

LYDFORD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Held in the Nicholls Hall on Tuesday 18th November 2008

123-2008 Present:

Ms L Ellicott (Chairman); Ms J Gannon (Vice-Chairman); Mrs L Cole; Mrs S Holland;
Ms C Moriarty; Mr I Hammerton; Mrs A Martin (Clerk)
Cllr I McPhie WDBC

Parishioners and others in attendance: Eight Parishioners were in attendance.

124-2008 Apologies for Absence:

Mrs K Boyd, Cllr A Hosking and CPSO Chapple were accepted.

125-2008 Declaration of Interests:

The Chairman and Mrs Cole declared a personal interest in the planning application at the Paddock as friends and neighbours of the applicants.

126-2008 Parishioners and Visitors Time:

126.1 The Chairman, on behalf of a parishioner, asked about planning law as it relates to caravans and mobile homes. The clerk replied that only mobile caravans which roll on their wheels and are regularly taken out on the road do not require planning consent. Any permanently sited mobile home requires planning permission.

126.2 The Council had been requested by various parishioners to find answers to questions regarding the proposed sewage treatment works, including the question as to why it cannot be kept in the present site. A detailed reply has been received from South West Water, and the Chairman reported that the information had only just arrived but that she would seek permission for a copy to be appended to these minutes on both the parish notice Board and the internet, and also to be published in the Parish Magazine.

126.3 A parishioner had reported to the council that certain hedges in the village had grown outwards and were forcing pedestrians out into the road. The Chairman will put a request in the Parish Magazine for householders to check their hedges now that the summer growth season has finished. This is in the interests of all those whose hedges border the road as the highway authority has the power to cut the hedges itself and pass on the bill to the householder if it considers that the safety of the public is becoming compromised.

126.4 A number of parishioners have contacted the council regarding what is perceived by local residents to be the unfair way that the owners of Downtown Farm have been treated by the DNPA regarding their signage. Many local people are sorry that this business may cease to exist in the village if the property is sold as a private residence. The Chairman pointed out that the DNPA were obliged to take action if a complaint from a member of the public were received. It was decided that the Clerk will write a letter passing these views on to the DNPA planning department.

126.5 Police Report: Although not present at the meeting the police had sent a report that there had been a theft of a horse trailer from the vicinity of the Sports Field. The Council had additionally contacted PC Reed regarding road safety aspects of the removal by the Highways Authority of the double white lines at Vale Down. He had referred the safety query to the Road Safety Officer, who will now take the issue forward. Mrs Holland stated that she understood that the Safety Officer believes that the double white lines should be reinstated.

127-2008 To approve the minutes of the previous meeting:

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 14th October 2008 were signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record after one alteration – the date of the Nicholls Hall AGM is Wednesday 26th November, and not 28th as originally recorded.

128-2008 Matters Arising:

128.1 Highways, Parking and Traffic Issues: Dealt with in Parishioners Time and during the Police Report. In the light of the police report the Clerk will write a further letter to Devon Highways. The Council was informed that Cllr Christine Marsh has kindly consented to take on this issue for Lydford whilst Cllr Hosking is unwell, and the Clerk will copy her in on the correspondence.

128.2 Parish Plan update – This was postponed to the December meeting in the light of more pressing issues.

128.3 Progress re: Ancient Spring and Opening Ceremony – The opening ceremony date had been set for Saturday 14th March. VIP guests from ING, and also the Mayor of West Devon had been given advance notice of the dates for their diaries although formal invitations will not be sent until nearer the time.

128.4 Progress re: Emergency Plan – Mr Hammerton reported that a doctor and nurse within the parish have volunteered to assist in case of a local emergency.

128.5 Beating of the Bounds – The Chairman reported that two walk leaders living in the parish have been approached and have agreed to help. She requested permission to approach, on the Council's behalf, the two farmers who kindly helped with motorised transport at Captain Hunter's dedication to ask if they might be willing to provide similar assistance at this event, and this was given. Ms Gannon also volunteered the use of her Land Rover again.

128.6 Community Land Trust Update This was postponed until the December meeting in the light of more pressing issues.

128.7 Proposed Sewage Treatment Works The Chairman reported she and the Clerk had recently met with the National Trust Land Manager for the South West and together had inspected the South West Water preferred site, noting the area of the field where the Iron Age Hill fort may have existed. The National Trust as a body is keen to satisfy both the needs of the local parish but also the Trust's wider membership. Any development in the field would have to be conditional on lack of harm to the archaeological findings.

