

KINGSWEAR PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held at the Village Hall (Lower Room)
on Wednesday 11th January 2023 at 7.00pm

Present: Cllrs L Maurer (Chairman), J Hawkins, G Webber, P Pudduck, E Jones, S Pearson, P Burnell, T Burnell, H Newcombe, B Longland, District Cllr H Bastone

In Attendance: Sue Balsdon (Clerk)

Members of public present: 2

C/141/22 – Welcome from the Chairman

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

C/142/22 – To receive any apologies for absence from the Meeting.

None.

C/143/22 - 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:

None.

The Council will receive the following reports if available:

i) Bob Mark (Chair – Board of Trustees, SW Coast Path Association)

The Inspector's report for the Kingswear section of the English Coast Path (ECP) states that the Natural England (NE) surveyors would have preferred to route the ECP along the presently closed Beacon Road section, which is a public right of way, (PROW), the original route of the South West Coast Path (SWCP), and better meets the criteria set for the ECP; which is to route the re-designated path to provide the best proximity to the coast with views of the sea. The NE inspector acknowledges that Beacon Road fits the ECP criteria in this respect better than Castle Rd. The only reason, (stated by NE to the Inspector and referenced in the Report), not to designate Beacon Road as the ECP route, was the cliff fall and temporary path closure. The Beacon Road path at the eastern end of Beacon Road has two traffic management notices presently imposed by DCC. One to prohibit vehicles, which DCC say will stay, the other a temporary path closure notice due to the old cliff-fall, which DCC have stated they will remove once path safety works are complete.

Once the privately financed contractor repairs to the Beacon Road path are completed, the SWCP Association recommends that it would be advisable to ask Richard Walton, Devon County Council (DCC) PROW Officer, to apply to Natural England to designate the Beacon Road path as the primary ECP route. This action should unlock ECP funds to adjust the current path signage, and route walkers away from the difficult to negotiate Alma Steps, and from the steep Church Hill, which lacks pavement in places, and is in constant use to carry vehicle traffic through the village. DCC can designate Beacon Road as an alternative route for the ECP to unlock local DCC funds for any upgrading to the Beacon Road Path which DCC deem appropriate. It is understood that DCC plan to undertake a formal path survey of Beacon Road once the contracted work is complete, to determine if any additional work by DCC, which falls outside the privately funded slope re-stabilisation work is appropriate. Accessing ECP funds by adjusting the designation, is recommended to secure any long-term ongoing maintenance funds which become available in the future once the ECP is fully established. SWCP Association Charity Path improvement funds for the Coast Path can also be sought via the South West Coast Path Association Path Committee which disburses its limited funds through the priorities established by its Path Committee across the 630 miles of the existing SWCP.

Lighthouse Beach - The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, which underpins establishment of the ECP, also lays down criteria for coastal access. Lighthouse Beach, as a formerly accessible public beach, falls squarely into the criteria for coastal access as defined by the 2009 Act. The landowner of Lighthouse Beach applied to have the Beach designated as 'excluded land' under the Act, which would have closed the beach permanently and excluded public access. The DEFRA Secretary of State appointed an Inspector to assess the objections to

coastal access for Lighthouse Beach. The objections were overturned and the Inspector recommended to the Secretary of State that coastal access be restored for the benefit of the public. The immediate curtilage around Inverdart Boathouse, and its dock, was recognised by the Inspector as private land. The Secretary of State accepted the Inspector's findings. The Inspector noted in her Report that DCC will have powers under the Act, once the ECP Kingswear section is finalised, to enforce public access to the Beach. The Kingswear to Lyme Section ECP route has been surveyed and largely approved by the Secretary of State, work is in hand by Natural England, working with the Local Authorities, (in the Kingswear case DCC), to establish the ECP route on the ground with signage and path improvements pending opening this section of the ECP soon. The formal progress of the ECP can be checked and tracked on the Natural England web-page. <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/england-coast-path-improving-public-access-to-the-coast>

