

East Worlington Parish Council

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Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 23rd November 2023, 7.30pm at East Worlington Parish Hall.

Cllrs Present: Andy Bell (Chair) Diana Sturla (Vice-Chair), Becky Smyth, Barnabas Hurst-Bannister, Ros Bolt, Simon Good and Nigel Pankhurst.

BUSINESS TRANSACTED.

1.11.23: Welcome (Chair)

Chair opened the meeting on time and welcomed Councillors and members of the public, and advised that there would be no recordings of proceedings, with Cllr Good taking the Minutes.

2.11.23 Apologies for absence: (Chair) - All Cllrs present.

3.11.23: Minutes of the Last Meeting. (Chair)

- a) **Cllrs to consider the approval of Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on Thursday 20th July 2023.**

Cllr Bell proposed that the Minutes of the 20th July 2023 be approved, seconded Cllr Pankhurst. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2023/037)

- b) **Cllrs to consider the approval of Minutes of the Extraordinary Council Meeting held on Thursday 2nd November 2023.**

Cllr Sturla proposed that the Minutes of the Extra-Ordinary Meeting on the 2nd November 2023 be approved, seconded Cllr Pankhurst. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2023/038)

- c) **Cllrs to consider the approval of Minutes of the Extraordinary Council Meeting held on Thursday 9th November 2023.**

Cllr Pankhurst proposed that the Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held 9th November 2023 be approved, seconded Cllr Smyth. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2023/039)

- d) **Cllrs to consider the approval of Minutes of the Extraordinary Council Meeting held on Thursday 16th November 2023.**

Cllr Bell proposed that the Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held 16th November 2023 be approved, seconded Cllr Smyth. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2023/040)

4.11.23 Declarations of Interest. (Chair)

Cllrs are invited to declare any interests they may have in items on this agenda, including the nature of the interest. Cllrs are reminded to keep their Register of Interests updated.

Cllr Hurst-Bannister declared an interest on two matters on the agenda.

- Hall windows Listed Building Consent
- Land Transfer

5.11.23: Public Speaking Time (max. 3minutes/person. Session time: 10 minutes).

Parishioner– very concerned again that the road drains were not being cleaned and were rendering key roads used for commerce and education and use by parishioners, many of whom are elderly, dangerous, especially so in winter conditions.

6.11.23: Report to & from Devon County & N.D District Cllrs (Max. 10 minutes)

None present.

7.11.23: Reports to and from the Parish Road Warden relating to highways (Cllr Sturla).

- a) Verge ploughing – So far unable to agree a date with the contractor who undertakes this work within the Parish. Cllr Bell requested that Cllr Good attempt to contact the contractor to determine a date for the works.
- b) Stocks of road salt – 4 roadside salt bins have been inspected and all require refilling. Highways have advised that only two bins are logged onto their system and requested Cllr Sturla provided location so they can be logged onto the system. All 4 bins will be refilled.
- c) Additional road salt bins – Cllr Sturla to apply for additional bins in two locations.
- d) Drain clearance – DCC Highways public records indicate that drains in the Parish have not been cleaned since 1st April 2022. Cllr Sturla to chase Highways for works to be carried out asap to address parishioner concerns about safety of roads.
- e) 5 tons of salt delivered to local contractor.

8.11.23: Planning Matters:

- a) **Applications received since the last meeting:**
 - i. [Planning application: 77698 - Council Services \(northdevon.gov.uk\)](#) Full planning application. **EWPC responded to support application.** NDDC decision awaited. Considered in previous minuted meeting.
 - ii. [Planning application: 77699 - Council Services \(northdevon.gov.uk\)](#) Listed Building Consent. **EWPC responded to support application.** NDDC decision awaited. Considered in previous minuted meeting.
 - iii. [Planning application: 77798 - Council Services \(northdevon.gov.uk\)](#) Full planning application. **EWPC responded and raised no objection.** NDDC decision awaited. Considered in previous minuted meeting.
 - iv. [Planning application: 77872 - Council Services \(northdevon.gov.uk\)](#) East Worlington Parish Hall. Listed Building Consent for replacement of three windows. Consultation ends 30 November.
[Cllr Bell proposed that the Council Response in support of application, seconded Cllr Sturla.6 in Favour, 1 abstention – Motion Carried. \(RR2023/041\)](#)

9.11.23 Council Documents & Policies & DALC Instruction (Chair / Cllr Good)

Cllrs to consider actions to update or include a range of policies including those related to HR matters.

- a) **Accept DALC guidance based on consultation with TOZER on how to manage long term absence.**
[Cllr Bell proposed that Cllr Good prepare a full suite of HR related policies, in addition to those on this meeting's agenda, and present for approval at next meeting, seconded by Cllr Smyth. All in Favour – Motion Carried. \(RR2023/042\).](#)
[Cllr Bell further proposed that Cllr Good examine the Council's existing policy framework and identify where there are gaps and present findings to Council at a later meeting, seconded Cllr Smyth. All in Favour – Motion Carried. \(RR2023/043\).](#)
- b) **Adopt NALC Sickness absence policy**

Cllr Bell proposed that the Sickness Absence policy be approved, subject to check that policy provisions around sickness pay aligned with current staff terms and conditions, seconded Cllr Smyth. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2023/044).

c) Adopt NALC Performance improvement policies.

