

BICKLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

The Council Offices, The Woolwell Centre, Darklake Lane, Woolwell, PL6 7TR

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26th November 2020

Minutes of the Meeting of Bickleigh Parish Council held on **Thursday 26th November 2020 at 7.30pm**. The meeting was conducted remotely via Zoom.

Present: Councillors B Spencer (Chair), Taylor, Blight, C Spencer and Rundell

Apologies: Councillors Haymes and Tamsett-White

Present: Helen Nathanson (Parish Clerk) and District Councillor Hopwood

There was an open forum of 15 minutes at the beginning of the meeting to allow members of the public to ask questions or make comment regarding the work of the Council or other items which affect the Parish. No members of the public were in attendance.

1. To receive apologies.

It was resolved to accept the apologies from Councillors Haymes and Tamsett-White.

2. To declare any personal or pecuniary interests in items on the agenda and the nature of that interest.

Councillor C Spencer declared a pecuniary interest as an employee of the Woolwell Community Resource Trust.

Councillor Barrie Spencer declared a personal interest as a member of the Woolwell Community Resource Trust.

3. To approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on 22nd October 2020.

It was resolved to approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on 22nd October 2020.

4. To raise any matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting. The following matters arose:

Item 4

A meeting with BT Openreach is being arranged to talk to them about progress and deadlines.

Item 6

Planning Application 3044/20/TPO Works to Ash tree – this was approved.

5. Casual Vacancies on the Parish Council

It was noted that there has not been a call for an election to fill the casual vacancies and that they will therefore be filled by co-option. Details have been placed on the PC Facebook page and website and any resident who is interested in joining the Parish Council can contact the Parish Clerk at the email address above for more details.

6. Planning

- To comment on the following planning application:
2975/20/HHO Householder application for repair to cracks in walls
22 Ferndale Close Woolwell PL6 7HJ

Councillors supported the application.

- To note that the Planning Inspectorate Appeal APP/K1128/W/20/3256040: Land opposite Woodlands House, Station Road, PL5 4LD found in favour of SHDC and the appeal was dismissed.
This was noted.
- Standing Item: To receive an update about the Barwood planning applications 4185/19/OPA and 4181/19/OPA.
District Councillors B Spencer and Hopwood continue to attend regular meetings with the case Planning Officer. They will also be meeting with Barwood to discuss in more detail the proposed improvements to the Woolwell Centre which were submitted by the Parish Council.
- To discuss a review of the Neighbourhood Plan.
Councillors discussed this and agreed that they would like more information about how and when it needed to be reviewed. The Parish Clerk was asked to contact the original consultant who worked on the Plan and find out about making some amendments to the document in order to protect certain areas more effectively from development.
- To note the confidential list of enforcement cases in the Parish.
This was noted.

7. The recommendations presented by the Assets Working Group were discussed and approved as follows:

1. Roborough Green

a. Trees

- The quotes for tree work on Roborough Green had not yet been received in their entirety so it was agreed that this would be looked at again once they were ready.
- All felled trees will have the stumps ground.
- New tree plantings will be at 3m height.
- Discussion was had about what more could be done to the plot of land on Tavistock Road, rather than simply replanting a tree where the Horse Chestnut sits. There is space there to do more such as wildflowers or spring bulbs and the hedges enclosing the plot need to be tidied up and replanted. Councillors will consult with the residents of Roborough about what natural features they would like to see there in order to make the plot look nice.
- The trees along the path at the northern end of the Green are not on PC land and were included in the Tree Survey in error. It was agreed to investigate ownership as nearby residents are concerned about the condition of the trees and the PC's own report suggests that they need to be looked at. The Clerk will look at the Land Registry and approach Maristow.
- The requirement for an annual safety inspection of trees on land owned by the PC was discussed. Councillor Taylor explained that the Highways organisation works on the basis of inspecting the stock on a 3-yearly rolling basis, depending on the usage of the area. The PC needs to adopt an inspection regime in this way and draw up a policy to explain this. Once the outstanding tree work is complete, this will be done.
- Parish Plot – the crown of the oak tree which overhangs the garden of No 21 Leat Walk will be lifted by 1.5m to take it to the level agreed in the planning permission granted earlier this year. The Tree Officer will be contacted before the work is undertaken.

b. Land at Blackeven Close

A resident had asked to purchase from the PC the small parcel of land at the end of Blackeven Close. Councillors discussed this and agreed that this was not in the spirit of the original gift of the land from Maristow. They considered that it would set a precedent and that, if the land were going to be disposed of, it should go out to public tender and not directly to an individual as this may not be welcomed by other residents. There was general agreement that selling off or enclosing the green spaces would change the feel of the village. The Council will therefore decline the request.

