

## COLEBROOKE PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2011 at Colebrooke Parish Hall

**Present:** Mr G Shepherd (Chairman), Mr N Enderson (Deputy Chairman), Mrs P Hockridge, Mrs D Shepherd (Clerk), Mr M Wood, Mr P Niklaus, , Mr D J Squires (MDDC), Mr J Richards, Mr M Waltho, Mr N Way, Miss M Pitts

**69. Apologies:** Mr D Hill

**70. The Chairman of MDDC Mrs Brenda Hull:** The Chairman talked about her personal and working background prior to becoming Chairman. She explained that MDDC was a large district of 350 square miles with 62 parishes, 48 parish councils and others with parish meetings rather than councils. MDDC has 42 councillors, eleven of whom are female. The leader is Peter Hare Scott. There are 6 cabinet members but all the councillors have other duties. There are policy development groups and a planning committee and licensing committee. Geraldine Talbot is the liaison contact for clerks. Parish Matters is issued regularly to keep residents informed of developments. Mrs Hull referred to £400,000 which will become available from the Community Council for Devon in January. Parishes may apply for this money. Mrs Hull gave details of the things she had done since taking office including two Royal visits. She talked about the new affordable housing schemes. She explained that the budget remained very tight and that they would need to save £900,000 this year. It was also likely that MDDC will need to borrow £52 million to buy their housing stock of 3200 houses from Central Government. Mrs Hull also referred to the changes in planning which are likely to see the system simplified. The Localism bill is also expected next year. It is possible that parish councils will be expected to consider taking on more services than they currently do and they are able to raise the precept year on year to meet the additional costs of services.

**71. Declarations of Interest:** The Chairman declared an interest in a planning application for Squirrel Lodge where he hopes to install an air source heat pump.

**72. Public Participation:** There was one member of the public present, Mrs Lee. Mrs Lee raised further issues about the Penstone Car Park. Firstly she referred to the white van which has returned and is larger than the parking spaces which are 2.4 x 4.8 meters. This van is affecting the visibility splay and also preventing her from cutting the bank. Mr Waltho undertook to speak to the owner, Jez Cook about this. Mr Richards explained that he had not been able to paint the white lines on the car park as previously agreed because of the grass. Mr Waltho and Mr Richards undertook to make an attempt to do this. Mrs Lee raised the issue of some stones that had been laid on the highway at No 2 which made it difficult to reach the post box safely. Mr Waltho undertook to speak to the owner Mr and Mrs Warren about this. Mrs Lee said that the pot hole in front of her house was still not dealt with and the Clerk agreed to chase this up.

**73. Co-option of Parish Councillor:** Miss M J Pitts signed the declaration of acceptance of office and was welcomed to the meeting by the Chairman.

**74. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2011 at Colebrooke Parish Hall:** These were approved as a correct record.

**75. Penstone Glade Insurance:** Mr Waltho reported that they were seeking three quotes for the insurance for next year. They were also looking at an alternative which would be Public liability event insurance on an event by event basis. Mr Waltho undertook to report further next time.

**76. Snow in the Parish:** The Clerk reported that Dave Fergie had been unable to attend the meeting but had offered to meet with representatives of the Council during the day to discuss the snow warden scheme. Mr Way would be happy to attend this meeting. Mr Way led a long discussion about the snow warden scheme and the advantages and disadvantages of the scheme. Councillors expressed a variety of views. Mr Way said that under the scheme parishes would get 5 tons of free salt and they would need to decide where this could be stored. DCC would however continue to fill up the bins. DCC would train the snow warden and then all those who offer to help in the parish would be covered under DCC's insurance for snow clearing. The snow warden would be responsible for drawing up the list of those prepared to help. Mr Way said that the training was likely to be in Crediton in the next month. The Chairman indicated that the local Neighbourhood Watch was also going to be discussing snow clearing this week and that he would attend and report on the discussions at the parish council. Mr Way urged caution if the Neighbourhood Watch scheme developed something on their own because the Highways might not let them do this as some substances spread on the road can damage them. It was agreed that the Chairman and Nick Way would meet Mr Fergie and the Chairman said in the absence of another volunteer he would consider taking on the snow warden role.

