

# KNOWSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

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## Minutes of the annual meeting of the Council on 23rd May 2023 held in Knowstone Parish Hall

**Present:** Cllr J Clarke, Cllr C Dey, Cllr D Maidment, Cllr J Pomfret (Chair), Cllr J Stanbury

**In attendance:** W Sweet (Clerk), C/Cllr Yabsley (part)

**23/01 Election of Chairman** – Cllr Clarke nominated Cllr Pomfret as Chairman, Cllr Dey seconded, all agreed.

**23/02 Election of Vice Chairman** – Cllr Pomfret nominated Cllr Parry as Vice Chairman, Cllr Maidment seconded, all agreed.

**23/03 Declaration of Acceptance of Office** as Chairman was signed by Cllr Pomfret.

### **23/04 Co-option of additional member**

(i) Co-option of John Stanbury – Cllr Pomfret proposed that John Stanbury is co-opted onto the Council, Cllr Clarke seconded, all agreed.

(ii) Cllr Stanbury signed the consent to co-option and declaration of acceptance of office forms.

**23/05 Apologies for absence** - Cllr Parry, D/Cllr Milton

**23/06 Declarations of Interest** (re. matters appearing on this agenda) - None

**23/07 Approve Minutes** It was RESOLVED to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 26th March 2022, Cllr Pomfret proposed, Cllr Dey seconded, all agreed.

### **23/08 Appointment of members to serve on Parish Committees:**

Parish Hall – Cllr Pomfret was happy to carry on reporting back to the Parish Council re. hall meetings.

Moors Management Association – Cllr Maidment will continue to serve on this committee as the Council's representative.

### **23/09 Allocation of Roles** amongst members – the following was AGREED:

Footpaths & Beaples Stone – will be covered temporarily by Cllr Pomfret, assisted by Cllr Maidment if required.

Planning – Cllr Clarke

Highways – Cllr Dey

Snow Warden – Cllr Stanbury

Police liaison – Cllr Vukic

Emergency Plan – Cllr Parry

Road Warden – Cllr Pomfret

Welcome Pack – Cllr Maidment

### **23/10 Correspondence (not covered elsewhere on the agenda).**

To note receipt of the following:

- DALC E-bulletin #13 2023 dated 30.03.23;
- Email dated 3.04.23 from NDC re. Code of Conduct training for Town and Parish Councillors following the elections in May 2023 – the training will take place online on 5th June at 6.00 p.m.
- Devon Climate Emergency April Newsletter dated 3.04.23;
- Email dated 5.04.23 from Sinclair Dalby Limited re. Proposed Telecommunications Upgrade at MARLEY MOOR FARM, KNOWSTONE, SOUTH MOLTON, EX36 4QT;
- DALC E-bulletin #14 2023 dated 5.04.23;
- Email dated 18.04.23 from OPCC re. Councillor Advocate Seminar - Tackling Drugs - May 16, 2023;

*Draft to be approved at the next schedule meeting*

- Email dated 18.04.23 from OPCC re. PCC Response to PEEL report;
- DALC E-bulletin #16 2023 dated 19.04.23;
- DALC E-bulletin #17 2023 dated 26.04.23;
- Parish Online Newsletter dated 3.05.23;
- DALC E-bulletin #18 2023 dated 3.05.23;
- North Devon Link Road - A361 - Newsletter No.14 - May 23 from Griffiths;
- Email dated 5.05.23 from OPCC re. Invitation to the Commissioner's Showcase - May 23, 2023;
- Email dated 8.05.23 from OPCC re. Councillor Advocate Meeting;
- Devon Climate Emergency May Newsletter dated 9.05.23;
- DALC E-bulletin #19 2023 dated 10.05.23;
- Email dated 15.05.23 from NDC re. Register of Interests form;

The following correspondence, received after the preparation of the agenda, was NOTED:

- DALC E-bulletin #19 2023 dated 17.05.23;
- DALC E-bulletin #20 2023 dated 22.05.23;
- Temporary traffic notice – road closed between Anstey Gate & Five Cross Way, 7 – 9 June. The information has gone on the Knowstone website and Cllr Pomfret will put it on the Knowstone Facebook page.

