



**ROCKBEARE
PARISH COUNCIL**

Chairman: Cllr. Phil Franklin

Clerk: Carolyn Y. May
A209, Victoria Advent House,
Station Approach
Victoria, Roche,
Cornwall PL26 8LG

Telephone: 01726 210139

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Web: www.rockbeareparishcouncil.co.uk

11th October 2023

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF ROCKBEARE PARISH COUNCIL

To all Members of Rockbeare Parish Council

You are hereby summoned to attend an Ordinary Meeting of Rockbeare Parish Council, to be held at **6pm, on Tuesday 17th October 2023**, at Marsh Green Village Hall, for the purposes of transacting the following business:

Carolyn May
Clerk to Rockbeare Parish Council

AGENDA

All Councillors are politely reminded of their obligation to declare interests under the Code of Conduct.

Please Note: This meeting will be recorded.

- 1.0 APOLOGIES:** To receive apologies for absence.
- 2.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** To receive declarations of interest.
Members – please remember that you must declare any personal or prejudicial interest at the start of the meeting. Please ensure that you state the reason for your interest, as this must be included in the Minutes of the meeting. If your interest is a ‘Declarable Pecuniary Interest’ then you must leave the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.
- 5.0 TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC – Strictly 15 minutes in total. Thereafter, members of the public may not enter discussions without the express permission of the Parish Council Chairman.**
- 6.0 MINUTES:** Minutes Of the last Meeting of Rockbeare Parish Council, held on 19th September 2023 to be signed as a true correct record of that Meeting (Appendix A).
- 5.0 REPORTS**
 - 5.1** Chairman’s Report
 - 5.3** County/ District Councillors Report - Appendix B
 - 5.4** Any other reports

6.0 10.0 WARM SPACES / PARISHIONER SUPPORT – Sharon Thorne

7.0 PLANNING

- 7.1 To consider Planning Applications –Appendix C
- 7.2 To consider Planning Applications received since the date of this Agenda – None
- 7.3 To receive, and note, details of Planning Determinations - None
- 7.4 Ford Oaks Solar Farm Appeal - Update

8.0 CORRESPONDENCE

- Complaint from Resident reference CCTV
- Victim Care Website
- Bank Account Update

9.0 BUSINESS AND FINANCE

- 9.1 **Schedule of Payments** – to follow.

10.0 CAR PARKING AREA – Rockbeare

- Space Marking and Allocation

13.0 BIRCH END PROJECT – Update

13.0 LAND ACQUISITION/ DISPOSAL PROJECT – Update

14.0 PARISH NEWSLETTER - Update

16.0 MILLENNIUM FIELD PROJECT – Update

- Planning advice;
- CCTV;
- Dogs;
- Phase 1 – 2024/25

Appendix A



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MINUTES OF ROCKBEARE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

HELD ON

WEDNESDAY 19TH SEPTEMBER 2023

PRESENT: Cllr. Franklin (Chairman), Cllr M. Nequest (Vice-Chairman), Cllrs. R. Nequest, S. Brodie, A. Dunn and P. Dunn

Also: Cllr. S. Randall-Johnson (Devon County Council), Cllr. T. Olive (EDDC) and ten Members of the Public

Parish Clerk: Carolyn Y. May

AGENDA

46/23 Apologies – Cllr Mark Nequest (Vice-Chairman), Cllr. Simon Brodie, Cllr. Todd Olive (EDDC), Cllr Sarah RANDALL-JOHNSON (Devon Council)

47/23 Declarations of Interest – None

48/23 Public Session

Andrea Cook – Rockbeare Hill sign – The Clerk advised that this matter had been passed on to EDDC.

Ford Oaks Solar Farm Inquiry - Mrs Cook had addressed the inquiry as a resident representative. Mrs Cook advised the meeting that she had canvassed her neighbours, who had raised several issues.

Reduction of Speed on Rockbeare Hill – Mrs Cook asked if it was possible for the Parish Council to consider a reduction in relation to the permitted speed of traffic on Rockbeare Hill. The older cob buildings on Rockbeare Hill are situated close to the road, and these vibrate when large vehicles pass. A further problem arises where residents are at risk being knocked over by lorries, when out walking. There have been two recent incidents.

