

# SOUTH TAWTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council held at the Victory Hall, South Zeal, on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2011 at 7.30pm

Councillor A White (Chairman)  
Councillor W Cann  
Councillor J Pillar  
Councillor B Woolland  
Councillor C Curtis  
Councillor R Souness

Councillor J Darch  
Councillor A Sampson  
Councillor J White  
Councillor C Coombs  
Dr P Brotherton (Clerk)

In attendance: Mr M Date and Mr D Webber (Parish Members of Dartmoor National Park Authority).

**11/031 Apologies for absence.**

All councillors were present.

**11/032 Declaration of Interest for items on the agenda and update of Register of Interests.**

Councillor Woolland declared an interest in item 11/038(e). No other councillor wished to declare an interest in any agenda item and no councillor wished to update his or her Register of Interests.

**11/022 Minutes of the last meeting.**

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2011 were circulated, read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**11/034 Clerk's Report**

a. **Mr M Date and Mr D Webber have accepted the invitation to attend this meeting.**

Council thanked Mr Date and Mr Webber for their attendance.

b. **Reply from Mr P Williams concerning the Poppy Party in June 2011.**

An email had been received from Mr Williams and was read to council. Council regretted that they could see no other immediate way of supporting this cause.

c. **The future of on-line banking.**

The clerk outlined the frustration of all council clerks at the government's lack of progress on this matter.

**11/035 Questions from parishioners**

a. Councillor Coombs raised the matter of a missing road sign, warning of the road down towards Croft Gate at Prospect on the old A30. It was decided that the clerk should add this to the list of tasks to be addressed by DCC Highways (North)

b. Councillor J White (Vice Chairman) brought the poor state of the car park at Hillcrest, South Tawton, to council's attention and added that an untaxed car seemed to have been abandoned at one end of it. The clerk, before taking other action, was asked to write initially to the owner of the car to ask for his advice on its future.

c. The Chairman, Councillor A White, welcomed Mr. Date and Mr. Webber and asked them if they would care to talk about aspects of the role of Dartmoor National Park Authority and to answer councillors' questions. In response Mr Date began by mentioning the 5% funding cuts in this the first year and the further cuts of 21.5% (plus the impact of inflation) in the next 4 years which in total could amount to a reduction of about 30%. He emphasized the effect that this would have on staffing the Authority, reducing the full-time workforce from 104 to around 70, which in turn would have significant impact on the pension deficits. In addition every part of the Authority is being scrutinised, even the possibility of moving to smaller premises. In order to help maintain service provision recourse might be made, he said, to sharing personnel with other authorities and other National Parks and looking for other funding streams, such as car parking charges. Following this line of thought, Mr Webber emphasized the role that farmers played as 'unpaid park keepers'.

Turning to planning matters, Mr Date mentioned some criticism that the Authority had received from a dissatisfied applicant, who had complained about the use of 'delegated powers' whereby up to 80% of all applications are determined by officers without recourse to the Development Management Committee. Approximately 90% of all applications are granted by either delegated powers or by Committee. Both Mr Date and Mr Webber emphasized the need for parish council recommendations to be strong and positive in either support or refusal to support the applications sent to them for comment. Councillor J White (Vice Chairman) stated that she thought there was often inconsistency in officers' approach to similar applications. Mr Date replied that officers always used the existing planning policies to reach their conclusions but that, whilst he thought that the present approach to such matters by the Authority was now much more black and white, he agreed with Councillor Cann that planning matters, in many ways had grey areas, making decision-making difficult on some applications. However, both Mr Date and Mr Webber agreed the need for consistency and, in response to another question, thought that the practice of sending explanatory letters to parishes when there was a difference of opinion between the Authority and parish councils was very worthwhile.

Other topics, such as the size of the members' committee, possibly with more parish representation, the election of parish members and the need for all members to have local knowledge were touched upon. In answer to a question from Councillor A White (Chairman) on the fate of moorland farming in the North, Mr Date mentioned the Moor Skills Scheme, an innovative partnership project designed to help teach young apprentices the skills necessary to work in upland farming. In conclusion, council were relieved to hear that there would be no change to the Ranger Service. Council thanked Mr. Date and Mr. Webber for their time and expertise, who then left the meeting.

