

# Parracombe Parish Council

Meeting held on Tuesday 2nd January 2024 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall

Present: Cllrs Holtom (Chair), Bastock, Harding, Harrison  
Council Also in attendance: District Cllr Patrinos, The Clerk

## MINUTES

### **01/1/24 Welcome by the Chairman and Introduction**

### **02/1/24 Open Public Participation Session**

Two members of the public attended the open participation session (and left before the Closed Council session). They introduced themselves as new residents to the area and were interested to know more about the local planning procedures. Suggestions were made, directing them to the Exmoor National Park Authority for further information.

**03/1/24 Police Report** - January 2024 report circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting, and to be displayed on the community shop notice board.

**04/1/24 County Council Report** - County Councillor A Davis - December report had been circulated to Cllrs prior to meeting. Topics included were:

Lynton Health Centre - Cllr Davis contacted Chairman of Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, leader J Hart and the DCC CEO requesting this issue be raised at their meetings.

Drainage Issues on A39 - schemes scheduled for next financial year

Growing Communities Fund - grant provision and details

North Devon Link Road closures

Grit bins and Highways preparations for winter and defects

### **05/1/24 District Council Report** - District Councillor J Patrinos

Cllr Patrinos reported that the main local issue at the moment regards the GP surgery in Lynton. The current surgery contractor is handing back its contract in April 2024. There will still be locums available for residents after that date, and nurses have separate contracts so they will still be secure in the same building, but at the moment there is no other contractor or permanent GPs confirmed to take over the surgery. NHS Devon is advertising in Devon for GPs. The Patient Participation Group (PPG), a group of local volunteers interested in the preserving the high quality medical provision at the Lynton GP surgery, would like to see national advertisement for GPs to ensure the widest possible field for recruitment, and they are looking into ways of fundraising for national advertising (approx £2,000 for an initial national advert in medical magazine). PPG is approaching Parish Councils to see if they are able to contribute any funds to advertisement costs - suggesting amounts commensurate with population/parishioner numbers.

PPC resolved, in principle, to contribute £430 towards an advert once more information is made available by PPG, and once it is confirmed that this is a viable option and that other Parishes may be making financial contributions too. Proposed by Cllr Bastock, seconded by Cllr Harrison and agreed by all Cllrs.

**06/1/24 Exmoor National Park Authority update** - No news to pass on

### **Closed Council session**

**07/1/24 Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Bloore, Ogden and Walters. Also from the police.**

**08/1/24 Declarations of Member's Interests** - none

**09/1/24 To approve and to sign the Minutes:** for the meeting held on 7th November and the extraordinary meeting held on 28th November 2023: the minutes were approved by all Cllrs as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

**10/1/24 Matters arising** - nil

### **11/1/24 Parracombe Community Trust** - Cllr Harrsion/Chairman

/1 Community shop

Good Christmas events and sales. Two grants have been received. One has been used to purchase new furniture and a freezer. The second grant, from Devon County Council, has been used to enable 'Community Cuppa Hour', whereby the cafe is selling hot drinks for only £1 on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays between 2pm-3pm from 2nd January until 11th February 2024, providing a warm, sociable setting for anyone to come and buy a cheap, hot drink.

a) Bin update: bins have been emptied. A new litter bin has been ordered, but has not yet arrived.

b) Signed Bus stop progress update: Cllr Davis was contacted by Clerk, but no news back yet.

c) Defibrillator update - PPC has a loan and maintenance arrangement with Lyn Defibrillator Fund, and unfortunately the defibrillator offered by the school can not be incorporated into that arrangement. All Cllrs agreed that it is important to have a defibrillator at the shop. **Action:** Clerk to contact the current provider and enquire about how to go about procuring an additional village defib for the shop. Cllr Holtom to forward to the clerk the contact details he has been using so far to liaise with Lyn Defibrillator Fund.

d) Now that the shop has been open for approx 18 months, PCT has drawn up a customer survey to seek the views of residents in or around Parracombe, to ensure that the shop and cafe are meeting the needs of the local community. A paper copy will be delivered to the homes of all Parracombe residents. There are copies at the shop too. The survey can also be completed online at <https://bit.ly/PavilionShopSurvey>

Completed forms and online surveys must be received by Friday 26th January 2024. Completed paper forms can be returned to the collection boxes placed at Parracombe Pavilion Stores & Cafe or posted at the Village Hall (letter box to the left of front door).

## /2 Affordable housing project update

Cllr Harrison informed PPC that he and Cllr Holtom had attended a meeting regarding the application in December at Exmoor House and that there is still an impasse with regard to local lettings policy.

