

# DUNSFORD PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of meeting held in Village Hall dressing rooms on Tuesday January 2nd 2024

**Present:** Cllrs P French (Chairman), R Squire, P Lewis, H Smith, D Matthews, C Heard, K Morris and A Arnold, District Cllrs Swain, Purser and the Clerk Lynne Ogden

**1. a) Apologies** – County Cllr Brook

**b) Declaration of Interest/ Register of Interests:** None

**2. Minutes of the Council meeting held on December 5th 2023** had been distributed, were approved and signed.

### **3. Progress Reports**

**3.1 Action Points from last meeting-** All actions completed

**3.2 Clerk's report** – had been sent to all Cllrs with the Highways report

**3.3 District Cllr Swain** reported that he had update on Teignbridge Planning. TDC have had a significant backlog of planning applications for some time and the head of planning left at the end of 2023. The law also changed on the 6th December 2023 year giving the council 16 weeks to process an application before being liable for a refund of the planning fees. This was previously 26 weeks. He was concerned this could mean further disruption however he recently met with the new interim head of planning. He is a very experienced officer, specialising in turning round departments with problems like ours. He has been brought in as an expert troubleshooter and is putting together a detailed plan for change that we hope will clear the backlog and keep future performance stable. He is quite pleased with the changes proposed, more details will be published soon, and he hopes there will be genuine improvements in future.

**District Cllr Purser** reported that: - there was not much to report because of the Christmas shutdown. He reminded the Council that they need to request their Precept soon and said he understood that TDC will be applying the maximum allowed without a referendum of 2.99%.

**3.4 Housing Working Group** – Cllr French had sent the following report to all Cllrs: -

The HWG met after our Dec PC meeting to progress actions with Hastoe relating to the preferred development site. We will be meeting again in early Jan but not before the PC.

On Dec 7th Summerfield Planning Ltd advised DPC that they had submitted a Permission in Principle (PIP) to construct 9 Affordable Homes (AH) on what we have called site1, land to the north of Reedy hill.

This location was the subject of a parish wide referendum in November 2022, asking residents whether or not they supported AH construction on this site. The outcomes showed a 50:50 split; For and Against. A public meeting held in March 2023 confirmed significant opposition to development at this location, particularly

but not solely from residents adjacent to the site. Subsequently the PC passed a motion opposing any development on this site.

A week prior to the PIP submission, the Council was sent a paper by the Developer comparing site 1 with site 4 (probably an error and should have been site 6), which was circulated to all members. The PIP appears to be seeking TDC conformation that site 1 meets the criteria set down for it to be considered a Rual Exception Site (RES) and as such is not an application for any form of Planning Approval Your HWG members will propose a draft response to the PIP for consideration and vote by the PC on Jan2nd.

**Action Cllrs French and Matthews**

**3.5 Dunsford Emergency Response Team – (DERT) – Cllr Smith reported that the group were meeting next week.**

**Action Cllr Smith**

**3.6 The Dunsford Climate Initiative (DCI) – Cllr French reported that Cllr Squire was taking over writing the reports for this group and that they would be meeting before the next Council meeting.**

**Action Cllrs French/Squire**

**3.7 Review of Community Assets – Nothing new to report**

**Action Cllr Lewis**

**3.8 Reports from other meetings attended by Cllrs – a)** Cllr Squire and the Clerk attended the webinar presented by Teignbridge DC concerning Register of Interests and the Code of Conduct. Both found it useful and the Clerk will forward the course slides to all Cllrs, when received. Cllr French said that this should be put on a future agenda for discussion/training purposes. **b)** Cllr Heard has been in touch with the Lord Lieutenant's Office to get advice on updating the Council's Operation London Bridge policy. She has agreed to do this.

**Action Clerk/Cllr Heard.**

**4. Correspondence:** - List of correspondence received by email listed overleaf.

**5. Finance Current Account/Treasurer's - £11,091.88 as 21/11/2023**

**Business Bank Instant Account - £1840.52 as at 09/11/23 Income: £200** grant from Cllr Swain towards new benches for the Village Green.

