

COMBE MARTIN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Combe Martin Parish Council held at the Town Hall on Monday, 13 December, 2010, at 7pm.

Present: Cllrs Julia Clark, (Chairman) Ray Druce, Yvette Gubb, Eric Hughes, Jill Sidebottom, Peter Spencer, Sue Sussex.

In Attendance: County Cllr Andrea Davis. PCSO Ade Drury, Richard Howe (North Devon Journal) 3 Parishioners, Michelle Beaumont (Parish Clerk).

The Parish Council meeting was opened with prayers.

154/10 **Matters raised by parishioners**

a Issues raised verbally without prior notice

John Lovering - Where is the Christmas Tree that is usually erected at the Parade?

Mr Lovering was advised that, in recent years, Mr Vic Gubb had donated Council's Christmas trees but his supply was now exhausted. Council had therefore agreed to only erect one Christmas tree, as an appropriate economy measure for the current economic climate. The tree had been erected in the middle of the village rather than favouring one end of the village over the other. Subsequent to the decision, the tree had been donated by Mr Keith Hanson.

155/10 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Trevor Kibble, Steve Seldon, Tracey Seldon and Arthur Yelton.

156/10 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

157/10 **County and District Councillors' Reports and Update on the Parade**

a County Councillor

Underage drinking - Recent test purchasing exercises, carried out by Devon County Council's Trading Standards Team and Devon and Cornwall Police, in Barnstaple, Ilfracombe and Fremington, have revealed that underage sales of alcohol have fallen in the area. Of the twenty premises visited during the operation, only one sold alcohol to the 14 year-old volunteer. Previous checks found 15% of retail shops and 40% of pubs to have sold alcohol to young people.

Health and Wellbeing - NHS Devon's has a new strategy to improve the overall health, wellbeing and quality of life for all people living in rural areas, with a focus on reducing inequalities in health and making health and social care provision fairer. Key areas include developing services that focus on marginalised and geographically isolated young people, improving access to health promotion opportunities; promoting opportunities for play and physical activity and addressing the transport needs of children in targeted rural areas.

Recycling - With a recycling rate of 52.62%, Devon is the 2nd best county in England. Last year, over 200,000 tonnes of material was recycled instead of being sent to landfill.

Children's services - The annual children's services assessment by Ofsted has rated DCC as 'Good'. Both primary and secondary schools are 'Good', day care for very young children and DCC's adoption service are rated as 'Outstanding', and the number of children and young people regularly taking part in sport is significantly above the national average.

Winter roads - Grit bins are being refilled. So far, DCC has used 7,000 tonnes of salt on the roads, costing more than £350,000. There are still 18,000 tonnes in stock, 400 tonnes of which will be used to top up salt bins. Another 5,000 tonnes are on order. To ensure maximum availability of salt and grit in the bins it is essential that:

- It is not used for private land, driveways etc (salt for this purpose can be purchased from builders merchants etc)
- Salt is not spread excessively. A small amount will be effective in most circumstances.

DCC treats around 2,000 miles of roads on its combined primary and secondary salting networks, providing reasonable access to treated roads for more than 90% of Devon residents. Salt bins are provided to enable communities to salt roads and pavements which the County Council cannot treat. Salt should be used sparingly as only small amounts of salt are required to be effective.

More than 30,000 tonnes of salt was used by Devon County Council in 2009/10 – nearly six times the amount used three winters earlier.

DCC's Highways Unit was shown appreciation for Highways' work with the gritting by the Chairman on behalf of all councillors.

c District Councillors' report

North Devon Council has agreed to release £20,000 of Combe Martin's Section 106 monies to be used towards the cost of the works at the Parade.

158/10 **Police and Vandalism Reports**

a Police

During the last four weeks there had been 3 reported crimes, compared with 13 in the same period last year. These were:

One vehicle stolen from garage forecourt
One theft from a communal hallway
One assault on a juvenile

b Vandalism

A handle has been removed from play equipment at Hollands Park and one of the panels in the new fencing has been cracked. There were no witnesses to the damage to the fencing.

159/10 **Adoption of Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 November, 2010, be confirmed and signed as a true record.

