

Minutes of Woolsery Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday, 17 December 2024 in Woolsery Sports and Community Hall at 7.30pm.

Chaired by: Councillor M Hill		Clerked by: Mrs Sue Squire
Present: Councillors R Heywood M Hill S Hill S Salvidant L Spittles District Councillor S Harding from Minute No. 24/25.93.4 until Minute No. 24/25.99.3 1 Member of the Public		Agenda: - Public Comment Session Apologies Declarations of Interest Approval of the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 26 November 2024 To consider items raised at the last meeting Reports Planning Finance To consider a response to items raised under the Public Session Correspondence Date and time of next meeting
		Action:
24/25.93	Public Comment Session.	
24/25.93.1	State of roads. There were potholes everywhere and the roads are receding. Pothole repairs around the area at Dipple had several cancellations in the Summer and could not be accessed. The resident was advised that Woolsery Parish Council has supported County Councillor Wilton-Love to get the roads back into good shape.	
24/25.93.2	South West Water working at Woolsery sewage works. A lot of traffic in connection with this work has affected the neighbour, resulting in the corner of the lane being eroded. The issue was dealt with but the following day the stones were removed. Pumping lorries are going to the site 2 or 3 times a week.	
24/25.93.3	Representations that the clothes bank is overflowing. The Clerk had contacted Elm Tree Textiles asking for it to be emptied and reminded them that the arrangement is for a fortnightly empty. The reply received confirmed that it had been emptied on 4 December, yet on 6 December it was reported as being full. Representations from a different member of the public had also been received on the same subject to which the Clerk had responded.	
24/25.93.4	Email from a resident with a formal complaint about TDC, Hartland, Clovelly and Woolsery Parish Councils. <i>Noted.</i>	
24/25.94	Apologies. Councillor D Hancock, County Councillor J Wilton-Love, District Councillor Dart.	
24/25.95	Declaration of Personal / Prejudicial Interest for items on the Agenda. None.	
24/25.96	Minutes.	
24/25.96.1	Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 26 November 2024 to be approved and signed as a true and accurate record. Approved and signed as a correct record.	

	Proposed by Councillor S Hill. Seconded by Councillor Salvidant and unanimously agreed.	
24/25. 97	To consider items raised at the last meeting:	
24/25. 97.1	2025 Black bag distribution / 2025 Annual Parish meeting format. Councillors felt the two events should be amalgamated and held on Saturday, 5 April 2025. The Clerk to book the main hall and kitchen from 9am. The Annual Parish Meeting would be held at 10am and the black bag distribution would commence at 10.30am.	Clerk to book Hall. SH to get prices for January meeting
24/25. 97.2	North Devon Coast National Landscape (NDCNL), formerly the AONB. Presentation at the January 2025 meeting at Bucks Cross Village Hall. The Clerk to check with the Hall booking secretary regarding presentation facilities (projector and screen)	Clerk LS to advertise
24/25. 97.3	Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. Open Consultation enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings. In addition to the wording agreed at the November meeting, the following to be included: It would be expected that all members attend the APCM in May and in October. Proposed by Councillor M Hill, seconded by Councillor Heywood and unanimously agreed.	Clerk
24/25. 98	Clerk's Report.	
24/25. 98.1	Bus Shelter at East Park. The Clerk advised that no response had been received from Westward Housing Association as to whether they have any objections to the shelter being constructed on this site.	RH to double check
24/25. 98.2	Airband. The Clerk had asked what NF019 means. A reply has been received and circulated to Councillors, informing that NF019 is the area the customer is situated. If the Wayleave is approved, the customer can be connected and it would open up the opportunity for more people to benefit from fibre connection. Proposed by Councillor M Hill that the Wayleave should be signed. Seconded by Councillor Spittles and unanimously agreed.	Clerk to return the Wayleave to Airband
24/25. 98.3	Further enquiries had been made regarding the current position regarding the SWW First Time Sewerage Application for Bucks Mills. On the day of the meeting, the Clerk received a reply advising that it had been necessary for the Company to undertake some further investigation work before they could submit the paper to the Executive Team. This work has been completed and the paper will be going forward to the next committee meeting in January and the outcome will be confirmed at the end of January.	
24/25. 98.4	Information Board at Bucks Mills car park. The Clerk is currently making enquiries about a grant.	
24/25. 98.5	South West Water – Upgrading of the sewerage system in Woolsery. A reply had been received as follows: <i>The scheme is designed to reduce our reliance on storm overflows as part of a significant investment in the region to improve the quality of our rivers and seas.</i> <i>The work is to construct a storm tank which will hold excess water during periods of wet weather, and then release it for treatment at a controlled rate to avoid</i>	

