

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Luppitt Parish Council held in the Village Hall
on Friday, 3 May 2024 at 8 pm**

Present: Cllrs Michele Turner (Chair), Lindsay Hill, Charles Murray, Brian Pulman, Martin Summers, Andrew Tucker, Yehudi Levine (EDDC) and one member of the public
In attendance: Rosalind Buxton (Parish Clerk)
Apologies: Cllrs John Thorne, Paul Prettejohn, Colin Brown (EDDC) and Iain Chubb (DCC)

1.1 Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair

Cllr Pulman took the chair for the election of Parish Council Chair and Vice-Chair. Cllr Pulman thanked Cllr Turner for carrying out her duties so well as Chair during the past year. Cllr Tucker proposed Cllr Turner as Chair and this was seconded by Cllr Hill with all in favour. Cllr Pulman proposed Cllr Thorne as Vice-Chair and this was seconded by Cllr Summers with all in favour.

1.2 Appointment of Planning Committee, Parish Maintenance Committee, Tree Warden, Road Warden, Snow Warden and P3 Co-Ordinator

It was agreed unanimously that the whole council would be members of the Planning Committee (with a quorum of three) and that the whole council (excluding Cllr Tucker) would be members of the Parish Maintenance Committee (with a quorum of two). It was agreed unanimously that Cllr Pulman would act as co-ordinator of the Parish Maintenance Committee, that Cllr Tucker would continue as Tree Warden and Cllr Pulman would continue as snow warden (proposed by Cllr Summers, seconded by Cllr Murray). The clerk will continue to act as point of contact with the three footpath wardens for the P3 scheme.

1.3 Receive the Chair's Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Turner welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked all the councillors for their confidence in re-electing her as Chair and said she was very happy to continue in this role. Cllr Turner then signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Chair.

1.4 Receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received as above.

1.5 Minutes of previous meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 2 April 2024, were unanimously agreed and signed as a correct record of that meeting (proposed by Cllr Tucker and seconded by Cllr Hill).

1.6 Declaration of Interest

Cllr Tucker declared an interest in the planning application at Blackenfields Farm because he carries out work there. Cllr Hill declared an interest in the same item because she lives at Millrise within view of the proposed location of the new building.

The meeting was suspended to allow the member of the public to speak on the next item.

2.0 PLANNING

2.1 Applications (for comment, support or objection)

2.1.1 23/1770/AGR – Blackenfields Farm, Luppitt, EX14 4UB – erection of general purpose agricultural building

The Parish Council does not support the planning application in its present form and the applicant had come along to the meeting to give further information to clarify the reasons behind the choice of location for the new building and to answer any questions. The applicant explained that the land at Blackenfields Farm and Greenway Farm are farmed as one and a new building is needed for future expansion. Access to the existing (dilapidated) building at Blackenfields Farm is difficult.

Cllr Hill read out comments from residents at Millrise who had concerns about

- the volume of agricultural traffic and subsequent damage to the roads;

- erecting such a large building away from existing farm buildings;
- why the footprint of the existing building could not be used with a road made across the field avoiding Blackenfields Farmhouse which is now let to non-farming tenants.

The applicant did not feel that there would be much increase on the present agricultural traffic. The option of making a new track had been explored but the fields are steep and further away from the highway so not ideal for heavy farm vehicles. The applicant explained that some options have been discarded as it is important that the project is kept as ecologically friendly as possible. There was a general discussion between the applicant and the Parish Councillors on the redevelopment of the barn on the existing site. The applicant was thanked for attending and then left the meeting.

After the applicant had left the meeting, the Parish Councillors discussed the application further. It was agreed that the applicant has taken positive steps to address concerns on the impact on biodiversity (policy NE2) but the application is still contrary to policies NE1, ND1, ND2 and ND3 of the Neighbourhood Plan and, as a result, the Parish Council still feels unable to support the planning application in its present form.

The meeting then resumed.

2.1.2 Housing Needs Survey

Cllr Turner and the clerk had had a very successful meeting with the Housing Enabling Officer at EDDC, Cassandra Harrison, and the Neighbourhood Plan officer, Angela King. EDDC will fund a small number of Housing Needs Surveys per year (three). A site in Luppitt may be available for a very small number of affordable houses if a need were established. It is acknowledged that finance will be a major problem should there be a positive result from the survey. Some parishes in East Devon have set up a Community Land Trust and contact details were passed on to Cllr Turner and the clerk for future research. It was agreed to accept EDDC's offer of funding a Housing Needs Survey for Luppitt. This will be carried out by Devon Communities Together on behalf of EDDC, probably in September. There will be no cost to the parish.

2.1.3 Urbanisation

This item will be carried forward to the next meeting.

2.2 Decisions

There were no decisions.

2.3 REPORTS

2.3.1 Ward Councillor

Cllr Levine added to the report that he gave at the Annual Parish Meeting that preceded the Parish Council meeting.

- A new CEO for East Devon District Council has been appointed – Tracy Hendren who had been Director of Housing.
- All councillors must undergo a standard DBS check.

