

# Minutes of the Virtual Woolfardisworthy Parish Council held on the 16th February 2021 at 7.30pm via Zoom

## **1.0 Attendance**

Parish Cllrs: M Hill (Chair), L Spittles, S Hill, R Heywood, S Raffe, S Harding (also District Cllr) and A Sealey

Members of the public.

## **2.0 Apologies**

District Cllr Anna Dart

## **3.0 Statement from the Chairman**

Woolsery Parish Council strives to be as inclusive as possible with its monthly meetings and communications via the WPC website, Facebook page and the submission of the minutes of our monthly meetings for publication in the Parish News magazine. We endeavour to keep our Parish community as informed as possible in what, for the past year, have been far from ideal circumstances.

However, Woolsery Parish Council has a problem. This problem is regarding the use of the public comment session which takes place immediately prior to the formal monthly meeting on the third Tuesday of each month. For several years the councillors have been persistently badgered by one individual parishioner regarding a number of recurring issues. Some of these issues go back several years, others are more current. Nearly all of these issues relate to planning matters of which Woolsery Parish Council's role is only advisory. Planning decisions are taken by TDC planning committee or planning officers.

Woolsery Parish Council have repeatedly passed these concerns onto the appropriate department at Torridge District Council, who have then given a response.

This situation has been ongoing for several years now and has resulted in many of this persons complaints being investigated by the ombudsman, who to date has not upheld any of them.

Regarding the Parish Council Meetings and public comment sessions, Parish Council meetings are open to the public by right. The public do not have an automatic right to comment at the meeting nor are the public entitled to interrupt the council meetings, unless authorised by the Chair.

In recent times some public comment sessions have become quite fraught and quite intimidating to some councillors. This, coupled with a deluge of emails with some containing threats of legal action, has led to several councillors resigning from the Council and others to consider their position.

This situation cannot be allowed to continue. Therefore we propose that from now Woolsery Parish

Council will not allow their public comment sessions to be used for vexatious matters that we consider to have been adequately dealt with previously. The same conditions will apply to emailed correspondence. If, during the course of a Council meeting, the situation should become disorderly then The Council may choose to implement section 2 a) b) & c) of the Councils standing orders. This could lead to that person being expelled from the meeting.

All parishioners are reminded that for any matter to be considered at a Parish Council meeting, it must be with the Parish Clerk at least four days before the meeting date (not including Sundays and Bank holidays)

Woolsey Parish Council do not wish to stifle free speech nor to prevent open debate, on the contrary we welcome it. Woolsey is a vibrant and welcoming community and as Councillors we want to be looking ahead to the future, not glaring back at the past.

Cllr Spittles proposed to adopt the above statement, seconded by Cllr Harding. Those present were all in agreement.

#### **4.0 Public Comment Session**

A parishioner requested the above statement to be included in the minutes, stating “that we do not understand the hole we are in.”

Sallie Salvidant, who has applied to become a Parish Councillor, introduced herself to the Council.

#### **5.0 Declaration of Personal / Prejudicial Interest for items of the agenda**

Cllr’s Spittles, S Hill and Harding declared an interest for the finance items.

#### **6.0 Minutes of the previous meeting to be approved and signed as a true and accurate record**

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record, to be signed by the Chair at the next face-to-face meeting. Proposed by Cllr Harding, seconded by Cllr Raffe.

#### **7.0 Clerk’s Report**

- **Planning Training - ACTION: The Clerk to confirm a date with TDC.**
- **Scaffolding / Lights around The Smithy** - Covered in the MXB report and minutes.
- **Highways Community Enhancement Fund - Re Grass Cutting for 2021/202** - Approved £625.
- **Back Street Sign** - The landowner has applied to Torridge District Council for a new sign.

## **8.0 Reports from County Cllr, District Cllrs and Parish Cllrs**

### **District Cllr Harding:**

- Torridge District Council will be reviewing the budgets and precept at their full meeting next week. Cllr Harding stated that he would not be voting to increase the Precept.
- Bideford was unsuccessful in winning the High Street Funding, however other options of investment are being explored.
- Concerns were raised with regards to the bollards at Appledore Slipway, therefore this is to be reviewed.

### **Parish Councillors**

#### **Cllr Spittles**

- The road has been closed down to Bucks Mills to allow extensive work with gabion baskets and fencing. The fencing that leads into the carpark needs repairing. **ACTION: To establish if this belongs to Highways or Torridge District Council.**
- A tree is down on Footpath 8, therefore details passed to Cllr Harding.