	<p><i>overwhelming the treatment works and spilling. It will not increase the treatment flow of the works, and is limited to the treatment works – we are not making any changes to the storm drain infrastructure at this time.</i></p> <p><i>The driver for this scheme is to reduce spills to the environment, not to increase capacity for treatment, so it would not have any influence on, or increase the possibility of, any future development.</i></p> <p><i>Unfortunately South West water are not a statutory consultee on Planning issues and therefore cannot comment on developments, we simply have to deal with them as they occur and we do not generally upgrade works with a view to allowing potential development in an area.</i></p>	
24/25.98.6	Submitted planning responses to TDC.	
24/25.98.7	Made payments.	
24/25.98.8	<p>Requested a presentation in connection with an Emergency Plan from Devon Communities Together who thought that a joint presentation at Woolsery inviting neighbouring Parishes would be beneficial.</p> <p>On officer from Devon Communities Together advised that there is a Resilience Forum event in Langtree on the 11 March and it was felt this would compliment a presentation on 3 March at Woolsery Sports and Community Hall. On checking availability the Hall was booked until 8pm on Monday evenings and the Clerk to enquire the length of the presentation and if this was longer than an hour, Clovelly Parish Hall to be considered.</p>	
24/25.98.9	<p>Devon Wildlife Trust - Free Tree. The first choice of a Bird Cherry was not available but the second choice of a Hornbeam had been reserved for the Parish Council.</p> <p>The collection times and venue had been advised, and Councillor Spittles would collect the tree, to be planted on the Green at Old Market Drive.</p>	<p>LS</p> <p>MH to inform the Primary School so they were aware of the offer</p>
24/25.98.10	<p>Admissions, Transport and Relevant Areas Consultation – Education and Families – Atlantic Academy and Bideford College Catchment Area.</p> <p>The consultation is open until 10/1/25 and can be found on the following link: https://www.devon.gov.uk/schcomms/sc/122024-8603/</p>	<p>MH to advise the Primary School to ensure parents were aware</p>
24/25.98.11	<p>AGR Applications. TDC was asked why the Parish Council is not consulted on this type of application, and the reply, circulated to Councillors was: ‘AGR applications are Prior Approval and so the officer is checking to see if it meets the requirements in Part 6 of the GPDO. The applications must be determined within 28 days and consultation isn’t set out and required like how it is for other prior approval applications. Therefore, it’s just that it’s not required to consult the Parish Council for these applications’.</p>	
24/25.98.12	<p>Letter to the Government to support small farms or any family business / Inheritance Tax implications.</p> <p>The letter is in the process of being drafted.</p>	
24/25.98.13	This had been covered under 24/25.98.10.	
24/25.98.14	<p>Overgrown trees at Old Market Drive and Church Green.</p> <p>The Tender had been circulated to Councillors.</p>	