160/10 **Planning**

Cllr Sue Sussex declared a personal interest and the Clerk declared an interest in the following item.

a *Applications*

51308 – CHANGE OF USE OF PART OF GROUND FLOOR FROM RESIDENTIAL TO ALLOW HOT STONE MASSAGE TREATMENT AND TRAINING ROOMS AT 1 DOWNS PLACE KING STREET

Applicant: Mr C Franks

RESOLVED to recommend that the application be APPROVED. The development is considered to have little impact upon neighbouring properties, while being of positive benefit to the Combe Martin economy.

51247 – RETROSPECTIVE APPLICATION FOR ERECTION OF ONE REPLACEMENT AGRICULTURAL BUILDING FOR ANIMALS, FEED AND GENERAL STORAGE AT HILLSVIEW, RIDGE HILL

Applicant: Mr G F Muggleston

It is noted that the application says that the appearance and size is similar to existing, with a 10% reduction in size. The supporting statement states 'to match original'. Members have no recall of any formal application for any previous building for which the application purports to replace. No prior notice of agricultural development has been made, perhaps as it would be difficult to justify the need for such a large building on this size of holding.

RESOLVED to recommend that the application be REFUSED, because:

a The proposal is too large for the size of the holding. Construction details are inappropriate for an agricultural building and are more appropriate to a residential property.

b The proposal cannot be considered a replacement building since no previous approval has been made.

c The site is in a prominent and elevated position, within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Coastal Preservation Area and the Heritage Coast but outside the Combe Martin Development Boundary.

Should the planning authority be minded to approve the application, this Council recommends that a condition be applied forbidding residential use, which should be the subject of a further application.

51239 – RETROSPECTIVE APPLICATION FOR ERECTION OF ONE BOTTLING & PACKAGING SHED AT NUTCOMBE FARM

Applicant: Mr F Willis

RESOLVED to recommend that the application be APPROVED. The development is considered to have little impact upon neighbouring properties, while being of positive benefit to the Combe Martin economy.

b NDC's Planning Approvals

45755 - Extension and conversion of dwelling and hostel to form 6 flats at Wesley Manse, Castle Street

49547 - Removal of residential mobile home and erection of one dwelling and garage at The Caravan, Top George Inn, Victoria Street

50226 - Erection of car port with decking over (amended plans) at Wynnstead, King Street

50828 - Change of use of part of shop to café at Harlequin House, Borough Road

c Planning correspondence

i The Planning Inspectorate's Decision re Rock House Farm, Castle Street was REFERRED to the Highways Property and Planning Committee.

ii NDC - Planning application 50784 –removal of earth bank and fence and erection of wall at Woodland Glen. Confirmation that planning permission was required because the wall abuts the un-adopted road, so a height restriction of 1m applies.

161/10 **Matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting and Update on the Parade**

Min 142/10c - Update on the Parade

The Chairman and District Cllr Yvette Gubb had attended the NDC meeting at which the S106 monies had been released. NDC had now sent the funding agreement. RESOLVED that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman should sign the agreement.

162/10 **Committee Reports**

Cllrs Yvette Gubb and Ray Druce declared prejudicial interests in the following item and left the room.

a Village Hall Working Party 17 November, 2010

The report of the Village Hall Working Party meeting held on 17 November, 2010, were ADOPTED.

b Parks and Open Spaces Committee, 22 November, 2010

Minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 22 November, 2010, were ADOPTED. It was noted that a third quotation to fell the tree should be

received this week. RESOLVED that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman be given Power to Act to select one quotation and instruct the contractor to carry out the work as soon as possible.

c Highways, Property and Planning Committee, 29 November, 2010

Minutes of the Highways, Property and Planning Committee meeting held on 29 November, 2010, were ADOPTED. NDC had held its Consultation event on the proposed Conservation areas, and had advised that there had been no objections at the event. Mr Batch was thanked for permitting this Council to use his electricity supply and a cheque for £30 towards the cost is authorised. Cllr Druce is arranging the use of a cherry picker at favourable terms to replace the missing bulbs on the fairylights at Seaside.

163/10 **Reports by Representatives to Outside Bodies.**

Devon Association of Local Council's County Committee

Cllr Spencer had attended the DALC's County Committee meeting. DALC is reducing the number of members on the County Committee from next year, to make it more workable, and Cllr Spencer stressed the value to this Council of having a representative on the County Committee.