## /3 Village Hall

a) Planning application - None of the consultees have responded yet, but some individuals have. Although PPC can not comment on its own planning application, individuals can.

b) Insurance renewal: The clerk has been liaising with the insurance broker and PCT to clarify what exactly PPC wishes to include in its renewal cover (and to confirm that there has been no change to Statement of Fact with regard to solar panel/heating system). Historically, PPC has taken out buildings insurance and PCT has taken out contents insurance for the Village Hall, and PPC councillors resolved that they wish PPC to continue this arrangement (proposed by Cllr Harding, seconded by Cllr Bastock, agreed by all Cllrs). PPC's current insurance does also cover Employer's Liability. Last year PPC did include some contents cover insurance, so the clerk has asked the insurance broker to provide quotes this year for a renewal of insurance without contents cover (but for the insurance of all other aspects, eg. Employer's Liability, to remain at same level, and for the buildings cover to include solar panels and heating system). The quote from the existing insurer (including tax and broker fee) is: £725.65. (If contents were to be included, quote would be £846.61. Last year's cost was £792.12). Other insurance quotes should be requested from the broker for comparison with existing renewal quote. **Action:** Clerk to request further insurance quotes and if none are cheaper than £725.65 (for same level of cover), she will renew the insurance with the same insurer. Clerk will also pass on this information to the Chair of PCT.

## 12/1/24 Planning applications (New: 2)

1/ **62/43/23/009:** Application type: Alteration/Lift Condition, Location: Woody Bay Station, Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Co Ltd, Parracombe, Devon, EX31 4RA, Parish Martinhoe. Proposal description: Proposed variation of condition 2 of approved application 62/43/23/002 to extend the hours of operation (0700 – 1900hrs).

The Cllrs discussed the proposal and resolved to object to the application as they were unable to understand why L&BR would want or need an extension to the hours of operation at this point in time, after many years of working successfully within the existing hours of operation. The Cllrs would be happy to look at the application again in the future, if further information can be provided regarding why the existing conditions need to be changed. Proposed by Cllr Bastock, seconded by Cllr Harding and agreed unanimously. **Action: clerk**

2/ **62/50/23/019:** Application type: Full. Location: PARRACOMBE VILLAGE HALL, PARRACOMBE, BARNSTAPLE, EX31 4RJ. Parish: Parracombe. Proposal description: Proposed extension, alterations and refurbishment of Parish Hall building and car park. Status Consultation Stage. Deadline for response has passed and no response was submitted by PPC.

**(This was noted by the Cllrs)**

## 13/1/24 Planning applications - pending or decided: Cllrs noted.

1/ **62/50/23/002: Land West of Parracombe Lane.** Proposal: Proposed construction of 6no. dwellings with associated landscaping and highways works including new road access to Parracombe Lane. On the ENPA website 20/12/23 it still states: **Under consideration by officers.**

2/ **62/36/22/003: HIGHER COWLEY FARM, PARRACOMBE, BARNSTAPLE, EX31 4PQ.** Proposed revised siting of agricultural shed approved under 62/36/19/001. **Registered.**

3/ **62/50/22/012 WEST MIDDLETON FARM, PARRACOMBE, BARNSTAPLE, EX31 4PG.** Proposed demolition of 2 no. existing cubicle sheds together with its replacement with 1 no. livestock building. On 30/10/23 status = **Under consideration. Meeting to be held on 7/11/23.**

4/ **62/50/22/003 HIGHER BODLEY FARM, PARRACOMBE, BARNSTAPLE, EX31 4QN.** Application type: HRN. Proposal: Hedgerow removal notice for the proposed removal of four x 5 metre sections of hedgerow. **Registered**

5/ **62/50/23/017** Application Type: Householder. Location: VENTION COTTAGE, PARRACOMBE, BARNSTAPLE, EX31 4QA. Proposal: Proposed erection of outbuilding together with installation of door, roof light and flue to existing outbuilding. **30/11/23: approved with conditions.**

6/ **62/50/23/018LB.** Application Type: Listed Building Consent. Parish: Parracombe Location: HEDDON HALL, PARRACOMBE, BARNSTAPLE, EX31 4QL Proposal: Listed building consent for the proposed replacement of 2no. windows and blocking up of internal doorway in Coach House, installation of 2no. toilets in the Garden Room, re-roofing and roof repairs to Ballroom roof, removal of chimney stack to Heddon Hall, re-roofing of stables with corrugated iron and creation of block hen house within stable block. Retrospective. Status = **registered.**

## /7 Other planning matters

a) Email/letter from Historic Buildings Officer at ENPA re property in Parracombe: Cllr Holtom had received an email expressing concern for the increasing state of disrepair of Sunny Corner (it has been vacant for some time). PPC would welcome a letter for consideration regarding this matter.

b) L&BR response to PPC's September correspondence.