	<p>The work involved thinning and crown reduction to Horse Chestnut by bus shelter and selectively pruning to improve form. Removal of basal growth and clearance of communication cables and bus shelter roof.</p> <p>Sweet Chestnut opposite school gate. Crown lift to above 6'. Removal of failed/dead limbs. Removal of waste from both sites. £380.00</p> <p>Proposed by Councillor S Hill to agree the cost and award the work to Mr B Trevor.</p> <p>Seconded by Councillor Spittles and unanimously agreed.</p>	<p>Clerk to advise Mr Trevor</p>
<p>24/25.99</p>	<p>Reports from County, District Councillors and Parish Councillors.</p>	
<p>24/25.99.1</p>	<p>County Councillor J Wilton-Love. Written Report received as follows: First I am going to have to send apologies for tonight's meetings. Yesterday's White Paper and Jim McMahon's announcements/letters have completely thrown everything up in the air and there are emergency meetings happening en masse. There is a large group meeting at County Hall on Thursday when we will know a lot more but potentially this is very serious and we are trying to take control of the future of Devon. I will send an update as soon as I know more but yesterday's events have me extremely worried for the future of Devon and, in fact, the country.</p> <p>Second, Councillor McInnes is ill with a cold and it is affecting his ability to speak. Due to this, his briefing this evening will be postponed until the new year.</p> <p>We will communicate a date as soon as it is confirmed. I have more than a little concern what is about to unfold and promise you we are going to do everything possible to ensure the best outcomes for Devon despite what seems to be intended by the government.</p>	
<p>24/25.99.2</p>	<p>District Councillors. Written Report from District Councillor Dart as follows: I attended an ANOB, (or North Devon Coast & National Landscapes) as it is called now, meeting in Hartland with local farmers, which was a consultation on the next 5 year management plan. It was well attended and a useful evening, finding out about logic behind the new name and what is important to farmers and indeed the ANOB team. The team will use the feedback and incorporate it into their next plan.</p> <p>I also attended a local plan working group about the economy and feeding thoughts and objectives into our next 20 year local plan. Things that were important to all of us, were... an effective education system here in North Devon that enables our young people to be able to learn appropriate skill sets, and further education system and when they leave such education they are workplace ready....it was largely thought that many leave education and are not employable or ready for the workplace environment.</p> <p>It was revealed that Petroc have appointed a 9 month interim manager to, hopefully, turn it around. He will be invited to our next meeting, along with a few key people in business locally to glean their perspective and views. We also suggested teaming up with Exeter college to work with them in Northern Devon, even if remotely for some students, given the accessibility of Exeter from many areas around here and lack of transport links.</p> <p>Then we had a full council meeting, which comprised of a mid year treasury management review, Torridge have had returns on investments of 1 million to date.</p> <p>We agreed the council tax reduction scheme to bring it in line with new minimum wage figures. Also we agreed the council tax base for 2025.</p> <p>It was proposed by our overview and scrutiny committee to introduce a reserve policy, however Torridge already keeps reserves of 10 to 15 % of its net budget, so this was not voted through.</p> <p>We agreed to add £1,080,000 to the capital program for the Appledore marine maritime slipway improvements.</p> <p>And we had some scant information on the X links Morocco project. They have agreed to pay £250,000, for our officers time, however the decision is to be made by central government via a development consent order, and is out of Torridge's hands. We must just respond when consulted and a working group of councillors has been set up to do this and ensure the area gains maximum benefits from the project, whilst minimising negative impacts. We also delegated authority to the head of communities and place, Sean Kearney, to respond on the council's behalf as there is likely to be only 14 day turn around for consultation. We all requested to be kept better informed on this project and process.</p>	

	<p>Also, good news regarding the renewed 5 yr housing land supply assessment:</p> <p>‘The updated assessment concludes that the supply of housing from deliverable sites in North Devon and Torridge exceeds the minimum requirement over the next five years (2024 – 2029). The published statement demonstrates a five-year housing land supply equivalent to 5.18 years, which represents 104% of the five-year requirement.’</p> <p>In licencing we agreed to go out to consultation on the new pavement policy...see on TDC website if you wish to respond.</p> <p>That’s it for now, you are up to date. Seasons greetings to you all!</p> <p>District Councillor S Harding advised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - He had spoken to TDC Estates Manager regarding the Bucks Mills huts who is working out who owns what. TDC does not make a charge for the huts to be sited on TDC land and there is no intention to do so. Granddad rights were spoken about and as long as the huts were maintained, TDC were happy with the situation. No more huts can be built. The Council will not be liable due to the danger of the cliffs behind. - A Hardship Grant is available for residents experiencing financial difficulties. - Appledore Dock. Three large container ships had docked on behalf of Mole Valley Farmers delivering animal feed. This had saved about 6,000 land miles. It is a shared dock frontage with the former Harland and Wolfe company. More deliveries are expected and the Torridge Harbour Board are seeing an increase in revenue as a result. - District Councils are in jeopardy due to the government announcement regarding Unitary Councils. - TDC will be awarded money from the Levelling Up Fund 	
<p>24/25. 99.3</p>	<p>Parish Councillors</p>	
	<p>M Hill. (1) Housing Needs Survey Printing Cost. Deferred to the January meeting.</p>	<p>January Agenda</p>
	<p>D Hancock. Home Guard Huts. Not present but had advised that it had not been possible to speak with the landowner and furthermore, there was only one wall and the concrete base left. In the circumstances, this item would not be pursued.</p> <p>When sending his apologies, Councillor Hancock advised that buses had again been using Manor Park as a short cut again, and supplied pictures. Councillor S Hill advised there was no option for buses to go this way when there was road works. The alternative would be no bus service. An option would be to make the verge smaller and reduce the corner to prevent the buses from mounting the kerb, which the driver has to do due to the number of cars parked in the road through Manor Park.</p> <p>It was also advised that in the recent storm, a tree had blown down and the branches had been moved sufficiently enough to drive through.</p>	
	<p>R Heywood (1) To discuss Councillors’ allowances providing a range of suggested options. This was further discussed at the budget setting part of the meeting.</p> <p>Thanks were expressed to Darren Powell and Amanda Harding for their help with the village Christmas Tree.</p> <p>It was suggested that the County and District Councillors Report was an item earlier in the Agenda.</p>	
	<p>S Hill (1) Dog Bins. When sending his apologies, Councillor Hancock advised that he had seen a TDC officer and showed him where the bin at East Park was to be located, in line with that identified by him and Councillor S Hill. The TDC officer did not have any objections and would advise his Manager. When permission had been received, the bin would be moved.</p>	

