

# KNOWSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

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## Minutes of the Meeting of the Council on 27th July 2021 held in Knowstone Parish Hall

**Present:** Cllr J Clarke, Cllr D Maidment, Cllr A Parry, Cllr J Pomfret (Chairman), Cllr J Stanbury

In attendance: W Sweet (Clerk), C/Cllr J Yabsley (part), 1 member of the public

**21/49 Apologies for absence** – Cllr Barrett, D/Cllr E Ley

**21/50 Declarations of Interest** – Cllr Stanbury declared an interest re. agenda item 12 (c) Moors Management.

**21/51 Approve Minutes** It was RESOLVED to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd June 2021, Cllr Pomfret proposed, Cllr Parry seconded, all agreed.

**21/52 Correspondence** The following correspondence (not covered elsewhere on the agenda) was NOTED:

- Email dated 24.06.21 from Mick Harrison, OPCC – Road Safety Matters;
- Email dated 25.06.21 from Mick Harrison, OPCC – Invitation for OPCC Cllr Advocates to help shape the next Police and Crime Plan;
- DALC Newsletter #30 2021 dated 25.06.21 – Get prepared for summer!
- DALC Newsletter #31 2021 dated 25.06.21 - Latest News;
- Email dated 30.06.21 from Mick Harrison, OPCC – Prime Minister praises Alison Hernandez for doing 'the right thing' with Councillor Advocates Scheme;
- Devon CPRE's June E-bulletin dated 30.06.21;
- DALC Newsletter #33 2021 dated 2.07.21 – Latest News;
- DALC Newsletter #34 2021 dated 5.07.21 – Events Bulletin;
- Email dated 6.07.21 from NDC – Parish Councillors' Guide to Rural Affordable Housing;
- DALC Newsletter #35 2021 dated 7.07.21 – Events Bulletin;
- Email dated 7.07.21 from Mick Harrison, OPCC – Scam calls with matching numbers;
- DALC Newsletter #36 2021 dated 9.07.21 – Latest News;
- Email dated 9.07.21 from Mick Harrison, OPCC – Catalytic Converter Thefts in North Devon / Torridge;
- Email dated 12.07.21 from NDC Lead Officer Planning Policy – Biosphere Nature Plan;
- Email dated 12.07.21 from Devon Communities Together – The second Devon Wide Local Councillor Climate Emergency Network;
- Email dated 12.07.21 from Mick Harrison, OPCC - £350,000 unveiled to make Devon & Cornwall safer this summer
- DALC Newsletter #37 2021 dated 12.07.21 – Annual Report 2020/21;
- DALC Newsletter #38 2021 dated 16.07.21 – End of Covid-19 Restrictions;
- DALC Newsletter #39 2021 dated 16.07.21 – Latest News;
- Email dated 20.07.21 from DCC - Parish and Town Council Wildlife Network Newsletter;
- DALC Newsletter #40 2021 dated 21.07.21 - Special heatwave bulletin

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

- DALC Newsletter #41 2021 dated 23.07.21 – Latest News;
- Email dated 23.07.21 from CPRE – Hedgerows;
- DALC Newsletter #42 2021 dated 26.07.21 – Events and advice from Came and Company Local Council Insurance.

### **21/53 Public Questions**

(a) **Exe Valley Community Bus** - Tim Browse had contacted the clerk and asked that the following information was shared at this Meeting. The Exe Valley Community bus is resuming weekly services from next Thursday 5th August and there will be a booking system. Passengers need to ring Tim or Michele Browse on 01398 341977 to book a seat no later than the Monday preceding intended travel. There is a lot of interest from Oakford passengers for the South Molton and Barnstaple routes, so booking a seat in advance is essential at this time. Details are on the parish noticeboards and the Knowstone website.