- d. Councillor Cann reported that whilst canvassing the parish over recent weeks we had been impressed by the overall positive response of parishioners to the work of the council, despite the occasional comment about phraseology in council minutes. However, he also reported that the problems with footpath No. 52 through Powlesland farm were increasing and the clerk was asked to send a further letter to Mrs. R Davies (DCC P3 Coordinator) to underline the need for immediate action.
- e. Councillor Cann asked what the organisers of the Royal Wedding celebrations wished councillors to do on the day. The chairman (Councillor A White) suggested help with the early afternoon organisation of the event.

11/036 **Correspondence**

- a. **Letter from Rev<sup>d</sup> J Smart concerning cutting roadside verges.**  
This letter was read to council along with a reply from Mr Pedrick (DCC Highway Engineer) which Rev<sup>d</sup> Smart had forwarded to council. Mr Pedrick, after consultation with Jill Skelton (WDBC Environmental Services), stated that the verges in question would be omitted from the first cut, or that the contractor would cut around the stands of flowers. Council welcomed this arrangement.
- b. **Letter for the Church Commissioners regarding South Tawton vicarage.**  
Council were relieved to hear that there were no changes to the arrangements previously accepted.
- d. **Notice of Polls and Uncontested Elections.**  
This document had been received from the Electoral Registration Officer stating that as valid applications had been received from 10 people no parish council election would be called in this parish on May 5<sup>th</sup> 2011.

11/037 **Agenda Items for discussion and resolution**

- a. **Discussion of tasks for the parish lengthsman.**  
It was reported that apparently no decision had been made by DCC Highways about this service. Therefore no further requests for service were made.
- b. **Return of Parish Maps by retiring councillors.**  
The clerk made arrangements for the collection of these maps for distribution to new councillors in May.
- c. **Discussion of the Annual Parish Meeting and whom to invite.**  
After discussion, it was agreed that an invitation be extended to Mr Sheard, C.E.O, West Devon Borough Council or, in the event that he was not available, to Mr Belli (Director of Planning, Dartmoor National Park Authority) and to Mrs H Poustie, Head Teacher, South Tawton Primary School, Mr J McInnes (Area County Councillor) and to the Ward Member, West Devon Borough Council.
- d. **HMRC guidance relating to PAYE implications for parish clerks.**  
Council were informed of the new legislation from HMRC and the consequences of this for the council and clerk.
- e. **Acceptance of Mr M Jecks as the new organiser of the P3 Scheme on behalf of the council.**  
Council were delighted to hear that Mr Jecks had provisionally offered his services in this capacity. It was hoped that his conversations with Mr Butlin would lead him to take up this post, a decision that council would warmly welcome.
- f. **Nomination of parish members to Dartmoor National Park Authority.**  
The procedure for this was discussed and it was decided to postpone a decision to the first meeting of the new council in May 2011.
- g. **Review of South Hams and West Devon Council's Statement of Community Involvement.**  
Councillor Cann explained the timing of this review. It was decided that council would return to this matter when more information became available.
- h. **Report from Lead Persons on aspects of development of The Parish Plan.**  
Councillor Pillar reported that Mr J Packer (WDBC Housing Champion) had now retired but that Ms. D Bird had assumed his responsibilities for Affordable Housing in this parish. Hastoe Group and an architect were making plans to build 4 houses at Cannonmead in South Tawton but there was no information as yet concerning the provision of such housing in South Zeal. Councillor Cann thanked councillor Pillar for all his work steering council through this matter over recent years.

	Parish Plan areas	Parish Plan Lead person
B	Communication	Peter Brotherton
C	Crime and Safety	Ray Souness
D	Housing Needs	Julian Pillar
E	Planning	Julian Pillar
F	Transport and parking	Andy White
G	Highways and roads	Bill Cann
H	The environment	Carol Coombs
K	Shopping	Jane White
L	Social Activities	John Darch
M	Services and Facilities	Bryan Woolland