Cllr Franklin stated that it is possible to have speed restrictions imposed and that, looking to the future, if the Ford Oaks Solar Farm is approved, there will be an even greater volume of traffic on Rockbeare Hill. Therefore, a speed restriction would be sensible.

The Clerk advised the meeting that the issue of vehicle speed on Rockbeare Hill was raised as part of the formal objection to the Solar Farm application and, that the local lanes were considered to be unsuitable for the type of vehicles being proposed for use by the developer.

The Clerk added that any matter appertaining to the highway, fell into the remit of Devon County Council, Highways Department. Whilst the Clerk can raise the matter with the DCC Councillor for the area, there is more to be gained from each resident accessing the DCC website and, individually, reporting the issues.

Cllr Franklin suggested that an alternative to reporting the issues by email, would be to arrange for a petition to be signed by residents, or for each resident to write to DCC.

49/23 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD on 18th July 2023

Members considered the draft Minutes for the last meeting of the Parish Council, held on 18th July 2023.

It was **proposed** by Cllr Rebecca Nequest, **seconded** by Cllr. Andrew Dunn and **RESOLVED** that the Minutes would be accepted as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting, Unanimous. **Carried.**

50/23 REPORTS

50/23.1 Chairmans Report - Cllr Frankin advised the meeting that he had attended the Ford Oaks Solar Farm Appeal and had addressed the same. There was a significant number of attendees and there appeared to be more against the application, than in favour of it.

There was some concern at the conduct of EDDC, which withdrew some of its objections to the application. The withdrawal of some objections had been undertaken late into the process and it had been felt that the organisation should not have been permitted to do so. The conduct of EDDC was viewed as irresponsible and lacking in transparency.

It was noted that EDDC did, in fact, own some of the land which was to be used for the proposed development. That fact raises questions in respect of 'conflict of interest'.

Members agreed that the Parish Council should write to the CEO of EDDC, in order to express the concerns raised during the extant discussion.

Mrs Cook advised the meeting that the Appellants have requested costs from EDDC, on the grounds that they had been led to believe that the original application had been guaranteed to succeed. When the Planning Committee voted against the application, there had been some anger on the part of the Chair of the committee and officers.

The Clerk stated that, if the application had indeed been signed off by Council Officers, then that action was 'ultra vires'. Officers are appointed to advise Members, not to make decisions in their stead. The decision not to accept any pre-decision made by Officers was, in fact, the price of democracy.

The Clerk requested to be advised of the matters upon which there had been a change of heart by EDDC Officers. She was advised that the areas concerned were heritage, soil, highways and flooding. Indeed, the issue of flooding was not one which the parties wished to address.

It was proposed by Cllr Franklin, seconded by Cllr Dunn and **RESOLVED** that the Clerk would draft a letter to EDDC, in which the disappointment and concerns of the Parish Council, in relation to the conduct of EDDC Officers on the Ford Oaks Solar Farm application, and appeal, are raised. Unanimous. **Carried.**

50/23.2 Devon County Councillors Report – noted.

51/23 PLANNING APPLICATIONS – none

PLANNING DECISIONS – Noted

52/23 CORRESPONDENCE

Barclays Bank – the Clerk advised the meeting that a letter had been received from Barclays Bank, in respect of our recent application for an account. It was agreed that the Clerk would take the necessary action to address the content of the document.

Rockbeare Rockets – The Clerk advised the meeting that she had requested the return of the Line Marking kit, which had been loaned to the Rockets, for the season. The Clerk had been assured that the unused item would be returned to the Chairman. To date, this has not been done. It was agreed that the Clerk would send a reminder.

53/23 BUSINESS AND FINANCE

53/23.1 Members considered the Schedule of Payments and Bank Reconciliation

It was proposed by Cllr. Rebecca Nequest, seconded by Cllr. Andrew Dunn, and **RESOLVED** that the schedule of payments would be accepted, and the liabilities discharged. Unanimous. Carried.

53/23.2 The Bank Reconciliation was accepted.

54/23 WARM SPACES/ PARISHIONER SUPPORT – Report previously disseminated.