*Approved*

## 21/54 Finance

It was RESOLVED to settle the following accounts, Cllr Stanbury proposed, Cllr Clarke seconded, all agreed:

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|--|--------------------|
| • Wendy Sweet (Clerk's pay £126.37 & expenses £3.87)   | £130.24            |
| • Wendy Sweet (reimbursement for plants & compost)     | £119.39 (incl VAT) |
| • Cllr D Maidment (reimbursement for plants & compost) | £80.60 (incl VAT)  |
| • SLCC (annual membership renewal)                     | £80.00             |
| • Wendy Vigus (updating website, March – June 2021)    | £76.00             |

**21/55 Civic Pride** – It was reported that six out of the seven planters purchased have now been planted and are in position. The seventh has been delayed as the Roachill sign near Holy Moor Cross is damaged. Volunteers are looking after them well. Plaques giving the Council's website address had been previously suggested for the planters and this will be an agenda item at the next meeting. When the autumn comes the Working Group will have to look at different plants to put in the planters. It was commented that the planters look very attractive and the Council expressed its thanks to Cllr Maidment and the Clerk for organising them and gratitude to the volunteers who are maintaining them.

**21/56 Review and adopt NALC Model Financial Regulations 2019** – previously circulated. Cllr Pomfret reported that Financial Regulations have been updated by NALC since KPC first adopted them. It is planned to use the new NALC one as a template. Cllr Pomfret felt that there were drawbacks to removing clauses which do not apply to KPC as when comparing it to amended versions in the future all reference numbers would be different. Cllr Parry queried that if everything is included would it affect the audit. Cllr Pomfret suggested that 'not applicable' in brackets could be put against clauses not relevant to Knowstone. It was AGREED that Cllr Pomfret and the Clerk will go through the Model Regulations, amend where appropriate and re-present to Council for approval.

**21/57 Review and agree amendments to Standing Orders** It was RESOLVED to adopt the amendments to KPC's Standing Orders as listed below, Cllr Parry proposed, Cllr Maidment seconded, all agreed.

### **Section 3 – Meetings generally**

Point 't' – add a subsection to read: "the grant of dispensations (if any) to councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;"

### **Section 5 – Ordinary Council meetings**

Point 'j' – subsection 'xvii' – amend to read: "Review of the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under freedom of information and data protection legislation (see also standing orders 11, 20 and 21);

Add the following subsections:

"Review of the Council's employment policies and procedures;"

"Review of the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the general power of competence."

### **Section 12 – Draft minutes**

Change point 'e' to point 'f' and amend to read: "Subject to the publication of draft minutes in accordance with standing order 12(e) and standing order 20(a) and following a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed."

### **Section 15 – Proper officer**

Point 'b', subsection 'viii' – amend to read: "assist with responding to requests made under freedom of

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information legislation and rights exercisable under data protection legislation, in accordance with the Council's relevant policies and procedures;"

Add a subsection to read: "liaise, as appropriate, with the Council's Data Protection Officer (if there is one);"

Subsection 'x' – amend to read: "assist in the organisation of, storage of, access to, security of and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form subject to the requirements of data protection and freedom of information legislation and other legitimate requirements (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980);"

### **Section 18 – Financial controls and procurement**

Replace existing point 'c' with the following (mandatory) clause:

A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £25,000 but less than the relevant thresholds in standing order 18(f) is subject to Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include a requirement on the Council to advertise the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website regardless of what other means it uses to advertise the opportunity unless it proposes to use an existing list of approved suppliers (framework agreement).

### **Section 19 – Handling staff matters**

Amend point 'g' to read: "In accordance with standing order 11(a), persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing order 19(f)."

Delete points 'h' and 'l'.

### **21/58 Planning**

(i) Applications notified since last meeting - None

(ii) Applications notified since the preparation of the agenda – None.

(iii) Other planning matters – Cllr Clarke drew councillors' attention to the Parish Councillors' Guide to Rural Affordable Housing, a weighty document, which had been circulated by NDC. Within the document there are two pages (42 and 43) that specifically relate to the role of a Parish Council. The main role is in relation to the adoption of new policies re. affordable rural housing. KPC would have to decide whether it would support a rural affordable housing scheme. Due to the size of the parish, it is quite unlikely that Planning would receive an application where this policy kicks in. It was queried whether this had any bearing re. East Hill. Things are currently in limbo as waiting for the builders to get onto the next stage. The Council needs to look closely at the application to see if they have the ability to avoid building the affordable houses as it is possible they could make an application to vary the conditions of the permission.

(iv) Cllr Parry asked whether any more had been heard regarding the mobile home at Tower Farm. Nothing has been heard since it was reported earlier in the year. It was AGREED that the Clerk would contact the Enforcement Department to see what the outcome had been.