The Parish Council (KPC) discussed next steps to facilitate and accelerate work on restoring access for residents and visitors to the Beacon Road Path and Lighthouse Beach. Access is conditional on two actions (1) Completion of repairs to the Beacon Road Path, and DCC removal of the temporary path closure notice. (2) Opening of the Kingswear section of the ECP by Natural England to provide DCC with the necessary powers to enforce appropriate Coastal Access. I believe DCC are best placed to update KPC on these aspects rather than the SWCPA, which supports KPC in its endeavours to improve the National Trail through Kingswear.

ii) Devon County Councillor

With regards to Beacon Road and the stabilization of the cliff, Devon County Council have advised that there have been technical difficulties at the site, which have necessitated a review of both the design and of safe working procedures and therefore work has been temporarily halted. However, once the stabilization is complete, Devon County Council will survey the cliff themselves and come forward with a scheme to reopen the public right of way. Cllr Hawkins proposed that re-opening the Beacon Road path in time for the planned celebrations in the village for the Kings Coronation would be wonderful and it was therefore agreed to reinstate the Light House Beach working Group in order to progress this.

Devon County Council budget is in a very difficult financial situation at the present moment, which unfortunately is not helpful for projects we may want to progress in the next 12 to 18 months.

South Hams District Council has agreed proposals for second homeowners to pay a fair share of Council Tax. The proposals agreed would see second homeowners paying double the Council Tax and the changes are likely to take effect in 2024.

I understand there are proposals to make the Car Ferry electric propelled, which will be good for the climate and environment.

The Health and Wellbeing Centre at Townstal is due to open in April and I believe Dartmouth Caring will be moving in, in March.

I am meeting with Les Pym (Devon County Council Street Lighting) in the Village next months, regarding their proposals for the replacement of the string of lights in Fore Street.

Dartmouth Youth Group is going from strength to strength. A group of children were taken on the Train of Lights at Christmas, which was thoroughly enjoyed. The Youth Club is open on Tuesdays at Ivy Lane and Rollerblading on Friday Nights at the Leisure Centre, all of which are provided free of charge.

iii) South Hams District Councillors

Please see Kingswear Parish Council website (Full Council Minutes) for District Councillor reports.

iv) Police

None.

v) Sustainable Kingswear

Sustainable Kingswear have been in contact with South Dartmoor Community Energy, regarding what further help had been provided to applicants, following the completion of the Western Power Sustainable Energy Project. They have advised that more than £22k of other support has been provided to residents in the Parish.

The group have now purchased a thermal imaging camera using funds from the District Council. The camera can be utilised by residents in the Parish to see where they are losing heat from their homes.

No further correspondence has been received in regard to the Devon County Council Power Allotments Initiative and this may possibly have something to do with the distance from a primary substation.

With regards community composting sites, the pre-application site visit fee has now been waived by Devon County Council, so we are keen to let this information be known in the hope a site can be found in Kingswear. The group will be promoting home composting, as the best way of dealing with garden waste.

They have also heard today about an initiative called 'Shareded' who are based in the South Hams. They have tools, household appliances, camping and gardening equipment etc that can be borrowed for a small fee. The Clerk will share details of this initiative via the Council's Facebook Group and website.

The Council will reconvene to discuss the following items:

C/144/22 - To make comment to the Planning Authority with regards to the following planning applications (Hector).

i) **Ref:** 4097/22/HHO **Proposal:** Householder application for raising of existing roof with rear dormer roof extension to create additional ensuite bedroom and study area. Roof of garage to be replaced from mono pitch to duo pitch Site **Address:** 76 Raddicombe Drive, Hillhead, TQ5 0EZ

SUPPORT

ii) **Ref:** 4210/22/FUL **Proposal:** Installation of car parking meter **Site Address:** Mansands Car Park, Brownstone Road, Kingswear

iii) **Ref:** 4206/22/FUL **Proposal:** Installation of car parking meter **Site Address:** Coleton Fishacre, Brownstone Road, Kingswear

OBJECT (ii & iii) – Kingswear Parish Council strongly object to the installation of a car parking meter at Mansands Car Park and at Coleton Fishacre. This will encourage people to park on nearby roads and verges to avoid car parking charges, which will be detrimental to local farms and homes and restrict access.

