

# Haccombe-with-Combe Parish Council

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## Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council held in the Village Hall, Combeinteignhead on 7 February 2024 at 7.30pm

**Present:** Councillors G Humble, A Cooper-Smith, J Evans, R Hussey, C Lockton, H Martin, O'Regan and M Wakefield

**Also present:** County Cllr Dewhirst, County Cllr Bradford, District Cllr Taylor and two members of the public.

**Clerk:** Suzanna Hughes

### **070224.01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from:

- Cllr Pattinson

### **070224.02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION**

Members were reminded of their responsibility to continually update their Notice of Registerable Interests and to declare any disclosable interests, including the nature and extent of such interests they have in any items to be considered at this meeting. Members were reminded that unforeseen requests for a Dispensation to be considered at this point only if there was no way a member would have been aware of such before the meeting.

There were no declarations of interest of requests for dispensation.

### **070224.03 OPEN FORUM**

Concern was expressed from close residents of Hearn Field about the Premises Licence application for Hearn Field, in particular the perceived creeping commercialisation of the field. They sought clarity in the form of a policy about the vision of Hearn Field and how far this is expected to go. Cllr Hussey, as Chair of the Hearn Field Committee, insisted that the role of the Hearn Field Committee is to serve the community and provide a facility for the community to enjoy and that it is not its intention to turn the field into a commercial operation. A Premises Licence would give operational flexibility for the provision of events for the community, e.g. Bonfire night, Combe Village Show etc. Engagement with the Hearn Field Committee was encouraged and members of the public are always welcome at the Hearn Field Committee meetings.

Concerns were also expressed about the lack of planning enforcement action in the parish. The Chair advised that every month, the Parish Council writes to the Enforcement Officer, about enforcement matters; officer time is limited and action is slower than desired particularly in this rural community which seemed to have a lower priority than urban settings. Members agreed that this lack of enforcement is setting a precedent for unsolicited development in the community. The Chair suggested moving the planning item up the agenda so that these enforcement matters could be addressed earlier in the meeting in the presence of the District and County Councillors.

### **070224.04 PLANNING**

#### **4.1 New applications/appeals/notifications**

None

#### **4.2 Decisions**

None

#### **4.3 Enforcement matters**

Following the open forum, a general discussion about lack of enforcement continued. District Cllr Taylor reported that she has requested a Task & Finish Group to look at

other planning matters around affordable housing quotas. She suggested that there may be an opportunity for some of the key issues raised this evening to be added to this agenda for discussion.

The following updates on the four enforcement cases being pursued by the Parish Council were received from TDC's Enforcement Officer:

#### 1 Albert Cottages

In this case details of the materials were to be agreed as part of the planning permission reference 19/01656/FUL) for the boundary wall works. It was noted that information was received towards the end of 2023 to discharge the condition. It is noted that the details submitted were approved. However, as I have not been to the area for a while I am not sure what the current situation. Although I will try and visit the area soon if someone could submit photographs of the works as they are that would be helpful in making a decision on what needs to be done. The clerk confirmed that photographs have been taken and submitted.

#### Little Park

In this instance I have been in correspondence with the owner and it is claimed that no recent works have been carried out. I do hope to visit the site soon but each time I have been in the area there has been road closures. However, I will aim to visit the area soon and will look at the additional structure that has been provided. It was my understanding that the owner was going to replace the shed that was previously on the land but I will check this.

It was noted that further photographs have recently been sent to TDC showing the site.

It was also noted that no response has been given regarding the lack of planning application for the significant groundworks on which the construction is sited. It was agreed that the clerk would also chase a response on this.

#### Teign View Cottage

In this instance I am still not convinced that the current appearance of the site would warrant formal action being taken as an untidy site. However, I have been trying to locate the owner as there has been no response to correspondence sent to the property. I recently served a notice requiring the current occupier to supply details of the owner but if anyone locally has any details that would be helpful. Once I have the details I will try and pursue the owner to complete the works.

#### Land associated with 22/01635/AGR

I have started the preparation of the Planning contravention Notice but this needs to be completed and issued. I hope to get this done shortly.