### **21/59 Third Party Reports (if present):**

a) District Councillor – not present

b) County Councillor – C/Cllr Yabsley reported that he would be out in the Parish with the Highways Officer on Thursday. Cllr Pomfret drew his attention to a potential problem at the foot of Crosside Hill, where the road bends and is level with the roof of the bungalow located there. The landowner has moved earth to create a gap to put in a wall. Cllr Pomfret has concerns that the verge on the outside of the bend is narrower than it used to be. In the winter or when there is mud/dirt on the road, there could be an increase in the risk of accidents. It would be useful if a bend warning sign could be placed on the approach. There are a lot of large vehicles and horse riders using the road. C/Cllr Yabsley said that he and Richard Sables would look at the situation at this location.

C/Cllr Yabsley reported that he had attended the first TEAMS Link Road consultation meeting for

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councillors, the contractor and Highways Officers to bring up questions relating to the work being undertaken on the link road. There has been an issue with the link road being avoided unnecessarily at the present time causing problems elsewhere. Along the stretch which has the 40 mph limit it is busy but there have been no major hold ups. Signs encouraging traffic to continue to use the link road have been discussed. Occasionally large vehicles have to be escorted but it is not known in advance when they are coming. The contractors have experienced some ecological issues relating to hedgehogs and dormice so patches have been left which looks messy. The. Borners Bridge work will be starting in September, earlier than planned. Programme notices about the work will be issued in August. Underneath that area there are two streams which meet in a culvert which they will have to extend. It will be complex work and will take nine months to complete, much longer than is usual to build a roundabout. It will affect people going into South Molton but the work has to be done. If any member of KPC would like to join future TEAMS meetings, they should let C/Cllr Yabsley know. Details will be emailed to the Clerk.

Devon County Council and North Devon Council are now meeting in person, the latter at the crematorium.

The Clerk mentioned the potholes/rough road in East Knowstone which had been reported but were deemed not to be bad enough to be repaired. C/Cllr Yabsley said that he and the Highways Officer will look at that when visiting the parish.

### **21/60 Members Reports**

- a) **Highways** – It had been reported to Cllr Barrett by a parishioner that a settee has been dumped in the layby on Knowstone Moor near the link road. The Clerk will report this online via NDC's reporting system.
- b) **Footpaths & Beaples Stone** – Cllr Pomfret reported that DCC have strimmed some of the footpaths in the parish. He is still in discussion with various landowners re. replacing stiles with gates. He has repaired the broken spring on the self-closing gate on the path past Marilyn Cottage.
- c) **Moors Management Association** – Cllr Maidment - nothing to report.
- d) **Welcome Pack** - Cllr Maidment – nothing to report.
- e) **Emergency Plan** – Cllr Parry had circulated three documents – a covering letter to parishioners explaining what the Council is doing with regards to the Emergency Plan, a redacted copy of the Emergency Plan and the proposed questionnaire. It was agreed that a paper copy of the Emergency Plan would not be sent out at this stage, but a tick box would be included in the questionnaire for people to indicate that they would like to be sent a hard copy of the plan once it was finalised. People would also be referred to the Council's website. The Emergency Plan will not include any personal information. It was also agreed to include a question about volunteering to help with shopping etc in the event of another pandemic as well as a tick box for selection by people who did not wish to complete the questionnaire. Parishioners are being encouraged to return the questionnaire whether they have completed it or not via the SAE that will be included. The original plan was to send it out with 'In Touch' but the timeline has changed and it will go out using 'In Touch' distributors who will deliver it when it is ready in a couple of weeks' time.
- f) **Parish Hall** – there is going to be a coffee morning this coming Saturday in aid of Devon Air Ambulance.
- g) **PCC Report** – there had been 8 people at the recent Sunday service. There will be a PCC meeting this Friday.

**21/61 Casual vacancy for a Parish Councillor** – no applications had been received by the deadline advertised on notices in the parish and on the website. A revised notice, without a deadline, will be put up on noticeboards.

**21/62 Business at the Chairman's discretion** – none

**21/63 The date, time and venue of the next meeting** were confirmed as follows: Tuesday 24th August 2021 at 7.30 p.m. in the Parish Hall

The meeting closed at 20.40.