The Clerk reported that all new signatories had been finalised by the bank, enabling all Cllrs to be able to sign cheques.

**The Council resolved to pay the following invoices: -**

**5.1 Mr G Dicker – Village Maintenance - £366.64 chq 1525**

**5.2 Clerk's Salary – 4weeks x 10 hours a week – Gross pay £549.20**

Net pay to Clerk £439.40 + expenses of £30.49 - Total to Clerk - **£469.89 chq 1526**

**5.3 Elliott Fairs – Lengths man's tasks for December - £125 chq 1527**

**5.4 Village Hall MC – room hire (Nov and Dec)- £30 chq 1528**

**5.5 Mr I Seward – room hire, Walled Gardens - £10 chq 1529**

**5.6 Omitted**

**5.7 Budget – The Council approved the amended budget of £19,277**

**5.8 Precept for 2024-2025** - There was a lengthy discussion as the Council is aware that it needs to keep the funds at a certain level to remain solvent but, also, that there is a cost-of-living crisis. Previously the Council had cut costs from the budget plan to reduce expenditure but recognising that the Reserves have been severely eroded in recent years and we are obliged to have a higher Reserve than we currently have, the Council resolved to raise the precept to £16,078. This means the band D cost, for the year, will go up £5.53 from £46.10 to £51.63

**Proposed:** Cllr Matthews    **Seconded:** Cllr Heard    **Vote:** Unanimous    **Action Clerk**

**6. Village Green a) Monthly Report** – a) Cllr Matthews had sent the monthly report to all Cllrs. b) **replacement benches** – the discussion continued. One quote has been received but more are needed. The Clerk has applied and received notification that a grant of £200 will be given towards this project from Teignbridge Locality Budget. Thanks were given to District Cllr Swain for this. c) **tree pruning** – Cllr Matthews will oversee the works to be done, beginning on January 22<sup>nd</sup>. **Action All Cllrs/Clerk**

**7. Planning: - Applications: Teignbridge 23/02166/PIP/** – Land at Reedy Hill Dunsford – Permission in Principle for the construction of nine affordable dwellings. The Council has received an extension to make their comment. The Council voted on a draft response. Proposed: Cllr Lewis Seconded Cllr Morris Vote: Unanimous. The Council will object to this. The full comment can be seen on the Planning website. **Decisions:** None

**Action Clerk**

**8. Lengthsman** – A resident has reported a blockage in an under- road pipe near Scuttishill Farm. The Council agreed to ask the Lengthsman to investigate and pass on to Highways, if he can't fix it. Otherwise, normal drain maintenance is needed in the normal places. **Action Clerk**

**9. Footpath Inspections** – to be continued as the weather improves.

**10. Matters brought forward by the Chairman (for. information only /possible addition to next month's agenda including: - a)** Any pressing **Highways issues** for Clerk to pass on to Highways' contact. **b)** Suspended for this meeting- policy reviews, 20s plenty **c)** Parish noticeboards – the Clerk is concerned that rain is getting behind the glass and the backing is coming away. The boards are more exposed in this position and need more protection. **d)** Grit bin by the school is empty. **e)** dog mess becoming a problem again especially in Boylands Lane and Briton Street Lane. **f)** The street lights in the Village need a health check! Also, the light by the Church which has been replaced is the wrong style for the centre of the Village. **g)** The Clerk was asked to check with the DNP enforcement Officer the exact rules of alternative use of agricultural land.

**11. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2024 in the Village Hall dressing rooms There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7:30 pm.**

**Signed as a true record..... Cllr French (chairman)**

**Date .....**

## Email circulation during the past month

- Planning applications and decisions from DNPA and Teignbridge
- Rural Services Network Bulletin plus Funding Digests
- DALC newsletters
- Devon Communities Together – various newsletters
- Teignbridge newsletter
- Devon County Council newsletter
- Email from Mr Summerfield re PIP planning application
- Devon Climate Emergency newsletter
- Local flood risk management strategy newsletter
- Slides from Gary Powell on Budget briefing
- Slides from TDC Training on Register of Interests and Code of Conduct