The Clerk informed the Cllrs that she had received a reply from L&BR in response to PPC's correspondence in September. PPC's original email in September was:

*"Dear Sir*

It has come to the attention of Parracombe Parish Council (PPC) that L&BR have recently carried out a member survey regarding new scheme proposals. We understand that your members wish you to extend the operational railway from Killington Lane to Cricket Field Lane, and from Blackmoor Gate back to Rowley. We note that a meeting with PPC / Community is proposed once the scheme proposals have been approved by the Board.

PPC is disappointed that it has received no communication from you and we now understand that the L&BR only intend to give the PPC/Community sight of these schemes at a very late stage; prior to finalisation and submission of the planning application.

As you are aware the PPC represents a community that has divergent views regarding the extension of the railway, but has not been informed of, or consulted about, these proposals. It appears that a fait accompli will be presented, causing further anxiety to those parishioners affected by the railway's "temporary" and long term plans, and further friction in the Parish.

The PPC would have appreciated a consultation regarding L&BR's potential development ideas before they were fixed and fears the consequences of yet another public relations failure".

**L&BR's response in December was:**

"Our Woody Bay team have forwarded your recent enquiry to me.

I see that I accidentally replied to your mail of the 18<sup>th</sup> September 2023 to our own enquiries address. Apologies for that.

A copy of the mail is attached and reproduced below. I trust this is helpful."

**Their response to PPC's original September correspondence had been:**

"Our members were consulted over their views regarding extension of the railway during March of this year. A huge response was received. We have much work to do before we will have presentable proposals ready for public discussion, but I can assure you that we do intend to arrange a meeting at Parracombe to explain our ideas, to listen to comments and to answer questions before anything is finalised".

PPC felt that this reply was an inadequate response to its letter, as no real consultation is being offered.

**14/1/24 Finance: - Clerk.**

**/1 Additional payments made since the last notification of the agenda; Payments received and Balance:**

Date of paymt	Invoice number	Information	IN £	OUT £	Balance £
7/11/23					8895.86
9/11/23	23/23-24	Ben Smith grass cutting x 2 (10+11) cut on 10/10 & 24/10. 2 x £70 = £140		140.00	8755.86
9/11/23	24/23-24	Clerk wages September and October 2023 @ £11.21 an hour		269.04	8486.82
13/11/23	25/23-24	Public Works Loan		875.12	7611.7
16/11/23		Refund from Wollens Solicitors	11.00		7622.70
27/11/23	26/23-24	Donation to Royal British Legion (see minutes 15/11/23/6)		100	7522.70
27/11/23	27/23-24	Donation to Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) (see minutes 15/11/23/6)		100	7422.70
27/11/23	28/23-24	Donation to North Devon Record Office (see minutes 15/11/23/6)		100	7322.70
22/12/23					7322.70

**/2 Payments & invoices**

a) Invoices were signed for payments already agreed: e.g. Donations of £100 each to CAB, Royal British Legion (poppy appeal), and North Devon Record Office (see minutes 15/11/23/6). (Thank you emails have been received from CAB, records office and Royal British Legion).

Public Works Loan (PWL) went out on 13/11/23 - invoice signed.

Refund from Wollens of £11 paid on 16/11/23 - **noted by Cllrs.**

b) Payments to be approved +/- or inv signed: New pay rate (up by £1 an hour, from £11.21 to £12.21, recommended by NALC from April 2023) for clerk position was discussed and approved, prior to approving clerk wages for Nov and Dec. It was also resolved (proposed by Cllr Bastock; seconded by Cllr Harding) to backdate the increased payment from April 23. **Action:** to make wages payment by BACs and to provide a calculation and invoice for backdated payment, at next meeting.

**/3 Bank statement, bank reconciliation - approved and signed.**

**/4 Draft Budget, precept and fixed assets** - Cllrs approved final documents re proposed budget for 24/25 and fixed assets. Clerk informed Cllrs that the first stage of the Precept application had been completed. **Action:** Clerk to continue the administrative Precept procedure (for Precept of £10,552.23), as a second letter/form is due very soon.

Ben Smith has accepted Grass Tender offer for another year.

**/5 insurance for Village Hall** (see village hall agenda item above).

**15/1/24 Roles and Responsibilities. Reports if warranted.**

**/01 PROWS:** Cllr Harrison.

- a) Tarr path - clerk had circulated email from DCC Highways prior to the meeting. The situation is being attended to.
- b) Bridleway Parracombe/Challacombe. Cllrs noted: At the meeting on 23/11/23 the Public Rights of Way Committee resolved that a Modification Order should be made to amend the Definitive Map and Statement with ref to Parracombe Footpath 2 and Challacombe Bridleway 3.
- c) A parishioner had reported access problems to the footpath from Parracombe Lane to Killington Lane, where gates are padlocked and there are no dog gates/sluices. **Action:** Clerk to inform R Eales/ENPA ranger services.
- d) PPC has received no further news regarding the blocked footpath near Voley. **Action:** Clerk to contact R Eales for update.

