

KINGSWEAR PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Council Meeting held at the Village Hall (Lower Room)
on Wednesday 11th March 2020 at 7.00pm

Present: Cllrs L Maurer (Chairman), B Longland, J Hacking, S Smith, P Burnell, E Jones.

In Attendance: Miss Sue Balsdon – Clerk to the Council.

2 Members of public present.

C/170/19 – Welcome from the Chairman

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

C/171/19 – To receive any apologies for absence from the Meeting.

Cllrs H Newcombe, J Hawkins, Gary Webber, P Pudduck, District Cllr R Rowe.

C/172/19 - To receive any Declaration of Interest. [Councillors are also reminded that they must register any new interest or change in any interest already registered within 28 days of that new interest or change].

There were no declarations of interest noted.

The Council Meeting was suspended to allow members of the public to ask questions and make representations to the Council:

The Council will receive the following reports if available:

i) Stagecoach 18A Bus Service:

Two representatives from Stagecoach attended - Graham Bailey, Commercial Advisor and Paul Clark, Operations Director.

Objections raised by residents regarding the proposed withdrawal of the 18A Bus Services:

- It is a 50% reduction in service, reducing flexibility and convenience.
- Restricted use for bus pass users.
- Restricted use for commuters and school pupils.
- Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire - Of the 509 people who responded to the section on public transport, 450 residents supported the need for the bus services and asked for improved services not a reduction.
- This bus service is very busy in the summer period with tourists. We have the Hillhead Camp Site and the National Trust property at Coleton Fishacre, as well as visitors to Dartmouth and coastal path walkers. Only one bus an hour will increase this problem.
- With an increasingly elderly population rural bus services should be increased for greater road safety, helping the environment and for the reduction of social isolation and health and welfare benefits.
- There is a climate crisis, so why are rural bus services being reduced? Rural residents have the longest journeys to make.
- This is a vital service to our village, to ensure it has adequate links to the facilities in Torbay.

Stagecoach Response:

- The withdrawal of the 18A bus service has been proposed in the Stagecoach Route Consultation for 2020. A final decision will be made on the proposed withdrawal, only when the public consultation phase has been completed. If any part of the plan proves to be particularly controversial, relevant feedback will be considered and incorporated wherever possible.
- The 18A bus service is not cost effective for Stagecoach. The service used to be subsidised by Torbay and Devon County Council, but this subsidy was taken away several years ago and unfortunately it isn't viable to run the 18A bus service on a commercial basis.
- Stagecoach are looking at withdrawing the 18A Bus Service during the winter months only, in the first instance.
- The only revenue Stagecoach receive for this service is the money which is taken on the bus. A high proportion of those using the service, have bus passes. Stagecoach are reimbursed for each journey, but this does not cover the true cost of the journey. Each year this funding is reduced.
- Stagecoach have agreed this is a socially necessary service, that isn't covering its costs. It is up to Devon County Council to step in, if they feel there is a social need. Government funding exists for routes that may not be commercially viable, but which are considered socially necessary, to ensure people stay connected with their local services and communities.

ii) Devon County Councillor – None.

iii) South Hams District Councillors:

Please see Kingswear Parish Council website (Full Council Minutes) for March report.

iv) Police – None.

v) Residents Parking – None.

vi) Neighbourhood Plan:

Prior to the meeting, the Clerk circulated to Councillors, the latest version of the Neighbourhood Plan, the draft Consultation Statement and the Basic Conditions Statement, received from the Kingswear Neighbourhood Plan Group. The documents were considered by Councillors and approval was given for these to be sent to South Hams District Council.

The full consultation document and Basic Conditions Statement are legally required documents to accompany the full Kingswear Neighbourhood Plan and Character Assessment, when we submit to the Planning Authority for Regulation 16.

David McIlrath and Eileen Parkes have had several meetings over recent weeks, to check and amend the documents. David has worked very hard on formatting these documents and Mrs Parkes would like to formally thank him for his time and effort.

An invoice in the sum of £1,250 has been submitted for payment, for advice received regarding the consultation statement and for writing the basic conditions statement. A final account will be presented after the government examination. An expense claim (stationery) was also submitted for £17.50.

The Council will reconvene to discuss the following items:

C/173/19 - To resolve to approve the following minutes subject to any amendments [Amendments to the Confidential Minutes to be noted and documented in Part II:]

i) Full Council Meeting – 12th February 2020.

ii) Full Council Meeting (Confidential) – 12th February 2020.