It was agreed to write to the Enforcement Officer thanking him for his response and advising that the Parish Council and the community would expect movement in these cases before the next Parish Council meeting.

### **070224.05 POLICE REPORT**

No crime report. Members received a newsletter from PC Ben Chadwick and PCSO Bunce. The next PACT meeting is on 28 February at Hearn Field at 10.30am.

### **070224.06 DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS' REPORTS**

County Cllr Dewhirst gave a report – copy attached.

County Cllr Bradford thanked Cllr Dewhirst for sharing DCC's budgeting figures. She advised that a meeting of Full Council will be held next week to discuss the budget. She also sits on Children's Services and there is currently a focus on improvement of all service providers to ensure that children and young people and their families are able to access the support they need. SEND (Special Educational Needs) is having a system-wide overhaul to deal with improvements needed. She has also spent a lot of time helping residents with their housing, damp in housing, noisy neighbours, overgrown trees, leaves, pavements etc. She has also

been supporting residents and traders in Queen Street, Newton Abbot in relation to the controversial road scheme being proposed. Finally, she encouraged all residents to report potholes on the DCC website. DCC aims to repair potholes within 3 days on the higher category road network and within 7 days on the lower category network.

District Cllr Taylor reported that she has recently attended a conference on violence against women and girls at Buckfast Abbey. Devon and Cornwall Police are taking part in an initiative called Night Eye – an initiative to make women and girls feel safer on the street and to identify and target sexual predators. She will send a link to an online domestic abuse training course which enable attendees to advise and signpost people to the appropriate services. She advised that she is on the Planning Committee and is flagging up concerns about s106 agreements and the affordable housing quotas.

## **070224.07 DELEGATE REPORTS**

None

## **070224.08 MINUTES**

Members approved and authorised the Chair to sign the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 3 January 2024 as a true and correct record of that meeting.

## **070224.09 FINANCE & GOVERNANCE**

### **9.1 Expenditure**

Members approved the following payments:

<b>Payment type</b>	<b>Payee</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Amount</b>
DD	Ecotricity	Hearn Field electricity (December)	£398.26
Online	Clerk	Salary (January)	£399.97
Online	TDC (reimbursed to Clerk)	Premises Licence application fee	£100
Online	Tindle Newspapers (reimbursed to Clerk)	Public Notice in MDA (Premises Licence)	£336
Online	Event Hire Solutions	Portable toilets for Combe Show	£288
Online	N Courtier	Tree work – Hearn Field	£800
Online	Bramble Oak Boundaries	Hedge-laying - Hearn Field	£1065
Online	M Wakefield	Hearn Field Pavilion cleaning	£20
Online	Stoke-Coombe Magazine	Full page advert (Hearn Field)	£80

### **9.2 Income**

Members noted the income (30 December 2023 – 1 February 2024):

<b>Received</b>	<b>Received from</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Jan	Woodshed Coffee Bar	Income including contribution to electricity (£100)	£351.50
Jan	Hearn Field Bookings	Various	£162
Jan	Lloyds	Interest	£12.99

### **9.3 Bank Balances at 1 February 2024**

<b>Current account</b>	<b>Savings account</b>	<b>Sea Wall account</b>	<b>Total</b>
£23,172.43	£12,592.84	£6,343.43	£42,108.70

### **9.4 Small Grants**

Members considered an application from Combeinteignhead Village Hall for a grant of £1000 towards flooring in the entrance hall, bar area, toilets and associated passageway. After discussion, a sum of £1000 was agreed.

Members discussed the current arrangement between the Village Hall and the Parish Council in terms of providing a venue for monthly Parish Council meetings. It was agreed that a contribution of £50 should be made towards the electricity and heating for 2023/24 but that from April, the Village Hall should invoice the Parish Council for

use of the hall in the same way as other customers. It is understood that the hire cost for the entire site is £12 per hour and it would be required for two hours per month (excluding August).

#### **070224.10 HEARN FIELD**

Members received the minutes of the Hearn Field Committee and also received the following report:

The Committee met on Wednesday 17 January 2024. This has been a busy month for the Hearn Field team, so thank you to all involved. The following information and proposals follow on from the January Committee meeting.