The independent scrutineer of the confidential consultation slips had completed his report, and the Chairman revealed his findings. He found that 35 parishioners agreed with the resiting of the sewage treatment works whilst 14 disagreed. As many of the responses contained comments obviously intended for the parish councillors to read the scrutineer had returned anonymous copies to the council and destroyed the originals. The Clerk was requested to write on behalf of the Council to thank him for the work he has done on behalf of the Council and the Parish.

The Clerk was asked by councillors whether she had received the list of questions referred to at the previous meeting from the Lydford Sewerage Focus Group to put forward to SWW. She replied that she had received no contact from the group, but that she was aware that SWW had received questions from a number of sources within the parish and that these had been replied to on an individual basis.

Members felt that it was now an appropriate time for it to make a resolution on the issue.

The following proposal was put forward, proposed by Mrs Holland, seconded by Ms Gannon: "Given the evidence received, the consultation results and the opinions given to us individually and as a council, the Parish Council supports the proposal for a new sewage treatment works in Lydford.

The decision on the final siting of the new sewage treatment works is still being discussed by the relevant parties.

The P.C. fully supports the concept of no sewage smells in our village from whatever source and will continue to work with SWW and the Environment Agency to achieve this for the benefit of the whole village"

Acceptance of the proposal was unanimously RESOLVED.

At this point the Chairman suspended the meeting to allow the parishioners present to speak.

The parishioners were asked whether they had any further questions to ask the Council or indeed whether there was any help they wanted to Council to provide in any dialogue they may be having with SWW. The reply was that lines of communication with South West Water were already open, removing a need for Parish Council involvement.

The formal meeting resumed.

128.7 Christmas Tree Festival Mrs Holland has taken over the organisation of the decoration of the Parish Council's tree, and a maximum budget of £30 was agreed. A community tree will also be needed for outside of the Nicholls Hall, and traditionally this is donated by local businesses. The Clerk was requested to contact the National Trust on behalf of the village to invite them to provide the tree this year.

129-2008 Receive Reports from Councillors on respective outside bodies:

129.1 DNPA Consultative Forum The next meeting is on Friday 28th November. Mr Hammerton will attend as Ms Moriarty will be unavailable on this date.

129.2 Police Authority No meeting this month.

129.3 Southern Parishes Link Committee The minutes of the last meeting had been circulated to the Parish Councillors. The next meeting is on 4th December.

129.4 Nicholls Hall Committee The Halloween Bistro Nite raised around £300. The next one will be the Cabaret Night on Friday, with proceeds going to the external repairs needed on the building and the redecoration of the two storage rooms near the front door. Seasonal activities coming up include the Christmas Market, the Christmas Party and the annual community get-together on Christmas Eve. The recent coffee morning and jumble sale raised a total of £260 for the Macmillan Nurses. The Nicholls Hall AGM will be held on Wednesday 26th November at 7pm in the Hall, and new committee members will be welcome.

129.5 WDBC Cllr McPhie reported that the Dartmoor Tourist Association has now developed into a wider body the Dartmoor Partnership, to encompass not only tourist based businesses, but all businesses and trades. Additionally there is now "Dartmoor Farmers", an alliance set up to sell meat nationally under a Dartmoor Logo.

130-2008 Finance:

130.1 The Clerk, as Responsible Financial Officer, gave a report detailing the following points:

- i) New national pay scales for Local Government Officers have been received and applied to the current month's salary, including back pay and back tax.
- ii) The precept request for 2008/09 must be agreed at the December meeting.

130.2 The following balances were reported:

Current account – £353.14

Deposit account - £7128.90

Parish Plan - £1204.23

Ancient Spring - £3929.61

The following cheques were authorised from the general budget: Clerk salary & expenses £360.19: HMRC (via Post Office Ltd) £64.49: art FX (for artwork on the information board at the Ancient Spring) £350.00: Mainly Stationery £9.09: RBL Poppy Appeal £50.00. A transfer of £1000.00 from the deposit account to the current account was authorised. Provisions held as shown on the sheet circulated to members and attached to the master set of minutes.

131-2008 Correspondence

131.1 Correspondence requiring action or decision:

1. Consultation on Codes of Conduct for local authority members and employees from HMG. Ms Gannon was authorised to respond to this on behalf of the Council.
2. Grant request from Citizens Advice Bureau – the Clerk was requested to prepare a cheque for £50 for the next meeting. It was believed that a number of parishioners have used the services of the CAB.
3. A letter had been received from a parishioner regarding the Council's handling of a previous letter he had sent. The Chairman requested authorisation from the Council to engage in a dialogue with this parishioner on the Council's behalf, and this authorisation was given.