It was resolved to approve the minutes without amendment.

C/174/19 - Financial Matters:

i) To resolve to approve the expenditure of the Council for the period 01/02/20 – 29/02/20.

It was resolved to approve the expenditure of the Council for the period 1st February to 29th February 2020.

ii) To present for review – Finance Report and Bank Reconciliation as at 29/02/20.

The Income & Expenditure report and bank reconciliation for month ended 29th February 2020 was reviewed by Councillors.

C/175/19 - To approve the continued appointment of Kevin Rose (IAC Ltd) as the Council's Internal Auditor.

The Council voted to approve the continued appointment of Kevin Rose (IAC Ltd) as the Council's Internal Auditor.

C/176/19 - To approve the continued membership of the following organisations:

i) Society of Local Council Clerks.

ii) Devon Association of Local Councils.

iii) Devon Communities Together.

The Council voted to approve membership of the SLCC, DALC and Devon Communities Together for the forthcoming year - 2020/21.

C/177/19 - To receive the Chairman's report.

Cllrs Maurer and Hawkins met with Premier Marina at Noss, who have given the Council £500 towards the costs of their 75th Anniversary of VE Day celebrations, which are to be held in May.

Hillhead residents were concerned, regarding a letter they had received from contractors, with reference the proposed closure of Brixham Rd. The Parish Council contacted Torbay who liaised with the contractors, to agree a more convenient way for residents to enter and exit their properties.

The new bollards are in place on Fore Street, however as a result of the installation, there are reports of raised tarmac causing a trip hazard and Highways have been informed of this.

A number of incidents of cars being scratched deliberately on Higher Contour Rd and Church Hill, have been reported.

C/178/19 - To receive an update from the Clerk:

i) Churchyard wall railings.

The faculty and planning application for the Churchyard railings are both on hold, as the Diocese Advisory Committee have expressed concerns regarding the design of the railings and if whether any barrier is necessary. The SHDC Conservation Officer is in agreement and has suggested a natural barrier may be more appropriate.

A meeting was held with the Parochial Church Council to discuss their thoughts regarding the points made by the DAC. The PCC would prefer to opt for railings as opposed to replanting a hedge, as it was felt that a hedge would further damage the wall.

The PCC suggested they write to the DAC to ask what they would accept as a permanent barrier along the wall.

ii) Jubilee Park play area sign.

The play area safety sign is now displayed in the notice board in Jubilee Park.

iii) Rural Policing.

Sgt Crofts from our local policing team, has said he is more than happy to attend one of the Council's meetings and a list of dates has been forwarded to him. He advised the Councillor Advocate Scheme is a way of maintaining communication with the police and it was noted that Cllr Hacking had previously expressed an interest in becoming the Council's representative.

Sgt Crofts provided an email address for the local policing team, which can be used for non-urgent matters - dartmouth@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.co.uk. He also advised that details of recorded crimes in the area, can be found using the following link:
<https://www.police.uk/devon-and-cornwall/DEV.4001/crime/>.

iv) Road Sweeping.

The Road Sweep went ahead on 26th February 20. Letters advising of the date and time of the sweep, were delivered the Friday before and also on the Monday by SHDC. Two sweepers attended – 1 large and 1 small. Unfortunately, there were still cars parked on HCR, so they were limited to where the sweepers could operate. SHDC have advised it would be virtually impossible to clear any long road like HCR, regardless of what tactics were used. Most of the vehicles which hadn't been moved, still had the letters on their windscreens, so may have been there for some time.

The letters which were put on cars, by the Parish Council, asked for cars to be removed between the hours of 8.30 & 11.30, but SHDC advised that it shouldn't take much more than an hour for the sweep to take place, so we will bear this in mind for future sweeps.

Church Hill and Higher Street are not currently swept by SHDC and we have received a complaint of litter in the gutters near to the Village Hall. I have reported this to SHDC and they have advised that if there is clear evidence of failed street cleaning standards, then these need to be reported. Photographic evidence will be taken and provided to SHDC.

v) Beacon Lane Steps.

The Clerk has contacted the Public Rights of Way warden regarding the damage to the Beacon Lane steps. The Warden has been out to have a look at the steps and has advised that some of the lower landings have some erosion, which was initially caused by a SWW overflowing drain. He deems the erosion to be minor and it is not something he is able to prioritise at the moment. With the recent storms,

his department has been under extreme pressure and are having to close footpaths because of landslips etc.

vi) Footpath 9 (Upper Wood Lane to Mount Ridley Rd).