##### **Initial Covid Funds projects and recommendations as follows:**

For information: The first phase 70 metres of the hedge restoration has been completed. There's now a large amount of hedge trimmings on the field.

Proposal: A useful resource be created of the trimmings by chipping and using on site as mulch and under the climbing tree. A quote received £200 – 250 ex vat, and further quotes are being sought. Expenditure of up to £250 was agreed.

Proposal: One further marquee and two gazebos be purchased for the village show, to house and protect from weather. Best online price for the three items £750 ex vat. Expenditure of £750 + VAT was agreed.

Proposal: The heavy brown tables in the Pavilion be disposed of and replaced by purchasing fifteen lightweight white tables that will be used indoors and out. Best online price: £1,972 ex VAT. Expenditure of £1972 + VAT was agreed

Proposal: A further six "rustic" trestle tables be made for use at outdoor events. Quote of £540 - 600 ex vat received which is favourable compared to comparable ones seen online. Expenditure of up to £600 was agreed.

##### **Outdoor Theatre**

For information: The "Handlebards" theatre group mentioned in the November minutes is now being replaced by the "Three Inch Fools" who require a £1,500 guarantee and a £750 deposit. The November PC meeting agreed a limit of up to £2,000.

##### **Premises License**

For information: A Premises License application has been submitted, notices placed, and we're starting to receive feedback from agencies e.g. TDC Environmental Control, and Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service.

In view of the application for a premises licence and to clarify the intentions for the future use of Hearn Field, it was agreed to draft a Statement of Intent. It was agreed that the licence would permit the community-based activities without the need to apply for individual Temporary Event Notices (TENs). The licence would also give more flexibility in the organisation and management of events such as Bonfire Night and the Combe Village Show.

##### **Hearn Field Sauna**

For information: A pop-up sauna "dry run" took place at the Hearn Field last Tuesday 30th. This was a low impact activity using a small insulated tent with wood-fired heater. On the basis of what we've seen, we've agreed to them continuing on Tuesdays until further notice.

##### **HF Electricity Bill**

For information: The smart metre hasn't been functioning so the energy supplier Ecotricity was using estimated readings to bill us. The metre is due to be replaced free of charge.

#### **070224.11 DOG BIN – HACCOMBE VALLEY**

Members agreed to submit an application to TDC requesting a dog bin for the Haccombe Valley. It is suggested that it be sited near the turn off to the Haccombe Valley from the Newton Abbot to Combeinteignhead road and positioned to the left of the telephone box.

Whilst TDC's Community Environment Warden found little evidence of a widespread problem, which was supported by the Parish Council's own simple research, there was evidence that dog bags are left at the proposed site by dog walkers who park their cars in this area to access the valley.

**070224.12 HIGHWAYS AND FOOTPATHS**

12.1 Members commented on a badly managed road closure on Shaldon Road, Netherton. It was reported that the work carried out was a trench connecting a house to a drain. The roadside notice was from 8 to 12 January. Work continued intermittently through the following week. There was no sign giving new dates and it was not clear, day by day, whether the road was closed or not. The diversion signage, which was supposed to send traffic around the estuary, was very unclear and impossible to follow, leading to chaos on the local narrow lanes.

It was agreed to write to DCC Highways Officer, Sam Williams, to advise him of the issue and to request that he escalates it to those who have the power to change the process and procedures for this kind of closure to minimise the impact for other road users. It seems that inconvenience to communities and other road users are not a major consideration.

12.2 The Chair advised that annual footpath returns need to be submitted after the next meeting.

**070224.13 CORRESPONDENCE**

None

**070224.14 MEMBERS' ITEMS FOR INFORMATION OR GENERAL DISCUSSION, FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS AND/OR ITEMS REQUIRING URGENT ATTENTION**

*Members are reminded that they have not received the statutory notice of this business to be transacted and should therefore recognise that any decision made may be taken to be unlawful if challenged in the future*

None

**070224.15 ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON SOCIAL MEDIA, PARISH MAGAZINE, NOTICE BOARDS ETC**

It was agreed that an article about the hedge-laying at Hearn Field is submitted to the parish magazine. It was also agreed that information about the premises licence application is circulated on social media.