Councillors considered that this plot of land and the Parish Plot could also be appropriate for wildflowers, spring bulbs or other planting. The Council will contact the nearby residents and put up public notices asking people for their ideas.

c. Overhanging and damaged tree on Blackeven Close

A damaged tree is overhanging PC land and needs to be dealt with. The resident who owns the tree will be contacted.

2. Parish Council Salt Spreader/Gritter

District Councillor Hopwood can no longer provide storage for the unit and the PC needs to identify a permanent stowage. Councillors agreed that the unit had never been used and was therefore unlikely to be so in the future. The Parish Clerk was asked to contact Shaugh Prior Parish Council in the first instance and ask them if they would like to buy it for a nominal sum of £50.

3. Woolwell Centre matters

a. To discuss the maintenance and upkeep of the portacabin and specifically the need to paint the roof.

The Clerk will contact the company for details about appropriate materials and will then get quotes for painting the roof.

b. To receive an update about the relocation of the PC office into the Woolwell Centre

This is ongoing as Centre staff have been on furlough recently. A report will be given to the next meeting with a plan and costings.

c. To discuss the repurposing of the portacabin.

The trustees of Roborough Recreation Hall have asked if they could have the portacabin to use at the playing fields. They would be willing to pay to have it moved if the PC was able to donate the cabin as grant funding. Councillors discussed this, including the option of loaning the cabin at a peppercorn rent. It was agreed that the PC would donate the cabin to Roborough Recreation Hall as a way of supporting a local community organisation. The terms will be either as a grant or on a nominal rent, depending on receiving further advice about how this works within the rules for the DCC Locality grant with which the cabin was purchased.

d. To receive an update on the progress of the new lease between SHDC and the PC.

An update was received – see Item 8.

e. To discuss a landlord's maintenance schedule for the Woolwell Centre.

Councillor Carole Spencer explained that the general maintenance check on the Centre this year had shown that the Centre is now in a much better condition than in previous years because of the recent funding from the PC for repairs and maintenance. She expressed concerns that the roof may need replacement in due course, that the boilers will need replacing, and that 4 of the rooms do not have opening windows, which is a real problem at the moment. There is also an urgent plumbing issue which needs to be dealt with asap.

Councillors agreed:

- that we draw up a rolling maintenance programme and budget for the next few years
- that the PC pays the remainder of the £15k maintenance grant for the plumbing works
- that the Centre should get quotes to install opening windows in the 4 rooms that don't have them.

4. To discuss any amendments and updates to the grass cutting contract, including:

The hedge cutting requirements for Roborough Green need to be defined and made very clear in the terms of the contract. This is ongoing.

5. IT

Councillors agreed that some sort of contractual IT support was necessary because the burden of providing support and advice should not fall on councillors. The Clerk will investigate.

To receive an update about the Website Accessibility Guidance. This is ongoing.

6. Other matters

It was agreed that the post box in Tavistock Road is in a very poor condition. The Clerk will contact Royal Mail and, if they will not repair it, the PC will arrange for it to be done once the Horse Chestnut has been felled. The BT telephone box in Bickleigh also needs repair and this will be funded by the PC.

8. Woolwell Centre

- To receive an update about the preparation of the new lease on the Woolwell Centre between SHDC and Bickleigh Parish Council.

SHDC's Solicitor is now in possession of all the necessary documents and will commence drafting the new lease as soon as the caseload permits. They are arranging the Public Open Space disposal notice process and will make a start on the report to Hub Committee for the grant of a long leasehold interest very soon. SHDC did say that they want to see this matter concluded as soon as possible but that, because there is no change or effect to that which is on the land at present, this may need to concede precedence to other more urgent matters.

- To receive an update from the Woolwell Community Resource Trust (WCRT).
The latest news that Devon is in Tier 2 means that the Centre will not be getting back on its feet again this year. Financially they are applying for every grant available and they have not yet used the first tranche of money from the PC but they are expecting to have to after Christmas because all other income sources are on hold. Apart from am/pm Club staff, everyone is on furlough, including the Centre Manager, so as to save on costs. Even more of the Centre now has to close down so they are dealing with this as carefully as they can. It is tough on the staff and there is not a clear idea of when the situation will change.
The Centre is open for a limited range of events but it is very restricted in what is allowed.