**23/11 Public Questions – None**

**23/12 Asset Register** It was RESOLVED to agree the Asset Register, previously circulated, Cllr Maidment proposed, Cllr Dey seconded, all agreed.

**23/13 Finance**

(a) It was RESOLVED to settle the following accounts, Cllr Pomfret proposed, Cllr Stanbury seconded, all agreed:

• Wendy Sweet - Clerk's pay (£145.28) & WFH allowance (£48.00)	£193.28
• BHIB insurance renewal	£537.21
• DALC membership renewal	£86.15
• Alison Marshall	£100.00
• John W Morgan Garden Services	£70.00
• S Tomkins – reimbursement for bedding plants for planters	£29.80

(b) It was RESOLVED to agree accounts and bank reconciliation for year ending 31st March 2023, previously circulated, Cllr Pomfret proposed, Cllr Dey seconded, all agreed. Cllr D signed a copy of the accounts and bank statements. It was NOTED that first 50% of precept payment of £2,038.00 had been received.

(c) It was RESOLVED to agree, sign and submit Certificate of Exemption for this year's External Audit, previously circulated, Cllr Pomfret proposed, Cllr Stanbury seconded, all agreed.

(d) It was RESOLVED to agree Section 1 of the Annual Audit Return 2022/23 Part 2, previously circulated, Cllr Pomfret proposed, Cllr Dey seconded, all agreed.

(e) It was RESOLVED to agree Section 2 of the Annual Audit Return 2022/23 Part 2, previously circulated, Cllr Pomfret proposed, Cllr Maidment seconded, all agreed.

**23/14 Internal Audit Report**, previously circulated, was REVIEWED. The following recommendations / comments by the Auditor were NOTED and will be discussed more fully at the next Council meeting:

- cyber security added to insurance policy if not already in place;
- clearer explanation regarding difference in budget and precept requested,
- extraordinary meetings are called by chairman/2 councillors so agenda signed by them not the clerk;
- separate Freedom of information policy / publication scheme as indicated in the council's S/O's,

- Privacy policy to be renamed Privacy and GDPR policy,
- standalone Complaints Policy recommended,
- consider internet banking for making payments instead of cheques.

**23/15 Risk Assessment**, previously circulated, was REVIEWED. It was noted that in the Freedom of Information section it stated that FOI policy to be drawn up which ties in with one of the points that the Internal Auditor had raised. It was RESOLVED to agree the Risk Assessment, Cllr Pomfret proposed, Cllr Dey seconded, all agreed.

**23/16 Electric Vehicle Charging Point** – It was reported that the charger is now live and that there are three methods by which people can pay - Q code, app or via a link to Monta's website. The rate per Kw has been agreed at 53p. Payment will be collected on the hall's behalf by Monta and then transferred to the hall's account. Its availability to be promoted on the Knowstone Facebook page.

### **23/17 Planning**

(a) Applications notified since last meeting - **Ref: 77073** - Conversion of redundant outbuilding to residential unit at West Bowden, Knowstone EX36 4RP. Cllr Clarke had looked at this application but could not find any information within it to justify the application or about the type of residential building proposed. There is no design and access supporting statement. The other redundant outbuildings on site have previously been converted to holiday accommodation. As there was insufficient information on which the Council could base a response, it was AGREED to neither support or object to the application but to comment about the lack of information supplied within it.

(b) Applications notified since the preparation of the agenda - None.

(c) Other planning matters – Cllr Clarke reported, as proposed at the last meeting, that he had looked at the consent in detail relating to East Hill. There are three pre-commencement conditions that are potentially problematic – 6, 9 and 13. Condition 6 states the requirement of the submission of a remediation method statement to be approved by LPA before works commences – this is not on file at the moment. Condition 9 states that no works to take place in any circumstances unless the LPA has been provided with either a Natural England licence or a licenced bat ecologists stating that one is not required – this is not on file at the moment. Condition 13, also a pre-commencement condition, states that the access road is to be laid out, drained and constructed to base course level to 20m back from the junction with the public highway. Cllr Clarke stated that he would expect condition 6 to be satisfied first and then condition 13. The Council needs to be vigilant and make sure the developer does not start work without satisfying these conditions.

It was reported that North Devon has satisfied its five-year housing plan. It is looking at ways to force developers to get on with schemes – at the moment it has no power or leverage over developers to get on with approved work.