**/02 Highways: signage/drains/potholes and surfaces:** Cllr Harding

- a) Road closure - Pencombe Rocks 15th Jan - 5 days (til 19th) - new connection re water mains leak. **Noted by Cllrs.**
- b) Church Lane pot hole - it has been filled. Another is opening up nearby, but not yet big enough to report.
- c) Road warden: (Cllr Harding) contract between PPC/DCC: Two Cllrs have already attended training regarding this and PPC is keen to move on and sign the contract with DCC. **Action:** Clerk to prepare the contract for approval and signing at next meeting.
- d) School sign at Evenlode - Deferred to next meeting, as Clerk wrote to Cllr Davis, but has not heard back yet.
- e) 20mph signs: Cllrs noted that the Clerk now has the 20mph signs if anyone needs/wants them.

**/03 Trees:** Cllr Holtom

It was noted that a branch fell into the road near the shop during the recent stormy weather. Cllr Harding informed PPC that an ash tree at the school has been condemned and will need to come down.

**/04 Emergency Planning and Snow warden:** Cllr Bloore (Emergency Planning) Cllr Harding (Snow Warden)

- a) Emergency Plan meeting: Cllr Harding and Clerk fed back that a meeting had been held on 30/11/23 (Cllrs Harding and Bloore, The Clerk and S. Young) to facilitate handover of Emergency Plan Coordinator role from Cllr Harding to Cllr Bloore. The next step for emergency planning in the village is a meeting at the Village Hall (6th February, 7.30-9.30pm) to
  - Share the Emergency Plan with the community and create a feasible/achievable action plan via:
  - The compilation/extension of skill list and resources within the Parish
  - The suggested creation of focussed teams (e.g. flood, snow etc), each with a team leader and location-based/divided into village areas
  - The possible creation (by each team) of an action plan for their particular type of emergency, which could be then incorporated into the Emergency Plan document.
- b) Snow warden update: Cllr Harding has approached R Rawle re possible storage of salt delivery. This would be okay with him, but storage would need to be for a short time only, so this will be reconsidered once the Emergency Plan meeting has taken place. At the moment, there is still salt/grit available for use in the village if there is a snowy/icy spell.

**/05 Liaison with school and Church:** Cllr Harding reported that the Church has had a very busy winter so far: funeral, christening, wedding and Christmas events. The people organising these events have worked very hard.

**/06 Website and publicity, communications:** Cllr Harding.

- a) Website ideas update: (Cllr Bloore) - deferred to next meeting
- b) Chairman email address: Clerk is awaiting a reply to her query re possible outlook.com email address for the Chairman.

**/07 Coronation Playing Field (CPF):** Cllr Holtom reported that CPF working group have completed the consultation and have got all the results. They will be meeting soon to publicise results and next steps.

**/08 Liaison with PCT:** - see PCT agenda item above.

**/09 Planning noting applications contact for affected parties and applicants & LPA:** nil

**/10 Finance:** nil

**/11 Human resources:** Cllr Bastock.

- a) Clerk position update: There was one initial enquiry, but nothing else. More adverts have been placed.
- b) Chair signed the review form for HR documents, which were reviewed and approved at the last PPC meeting.

**16/1/24 Parracombe Pleasure Ground + Devon Wildlife Trust + Annual Parish Meeting (7/5/24 6.30-7.30pm):** deferred to next meeting and will be put higher up the next agenda.

**17/1/24 Correspondence** - none

**18/1/24 Cllr training** - discuss skills/topics for further training and development: deferred to next meeting.

**19/1/24 GDPR/data protection (clerk):** the draft document had been circulated prior to the meeting and the Cllrs resolved to keep this as a working draft document for the time being. Proposed by Cllr Bastock, seconded by Cllr Holtom.

**20/1/24 Items for the next agenda:**

- a) Parracombe Pleasure Ground + Devon Wildlife Trust + Annual Parish Meeting
- b) Cllr skills/expertise audit with view to informing areas of training needed.
- c) Evenlode signage/bus stop at shop etc

**21/1/24 Date for next meeting was confirmed: Tuesday 5th March 2024, 7.30pm**

**Meeting finished at 9.05pm**

**Signed: J Holtom (Chair)**

**Date: 5/3/24**