

Dartmoor Forest Parish Council Parish



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Minutes for the Parish Council Meeting at 1930 on 28th July 2020 via Zoom meeting.

Present:

Hexworthy/Huccaby Ward:

Cllr. Alison Geen*

Postbridge Ward:

Princetown Ward:

Cllr. David Worth**

Cllr Mark Renders

Cllr. Nigel Tigwell

Cllr Gregg Manning

** Chair, **Vice-Chair*

Four members of the public attended.

1. **Apologies.** Cllrs Watson, Greatrex, Stones, the Clerk. In the Clerk's absence, Cllr Worth took the minutes.

2. **Declarations of Interest.** None

3. **Acceptance of Minutes.**

4. **Parking Problems at Two Bridges, other sites and associated trespass issues.** The Council was concerned that the promised 'No Parking' cones and signs have not yet appeared. Dartmoor National Park Authority have been reminded that they were going to place them at Two Bridges after sourcing them from Devon Highways. Illegal parking at Two Bridges remains a concern for the Council and residents. The Council discussed the actions that are due to taken by the DNPA and other bodies to improve the situation.

Action: After much discussion, it was agreed that the Council would continue to press for further measures such as the siting of boulders to prevent nuisance parking. It was agreed that in the event of further inaction on the part of the relevant authorities then the Council would mount a press campaign to bring the problem of dangerous parking to as wide as possible audience. The Council agreed to revisit this problem at the August meeting

4. **Wild camping issues at Bellever and other sites.** Cllr Watson reports that the area at Bellever Forest is becoming a 'no-go area' for non campers and residents. A DNPA ranger has been threatened with a hammer recently at the site. The exchange of letters between Cllr Geen and the DNPA has been forwarded to Councillors. A change in the DNPA by-laws is still being sought, although this is unlikely to happen in the short term. A response is being awaited from DEFRA re: change of by-laws.



Action: The Council will continue to press for changes to the by-laws to prevent the excessive camping at Bellever. Simon Lee of DNPA to be invited to a future DFPC meeting.

6. Reopening of Princetown Playpark. The Playpark has been reopened and signs have been put up on the entrances. A quote has been received for a replacement wire for the corroded zip wire. Councillors were surprised at the high price quoted, and it was suggested that a certain amount of negotiation should be entered into with regard to the price. There has been an increase in the amount of refuse being collected by the litter picker including disposable barbecues.

Action: Cllr Tigwell to investigate the possibility of obtaining a reduction from Sutcliffe, the original installers of the equipment, and to seek other quotes. Councillors have been asked to observe the activities in the Playpark and to discourage the use of disposable barbecues.

7. West Devon Borough Council consultation re removal of public payphone at Bellever. The Council was in agreement that the retention of a public payphone was vital due to the lack of mobile phone signal in the area.

Action. Cllr Geen to write to WDBC in support of the retention of the payphone.

8. Weed Warden Scheme. The DNPA have still not made any attempt to weed the area in front of the Information Centre. There have not been any requests from other areas of the village for weeding to take place.

Action. In the absence of Councillors capable of carrying this matter forward, it was agreed to park it until a later date.

9. New DFPC website. No major update on this project was available at this time. Cllr Worth and the Clerk are progressing the checking of the new website.

Actions. Cllr Worth to provide an update at the next meeting.

10. Postbridge signage issue. No update has been received from the Postbridge Councillors on this issue.

Action. The Council agreed to a watching brief on this matter.

11. Taking custody of Speedwatch funds. Cllr Tigwell explained the legal situation concerning the holding of these funds. Cllr Renders expressed his disagreement with the principle of DFPC holding funds for Speedwatch, noting that the Council had voted against it in the past. After a lengthy discussion a vote was taken on whether to accept the holding of these funds.

Action. The council voted by a majority to take on the responsibility of holding Speedwatch funds in it's account, and ensuring that it is hypothecated for Speedwatch spending only.

12. Delegation of Parish Lengthsman management. With the resignation of Cllr Druett there is no longer a Princetown Councillor designated as a single point of contact for

DFPC to instruct it's Lengthsman. General disappointment was expressed at the loss of Cllr Druett. Cllr Stones has offered to take over the function of overseeing the Lengthsman, but is currently shielding due to COVID-19 regulations. The excess hours worked by the Lengthsman was of concern to the Council and was discussed in detail.

Action. Cllr Worth agreed to take on the responsibility of management of the Lengthsman for the time being until other Councillors have been appointed. Cllr Geen is to initiate the procedure for the co-option of a replacement for Cllr Druett. Cllr Manning offered to help Cllr Worth with the preparation of the new website.