**77. Queen's Jubilee:** The Chairman reported that on the Sunday there would be a service in the church for the whole area and the Village Hall Committee was discussing providing lunch in the village hall on that day. The Neighbourhood Watch group was planning to hold the Party in the Park event on the 4<sup>th</sup> June in Coleford. The bonfire would be lit in John Richard's field on the evening of the 4<sup>th</sup> June. The Clerk referred to the official guide for constructing a beacon and the insurance and health and safety issues. All official bonfires will be listed in a book that would be given to the Queen. Members agreed they did not want to have an official bonfire and that they would not therefore register it. Mr Niklaus referred to the purchase of commemorative mugs and it was agreed that the Clerk should purchase 288 Diamond Jubilee Design 2 Ceramic Durham Mug at £1.60 each. All those under 16 would be given a free mug and the rest would be sold for £2.50 each. Mr Niklaus also spoke of his wish to plant a red oak tree with a Jubilee plaque but he was not sure where this should be sited.

## **78. Planning Committee:**

Mr Enderson reported that the following application had been approved since the last meeting:

11/01404/LBC Erection of new porch at Snells Farm, Waterleat Lane, Colebrooke

10/01790/FULL/NMA Erection of extension and alterations at Red Hill Thatch

Mr Enderson reported that the following applications had been received since the last meeting:

11/01493/FULL Installation of an air source heat pump to provide domestic central heating at Squirrel Lodge, Colebrooke

07/01243/FULL (to extend time limit) Conversion of part of barn to ancillary accommodation (Revised Scheme) at Lower Wotton Farm

11/01801/LBC Consent for alterations and erection of an extension following demolition of existing extension at Snells Farm

11/01800/FULL Alterations and erection of an extension following demolition of existing extension at Snells Farm

Mr Enderson reported that the Council had had no objections to the above.

**79. Finance Committee:** The Clerk reported that the Finance Committee had met on 14<sup>th</sup> November to consider the budget in detail. The Committee recommended that the precept be held at £5000 for 2011/12 and that the monies for DAPC be deducted at source when the precept is paid. This was agreed. The Clerk also reported that the Finance Committee had considered the payment of the Clerk's salary under PAYE and had agreed that the Clerk should wait to be instructed by the HMRC.

**80. Cemetery/Ground Works:** The Chairman reported that he had investigated the lop sided seat and had corrected this. Mrs Hockridge enquired where the second seat in the Millennium Garden had gone and the Clerk undertook to find out.

**81. Accounts:** The Clerk reported that the balance in the accounts was £6493.08. The following receipt was noted £0.91 (interest). The following were approved for payment: Clerk's salary £303.52 (October/November); Granny's Meadow £80 (Millennium Garden £30 and the Cemetery £50) and the Village Hall Insurance £744.20. The payment of this insurance had been agreed last year for the next three years on the basis that the cost would be held for this period. The Clerk indicated that the cost was slightly higher this year but only because the Insurance Premium Tax has risen by 1%

**82. Internal Audit:** The Clerk read out a letter from the internal auditor Ken Abraham offering a further 5 year contract. The cost for a parish that has expenditure of £5000 will be £50. Members approved the contract and the Chairman signed it on behalf of the Council.

**83. Footpath no 14 Diversion and Bridleway No 15:** Mr Enderson reported on the history to this matter and the current proposals. It was agreed that Mr Enderson would draft a reply based on the parish council's previous comments in 2007. The Clerk would then respond to DCC.

**84. Roads and Hedges in the Parish:** Miss Pitts was able to confirm that they had been responsible for the Millennium Garden hedge being trimmed. This had been a mistake. Apart from the pothole outside Mrs Lee's house there were no outstanding issues at this time.

**85. Village Hall:** The Chairman reported the local Colebrooke concert would take place on 19<sup>th</sup> November at 6.30. People were invited to bring their own alcohol but soft drinks would be served. On 1<sup>st</sup> December there would be a concert by the folk singer Sarah McQuaid under the Villages in Action scheme. The Chairman reported on the continuing issue of whether the VAT could be reclaimed for the work on the roof. The latest letter is not clear and the Chairman will be writing to HMRC again. Mr Richards reported on his further discussions on how to improve the heating at the Village Hall. It may be possible to make a claim from the Community Fund next year to support this.

**86. Correspondence:** The Clerk circulated a list of correspondence received since the last meeting. The Clerk drew attention to the request for funds from Victim Support.

**87. Devon County Council:** Mr Way had left the meeting earlier and there was no report from DCC.

**88. Mr D J Squires (MDDC):** Mr J Squires reported that Colebrooke had £2644 in Section 106 monies to spend on open spaces in the parish. He said Colebrooke was third in priority list for monies. Mr Squires reported that the recycling trial was now complete but rather than saving money it cost £100,000. Mr Squires handed over details to the Clerk about Involve. Mr Squires also wondered if the new planning proposals would make things easier or more difficult.

**89. Date of Next Meeting:** 17<sup>th</sup> January 2012 at 7.30pm