164/10 **Chairman's Report**

Inspector Sarney had advised the Chairman that Devon and Cornwall Police have decided to close the Combe Martin Police Office as part of its cost cutting measures. All the offices open to the public in North Devon, with the exception of Barnstaple but including Ilfracombe Front Office, will be shut at the beginning of the next financial year. 90% of contacts by members of the public are made by telephone. The closures will enable the police to make savings of £5m over the next four years, hopefully allowing the retention of 36 officers.

165/10 **Correspondence**

a The following items were noted:

DCC - notification of road closure opposite Lower Hodges from Ridge Hill junction of Rectory Road for Carrillion Telent working on behalf of Openreach between 14 and 17 March 2011.

Christine Nelson, Shammick Farmers' Market – Thank you email for use of the Coach Park on market mornings and donation.

Combe Martin Museum - Thank you letter for the donation from CMPC of £220 towards the running costs of the Museum.

Combe Martin Tourism Association – Minutes of meeting on 18 November, 2010.

NALC – Advice on legalities of clearing snow and ice on highways.

Open Spaces Society – Request for feedback regarding Government's proposals to introduce a new landscape designation, and request for donations.

Devon Wind Power – Fullabrook Wind Farm November Newsletter

Safer North Devon – Autumn Newsletter

DALC – Nov/Dec 2010 Newsletter

Youth New Local – November Newsletter
Devon Community Recycling & Community Composting Network – Junkmail
DCC - 'In touch' newsletter
- Emergency Planning newsletter

b Complaint about dog fouling on pavements

RESOLVED to reply to the writer, sharing her concerns, explaining different organisations' responsibilities and what Council has done so far to address this persistent and unacceptable problem. Cllr Sue Sussex is to write something to be put in the Shammickite.

c Combe Martin Primary School – Invitation for councillors to meet the newly formed School Council

RESOLVED to write to the School Council, congratulating the Council on its creation and advising that Cllrs Julia Clark and Yvette Gubb will attend one of the meetings.

d NALC – Tree Preservation Orders

RESOLVED that Cllrs Julia Clark and Peter Spencer be given Power to Act to respond by the due date, to the consultation on proposed simplification of the Tree Preservation Orders system.

e Cllr Brailey, Leader, NDC – response to this Council's letter regarding parish grants

RESOLVED to leave this matter on the table until details of the Localism Bill are available and North Devon Council's budgetary provision becomes clearer, and then write to both NDC and central Government.

f The following items were referred to the Highways, Property and Planning Committee:

Defra - Consultation on Governance arrangements for National Park Authorities.
Local Government Boundary Commissions – (On the Right Lines) policy and procedures for principal area boundary reviews and (Striking the Right Balance) policy and procedures for electoral reviews.

166/10 **Finance**

a Financial Report

The financial report was noted.

b Payments

The invoices for payment set out on the Financial Reports were approved following recommendation by the Chairman and Cllr Miss Sidebottom.

c Finance Committee Reports, 3 December, 2010

Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 3 December, 2010, were ADOPTED.

d Precept

RESOLVED to set a precept of £53,300 for the 2010-2011 financial year, an increase of 2.995%.

167/10 **Staff Christmas Bonus**

RESOLVED to pay a Christmas bonus of £30 net of deductions to each member of staff employed by this Council throughout 2010, excluding the Clerk.

168/10 **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS AND RESTRICTION OF DOCUMENTS**

RESOLVED:

a That under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and the press be excluded from the meeting for the following items as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, ie information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings and information relating to a particular employee, former employee or applicant to become an employee of, or a particular office holder, former office holder or applicant to become an office holder under the authority.

b That all reports and documents relating to the items be confirmed as 'Not for publication'.

169/10 **Consideration of this Council's policy on vexatious complainants**

RESOLVED that the Clerk should respond to enquirers who continually do not accept Council's replies, in as brief a manner as possible, so as to bring the matter to a conclusion in order not to waste council tax payer's money.

The Chairman and the Clerk are to take further advice before drawing up a policy for consideration by this Council.

170/10 **Repairs at Seacott**

RESOLVED to instruct Mr Young to carry out all the works to the building, as set out in his report, including the fitting of a new shower to ensure that it complies with current regulations. Any supplementary and/or external electrical works would need to be provided by the occupiers, but would require this Council's permission, and must be carried out by a qualified electrician.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.

..... Chairman