### **23/18 Third Party Reports:**

a) **District Councillor** – not present

b) **County Councillor** – C/Cllr Yabsley apologised that he had not got back to Cllr Dey with dates to visit the parish. It has been very busy recently but he is hoping it will ease off soon. He has been out with the Highways Officer but not on this side of the area.

Devon County Council has a new Chief Executive – Donna Manson, a dynamic individual who had previously worked in Children's services and had been running an authority in the Highlands. A review of DCC has been undertaken. Senior Officers are now expected to be in the council offices three days a week. Things are now different – a more aggressive public expect a better funded situation. Highways budget is £70m per year but it needs £170m per year - funded by government for a declining network.

Cllr Pomfret reported that the issue of give-way white lines came up at Thursday's Parish meeting, in particular at the Sidemoor picnic area where the white lines have worn away and drivers come straight out without giving way which is very dangerous to vehicles which have just turned off the link road. C/Cllr Yabsley will take this up with the Highways Officer.

**23/19 Review the Council's and staff subscriptions** to other bodies:

- DALC (Devon Association of Local Councils)
- SLCC (Society of Local Council Clerks)
- CPRE (Council for the Protection of Rural England)
- Parish Online.

It was AGREED that they would be discussed and reviewed when each individual renewal becomes due.

**23/20 Members Reports**

a) **Highways** – Cllr Dey reported that she was hoping to meet up with C/Cllr Yabsley soon. She had gone round looking at potholes in the parish on this side of the link road and found a lot but only five met the criteria, which she will report. Cllr Clarke advised that the 'what three words' app would be very useful to locate accurate position of potholes.

Regarding the problem of fast traffic in Roachill, Cllr Dey reported that the '20 is plenty scheme' would be the most realistic and common-sense solution. It is recommended by DALC and many towns and villages in Devon have applied to participate. It was suggested that councillors read information about it in DALC newsletter #20. If KPC is going to apply to the scheme there would have to have a public meeting first to let parishioners know what is involved and get their agreement. There are webinars being held on 21st and 28th June, one of which Cllr Pomfret will attend and record for Cllr Dey. The legality of signs needs to be checked with C/Cllr Yabsley. Cllr Dey reported that she has been in touch with Buckland Brewer Parish Council who have adopted the scheme and who have been helpful.

b) **Footpaths & Beaples Stone** – Cllr Pomfret reported that the gate post at top of Shapcott Lane still needs to be repaired – he will chase DCC. Sheep were able to get through the kissing gate on footpath 3 (along the Crooked Oak) and get into the woods. Cllr Pomfret has put a stronger spring on it but it needs a new catch.

c) **Moors Management Association** – Cllr Maidment reported that a few trees overhanging the road had been dealt with by DWT. The riders latch on the gate adjacent to the cattle grid on the lane parallel with the link road has been fixed but the gate was left open and cattle got through it. A new post and rail had also been fitted but in doing so the fence to the river has been let down which cattle can get through. The clerk will check whether this has already been reported.

d) **Welcome Pack** - Cllr Maidment reported that one had been delivered to new residents in Roachill.

e) **Emergency Plan** – Cllr Pomfret reported that Cllr Parry was trying to organise the electrician to fit the generator fixings. The Hall committee thinks it could go where the AV point is. It would be good to have the option to use the generator, the solar panels or the grid - need to clarify if that would be possible.

f) **Police Liaison** – Cllr Vukic not present

g) **Parish Hall** – Cllr Pomfret reported that all going is well. There were about 70 people at the Coronation tea. The Ceilidh was well attended and went really well. Coffee mornings continue.

**23/21 Vacancy for Parish Clerk** Cllr Pomfret reported that he had spoken to a potential replacement who is thinking about taking on the role. The vacancy with job description will be advertised on the Knowstone website and Facebook initially.

**23/22 Business at the Chairman's discretion** – The Chairman thanked the Clerk for all her work over last six years.

**23/23 Dates & times of meetings** in the coming year – it was AGREED that the Council will meet bi-monthly on the following dates: 25th July 2023, 26th September 2022, 28th November 2023, 23rd January 2024, 26th March 2024, Tuesday 28th May 2024.

The meeting closed at 21.36.