#### **Cllr S Hill**

- Carried out the defib check and noted that the lights were not on. **ACTIONS: Cllr S Hill will contact Brian Butler to ascertain whether the power to the defib has been cut off by the Hall. Cllr M Hill will inform the Community Heartbeat Trust.**

#### **Cllr Raffe**

- Spoke to individuals with regards to the football posts, but not had a response.

#### **Cllr M Hill**

- Reported potholes at Ashmansworthy. **ACTION: To report to Highways.**
- Requested the Parish Council contact details to be included in the Village News. It was noted that the minutes are sent to the village news, but the publication of these lies with the editor. **ACTION: The Clerk has previously sent the information to the Village News, but will resend.**
- The agenda and minutes have not been included in the shop and noticeboard due to Covid, not encouraging people to stand around reading. It was agreed to start this again, as well as looking at the size of the noticeboard. **ACTION: Noticeboard, April agenda.**

## 9.0 Planning Applications

### Applications

1/0061/2021/FUL - Proposed two storey extension to provide additional living space. Green Cottage, Woolsery. **No objections were raised.**

1/0092/2021/FUL - Erection of 3 holiday lodges with associated road access. Forest Lakes, Woolsery. **Woolsery Parish Council objects to the planning application for the following reasons:**

The proposed erection of three holiday lodges is an inappropriate development on a greenfield site, which would have been contrary to planning regulations. The development will see an increase in additional traffic to an unclassified road, which is already in a state of disrepair. Over the years, there have been a number of planning applications for holiday homes. The cumulative effect of this, sees the creation of hamlets, consisting of holiday homes, which adds costs to the Parish with negligible economic benefit in return.

1/0121/2021/FUL - Retention of wildlife pond (removal of condition 2 of planning permission 1/0584/2016/FUL) Commercial Use. Land at Cranford Frm, Cranford. **No objections were raised.**

### Decisions

1/0711/2020/FUL - Change of use of land and proposed siting of 1.no multi-purpose facility and 3.no glamping units. Old Pound House, Woolsery. **Application granted.**

1/1058/2022/FUL - Retrospective application for the construction of a ground source heat pump. Land at Moorhead Farm, Woolsery. **Application granted.**

1/0728/2020/FUL - Erection of 4 one-bedroom flats and associated works (Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 1/1093/2019/FUL). Land Adjacent To Woolsery Village Hall, Woolsery, Bideford. **Application granted.**

## 10.0 Progress of Highways Issues

### Review of priority roads in the Parish - to put forward for budget 2021/2022

Roads completed in this financial year include; Manor Park, Bucks Cross to Laburnum Cottage, Kennerland to Cranford, Leworthy Cross to Powlers Piece and Ashmanworthy (East Ash Hall) (outside Parish, but requested by Woolsery PC.)

Roads on Highways radar for financial year 2021/2022 include;

- School to Duerdon
- Duerdon Cross to Claw Cross
- Farmers Arms to Alminstone
- Leworthy Cross to Leworthy Mill
- Middle Huddisford to Huddisford Cross

- Road past Satchfield

With the MXB works ongoing it was suggested that it would be sensible to delay the works from the School to Duerdon for 12 months, until work is finished.

Following discussion above the Council agreed with the above.

**ACTION: The Clerk to confirm with Highways, checking that the A39 at Bucks Cross is also in the budget for next financial year.**

## **Woolsery**

a) **No parking cones during road closures below (Manor Park)** - Devon County Council Highways have no objection in the Parish Council placing cones at Manor Park during road closures, however it was stressed that these are not enforceable. Those placing cones would need to have a Chapter 8 Qualification. **ACTION: The Clerk to ask Highways whether the Parish Council could keep the cones, and to ascertain what is required for Chapter 8.**

### **Updates on the following:**

- a) **Road from Parkham to Cranford** - Highways have been in touch with the person involved in the accident and will be painting the white lines.
- b) **Drain at bottom of Copper Hill (re addressing issues at the time of road closure)** - Has been jetted and CCTV'd. There are pipework issues, which will need resolving and will be raised in the new financial year.
- c) **Mirror at Merry Harriers** - Cllr Heywood to do.
- d) **Leaworthy Cross - Drainage** - Jetting has been undertaken and the system is flowing. Sent a preliminary report, which states some of the ditches require lowering. However, as there is no safety defect being caused, there is no budget to do this, and it would be down to the landowner.
- e) **Pleademill Bridge** - Managed by structures who state that this is low risk. Higher risk issues will be dealt with as a priority.
- f) **Repairs outside Claw Farm** - The structure of the road is collapsing and will cost approximately £100k to repair. This is outside what local budgets can accommodate and therefore only safety defects can be addressed at present.
- g) **Finger Posts** - The metal supplied to Skanska is non-compliant. This has been raised with the supplier and those which are substandard will be replaced.