13. Planning. Planning Application 0300/20 8 Blackbrook Avenue, Princetown was discussed.

Action. The Council voted to support the Planning Application.

FIRST PUBLIC SESSION

A resident of Two Bridges thanked the Council for its efforts in getting the parking problems resolved.

14. Financial management. Payments to be approved; Bank reconciliation; FOO

Financial Briefing Notes to Councillors – July 2020

Cheques to be signed this month:

Ref ChqNo Date Payee & Details Amount

Ref	ChqNo	Date	Payee & Details	Amount
1344	1593	28/07/20	Nigel Tigwell Expenses - (postage, gloves, bin bags, stationery)	£44.95
1345	1595	28/07/20	Don Agnew Internal Auditor Fee	£50.00
1346	1594	28/07/20	Alison Geen Expenses (defibrillator pads)	£74.34
1347	1596	28/07/20	Steve Cox Pay (sick pay at half rates)	£208.43
1348	1597	28/07/20	David Cole Pay and Expenses	£660.44
1349	1598	28/07/20	Josh Cook Litter Picker Fee	£40.00
1350	1599	28/07/20	David Worth Expenses (grass collection subscription).	£280.00

The Bank Reconciliations for July is complete and correct.

Other Movements In-Month:

None.

Other Liabilities:

a. Play Area repairs and maintenance – increased by zip-wire deterioration..

- b. New website – no change from last month – from reserves.
- c. Princetown notice board – quote £212 plus £18ph for any additional work needed.
- d. Bellever notice board – labour cost estimate £26.

Parishscapes Grant Fund and Other Similar Funds:

The Council still has to agree on which minor projects to develop in order to be ready to apply for short notice grant opportunities. Ideas were circulated in February.

Cllr Worth suggested adding to the list of possible projects the adoption of the former Princetown Railway Station stable block as a building under the control of DFPC for whatever purpose it may deem fit.

Audit:

Don Agnew has signed off the internal audit. There was one error found where David Cole had been underpaid by £6.00 in January 2020 owing to a transposition error: this has been reimbursed in his pay cheque for this month. Mr. Agnew accepted our arguments for improved management arrangements for the lengthsman.

The Council formally agreed the statements made in the AGAR document in Committee and approved that the document be signed by the RFO and the Chair of the Council.

Speedwatch Funds:

It has been suggested DFPC takes custody of the Speedwatch funds. DALC's advice is that this is acceptable but the money will legally become DFPC's and it will be for DFPC to decide how it will be spent. The advantages to Speedwatch is that (a) there is clear probity in managing the money, and (b) they will save on VAT. If this does go ahead Cllr Tigwell will open a new reserve to keep the funds separate, and it is suggested a minuted resolution is taken that DFPC will consult Speedwatch before committing any of the funds.

Action. This resolution was taken and minuted at section 11.

Report of Accounts:

Pay. We have an underspend on the Clerk's pay and to a lesser extent on the Litter Picker's pay.

Grass Cutting. Grass cutting during June/July was at an unsustainable level but we can still come in within budget provided we take corrective action and carefully manage the Lengthman's time.

Play Area Repairs. Without a quotation, it is difficult to assess the impact of repairs to the Play Area. We have a forecast underspend against the budget for CCTV camera maintenance of £400 which can be reallocated, but we may need to draw on reserves.

The forecast for the end of the year is broadly on track.

15. Urgent decisions taken since last meeting. None

16. Exchange of information

A reply has been received from Ally Bright concerning the outside of Princetown Information Centre.

Information has been circulated concerning the encampment at Holne and the temporary road closure.

No invoice has been received from WDBC concerning payment for Princetown Public toilets.

Emma Byron has reported to the Council that the school has opened for morning sessions only with 100% attendance. Forest School teaching is to commence with an outdoor lesson on a Friday. The School would like to express their thanks to Cllr Wendy Stones for the use of her field for the Forest School sessions. The School is undertaking litter picking in the area of their own premises. There is also a drive to increase the number of children attending from the village and surrounding areas.

Cllr worth raised the matter of replacement lights for the Princetown village Xmas tree, it was agreed to discuss this matter further at the Council's August meeting.

16. Date of next meeting. Given the ongoing governmental regulations concerning public gatherings, it was agreed that the next Council meeting would be held via Zoom Meeting. It is hoped to resume face to face meetings in September.

The next meeting to be held on Tuesday 25th of August at 19.30 via Zoom Meeting (subject to no alternative system being selected)

Meeting Closed at 20:20