



PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of a meeting of Dalwood Parish Council (23/24.7) held on Monday 8 January 2024 at 19:30 hrs in Dalwood Village Hall

Present: Cllrs Kathy Laing (Chair), Tony Benger, Peter Lawrence, Graham Perry, Christine Wyatt

In attendance: Ian Walker (Clerk & RFO) and four members of the public (apologies from Laurie Lucas)

1. Public Forum

Residents raised the following issues:

- Mrs S Beak gave a short presentation of the ongoing works at the Community Coffee Shop situated at the village shop which has now had scaffolding removed prior to the fit-out of the interior. She emphasised that two thirds of the funding for the Coffee Shop had been raised by village residents and she hoped that the facilities would be well used by villagers once it had been completed. The Parish Council expressed its thanks to Mrs Beak for her major part in driving the project forward, including the significant fund raising.
- The issue of potholes in village roads was again brought up, together with the general deterioration of many roads. This issue was dealt with in detail later in the agenda.

2. Apologies for absence: Cllr Tim Hodges (Vice Chair), Cllr Ben Trott and Owain Morgan (Parish Paths Coordinator)

3. Declarations of interest

- i. Cllr Benger declared an interest in items 7 (works to willow tree) and 12(i) (purchase of new oak tree).

4. Minutes: It was agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2023 be signed by the Chair as a true record.

5. Finance and Administration

- i. The schedule of payments made since the last meeting (and circulated with the agenda) were formally approved and signed by the Chair.
- ii. The summary of receipts and payments to 31 December 2023 showing a balance in hand of £14,473 (and circulated with the agenda) were approved and signed by the Chair.

- iii. The bank reconciliation as at 31 December 2023 (and circulated with the agenda) was approved and signed by the Chair.
- iv. The current allocation of funds was reviewed and it was agreed that the Election Fund (£480) should be held at its current levels and likewise with the Defibrillator Fund (£277.85) pending a review of the likely timing and cost of a replacement unit.
- v. It was agreed that the Maintenance budget should be reviewed in future years with particular reference to compiling a register of trees that were the responsibility of the Parish Council and the work that was, or would be, required on those trees.
- vi. The budget for 2024/25 (circulated with the agenda) showing anticipated income of £8,281 and anticipated expenditure of £8,932 was formally approved and signed by the Chair.
- vii. The Clerk was formally authorised to submit a precept application to East Devon District Council of £7,476.

6. Village Green application

It was noted that Cllr Trott had prepared the application to Devon County Council for the proposed Village Green and that it was currently with the Clerk for completion.

7. Works to willow tree

Further to the minutes of 9 October 2023, it was noted that no further quotation had been received and, therefore, that Cllr Benger be requested to take the matter forward at a cost of circa £980.

8. Planning matters

The matters that had been passed to Councillors since the last meeting (a summary of which had been circulated with the agenda) were noted. It was agreed that, in future, councillors would try to give positive and negative comments on such applications and that a summary would be passed on to East Devon District Council by the Clerk in all cases

9. Highway matters

- i. **Pot Holes** – The Council (and members of the public) were very disappointed to note that no response had been received to the Clerk's email to Stuart Hughes (East Devon Highways) on 5 December 2023. It was further noted that there had been significant deterioration to many areas of the carriageway but, in particular, around Shepherd's Knap and Carters Farm and the road leading to Coombeshead Farm. It was also noted that the culvert around Carters Cross/School House had also collapsed. The Clerk was instructed to write again to the relevant authorities. ***[NB Response received since meeting so letter deferred]***
- ii. **Bus shelter** – this matter had still not been resolved but was continuing to be dealt with by Councillors.
- iii. **Drains** – recent weather has caused problems with many of the drains around the village and it was agreed that the clearance of these should be a priority.

- iv. **Dalwood Bridge** – following a meeting of councillors on 5 January 2023 and after discussions with the adjoining property owner, it was agreed that work should be undertaken at the eastern end of Dalwood Bridge (at a cost of £100) to lower the level of the verge adjacent to the road to try to eliminate the area of flooding and so that rainwater is allowed to flow down to the river along the former route of the old ford.
- v. **Studhayes Road** – Cllr Benger had recently had discussions with Tim White about the area of flooding between the chicken farm and Loughwood Lane. Tim White had agreed to review the drainage in general in this area and also to remove the obstructions impeding the flow of water under the lower Corry Brook ford. He would also be asked to try to remove the accumulation of stones and gravel from the road in this area.
- vi. **Bridge Cottage** – it was agreed that the Clerk should write to the owner of Bridge Cottage requesting him to reduce the width of the hedge adjacent to the road as it was starting to impede the progress of large agricultural vehicles.
- vii. **Hutchins Barton** – it was noted that the ongoing works to this property have resulted in rainwater from gutters being discharged onto the highway. It was agreed that the Clerk should inform EDDC. *[NB Since meeting the gutter appears to have been removed so action deferred]*

10. Parish paths matters

- i. It was noted that Owain Morgan and the Clerk had very recently had discussions with Devon County Council with the result that an application had been made and agreed for a grant of £2,300 in respect of the P3 allowance for 2023/24, together with the monies that had already been spent on footpath repairs in the current year.
- ii. It was noted that the arrangement between local councils and Devon CC as regards footpaths was likely to be changing in the near future and a suggestion was made that a representative from Devon CC could be invited to the forthcoming village general meeting to explain the changes.
- iii. Following the recent bad weather, it had been noted that there had been a deterioration in the northern section of the footpath between Dalwood Bridge and the footbridge over the leat. In part it was believed that this could have been caused by a significant build-up of silt under the western end of Dalwood Bridge, leading to the river backing up which, in turn, leads to the river flooding over the roadway and also flooding in Stonehayes and the village hall car park. The Clerk was requested to write to the Environment Agency to see what could be done to reduce the build-up of silt and stones around the bridge.

11. Water quality monitoring survey

Cllr Wyatt explained her ongoing monitoring in this area in respect of two sites on the river. She explained that occasionally she had measured very low (but acceptable) levels of phosphates. These had been reported to the Environment Agency.

12. Other matters

- i. It was noted that the Jubilee Oak had died and it was agreed that Cllr Benger should be requested to acquire and plant another one at a cost of some £50.

- ii. It was agreed that the Clerk should investigate the cost and feasibility of replacing the existing litter bins, possibly to include dog waste bins at appropriate locations, and also to have discussions with the EDDC's refuse department about emptying the same.
- iii. It was agreed that the Clerk should have discussions with Cllr Hodges about bringing the Dalwood web site up to date.

13. Future meetings

It was agreed that future meetings of the parish council should be held on:

- 25 March 2024
- 20 May 2024 (annual Parish Council meeting and annual village meeting)
- 1 July 2024
- 2 September 2024
- 4 November 2024
- 6 January 2025
- 3 March 2025

The meeting closed at 21:05 hrs.

Approved

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Chair

Date:.....