9. To receive the notes from the Community Working Group and to discuss the recommendations.

Councillors discussed the communications training with the company *Breakthrough Communications* and the Parish Clerk was asked to arrange the training for early January. The training will comprise a 2 hour session on the subject of creating a strategy for communicating with the community. The cost will be £325 and will include all councillors.

10. To receive an update from the Staffing Committee.

The Committee met on the 17th November with the Parish Clerk for a 3-month appraisal. It was a useful and productive meeting.

11. To note the following and to consider a nominated representative for the PC.

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner has launched a new scheme called the [OPCC Councillor Advocacy Scheme](#) which aims to improve communication between local councillors, the police and the police and crime commissioner. The scheme provides regular opportunities to see and hear the latest news and information including face to face discussions, quarterly meetings, themed seminars and access to a named contact within the Commissioner's office.

Councillor B Spencer was nominated as the BPC representative.

12. To receive an update from the BPC representative for Roborough Recreation Hall.

Councillor C Spencer gave an update. The Trustees had planned to reopen the Hall but this had to be changed in view of the second lockdown. There is still a lot of work to be done on the playing field side and there are roof and internal repairs to be done. The possible donation of the portacabin from the PC was discussed in some depth.

13. To receive reports from County and District Councillors.

County Councillor John Hart gave his apologies and sent the following update:

DCC is working on the County Council budget at the moment. Officers are trying to see how the Chancellor's statement will affect it and they do have real pressure on all budget lines this year. However, the priority is to look after the old, the young and the vulnerable and they will shortly be announcing a plan to help families eligible for free school meals over the Christmas break. They will also be looking to continue this support at least until after Easter.

Devon has been told today that it is in Tier 2 in the new system that is coming in when Lockdown finishes on the 2nd December. He had been hoping for Tier 1 because Devon has a reducing number of Covid-19 cases and has reduced the pressure on our hospital beds – the Nightingale Hospital is now open to offer more capacity. Unfortunately the Government has looked at Devon as a whole and the Covid-19 cases in Plymouth and Torbay are a lot higher than Devon. He is now lobbying for specific support for the hospitality businesses as, without some help, there are likely to be far less pubs and restaurants in the spring. There is also a need to help families to meet and reduce loneliness and isolation, which is becoming a serious worry in a County the size of Devon with a sparse population.

He updated the Devon MPs yesterday on the current Covid-19 position and asked them to lobby for the above. He reminded everyone: Keep your distance, Wear a facemask when shopping, Wash your hands regularly. This does protect us from the virus. We now have a vaccine but it will take quite a while for it to be available to all of our residents.

District Councillor Barrie Spencer gave a report – see attachment below.

District Councillor Nicky Hopwood gave the following update:

Waste changes – SHDC will be meeting with the new contractor next week to speak to them about how the new contract is working. There have been some problems and it is very difficult on both sides.

There have been problems lately with several deer being hit in Woolwell by cars. It seems that the police have no deer policy so if the police call out a vet to put an animal out of its suffering they will pay for this but if a vet sees an animal in distress and then deals with it they are legally obliged to pay for this and dispose of the body. Cllr Hopwood is working with the police to sort this out.

Village Halls -there is another tranche of grants to help with funding.

In Woolwell the Christmas tree lights were turned on in a quiet ceremony so that the children could see them as they came out of school and this was much appreciated.

14. Finance

Councillor Rundell took over as Chair for this section of the meeting.

- To note the current bank balance of £87,937.14.
This was noted.
- To approve the following payments, which included an emergency payment to the Woolwell Centre for the remainder of the £15,000 maintenance grant.

Date	Payee	Total	VAT	Net	Details
30/10/20	Cllr B Spencer	17.99			Poppy Wreath for Remembrance Day
19/11/20	H Nathanson	21.60	3.60	18.00	Monthly Zoom licence – Sep/Oct/Nov
26/10/20	Chubb Fire & Elec	307.36	51.23	256.13	Fire Alarm Service Annual Contract – 2 nd payment

26/11/20	Woolwell Centre	£2,959.32			Urgent plumbing works to the kitchen
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- To note that a direct debit has now been set up on the EE account for payment of £24.52 on the 10th of each month.
This was noted.
- To note the current Budget Chart which shows what has been spent so far this year.
This was noted.

Councillor B Spencer resumed the Chair at this point.

15. To discuss a grant funding application from Roborough Rainbows.

Councillors discussed the application and it was unanimously agreed to grant the requested funding to the Roborough Rainbows.