Members considered the invoice received from Inspiring Connections, the contracted provider for the Hub. There was some concern raised in relation to the high costs incurred for the last month. Cllr. Rebecca Nequest reminded the meeting that a budget had been set by the Parish Council for this facility, and that the total cost of providing the service had, thus far, appeared to have exceeded the agreed budget. It was agreed that:

Sharon Thorne would be invited to attend the next Parish Council meeting, so that the continuation of the service can be discussed.

Sharon should be asked to keep an accurate record of postcodes, for all attendees at the events.

Sharon should be asked to compile a budget for the service, providing accurate costings for the balance of the extant financial year and beyond.

It was noted that whilst food was being provided for attendees, very little had been received by way of donations. This is a situation that cannot be permitted to continue, and a weekly sum should be determined for each attendee to cover the provision of victuals.

Additional funding streams are to be researched.

An additional event, to be held monthly, will be researched. This event will provide a monthly social event for older residents of the parish, who may find it difficult to deal with larger crowds and noise. This event is to be researched by Cllrs. Ripley Dunn and Rebecca Nequest, with costings being presented at the October 2023 Parish Council meeting.

55/23 CAR PARKING AREA

The Clerk stated that the car parking area had now been tarmacked. Lining of bays will be undertaken once the final lay-out of spaces has been agreed. Cllr Franklin was of the opinion that there should be two reserved bays, which would be available to parishioners for a fee. These would be managed on a contractual basis. The annual sum to be set at £300 p.a. The reserved spaces would be offered on an open bidding system, with availability being advertised on the PC website. The security of the reserved spaces would be ensured through the provision of a fixed, dropdown, lockable post.

Cllr. Frankin added that there should also be a disabled car parking space provided, and either one, or two, 'open spaces' (depending on the amount of space available). The open spaces would be time restricted. A notice board will be erected, advising users of the waiting times permitted.

It was agreed that the Clerk would provide the requirements detailed above to the contractor.

56/23 PARISH NEWSLETTER

The next newsletter will be published in October 2023.

57/23 MILLENNIUM FIELD UPDATE

Cllr nequest advised the meeting that t new benches had been delivered to the contractor, who will arrange for the items to be concreted into the ground. There are a large number of hedging plants to be place around the boundary, which has been cleared.

The drainage installed has prevented the land from becoming marshy, and the previously wet areas are now much more solid. The walkway around the site is now clear.

Hardcore has been laid at the gateway to the field, however, it is felt that tarmac would be a better option.

Cllr Nequest suggested that it might be appropriate for the Parish Council to host a bonfire event, with a hog roast. It was agreed that there would be no fireworks and only a token bonfire, corralled within a fire pit. Ideally, this would be a social event for parishioners, and the cost of tickets would be kept to a minimum.

It was agreed that the cost of a seating shelter for the site would be researched.

It was agreed that Cllrs. Nequest, Ripley Dunn and Andrew Dunn would undertake the planning and costing of the proposed event and obtain potential numbers – with the information being shared with Members as soon as possible. Members felt that social events should become part of the PC's calendar.

The Parish Clerk is to submit a Planning Application for the proposed storge container.

It was agreed that the wooden walkway for the site would form part of the 2024/25 Project Plan, and that this will be costed, prior to the setting of the next budget in November.

The Meeting Closed at 19.20 hrs.

October 2023 Division Members Report **Cllr Sara Randall Johnson**

This month my report is a single-issue one giving an update on Highways and related items that might be of interest to you.

As you might imagine with Devon having the largest network of roads in England at over 8000 miles (12,000km) the permanent challenges posed by roads largely built for horse and cart, with little in the way of proper foundations is massive!

Safety defects

That said like all plans sometimes things do not go as you hope, and in the case of Highways that is invariably down to unexpected 'weather events' diverting resources away from day to day work, leading to delay in delivering those plans.

Following the extremely high numbers of publicly reported potholes across the network during the first part of the year, and the increase in repair gangs as a response, numbers gradually stabilised through the spring and into the summer, however, but remain above average for this time of year. This has led to some residual pressure on inspection teams in assessing backlogs. Evening and weekend working has remained in place in some areas to assist with this.

Work is underway to improve the messaging on the 'report a problem' webpages to reduce the number of defects that are incorrectly reported – since January this year this represents around 55% of all reports received.

