felling in Princetown conservation area. Clerk to provide Cllr. Worth a copy of the map denoting affected trees.
  - i) Two Bridges/Wistman's Woods – DCC have agreed to replace cones to deter parking on road. DNPA rangers will be placing them back on affected areas. Also, DNPA have confirmed that bus stop will be reinstated. Alison Kohler, Director of Conservation and Communities at DNPA will be attending December's meeting to discuss this issue.
  - j) Fence in playpark needs repairing. Cllr. Stones to advise David Cole to complete repairs.
  - k) Pothole on Tavistock Road has been reported.
  - l) Trees overhanging onto Tavistock Road, from HMP Dartmoor to Rundlestone, have been cut back.
  - m) Drains in car park behind Royal Court, which flooded in recent wet weather have been cleared.

**SECOND PUBLIC SESSION** Cllr Sanders reported that he was continuing to lobby Highways to assist with parking problems at Two Bridges. Also, concern that continued visitor pressure on the National Park is not sustainable, especially with population growth and new housing surrounding the park, and DNPA will have to consider how this can be managed long term.

- 17.** The next meeting of the Parish Council is **19.30 on TUESDAY 15<sup>th</sup> December 2020 via Zoom Remote Video Conferencing.**
- 18. Proposal to exclude members of the public and press** it was resolved that due to the confidential nature of the following agenda item that members of the public & press are excluded from the meeting:
- PART 2**
- 19. Princetown CCTV Project (Part 2)** Subject to final agreement on camera locations and installation costs, the council resolved to appoint Castle CCTV as the preferred contractor for the proposed CCTV project in Princetown.
- 20. Clerk's Pay** The council resolved to approve the Clerk's pay increase to level 25 of the nationally agreed pay spine. This is in effect from December 1<sup>st</sup> 2020.

**The Chair closed the meeting at 21.49**