**11/038** Planning

- a. **WDBC 01401/2011 (Laura Batham, 22 April, 2011) Mr C Baulch, Great Cocktree Farm, North Tawton. Full Planning Permission.** Erection of single 55Kw wind turbine, 32.8M to hub, 34.2m to blade tip. Proposed by councillor Pillar and seconded by councillor Coombs, it was agreed by majority decision that this application be supported by council.
- b. **DNPA 0152/11 (Jo Burgess, 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2011) Mr G Gore, Galerie Woods, South Tawton. Full Planning Permission.** Erection of a tool and plant store used for forestry management. Proposed by councillor Darch and seconded by councillor Curtis, all agreed that this application will not be supported by council.
- c. **WDBC 01440/2011 (Louis Dulling, 7<sup>th</sup> June 2011) C Baulch, Great Cocktree Farm, North Tawton. Full Planning Permission.** Proposed livestock and straw building. (Building Number 1) Proposed by councillor Pillar and seconded by councillor Woolland, all agreed that this application be supported by council without reservation.
- d. **WDBC 01441/2011 (Louis Dulling, 7<sup>th</sup> June 2011) C Baulch, Great Cocktree Farm, North Tawton. Full Planning Permission.** Proposed livestock and straw building. (Building Number 2) Proposed by councillor Sampson and seconded by councillor J White (Vice Chairman), all agreed that this application be supported by council without reservation.
- e. **WDBC 01436/2011 (Anna Henderson Smith, Mr J McDiarmid, Wood House, South Tawton. Listed Building.** Works to roof, including replacement lantern and positioning of air conditioning units. Proposed by councillor Curtis and seconded by councillor J White (Vice Chairman), it was agreed that this application be supported by council without reservation. (Majority decision)

**11/039** Determination

- a. **DNPA 0044/11 (Jo Burgess, 28<sup>th</sup> February 2011) Mr A Clark, Land adj. to Meadowside, Zeal Head, South Zeal. Approval of Details.** New dwelling and curtilage with vehicle access including the addition of garage and re(c)ycling store (amendment to previously approved 0297/08) (incorrect descriptor) Refused. Grounds: The proposed development by virtue of it additional floor area will not be an affordable dwelling... 'contravenes' COR2, COR15, policy CO2 of the Devon Structure plan et al.
- b. **DNPA 0057/11 (Jo Burgess, 7<sup>th</sup> March 2011) South Zeal Recreation Ground Association. Full Planning Permission.** A small low level skate park to extend the age range of play equipment in a community recreation ground. Granted. Conditions: No tree or hedge forming the south west or north west boundaries of the site shall be felled, lopped, topped, cut down or grubbed out without consent. Any tree or hedge removed without consent, or found to be dying, damaged or diseased, shall be replaced on a like for like basis unless agreed.

**11/040** Accounts

- a. **Consideration of accounts.**

Proposed by councillor Darch and seconded by councillor Coombs, all agreed that the monthly accounts be adopted.

104	04-Mar-11		Brought forward		£ -	£ 7,694.28
105	05-Mar-11	VAT Remit in 2009/10 c/f	Not claimed. Ref. 2010 Item 95	£ 33.10	£ -	£ 7,661.18
106	05-Mar-11	VAT unclaimed	Closing balance at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2011	£ -	£ 551.33	£ 8,212.51
1	01-Apr-10	Balance brought forward	0	£ -		£ 8,212.51
2	01-Apr-10	NatWest Bank	Voucher STMNT Fee. April	£ 3.25	£ -	£ 8,209.26
3	06-Apr-10	West Devon Borough C	First half of Precept	£ -	£ 5,900.00	£ 14,109.26
4	05-Apr-11	Majestic Wines	Royal Wedding Street Party	£ 191.52	£ -	£ 13,917.74
5	10-Apr-11	Mr. T.Sandeson	Toilet cleaning	£ 85.00	£ -	£ 13,832.74
6	10-Apr-11	Get Changed Theatre Co.	Grant	£ 100.00	£ -	£ 13,732.74
7	10-Apr-11	AON Ltd.	Annual Council insurance	£ 538.03	£ -	£ 13,194.71
8	10-Apr-11	Post Office Ltd. Jan-Mar	EDF. Rec.Ground: Electricity	£ 31.33	£ -	£ 13,163.38
9	10-Apr-11	Post Office Ltd. Jan-April	SWW. Rec.Ground: Water.	£ 95.01	£ -	£ 13,068.37
10	10-Apr-11	WDBC.Oct 10 - Mar 11.	Emptying Dog Bins	£ 32.45	£ -	£ 13,035.92

The chairman (Councillor A White) thanked the retiring councillors, Pillar, Darch, Souness and Curtis, for their service to the community over the sum of 117 years!

He adjourned the meeting at 9.15 pm.