	(2) Grit Bin at Cranford Water. The details are to be sent to the Clerk for further attention.	
	S Salvidant. No items raised.	
	<p>L Spittles (1) An email of support has been sent on behalf of the Parish Council to County Councillor Wilton-Love regarding the Highways maintenance service and the tender process. The Parish Council has confirmed that it does not agree with the recommendation not to re-tender the service.</p> <p>(2). Huts at Bucks Mills. Further correspondence had been received and was advised. Also District Councillor Dart advised: "The enforcement case E/24/0273/UND has been closed with no further enforcement action being considered. As the land belongs to this Council, the Council are unable to take enforcement action against themselves. The Parish Council were informed of this decision on the 30th October via email.</p> <p>This will now be a matter for the legal or the property and estates teams to progress with and not the planning enforcement team. Both teams have duly been informed of the above."</p> <p>(3) Emergency Plan. At the Annual Parish Council Meeting held in May 2025, to assign a person to hold the Emergency Plan details.</p>	
24/25. 100	Planning.	
24/25. 100.1	<p>The following applications were considered:</p> <p>1/0980/2024/FUL – Erection of 1 no. supervisory dwelling – land at Forest Lakes, Marshall Farm, Woolsery. The deadline date for the Parish Council's response is 3/1/25.</p> <p>The main basic items were covered for the Clerk to compile a response and circulate to Councillors for agreement, as follows: We see no evidence that there is anything on the site to be supervised, except for a machinery shed that has not yet been built.</p> <p>All the Lodges are privately owned and not rented by Atrium Leisure.</p> <p>Clarification is sought on the need for a supervisory dwelling in the open countryside, as this site has not been farmed as indicated since 1986 and as such, has become naturalised.</p> <p>Proposed by Councillor Spittles, seconded by Councillor S Hill and unanimously agreed.</p> <p>1/1057/2024/FUL – Erection of extension – Brambles, Bucks Cross. The deadline date for the Parish Council's response is 4/1/25. Proposed by Councillor Spittles to respond 'no comment'. Seconded by Councillor M Hill and unanimously agreed.</p>	Clerk
24/25. 100.2	Planning Correspondence: Decision Notices; Withdrawn Application.	
24/25. 100.2.1	<p>TDC Decision Notices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Approval for 1/0733/2024/FUL – Change of use from an existing caravan business site to an operational depot (Class B8 – storage and distribution) (amended description) – Hill Top Caravans, Bucks Cross. ▪ Approval for 1/0836/2024/FUL – Installation of PVCu conservatory to the front of the property – Knivers Meadow, Woolsery. 	

24/25. 100.2.2	<p>Application 1/0794/2024/FUL – Demolish existing Nissan Hut and erection of 1 no. log cabin dwelling (self build) – Building at Dipple Farm, Woolsery. The application has been <u>withdrawn</u>.</p>	
24/25. 101	<p>Finances.</p>	
24/25. 101.1	<p>The following payments were approved and authorised: Proposed by Councillor S Hill. Seconded by Councillor Salvidant and unanimously agreed.</p> <p>a. Sue Squire: December 2024 salary £510.93 Expenses (broadband/photocopying/mileage) £. 15.75 £526.68</p> <p>b. HMRC PAYE £127.60</p> <p>c. Stacey’s Christmas Tree Farm. Supply of 1 x 15’ Christmas Tree £105.00</p> <p>d. Mr R Stoneman. Grass cutting July – November 2024 £1,300.00</p> <p>e. To award the Tender for maintenance of bus shelters at Woolsery and Bucks Cross. Councillors had been forwarded details of the quotation: Woolsery shelter: All weeds removed surrounding shelter along with concrete floor washed down. Roof inside washed and repainted. All windows deep cleaned. Architrave repaired and replaced where requires to either gable end, painted to finish. Bucks Cross poly shelter: TFR applied All over to lift algae staining to perspex and frames, then brushed and rinsed. All gutters cleared. All weeds removed surrounding shelter, brambles to rear cut back. Concrete base washed down. Bucks Cross block shelter: All ivy removed to sides and rear of shelter. Gutter repair to front of shelter with new clips installed and reattached to wall. All walls externally and internally primed and sanded down ready for painting. Exterior and Interior walls painted. All weeds removed surround shelter. Concrete floor washed down. Total cost for all over the above - £2,225.00 This includes all materials including paint, Architrave, TFR chemical and fuel for jet wash. All weeds and ivy removed and disposed of by HTCD. Proposed by Councillor S Hill to accept the quotation and award the work to HTCD External Cleaning. Seconded by Councillor Salvidant and unanimously agreed.</p>	<p>Clerk to make payments</p> <p>Clerk to advise</p>

