



**ROCKBEARE
PARISH COUNCIL**

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MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF ROCKBEARE PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON

WEDNESDAY 27TH JULY 2022

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Wollen J., Wollen S., Forest, and Franklin

Also: Cllr. Lawrence (EDDC), Cllrs Randall Johnson and Gent (DCC) and three members of the public.

Clerk: Carolyn May

Apologies: Cllrs. Brodie, Ratcliffe

AGENDA

695.0 Declarations of Interest: None

696.0 Questions from the Public

Mr Julian Turnbull requested to discuss a confidential report, commissioned by the Parish Council. The request was denied due to the intention of the Members to discuss the matter in the Part II section of the meeting.

Questions were raised in relation to the Parishioner's procurement of a confidential document, which had not been forwarded to Members by the Consultant, in accordance with explicit instructions issued by the Parish Council.

The Parishioner stated that he had 'been sent a copy' by the Consultant. The Clerk highlighted the fact that the provision of a confidential document to an unauthorised person constituted both a breach of contract and a breach of confidentiality, on the part of the Consultant. It was held impermissible to discuss the content of the document due to the confidential nature of the same, and because it had not been disseminated to the Parish Council, in accordance with the agreed contractual terms.

It was **agreed** that the breaches would be addressed with the Consultant.

Ford Oaks Solar Farm Proposal

Mr Cyril Emmett advised the meeting that the opposition group has now settled on the content of a flyer, which is to be printed, the delivered to every home in the parish. He, and Cllr Forrest, have arranged for two persons to make the deliveries and will pay those persons to do so.

The document (ibid) will be posted on the village Facebook page and the Parish Council website.

697.0 Reports

697.1 Chairman's Report

The Chairman advised the meeting that he had now moved out of the village. The regulations governing the operation of Parish Council's permit him to remain in post until the next local election (May 2023).

The Chairman regretted that he is, however, unable to follow up as a member of the Solar Group.

697.2 Cllr Gent (DCC)

Cllr Gent advised the meeting that, whilst the Silver Lane signage issue has not been resolved, he is currently in communication with DCC Highways Department about the matter.

Cllr Gent advised the meeting that he was in receipt of a number of complaints about the public bus service in the area. He requested that any complaints received by the Parish Council should be forwarded to either of the County Councillors, for inclusion in a report to be sent to the relevant DCC department.

697.3 Cllr Lawrence (EDDC)

Cllr Lawrence advised the meeting that the Solar Farm application for Clyst Haydon had been approved by EDDC. Whilst Cllr Lawrence had asked Cllr Skinner (EDDC Planning Committee) to defer deciding on the application (there are currently three other applications in the pipeline), the request was not accepted.

It was a matter of concern that four hundred letters opposing the application (views of residents) had been ignored, Furthermore, the Chief Planning Officer has openly stated that there were 'no planning issues' in respect of the matter.

Cllr Forrest advised the meeting that he could provide evidence of the use of grades 3a and 3b land as being productive. Indeed, most of the food produced in the United Kingdom is grown on land of those gradings.

On a happier note, Cllr Lawrence advised the meeting that EDDC had now agreed the 'Heads of Terms' for the transfer of the land at Birch End to the Parish Council. The document should be received by the PC in early course.

698.0 Planning

698.1 **PA22/1352/ FUL** – the Parish Council has no objection to this matter.

698.2 **PA22/1401/ FUL** – the Parish Council has no objection to this matter.

699.0 Correspondence - none received

700.0 Business and Finance

700.1 Members considered the schedule of payments for July 2022.

700.2 It was **proposed** by Cllr Franklin, **seconded** by Cllr Forrest, and **RESOLVED** that the schedule of payments for July 2022 would be approved, and invoices discharged. **UNANIMOUS**. Carried.

701.0 Rockbeare Primary School Funding Application

701.1 Members discussed the application for funding, which had been received from Rockbeare Primary School. A sum of £9,226.82 had been requested for the creation of a Forest School.

701.2 Members raised a number of matters relating to the application.

Firstly, there was a degree of concern that no 'match funding' was being offered, either by the school or by other organisations. The Parish Council would expect other potential funders to have been approached, prior to the submission of the application for the total amount of funding required.