16. To note the following correspondence:

- Councillors are invited to the South Devon and Dartmoor Community Safety Partnership Forum on 9th December 2020. This will cover projects that have been delivered over the last year on topics including: domestic abuse in later life; preventing radicalisation; South Devon exploitation prevention network; and responses to changing youth culture.
- South Hams District Council is inviting residents and businesses to have their say on Alcohol Public Space Protection Orders. These deal with potential anti-social behaviour in an area, which could have a harmful effect on the quality of life for those in the local community. The Council would like to hear from you if you live in Woolwell. The consultation will be running for four weeks, from Wednesday 18 November to Friday 18 December 2020 and details can be found at <https://www.engagement.southhams.gov.uk/pspos-alcohol>
- There have been a number of Avian Flu cases in the UK and new guidelines have been introduced which must be followed by anyone who keeps birds <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu>
- The latest edition of *The Valley*, the newsletter of the Tamar Valley AONB is due out in March 2021 and will celebrate 25 years of the Tamar Valley. Contributions are invited and details are available at <https://www.tamarvalley.org.uk/>

These were all noted.

17. To agree a date for the December meeting and to note that there is an additional meeting in January to set the budget for 2021/22.

There will not be a meeting of the Full Council in December. Urgent items will be approved by a majority decision on email.

There will be a meeting of the **Assets Working Group on Tuesday 8th December at 3pm** via Zoom and a meeting of the **Finance Working Group** will also be arranged for December.

The meeting ended at 9.30pm.

Councillor B Spencer
Chairman

Report to Bickleigh Parish Council

26 November 2020

From **Cllr Barrie Spencer**
Bickleigh & Cornwood Ward, South Hams District Council

Covid 19

As you know by now South Hams and the rest of Devon have been put into Tier Two of the new regulations effective from 02 December 2020. There is a lot out there on what this means so I am not going to elaborate on the issues except to say that this has far reaching effects on many individuals and businesses in the Ward.

We are, I am sure, all looking forward to eating out again and businesses yearn for the day when they are free of their current shackles. Potentially the new regulations could last until March 2021 but our comfort comes from the fact that we are fighting back against Covid and there are two weekly reviews.

The Legacy of Covid 19

SHDC staff are still working from their respective homes and doing the jobs that need to be done. Technology has taken over and Teams, Skype, Messenger and WhatsApp are the tools of our trade. When they return is anybody's guess.

The Council has appointed two new Compliance Officers whose task will be to support and educate businesses on Covid 19 and to assist with enforcement actions for non-compliance if required. More Compliance Officers are being sought to enhance this team. It is hoped that they will be able to encourage public confidence in visiting high streets.

Waste Collections

This has been a recurring theme in most District Councillors lives over the past few weeks. Residents are constantly contacting us with complaints about delayed or missed collections. SHDC staff are working hard to try and resolve these issues with our third-party contractor – FCC. It is hoped that the new rounds will soon be bedded in.

If you do not get your bins collected please, in the first instance, use the Report function on the SHDC website. As Councillors you can report missed collections on behalf of your residents. The Report function goes straight to FCC so this is the quickest way to get remedial actions taken

Barwood Development

Barwood and still with us and their plans are proceeding albeit slowly at the moment. Both Cllr Nicky Hopwood and myself have been holding regular monthly meetings with both the planning officer and the Urban Fringe co-ordinator. Additional reports and further studies are being sought and there should be a further public consultation which would offer greater insight into their current thinking. I am not sure exactly how this will be conducted but it is being looked at closely.

Climate Changes

The Councils Working Group on Climate change continues to meet and we are looking forward to their report shortly; although I do not have a precise time it should be this year.

Locality Officers

I sit on the Task & Finish Group which was set up to review how Locality Officers work and interact with residents. Locality is the area in SHDC which deals with some of the main issues that affect us on the ground – waste, fly tipping, parking, bin bags etc. The Group has recently made recommendations to the District Council on what improvements could be made to the team which will hopefully bring higher standards to their contribution to you, as residents. This should happen early next year.

IT Working Group

I also sit on the this Group which has been sitting for some months and has been working with officers to introduce new computer systems that will take the Council to a new level. New elements have been rolling out over the past few months and this should mean that there will be improvements in the way your requests and requirements are handled. This is an ongoing task.

Community Consultation & Engagement

I also sit on this group and we have just made recommendations about how the Council should either review or develop new policy and strategy. Our brief is to deliver a consultation and communication strategy for the council.

The strategy outlines how we will work together to inform, consult and involve local people in decision making and improving services generally. We hope that the outcome of this work will be to make the South Hams a better place by asking residents to directly contribute to the way things are done.

Barrie Spencer

Cllr.Barrie.Spencer@southhams.gov.uk

26 November 2020