	<p>Diary note to check in 6 months time.</p> <p>f. To set the 2025/26 Precept and Budget. Budget. Proposed by Councillor Spittles, seconded by Councillor M Hill and unanimously agreed. Councillors' allowances were discussed and within the agreement of the Budget, this figure was set at £2,000.00.</p> <p>Precept. Proposed by Councillor S Hill to increase the Precept from £15,002.00 to £18,000.00, seconded by Councillor Heywood and unanimously agreed.</p> <p>Part of this process involved a review of the Clerk's salary under Part II Confidential, when the Clerk including members of the public left the room for this confidential personnel item to be considered.</p> <p>g. <u>Income and Bank Account Balances:</u></p> <p>NatWest Current Account as at 17/12/24: £272.89 NatWest Business Reserve Account as at 17/12/24: £24,736.99</p> <p>Interest earned during November 2024: £27.25.</p>	<p>Diary note to be made</p> <p>Clerk to advise TDC</p> <p>Chair to write letter to Clerk to advise the revised amount</p>
24/25. 102	<p>To consider a response to items raised under the Public Session. Clothes bank. The Clerk to request for two bins or one larger one.</p>	Clerk
24/25. 103	<p>Correspondence received. Emails from various agencies have been forwarded to Councillors.</p>	
24/25. 103.1	<p>TDC. Storm Burt. The Emergency Planning and Corporate Risk Officer had requested that the Parish Council's current Emergency Plans proved sufficient in managing the challenges present by Storms Burt and Darragh. A copy of the plan is requested and if the plan requires revision, Devon Communities Together can assist.</p> <p>In this connection, some dates in March had been given by an officer who plans to give an Emergency Plan presentation at Woolserly which will be extended to adjoining Parishes to attend. This item had also been discussed under Minute No. 24/25.98.8.</p>	
24/25. 103.2	<p>National Grid. Numerous emails had been received and circulated to Councillors in relation to Storm Darragh giving details on how reconnection of power to the area was progressing.</p>	
24/25. 103.3	<p>Vacancy on the Parish Council as a result of former Councillor Beech's resignation.</p> <p>TDC Elections Department had confirmed that no request for a by-election was received. The Parish Council can now co-opt a person to fill the seat.</p> <p>The vacancy created by the resignation of former Councillor Harding had a deadline of 20/12/24 for the electorate to request an election.</p>	<p>Clerk to draft a Job Description and include in the Parish News</p>
24/25. 103.4	<p>Devon County Council Public Rights of Way Parish Paths Partnership (P3) Annual Survey.</p> <p>Paperwork had been received in the above connection and circulated to Councillors.</p>	

	<p>Councillor Hancock had advised that he would try to walk the paths. He had asked several local people to advise any issues as they walk them.</p> <p>There is a fallen tree on pathway number 9 at the Moorhead end which is right across the path. The path is accessible but it needs attention.</p> <p>Also on path number 2 at the gate by the stream, he had received representations saying it is not fit for purpose as it is too high when opened from \ one side.</p>	
<p>24/25. 104</p>	<p>Date and time of next meeting: Tuesday, 21 January 2025 at Bucks Cross Village Hall at 7.30pm.</p> <p>The first item will be a presentation by North Devon Coastal National Landscape (formerly the Area for Outstanding Natural Beauty) on its plans for the area, to which everyone is invited.</p> <p>There will be a question and answer session and enquiries to be made if it can start at 7pm.</p> <p>The meeting ended at 9.55pm.</p>	
<p>Summary of Decisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 26 November 2024 ➤ Response to consultation on remote meetings and proxy voting ➤ Award of Tender for work on two overgrown trees ➤ Planning ➤ Payments ➤ Award of Tender for maintenance work on three bus shelters in the Parish ➤ Councillors annual allowance set at £2,000 ➤ 2025/26 Budget ➤ 2025/26 Precept to increase from £15,002.00 to £18,000.00 		
<p>These Minutes are agreed by those present as being a true record.</p>		
<p>Signed: Chair of Woolserly Parish Council.</p>	<p>Date:</p>	