Cllr Pudduck advised that a pre application enquiry has been made in regard to land on Brixham Road for five detached properties and this was noted by Councillors.

C/145/22 - To receive an update in regard to the A3022 road closure - Inglewood development

Cllr Hawkins attended a meeting with Torbay Council, Devon Highways and other key stakeholders on 10th January. Torbay Council advised that the diversion route seems to be working well and the works themselves are progressing despite the heavy rain. There have been no major issues and that as expected, during peak times there is congestion but nothing more than was predicted – these continue to be monitored. The feedback from the College and schools, the fishing industry and the Brixham Chamber of Trade has all been positive. There are some emergency gas utility works that are being undertaken on Sands Road in Paignton, but this has not had an impact on the diversion route and the contractors are being encouraged to complete the works as quickly as possible.

C/146/22 - To resolve to approve the following minutes subject to any amendments:

i) Full Council Meeting – 14/12/22.

The minutes for December's Full Council were approved without amendment.

C/147/22 - Financial Matters (Clerk).

i) To resolve to approve the expenditure of the Council for the period 01/12/22 – 31/12/22.

It was resolved to approve the expenditure of the Council for the period 1st December 2022 to 31st December 2022.

ii) To present for review the month end finance report and bank reconciliation as at 31/12/22.

The finance report and bank reconciliation for month ending 31st December 2022 was reviewed by Councillors. All receipts and payments have been reconciled against the Council's bank statements and no differences have been identified.

C/148/22 - With reference to budget setting for 23/24 (Clerk):

i) To review forecast of 22/23 year end position.

Councillors reviewed the forecast report produced by the Clerk, detailing the 22/23 Budget, the Council's expenditure to date, a forecast of estimated spend for the remaining part of the year and the subsequent variances against each budget line.

The following adjustments were made to the forecast spend:

- To include spend for the archway noticeboard – To be purchased in 22/23.

ii) To consider the 23/24 draft budget figures and make any amendments considered necessary.

The 23/24 draft budget figures produced by the Finance Committee were considered and the following adjustments made:

- Remove budget for noticeboard (To be purchased in 22/23).
- Increase grave digging income budget by 10% (Administration charge).
- Increase budget for Coronation events income to £2000.
- Reduce telephone budget to £50.

- Remove budget Shakespeare event £100.
- Increase budget Firework & Bonfire event £100.

iii) To agree the total budget requirement for 23/24.

The Parish Council’s budget requirement for 23/24 is £84,198.

iv) To agree the total precept requirement for 23/24.

The Clerk advised that the tax base, which is used to calculate the band D Council tax charge for each Parish, has reduced by 11.25 properties and therefore if the Council opt to keep their precept the same, there will still be an increase in cost. The Council therefore agreed to set a precept requirement which keeps their band D parish council tax rate at the same level as that of the previous year. The Parish Council’s precept requirement for 23/24 is £45,771 – A reduction of £672.

Cllr Pudduck requested that it be minuted, that he has forecast the year end bank balance to be £66k.

C/149/22 - To resolve to approve Scheme of Delegation decisions made 10/12/22 to 04/1/23
(Clerk).

It was resolved to approve the Scheme of Delegation decisions for the period 10th December 22 to 4th January 23.

C/150/22 - Chairman’s Report.

The electric blankets purchased to help vulnerable residents in the Parish have now been allocated.

C/151/22 - To propose agenda items for the next Full Council meeting.

M Emms Bequest / Covid Grant / Working Group - Beacon Road & Lighthouse Beach.

C/152/22 - Urgent Items – For information.

Councillors agreed for funds of £181 raised by residents at the Community Market for the Jubilee Bell, to be deposited in the M Emms Bequest account temporarily, pending a decision by FROST as to whether to proceed with the project.

Sue Balsdon

Sue Balsdon
Clerk to the Council

The Meeting ended at 9.20 pm.

Minutes Approved: Councillor L Maurer – Chairman