131.2 Correspondence for Information Only

1. West Devon e-connect newsletter
2. Information on a proposed new incinerator for South West Devon
- 3 Useful information from Dunchideock PC on digital switchover. Our switchover will commence in August 2009. Of especial note – cold calling doorstep salesmen offering unnecessary digital aerials have been preying on vulnerable members of the community in some areas, and also that there is a Help Scheme for older people or recipients of some types of benefit.
- 4 Letter of apology from Beacon Bus for teething troubles on the 118 bus route.
- 5 WDBC Supplier update – the Clerk had sent the requested information.
6. DNPA Agenda, Minutes and reports of the Authority
- 7 Copy of letter received by a parishioner re: Horses on the Granite Way
- 8 Information from DNPA Planning re: changes to permitted development rights
- 9 Information from WDBC Planning re: changes to permitted development rights
- 10 Information from WDBC Planning re: changes to planning consultation procedure
- 11 Information from DCC re: Commons Act 2006 – Devon will be one of seven pilot authorities for the implementation of Part 1 which comes into force on 1 October 2008 in the county.
- 12 DNPA Agenda and Minutes of the Development Management Committee
- 13 Information from the RD&E Hospital
- 14 Brief details of the Devon Grassroots grant scheme

15. Information on a Conference to take place in Exeter on Plastic Packaging
16. Pamphlet from DNPA with details of new Design Guidance and stakeholder consultation
17. DAPC newsletter

131-2008 Planning Applications

131.1 Decisions Received

The application for the existing bungalow to be replaced with a two storey dwelling at Olde Stone has been refused permission by the DNPA

131.2 Applications Received

1. **Application for tree works at Barnhayes:** The application relates to two mature beech trees and is to lift the crown to 4m to give clearance. This is effectively only pruning, and there was unanimous agreement that the council's comment would be *The Parish Council has no objections to this work being carried out.*

2. **Application for Construction of detached garage adjacent to dwelling at the Paddock (0672/08)**

The Clerk had included the plans for the previous application and the minutes of the DNPA planning committee relating to it. She explained that planning history is a material planning consideration and in particular that any report from the Planning Inspectorate should be taken note of. This was a relevant point in the current application as the applicants had gone to appeal on a past application, and thus an Inspector's Report had been generated. There was some discussion about the new application, including whether the new permitted development rights would have any bearing. There was general agreement that the Council would want to see planning law correctly applied, but also a majority feeling of support for the need for a garage at the property. It was RESOLVED that the following comment be put forward:

The Parish Council supports the application provided that it is within current planning policy including the provisions of the General Development Order which has recently come into force.

132-2008 Items raised at the previous meeting for inclusion on this agenda:

132.1 : Knotweed The Clerk reported that she had rung the Agents handling the sale of the old garage on the A386 and asked them to alert the owners to the presence of knotweed, especially as its roots are known to have a detrimental effect on nearby buildings.

133-2008 Items raised for inclusion on the next Agenda

There were none.

134-2008 To agree the date of the next meeting:

The date of **Tuesday 16th December 2008** was agreed commencing at 7.00 pm.

There being no further business the meeting was formally closed by the Chairman at 8.05 pm.

Annie Martin
Clerk to the Parish Council

21st November 2008

Signed as a true and accurate record..... (Chairman) Date.....

PROPOSED NEW SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS (STW) FOR LYDFORD

Answers from South West Water to Common Questions:

South West Water maintains close liaison with the Environment Agency on the performance of all its sewage treatment works. Whilst South West Water is seeking a new Sewage Treatment Works for Lydford, there is still an obligation to meet the required standards from the existing works. These obligations may lead to some minor work being carried out at the existing works. The Environment Agency's suggestions are always considered and treated seriously; however South West Water is responsible for deciding how to meet its legal obligations.

South West Water will not seek any planning consent without the appropriate environmental considerations, and relevant supporting information required by the Dartmoor National Park Authority. These considerations will be made by suitably qualified consultants and their findings submitted to the planning authority. Access to the site of a proposed development is a valid planning consideration which the planning authority will take into account. Access during construction, and work in the highways would be done in consultation with the highway authority and parish council.

The discharge of treated water to the river will need consent from the Environment Agency. South West Water will meet their requirements.

Existing Site

The current standards required by the Environment Agency dictate that the level of treatment is improved.