**070224.16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the next Parish Council meeting would be held on 6 March 2024 at 7.30pm.

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Chair

## **County Councillor's Report 7<sup>th</sup> February - HWC**

Devon County have announced there will be a double digit increase in cash for children and more money for adult care, climate change and transport in the target budget for 2024/25.

New figures presented at Cabinet show a proposed 10.4% increase in the budget for children's services with a 6% rise in adult services and 4.7% extra for climate change, environment and transport. The 9.8% increase in the national living wage announced by the Government last year mean an additional £25.7 million has had to be added to the target budget to cover the cost.

Reductions in other departmental spending means an overall rise of 6.3% in our budget for next year with a total spend of over £743 million.

The full council are set to debate the budget in February and my CIRS Scrutiny debated the Budget a week last Thursday.

The director of finance, Angie Sinclair, said: "Local authorities across the country continue to face financial challenges due to high inflation and interest rates as well as demands on local service provision."

Cabinet Councillors have approved the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) which set out priorities for developing cycling and walking improvements in a number of areas of the county.

LCWIPs put us in the strongest possible position for bidding for Government funding for walking and cycle schemes, as well as leveraging external grants and for negotiations with developers.

While supporting increased walking and cycling levels across Devon, the plans also support the County Council's response to the climate crisis, improve health and wellbeing, access for all, as well as delivering economic benefits in the county.

Schemes have been prioritised based on where the greatest impact can be made in increasing the number of people who choose to walk or cycle. Factors taken into account include whether an alternative route exists nearby, how the links serve key journey types such as travel to school, work and for leisure, and where the potential is greatest to attract developer funding due to planned growth in these areas.

The plan for Teignbridge, covering Newton Abbot, Kingsteignton and Kingskerswell, sets out walking and cycling proposals along five key corridors.

At the same meeting the Cabinet approved plans which set out priorities for electric vehicle charging in Devon.

The EV strategy outlined plans to Reduce carbon emissions in Devon; accelerate the uptake of EVs in Devon, with an overall shift away from private cars; help ensure that the transition was accessible for all and equitable; maximise social value and community benefit; maximise the contribution EVs could make to our local economy, including through increased tourism and contribution to the Council's goal to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030.

Devolution for Devon and Torbay took a big step forward with the publication of Government proposals for a deal that could re-draw the future relationship between local government in Devon and Torbay, and Whitehall.

The proposals announced by Levelling Up Minister Jacob Young at an event in Paignton would enable more decisions to be taken locally by people who know their areas best and on things that matter to local people such as building more affordable homes, investing in new quality jobs and skills, and improving public transport.

The Government has chosen Devon and Torbay as one of only a small number of local authority areas in the country to form a Combined County Authority (CCA), that will not require an elected Mayor.

The new powers would be devolved to a proposed CCA – a partnership comprising Councillors representing the councils of Devon and Torbay, including District Councils, and representatives from business and education.

Under the proposals a new body would have direct control of adult education to create up to 50,000 new training and retraining opportunities by 2030.

Through Local Skills Improvement Plans, the proposed CCA will work with business and education leaders to create a stronger, joined-up relationship between employers and schools, colleges and universities to provide the skilled workforce the local economy needs for the future.

The Government is proposing to transfer over £16 million of new funding to invest in new green jobs, homes, skills, and business growth and accelerate Devon and Torbay's transition to a net-zero economy, capitalising on the area's world-leading expertise in green science and technology.

The Government is offering a stronger partnership with Homes England, capitalising on the Affordable Housing Programme and Brownfield Infrastructure and Land Fund to create a joint action plan for affordable housing schemes for local people and reduce homelessness. The proposal includes additional land assembly and compulsory purchase powers and would facilitate greater Community Land Trust-led delivery.

The CCA would be responsible for working with Devon County Council, Torbay Council, District Councils and the business and education sectors to support high growth business sectors such as advanced marine engineering, defence, photonics and digital, and improve the look and feel of local communities with street and town centre enhancements.

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