Following a very challenging winter for asset condition and safety defects, the numbers recorded across the network had reduced sufficiently that Highway Safety Inspectors (HSI) were able to re-start the identification of non-safety or 'serviceability' defects in June. This process offers HSI's the discretion to record defects that do not meet investigatory criteria in our Highway Safety Policy.

A trial with material called 'Elastomac' is taking place and this product is providing a lower carbon and cost-effective means of repairing carriageway defects. This 'mastic' (natural resin for bonding) product uses up to 70% recycled materials, including lorry tyres, that would otherwise be incinerated, This can allow reactive works gangs to undertake repairs much more quickly when compared to conventional techniques.

Winter Service

Preparations for winter have been taking place over the summer, with the fleet of gritters receiving their annual servicing and calibration checks. Works to install solar panels on some of the salt storage barns have also been progressed and salt stocks have been replenished ahead of winter.

By keeping the age of the DCC gritting vehicles under 10 years old, maintenance costs are reduced and ensure the fleet is safe and appropriate for the task in hand. In preparation for this winter, eight of our oldest/most costly gritters will be 'traded-in' against six nearly new

vehicles. This will reduce the secondary fleet from twelve vehicles down to ten, striking an appropriate balance of service resilience against financial pressures.

7 Gully Cleaning

8 Over 5,000 drainage issues identified by the gully cleaning crews and highway officers have been resolved since April. The challenge remains dealing with over 15,000 outstanding reported issues with limited funds available.

The ongoing trial to pre inspect gullies due to be cleaned on the cyclical programme has shown 49% of gullies inspected to date do not require cleaning. The aim of the trial is to ensure plant and equipment is deployed where it is most effective.

A joint trial with Devon's Flood team to place gully sensors in selected streets in Devon is in the preparation stages. It is hoped this externally funded trial will offer insight into whether technology can be used to inform policy or reaction for cyclical gully cleaning. The trial intends to run for an 18-month period from the winter period.

9 Road Markings

Since April, remarking has been undertaken in six of our market towns with works planned in a further seventeen. The main road remarking and road stud replacement programme has completed eight locations with a further twelve locations planned.

Following a review, it has been identified that the condition of our rural give way markings was an area for improvement and that these provided important information to drivers. Plans have been developed to systematically remark these features in rural areas. There are approximately 6,000 markings that will be treated through this project that is anticipated to take 4-5 years to complete.

10 Traffic Management

Since April 2023, 162 requests for waiting restrictions have been delivered through the various area Highways and Traffic orders committees (HATOC) Waiting Restriction Programme across Devon and work has continued on 20mphs limits in Winkleigh, Atherington, Ashburton and Tiverton, which will be implemented later this financial year. In addition, the Traffic Management team have progress 350 applications for new or the remarking of disabled bays and 56 applications for new or the remarking of Access Protection Markings, which have been processed, and orders for works placed.

ENDS

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Reference	23/1584/FUL
Alternative Reference	PP-12320687
Application Validated	Tue 19 Sep 2023
Address	Hawthorns Rockbeare EX5 2EG
Proposal	Proposed attached two storey annexe
Status	Awaiting decision

PLANNING DECISIONS

Reference	21/1077/OUT
Alternative Reference	PAPER/POST
Application Validated	Tue 20 Apr 2021
Address	The Jack In The Green Inn London Road Rockbeare Exeter EX5 2EE
Proposal	Construction of five dwellings and associated infrastructure (outline application seeking approval for access and scale, with matters of appearance, layout, and landscaping reserved)
Status	Approved
Decision	Approval with conditions
Decision Issued Date	Tue 10 Oct 2023

Reference	23/1396/TRE
Alternative Reference	PP-12272919
Application Validated	Wed 26 Jul 2023
Address	Danson House Marsh Green Devon EX5 2ES
Proposal	W1, Willow: Re-pollard at historic pollard points. AS1, Aspen : Re-pollard at historic pollard points. O2, Oak: Crown lift to a height of 6m above ground level. Remove deadwood. O3, Oak: Crown lift over garden by removing 4 lowest branches. Through prune telephone cable. Remove deadwood. O4, Oak: Remove deadwood on branches over field. Separate rubbing branches. Remove branch over telephone cable. O6, Oak: Remove deadwood.
Status	Approved
Decision	Approval with conditions
Decision Issued Date	Wed 27 Sep 2023