The existing site is very steep (about 1 in 2). This constraint alone precludes the use of the most appropriate treatment plant. To excavate a level platform on this hillside would be unwise, and a very major engineering undertaking. The finished product would be extremely unsightly and not appropriate for this site adjacent to the castle, church & ancient monuments. Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) consent for construction access & planning consent for the works would almost certainly not be granted. In 2003 the Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA) refused permission for a package plant and access improvements. They subsequently gave consent for an alternative application for a lesser scope to improve, rather than replace, the existing works. Further improvements to the existing site would not deliver a long term solution. Operational & maintenance problems would still exist, as would an unacceptable risk of non compliance with the discharge consent. Vehicle access to the site is very poor and terminates short of the site entrance. It is across National Trust land and over ground containing scheduled ancient monuments. Access within the site is pedestrian and poor.

Existing site after new development of new site - The large superstructure at the existing site would be removed to improve the appearance of the site. This would be done by crane, subject to English Heritage approval. The fenced area would remain in SWW ownership. SWW owns the valley side from the boundary with the National Trust up to the gate adjacent to the ancient spring recently landscaped by the parish council. This land would be offered to the parish (or National Trust) as a gift.

The existing works process is: septic tank + percolating filter + settlement tank.
Current discharge consent: BOD 30 mg/l; Suspended Solids 50 mg/l; Ammonia 8 mg/l
Dry Weather Flow = 66 m³/d. Full treatment Flow = 4l/s.

Existing Sewerage System

The existing sewerage system is combined, which means that some rainfall gets into the system, typically from downpipes from house roofs and back yards. This was standard practice when sewerage systems were first laid. Modern developments are required to separate rain water from the foul drainage. A sewage treatment works (STW) is sized to take all reasonable flows expected from the catchment, with excess storm flows spilling from storm overflows consented by the Environment Agency (EA). All STWs have discharge consents issued by the EA which set out the peak flows to be treated. Lydford is no exception.

Proposed STW

Finding a suitable alternative site around Lydford is very challenging. The topography of the area around the village, compounded by the profusion of ancient monuments and archaeological remains in the locality, preclude many areas. The proposed location offers the potential for an acceptable solution in environmental & planning terms. It also has the advantage of being adjacent to the River Lyd which affords great dilution for the discharge of treated water.

The new STW would be sized to cater for the existing population plus the growth currently predicted to 2031 by the local authorities. We would be negligent not to build a new works which did not allow for the predicted growth in the village.

Connected population 2008 = 170 + campsite; predicted 2031 = 196 + campsite.

South West Water would not seek to restrict new customers connecting to the sewerage system, subject to the design limits discussed above.

It is proposed to install a conventional percolating filter treatment process, a very sound & robust technology. It is appropriate for the level of treatment required by the EA. The process has stood the test of time, with the vast majority of villages in the UK having STWs which use this technology. Local examples are found at Mary Tavy & Northlew. The main treatment process operates by water power and requires a fall across the site. Should the site finally secured not have the ideal topography, a packaged treatment process would be proposed. A local example is Sourton Down STW.

It is proposed that boundary hedge & tree planting would screen the new STW. The final landscaping would be agreed with the planning authority

The new works would have a telemetry connection to our control room in Exeter. Alarms would be automatically sent upon failure of any essential process components.

On completion there would be about 5 vehicle movements per week to the new STW. Four visits by an operator in a small van plus one tanker to remove sludge.

Proposed Pumping Station

The pumping station would have to meet the requirements of the Environment Agency. The EA specify the installation of a socket for a mobile generator and sufficient emergency storage within the sump to give adequate time for the generator to be brought from our depot. The station would be alarmed to our control room which is manned 24 hours. The station would also be fitted with a standby pump. These measures represent standard water industry design practice. If all the safeguards listed above were to fail, then the sewage would spill through an emergency overflow into the pipeline which

current feeds the existing STW. A discharge would occur at the location of the existing STW. Such emergency overflows are standard water industry design practice and are consented by the EA.

Proposed Pipeline

It estimated that, subject to ground conditions, the pipeline construction would be about 8-10 weeks.

The pipeline is not subject to planning consent. We have statutory powers to lay pipelines in private land and highways by serving notice on the landowner or street manager. However we would involve the planners in order to ensure that archaeological and environmental interests are not compromised.

During the construction period we would routinely liaise with representatives of the parish council, highways authority, environmental health officer, and fire & ambulance services as appropriate.

This information has been supplied by South West Water in response to questions put to it by Lydford Parishioners either directly or through the Parish Council. As far as the Council is aware those residents who have put questions directly to SWW have received individual replies. If any parishioners require further information and would like the Parish Council to forward the request on their behalf please contact the Clerk.