Secondly, the Parish Council has previously donated a substantial sum of money to the school, to facilitate the creation of a garden and outdoor seating area. Members did not understand the need for the creation of a further outdoor space.

Thirdly, only one quotation for the necessary work had been sought and submitted with the funding request. Any future submission should include no less than three separate quotations.

Fourthly, a great proportion of the pupils at Rockbeare Primary School do not reside in the Parish. It was felt that funding should be sought from other sources and that the Parish Council would then match fund with a sum commensurate to the number of children attending the school, who reside in the Parish.

701.3 It was **agreed** that the Clerk would correspond with the Primary School Administrator in relation to this matter.

702.0 Website Update

702.1 Cllr Franklin provided the meeting with an update on the new Parish Council website. He recommended a contact system using Dropbox and for providing a folder on the site for Meeting Articles. When live, the historic data will be transferred.

703.0 Millennium Field

703.1 Cllr Forrest advised the meeting on the proposed improvements to the Millennium Field, at Marsh Green. He advised that there is a need to refence the area with suitable materials, new gates will also be required. The cost of this work will be in the region of £2,500.

703.2 Other work required includes:

- Hedge Cutting
- Felling of birch trees and replanting with native species

703.3 It was felt that this money should only be spent if the public are willing to assist with the work, as the use of contractors would incur substantial costs. Cllr Lawrence suggested that the Parish Council could contact Bickton College and the local Young Farmers Group for help. He also alluded to the East Devon Wellbeing Fund.

703.4 Cllr Forrest has been in contact with charities that may choose to introduce Gold Crested Newts and Hedgehogs to the site.

703.5 The total cost of the work to be carried out is around £5,000.

703.6 It was **agreed** that the matter would be brought to the September 2022 meeting.

704.0 Westcott Road

704.1 Cllr Forrest raised the matter of the proposed actions for Westcott, should the Ford Oaks Solar Farm proposal succeed. He highlighted the facts that:

- Westcott Road was not suitable for HGV's. It has a width of 10 feet, lorries being 8 ft wide.
- The peaceful enjoyment of the residents would be adversely impacted upon;
- A total of 3,000 per vehicle in the hamlet would be driven if the scheme to close of the village is implemented. This would amount to circa 90,000 of extra driving.
- There are nine children in the hamlet who attend school. The closure would adversely impact upon them and their families.
- There are issues of privacy for properties, where houses will be overlooked by drivers of high trucks.
- Local housing is vulnerable to damage/ collapse – particularly those built in the 1800's, as these have no foundations.
- The only suitable route for HGV's seeking to access the proposed development site, is via Daisymount.
- There appears to be a conflict of interest in that the land being provided for the development is, in part, owned by DCC – DCC Highways, which is planning the route, is a department of the said Council. Any complaints raised about the route will therefore be adjudicated and decided upon by DCC.
- Local householders have been approached to contribute to a fund, intended too fight the proposal to use/close Westcott. Cllr Forrest requested that the Parish Council match fund the sum raised.

705.0

Flooding Report – deferred

706.0 Parish Council Gazebos/ BBQ

- 706.1 Members considered the draft proposal, put forward by the Clerk, in respect Of the loan/ hire of the newly acquired assets.
- 706.2 Cllr Forrest stated that he would like to see a two criteria policy. Namely, terms for free loan and terms for private hire.
- 706.3 It was **agreed** that a suitable storage facility would be sought to place the equipment in, and the new storage yard was suggested. This will be looked into further.
- 706.4 Further discussion on the policy was deferred until September 2022.

707.0 Part II Meeting

- 707.1 It was **proposed** by Cllr Susan Wollen, **seconded** by Cllr Forrest and **RESOLVED** that, due to the confidential nature of the matters to be discussed,

that the meeting should enter into Part II (Confidential) session.
UNANIMOUS. **Carried.**

The formal part of the meeting was closed at 7.10 pm, and the public were asked to leave the room.

PART II DELIBERATIONS

708.0 Discussion relating to the inappropriate dissemination of confidential information.

708.1 Members, having discussed the situation that had arisen, **agreed** a course of conduct to address the same. Matter **proposed, seconded** and **carried**.
UNANIMOUS.

At 7.20pm, the Council exited the confidential session and the meeting closed.

Next Meeting: 17th August 2022, Rockbeare Village Hall, commencing at 6.00 pm