## **Road Closures**

**16th - 26th February 2021 - Road from Fernlea to Auction Way, Woolsery** - EXCAVATE TRENCH IN ROAD TO RE CONNECT EXISTING SEWER PIPE. TAKE OUT EXISTING KERBS AND REPLACE WITH NEW GRANITE KERBS. INSTALL NEW DISH CHANNEL KERBS.

**1st - 26th March 2021 - Road from Cranford Water Bridge to Farmers Arms.** TAKE OUT EXISTING KERBS AND REPLACE WITH NEW GRANITE KERBS. INSTALL NEW CROSSOVER. INSTALL NEW GRANITE DISH CHANNEL STONES. LAY GRANITE STONES IN FARMERS ARMS FOOTPATH.

## **11. Co-option of Councillor**

Cllr Spittles proposed to co-opt Sallie Salvidant as a Parish Councillor. Seconded by Cllr Sealey. All those present were in agreement. **ACTION: The Clerk to write to Sallie Salvidant.**

## **12. Update: Bucks Mills First Time Sewerage Application**

A site visit with the design engineer will take place on the 3rd March. Representatives from Parkham and Woolserly Parish Council will be present, including District Cllr Harding.

## **13. Wildflower and Village Gateway**

Cllr Harding to look at sites and liaise with the school and Robert Stoneman.

## **14. Covid-19 Updates**

No further updates in terms of additional funding. The Parish Council will remain meeting on Zoom, until notified.

## **15. Affordable Housing & Parish Plan 2021**

It was agreed to hold a closed meeting on the 2nd March 2021, where these items could be discussed in more detail. **ACTION: The Clerk to issue an agenda**

## **16. Update from MXB Sub-Committee**

The minutes from the meeting 11th February were circulated, and uploaded onto the website. Cllr Hill thanked Cllr Heywood for placing the cones out at Manor Park.

**ACTION: The image of the road closures to be placed on Facebook. Cllr Hill will convert the PDF to JPEG.**

## **17. FINANCES**

### **Payments to be authorised**

- a) Lisa Hutchings - January 2021 - £439.68
- b) HMRC 20% Tax - January 2021 - £109.92
- c) Cllr Spittles (Allowance) - £200.00
- d) Cllr S Hill (Allowance) - £200.00
- e) Cllr S Harding (Allowance) - £200.00

**Cllr Spittles proposed to authorise items a and b, seconded by Cllr Raffe. All in agreement.**

**Cllr S Hill proposed to authorise item c, seconded by Cllr Heywood. All in agreement, excluding Cllr Spittles who declared an interest.**

Cllr Sealey proposed to authorise item d, seconded by Cllr Spittles. All in agreement, excluding Cllr S Hill who declared an interest.

Cllr Raffe proposed to authorise item e, seconded by Cllr Sealey All in agreement, excluding Cllr Harding who declared an interest.

### **Income received & Bank Account Balance**

Current account - £2425.64 Reserve account - £17,503,15.

## **18. Correspondence**

Mr Willetts Correspondence - 19/01/2021, 04/02/2021

The Clerk stated that Mr Willetts letter dated 04/02/2021 stated “The protocol referred to was the manipulation of the official website to place the entry directly into the archive when the current year was still operative. The website now changed to delete this action.”

The Clerk requested the following to be minuted, stating “In respect of my professional reputation as Clerk, I can confirm that the official website has never and will never be manipulated by myself. The October minutes were placed on the Minutes 2020 page, and were not archived until January 2021. The archive file is on the website and remains fully accessible.”

The issues raised in the letter 04/02/2021 with regards to MXB have been responded to in the MXB minutes 11/02/2021.

## **19. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Virtual meeting to be held on the 16th March 2021 at 7.30pm via Zoom (unless otherwise advised by the Government)