2.3.2 County Councillor

Cllr Chubb's report delivered at the Annual Parish Meeting dealt with:

- The damage that the excessive wet weather has had on Devon's roads.
- Progress on filling potholes.
- Successful cleaning of gullies despite challenges around plant breakdowns and availability.
- Ditches and hedges that are the responsibility of landowners.
- £95m of national funds will be set aside to reduce the deficit on special needs education.
- Each County Councillor is allocated a Locality budget of £8,000. Parish Councils can apply for small grants for specific projects.

3.0 HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC

3.1 Parish Highways programme - update on Items to Report

- Large potholes at Pound Cottage to be reported.

- Clerk’s list of potholes reported to Highways will be updated with comments received from Highways.

3.1.1 Meeting with Neighbourhood Highways Officer (NHO)

Cllr Pulman had met the NHO to show him recent road repairs in School Lane and by Valley View where the tarmac has covered the gully resulting in rainwater running over the road. The clerk will follow up with Cllr Chubb.

3.2 Parish Maintenance

3.2.1 Ash Dieback

- The clerk has received confirmation by email that Streetscene will be responsible for dealing with the ash dieback in the hedge around the play area at Millrise. Cllr Hill confirmed that she had seen the tree inspector on site on 24 April.
- A parishioner had advised the clerk about dead ash trees in a field near Ford Bridge. The clerk will write to the landowner to request that the trees are dealt with.

3.2.2 Overhanging Hedges

The Parish Council considered the response the clerk had received from the Devon Wildlife Trust to be unsatisfactory. The clerk was asked to write again stressing the road safety issue that the overhanging hedges are causing.

3.2.3 Woodland Management Plan for Dumpdon Hill

The Parish Council will not be submitting any comments on the scheme.

3.2.4 Drainage Project in School Lane

Cllr Tucker was asked to submit a quote for the work required in School Lane. The clerk will then apply to the Highways Maintenance Community Enhancement Fund for a grant towards the work.

4.0 FOOTPATHS AND BRIDLEWAYS

4.1 Email from Chair of Luppitt Commons Ltd

The Chair of Luppitt Commons Ltd had written to the clerk to suggest that the stile on the footpath at the top of Hartridge is replaced with a gate. This is the only stile remaining on the popular circular walk. It was agreed that this was an excellent suggestion and Cllr Tucker was asked to carry out the work.

5.0 ENVIRONMENT/COMMUNITY FACILITIES

5.1 Litter Pick

It was considered that it had been left too late in the year to organise a successful litter pick but it was agreed that one would be organised to take place in the first quarter of next year.

5.2 Inspection Reports for play areas

The clerk had received the inspection reports from RoSPA with only one or two items needing attention. The clerk passed the inspection report on Millrise play area to Cllr Pulman and the report on the play area at the Village Hall to Cllr Summers.

5.3 Arrangements for 80th Anniversary of D-Day

General arrangements were discussed. It was agreed to have a Zoom call with all volunteers to finalise arrangements. The clerk will arrange.

6.0 FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

The following payments were authorised at the meeting. The clerk updated the figures as follows:

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| 6.1 | Receipts | EDDC – precept | £6,400.00 |
| | Account balances at last statement | P3 balance | £833.28 |
| | As per bank reconciliation end April | Luppitt Parish Council | £9,226.04 |
| 6.2 | Payments by online banking for approval | RoSPA – play area inspections | £187.20 |
| | | Devon Association of Local Councils | £193.33 |
| | | Luppitt Village Hall (Nov, Dec, Jan hire of room) | £30.00 |
| | | A R Tucker Ltd (ditches and drains) | £748.80 |

6.3 Annual Accounts

The year-end figures were agreed by the Parish Council without any queries. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) will be presented for approval to the Parish Council at next month's meeting. The year-end bank reconciliation has been signed by Cllrs Turner and Murray.

6.4 Quarterly check – internal financial controls

Cllr Murray has checked the cash book and reconciliation for the quarter ended 31 March 2024 and confirmed that all is correct.

6.5 Bank Signatories

The clerk will arrange for Christine Ryder to be removed as a signatory and will arrange for Cllr Summers to be added as a signatory.

6.6 Parish Council .gov.uk domain

The Governance and Accountability Practitioners' Guide for 2024 encourages Parish Councils to move over to a .gov.uk domain. The clerk has registered interest in an information webinar and will keep the Parish Council informed.

6.7 Correspondence

- EDDC is holding a series of webinars to share progress on the Local Plan. The next one to be held is on Thursday, 16 May, at 7 pm. The clerk will send details to Cllr Turner who will attend if she is available.
- The clerk showed photographs sent by a resident of steel girders being delivered by lorry to Higher Wick.

7.0 CHAIRMAN'S DISCRETION

Cllr Pulman advised that the Platinum Jubilee tree on Hartridge has died despite his best efforts in looking after it.

8.0 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no further questions and the meeting closed at 9.40 pm.

Dates for next meetings to be held in Luppitt Village Hall at 8 pm:

Tuesday, 4 June 2024

Tuesday, 2 July 2024

Tuesday, 6 August 2024