Cllr Bell proposed that proposed that policy be approved, subject to a change in the ‘Appeals’ provisions to reflect that notice of appeal be directed to the Chair where appropriate, rather than the Clerk, seconded Cllr Smyth. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2023/045).

d) Access to Parish Council digital assets, individual passwords, cloud access, security

Cllr Good proposed that all Councillors have unique access to Parish Digital access where possible, seconded Cllr Sturla. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2023/046).

Cllr Bell proposed that digital assets and access codes within Clerks care should be returned to Parish Council to enable work to continue whilst the Clerk is on long term sickness absence, seconded Cllr Good. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2023/047).

e) Use of private email addresses

Cllr Good discussed the importance of using email addresses unique to Parish Council matters rather than use personal or family ones.

Cllr Smyth proposed that instead of using generic addresses Councillors could use ones associated with the Parish Councils purchased domain subject to it being free or a minimal charge, and in the meantime Councillors use or switch to Parish Council specific handles seconded Cllr Bell. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2023/048).

10.11.23 Current & New Business:

a) Cllrs membership on Internal Committees & liaisons with external groups.

i. Worlington Relief in Need Charity

Cllr Smyth reminded Cllrs that she had volunteered for this role during the July meeting and she had been undertaking the role since this point. Chair thanked Cllr Smyth for the reminder and accepted the position was filled.

ii. Employment Committee (min 3 Cllrs)

Cllr Bell proposed that Employment Committee be formed of Cllrs Smyth, Good and Pankhurst, seconded by Cllr Smyth. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2023/049)

b) Progress with land transfer (Chair/Cllr Smyth) Actions:

Cllr Smyth proposed that she circulate previously agreed wording of PC agreement to transfer land to East Worlington House to occupiers and Councillors, seconded Cllr Good. 6 in Favour, 1 abstention – Motion Carried. (RR2023/050)

c) War Memorial works (Cllr Smyth/Cllr Sturla) – No minutes available to action.

Cllr Sturla to approach contractor to ascertain if previous quote agreed by Council valid and if so to contract work as previously agreed and if not bring new quote back to Council to be considered.

d) Parish magazine (Cllr Sturla)

Funding provided by District Council - £250

Cllr Good proposed that Cllr Sturla lead and proceed with magazine for Spring distribution, seconded Cllr Pankhurst. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2023/051)

e) Parish Hall lease renewal (Chair)

i. Discussion with regard to land acquired and used by Parish Hall Committee

Cllr Smyth raised concerns over insured status of additional curtilage and Hall extension. Cllr Bell proposed that he write to the Chair of the Parish Hall Committee requesting information as to the insured status of the Parish Hall building and curtilage, seconded Cllr Smyth. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2023/052).

Councillors will meet informally to discuss how to proceed with lease agreement to incorporate new curtilage in a lease agreement and agree Heads of Terms.

Three Quotes from Solicitors to be acquired.

f) Defibrillator renewal (Cllr Pankhurst) –

Cllr Pankhurst proposed to continue lease of Defib based on agreed costs, seconded Cllr Good. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2023/053).

Cllr Bell proposed that Parish Council support Community Responder initiative by circulating a communication via Worlywideweb for volunteers. Applications required by 1st December, training to commence in January 2024, seconded Cllr Smyth. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2023/054). Cllr Good to action with Worlywideweb coordinator.

g) Survey to establish community needs to inform future priorities / grant applications (Chair) Discussion document circulated prior to meeting.

Cllr Bell discussed access to funding from Batsworthy only available through Community Needs evaluation.

Cllr Bell proposed working group to assess local opinion and needs, to include Cllrs Sturla, Bolt, Bell and Hurst-Bannister., seconded Cllr Good. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2023/055)

h) Fostering greater collaboration between East Worlington community groups i.e. EWPC, PHC, PTFA, Parochial Church Council. (Chair) Discussion document circulated prior to meeting.

Cllr Bell proposed he write to the relevant persons within the respective organisations to gauge interest in forming an East Worlington Community Collaboration Group, seconded Cllr Sturla 6 in Favour, 1 Against – Motion Carried. (RR2023/056).

11.11.23: Finance (Clerk) Documents available at the meeting.

a) To approve payments as presented at the meeting.

None prepared due to Clerks sickness leave.

b) 2nd Quarter budget report and any virements.

None prepared due to Clerks sickness leave.

c) To consider draft 24/25 budget.

- a. Staff Budget increased
- b. All other figures increased in line with perceived inflation (7%)
- c. Training budget doubled
- d. Grass Cutting proposed £340

Cllr Bell proposed that Cllrs responded to him by 25 December with thoughts on the draft budget and he would arrange a working group meeting in January to progress work with refining the budget ahead of presentation to the Council for approval at later meeting, seconded Cllr Smyth. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2023/057).

12.11.23 Cllr/Clerks Reports & items for future agendas:

a) Membership of the Council for Protection of Rural England (CPRE) (Cllr Hurst-Bannister).

To be added to future agenda once Cllr Hurst-Bannister has gathered further information.

b) Contingency arrangements for protracted sickness or other absence of Proper Officer (Chair)

The Chair felt this matter had been addressed with earlier agenda items and did not need to be tabled for inclusion in future meetings.

13.11.23: Confirmation of the next meeting: (Chair) Any changes will be on the Website.

The next meeting will be on Thursday 1st February 2024 at 7.30pm at the Parish Hall.

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting.

Signed: Cllr A. Bell Date: 11/04/2024