

# BRANSCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Year Ending: 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

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MINUTES OF THE BRANSCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held online via ZOOM platform on **TUESDAY 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021 at 19.00hrs.**

PRESENT: Cllrs Fastnedge (Chair), Cox, Evans, Lambert, Pegler, Pike, Powell and White, and Cllr Shaw (DCC).

MEMBERS OF PUBLIC: One.

PRESS: None.

CLERK IN ATTENDANCE: Nicky Langley.

APOLOGIES: Cllr Pook (EDDC), PC Salter and Rob Skinner (NT).

PUBLIC SPEAKING: None.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: Parish Council meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2021, as previously circulated, was approved by Council and will be signed by the Chair as a true record at the next face-to-face meeting.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST: None.

## ORGANISATIONS' REPORTS:

**a) Police:** Note change of Beat Manager to PC 7114 Beth Salter & received new contact details.

**b) National Trust:** Apologies received.

## REPRESENTATIVES' REPORTS:

**a) DCC:** Report received previously. Cllr Shaw discussed, among other issues, the proposed 4.99% increase in council tax being the sixth above-inflation rise in a row, bringing the increase to 30 per cent over 6 years, with 3% of the rise for social care.

**b) EDDC:** Apologies received.

**c) Village Hall:** A meeting was recently held by Zoom. The Hall Committee discussed the flooding issue and reported that the bar at the Village Hall will be opened as a Village Shop.

## MATTERS ARISING:

**a) Parish Emergency Plan:** The Plan is ready for publishing and copies will be circulated to Council and key holders per the Plan distribution list. The redacted copy will go on the website when the site has been updated.

**b) EV Charging Point:** The Village Hall Trust declined the free EV installation so that they can be in full control of any charging point fitted. They have committed to view the market and install a charger and are seeking assistance from Cllr Pegler to do so.

**c) Website Accessibility:** Aubergine has successfully moved the website pages and the Clerk is booked into online training.

**d) 2021 Meeting Schedule:** The schedule is approved and a program will be published. The AGM may be held by Zoom or in person depending on the rules and advice in place at the time. The proposed date of 6<sup>th</sup> May, however, will be published in the Parish Magazine.

**e) Councillor's contact details:** The contact sheet will be circulated to all Councillors for review.

PLANNING:

**a) Update:** Noted.

**b) Applications, Appeals & Enforcement:** None.

HIGHWAYS/FOOTPATHS:

**a) Culvert by Village Hall:** Stones washed out from under the bridge are now causing back-up. As reported at the last meeting, DCC confirmed that the missing grating will be replaced.

**b) DCC Doing What Matters:** The river is above the pipe on Mill Lane; the scheme for this is due to start 15<sup>th</sup> April. Other works are not yet scheduled so Steve Kelly advised to continue reporting issues online. Cllr Lambert described Footpath 18 being in a shocking state and the track from Hole House to Edge Barton being used by 4-wheel drive vehicles; he will draft a letter for DCC on this subject. Cllr Cox suggested BPC write to Stuart Hughes and recommend the new road-mending machine "the dragon" be trialled at Berry Barton and Cllr White recommended a letter to Mr Hughes. Chair asked Clerk to write to Steve Kelly and ask what work is planned for 2021/22.

**c) Road Wardens:** BPC has received free Viafix material from DCC; all thanks to Beer Parish Clerk for putting in the joint grant application. The Road Wardens propose to start road mending again soon and also put to use the grant kindly received from Cllr Shaw at DCC.

**d) Highway Signs:** Cllr Evans has corresponded with DCC on the Weston signs. Council consensus was for the larger Branscombe signs with the one at the west end of the village made more square to the road; Clerk to inform DCC.

**e) Restricted width Signs:** Cllr Cox will obtain a price to purchase the BPC-designed sign (as previously approved). Chair will circulate his design for this sign. Clerk will get a price for the <2m width signs.

**f) Footpath 9A through Littlecombe Shute:** Footpath to be closed from 10th February for 6 months. Cllr White reported that there is an attempt to reroute the footpath.

**g) Notice of East Devon Way Link Project road crossing at Three Horseshoes:** Noted.

**h) Road Closure 16/03/2021 Underground transfer of plant on behalf of Openreach:** Noted.

**i) Road Closure to complete SWW Utility works outside Fountain Head Cottage:** Noted.

**j) Road Closure to install poly duct near Kings Down Tail Caravan Park:** Noted.

**k) Road Closure near Mill Lane 05/05/2021 - 07/05/2021 Pole Replacement:** Noted.

**l) Road Closure 19-25/05/21 To provide a new water service:** Noted.

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE:

**a) PCC Letter seeking support for St Winifred’s churchyard maintenance:** Chair mentioned the possibility of giving support during these difficult times and sought comments. Cllr Pegler recommended a contribution this year and reviewing next year, Cllr Evans advised not taking on any ongoing responsibility but contributing this year. Cllr Powell queried the value of service for the amount requested and suggested utilising volunteers for some activities, with any savings being used elsewhere. Cllr Cox stated that the churchyard is the church’s responsibility and BPC should not take this on without going to the Village. Ross Wilmington was asked to speak and reported that the PCC currently operates in deficit even with costs associated with maintaining the fabric of the church being borne by the Friends. There is no contract for the grounds maintenance and going out to tender could be a way forward. He clarified that the PCC is not looking for BPC to take over the contract but for a contribution towards costs only. Chair recommended that BPC review the Council’s budget before committing any amount; Cllr Powell proposed committing £1,000 this financial year towards maintenance with a view to a second payment in the next financial year (after April 2021); seconded by Cllr Pegler with all in favour. Chair will make a comment regarding the Council’s support in the Parish Magazine.

**b) New Local Plan for East Devon; comments sought:** Noted.

**c) Proposal for thank you gift to local NHS staff:** Council supported the general idea of a “stress busting week” but requested Cllr Powell further refine the proposal.

**d) Tree warden vacancy:** Clerk will forward to Village via Parish Magazine.

**e) EDDC Empty Homes week 2021 notice:** Noted.

FINANCE:

<b>a) Finance Update 2020/21:</b>	Total receipts for the year	£ 10,313.55,
	Total payments for the year	£ 8,263.58
	Difference	£ 2,049.97
	Current balance	£ 25,851.30

Chair requested that the Council consider future projects (e.g. contribution towards EV chargers) in order to earmark reserves in the budget.

**b) Update on internet banking:** NatWest needs three signatories to sign the approval form electronically. Clerk will circulate to authorised Councillors when mandate approved (now signed).

MATTERS BROUGHT FORWARD WITH PERMISSION FROM THE CHAIRMAN:

The next meeting will be 18<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

Meeting closed at 21.00 hrs.

Signed..... Date .....