A fallen tree on Footpath 9 was reported and this has now been cleared by South Hams District Council.

C/179/19 - To discuss and agree future actions for the following events:

i) Annual Parish Meeting and Kingswear Award nominations.

The Annual Parish meeting is due to be held on Wednesday 20th May at 6pm. The following speakers have confirmed their attendance:

Sune Nightingale – Sustainable Dittisham
Sue Merotra – Defib Demonstration
Update from Dart Harbour
Eileen Parkes – Neighbourhood Plan
Natalie Johnson SHDC – Waste & Recycling
Devon Communities Together – Emergency Plan

The event is to be advertised in the 'By the Dart' and posters are to be put up in Kingswear and at Hillhead.

There is a possibility that the event may have to be postponed, as it is likely the government will soon be putting in place, social distancing measures with reference Covid-19.

ii) VE Day Celebrations.

The Council have proposed an afternoon tea event on Sunday 10th May, in celebration of the 75th anniversary of VE Day. The event will be held in the Village Hall and a local caterer has been chosen.

C/180/19 - To consider and approve the 20/21 Lengthsman Service Level Agreement with Brixham Town Council.

The Lengthsman Service Level Agreement for 20/21, was considered by Councillors and the annual cost of £2,220 approved.

C/181/19 - For the purposes of identifying vessels which have been found adrift, to approve:

i) The sharing of mooring holder's personal data with Dart Harbour.

ii) Mandatory display of either a harbour dues sticker or a brown triangular sticker on all boats moored on the Parish Pontoon or in Waterhead Creek.

Concerns were raised at the Council's February meeting regarding health and safety and possible unnecessary emergency call outs, due to the mooring holder's personal data being withheld by the Clerk with reference GDPR.

The Clerk contacted the Harbour Master, to ask how best the Council can provide sufficient information to them, in order that they can identify a boat if found adrift in the Harbour. Mark Cooper has advised that the best way, would be to ask all mooring holders to register with them direct for a brown boat sticker. These are free and allow Dart Harbour to track down owners, when boats come adrift or need attention. The main benefit for Dart Harbour, is that by having the details on their system, they can avoid a search and rescue effort, when an empty boat is found.

In addition to this, the Clerk asked if an up to date list of mooring holder's contact details could be shared with Dart Harbour, when permits are renewed in April. If approved, a data sharing agreement would be drawn up between the Council and Dart Harbour, to set out the purpose of the data sharing and to demonstrate our accountability under GDPR.

Councillors approved the sharing of mooring holders contact details with Dart Harbour, subject to obtaining the consent from each boat owner. It will also be mandatory for all mooring holders to have a brown triangular boat sticker displayed on their boat.

C/182/19 - To review Councillor responsibilities.

Responsibilities for certain Council functions are given to Councillors, to aid the Clerk with practical issues, where they might have an expertise in a particular subject or to provide support for those 'on the ground' issues which may arise. Cllr Smith agreed to provide support to the Clerk with regards Health & Safety and

Risk Assessments and Cllr Jones was appointed Councillor responsible for footpaths.

C/183/19 - To consider the Council's response, in the event a Coronavirus pandemic is declared.

The Parish Council have been monitoring Government advice, as the COVID19 pandemic escalates in the UK. It is likely that Government will pass emergency legislation to support the prevention of the spread of Covid-19. This may include restricting people's activity and travel, increasing the number of people who are asked to self-isolate and preventing groupings of people for meetings and events.

A business continuity plan will be drawn up by the Clerk, to advise how the Council will continue to operate its business, should social distancing measures be announced by the Government.

C/184/19 - To propose agenda items for the April 20 Full Council meeting.

None.

C/185/19 - Urgent items - For information.

None.

C/186/19 - To discuss items of a confidential nature and resolve that in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Sub section 2, and the Local Government Act 1972 Section 100A sub sections (2) and (4) that the public and press be excluded from the Meeting in view of the items to be discussed. (Quotes and Staffing).

The Council approved the following quotes:

i) Cemetery Gate & Railings.

A quote in the sum of £680 received from Alan Farr was approved by the Council.

ii) Red Telephone Box – Lower Contour Road.

A quote in the sum of £950 received from Alan Farr was approved by the Council.

By Order of the Council

Sue Balsdon

Sue Balsdon
Clerk to the Council

The Meeting ended at 8.15 pm.

Minutes Approved: Councillor L Maurer – Chairman