

Drewsteignton Parish Council.

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Minutes for meeting of Drewsteignton Council that took place on Monday 10th June 2024 at 7.30pm at Whiddon Down village hall.

Present, Peter Brennan, Andrew Di Battista, Ian Rowe, Laurance Bennie, John Redman, Julie Macey and Anna Imrie.

Also present, Cllr Guthrie, Lou Butler(clerk) plus a large representation from the local community.

Business Transacted

1.6.24: Welcome

Chair opened the meeting & reminded everyone that an audio recording maybe taken to aid with taking the minutes, the recording will be deleted once the minutes are drafted.

2.6.24 Co-option Vacancy – Crockernwell (Chair)

Chair reminded council of the position still available for the Crockernwell ward.

3.6.24 Apologies for absence:

Apologies were received from Cllr Ridges due to work commitments.

Apologies were also received from Jenny Turner (Whiddon down village hall) Paula Clarke (national trust) PC Dan Wakeham (Devon and Cornwall Police) [Cllr Brennan proposed and Cllr Di Battista seconded. All in favour RR24/26](#)

4.6.24: Minutes of the Last Meetings. [Draft Minutes available on the website.](#)

Cllrs considered the approval of Minutes of the meetings held 20th of May 2024. Plus, the ACM Minutes for 2023. [Cllr Rowe proposed the minutes to be a true reflection of the minutes for both meetings and Cllr Imrie seconded. All in favour, Motion carried RR24/27](#)

5.6.24: Declarations of Interest.

Cllrs were invited to declare any interests they may have in items on this agenda, including the nature of the interest. Cllrs were reminded of their responsibility to keep their Register of Interests updated. Cllr Rowe declared an interest in agenda item 7.6.24 b) as he is a neighbouring property.

6.6.24: To receive reports (if any) from County Cllr. McInnes & Borough Cllr Guthrie.

Cllr Guthrie reviewed his first year in local government. See attached below.

7.6.24: Planning (DNPA unless otherwise stated) (Chair):

- a) [0167/24 Full Planning Permission, Conversion of barn into holiday accommodation. South Cuma, Drewsteignton, EX6 6PX](#) Drewsteignton Parish Councillors attended a site meeting with the applicants Agent on Friday 31st May 2024. Representations were heard from applicant, neighbouring properties and local parishioners. The PC determined that the application:

- Is an overdevelopment of a historical site. The size of the building and scale of the holiday let development, alongside the existing property, and subsequent expansion of visitors, is not in keeping with this remote and tranquil setting.

- Represents a significant expansion of the existing holiday let provision, with the potential to attract groups of up to 18 adults, with increased vehicles to the site.
- The self-contained nature of the site would contribute little economic benefit.
- The potential loss of a historical building is offset by the already significant deterioration of the building, further impacted by the poor quality and inappropriate materials used to carry out repairs.

Cllr Brennan proposed that the PC provided a negative view on the planning application. Cllr Di Battista seconded the proposal. All in favour. Motion carried. RR24/28

b) 0220/24 Listed Building Consent, Replacement windows, raising chimney stacks and internal alterations, Hobhouse, Drewsteignton, EX6 6PF

The homeowner Sue attended the meeting and spoke about her building plans for the thatched property in Whiddon Down. There is a health and safety need for the chimney extension as it is an old property and doesn't meet current regulations. The windows are in need of replacement as they are no longer up to current regulations. Cllr Bennie proposed that the council would give a positive response in light of the building needing updating to conform with current regulations. Cllr Di Battista seconded. All in favour. Motion carried RR2429

8.6.24: Highway matters

- a) Clerk updated the meeting with the plans to drop the kerbs at the bus stops in Drewsteignton. Devon Highways have agreed to fund the project once we source 3 quotes for work. Unfortunately, at the time of the meeting no quotes had been offered. One member of the public forwarded contact details to the clerk with a company to approach during the meeting.
- b) A request was made at the meeting to reduce the speed limits in Drewsteignton from the planned PC speed of 30mph to 20mph. The clerk has agreed with the council that she would look at this in further detail and update at the next meeting.
- c) Clerk informed the meeting of planned resurfacing work to the A30 12th and 13th of June at Whiddon Down overnight, and the planned resurfacing of the B382 overnight from 27th August till the 30th August. At Sandsgate cross to stone lane.

9.6.24: Reports from local organisations.

All local organisations were invited to make a report at this meeting either in person or by emailing a written report by 5pm on the day of the meeting to the email address above. These reports can be found at the bottom of the minute's pages.

10.6.24: Finance and Consideration for approval of purchases.

- a) Agar notice of exemption and notice of public rights.
- b) Financial schedule attached

11.6.24: Confirmation the next Council meeting will be 15th of July at Drewsteignton village hall- Any changes will be posted on the Website.

Cllr Guthrie update.

A formal working / advisory group has now been agreed to work alongside SWWater, which I will sit on, we hope this will ensure that we can hold them to account and be more proactive re all the concerns re rivers, water supply etc.

Ongoing concerns and debate re provision of proper affordable housing Borough wide as well as trying to support appropriate retro fitting to upgrade homes.

There will be a further visit to the Holsworthy Biogester, where all our food waste goes, that any Parish councillor can attend, so please put forward any names and I will update when we know more.

As with all the PC meetings, Highways continually tops people's concerns. WDBC have been chasing this with particular reference to the poor quality of all the repairs when they do actually get done....

A group of Borough councillors are keen to develop more coherent approach to how we can support the farming community with all the challenges they face, including addressing climate change or diversifying. Will share more as this makes progress.

Drewsteignton playing field

Alison from the playing field, bonfire night has been the big earner over the last 2 years with this November just gone being their biggest one to date, bringing in a fantastic £3316. With excess of £6000 in the playing field bank account currently there is hope that repairs will soon be made to the zip wire which has been without a seat for some time and more swings as the park is at risk of becoming a play area without any swings. Footballers is now playing at the field regularly, with the help of the goal posts that had been purchased for them last year. Alison reported that the number of volunteers that help at the playing field is dwindling and that she will also be leaving her position in September. They will be holding a meeting in July with the aim to recruit more committee members. But further meetings will be required to fix the equipment that is already at the play area. The Agm will be held on the 2nd of July at 7.30 in the Drewe Arms.

Gardening club

The gardening club is very successful with currently over 40 members, although a lot now travel from Chagford. They meet at the Whiddon down village hall, have trips to gardens. Plus have a garden party once a year. They are a very sociable group! The groups finances are in a good position. With the annual membership only being only £5 per person. But the fund is boosted by plant sales, which are held in Drewsteignton village hall and in Chagford. Bunni Johnson has been the Chair of the gardening club has retired after many years and the club would like to thank her for all the years of work and commitment she has put into the club.

Drewsteignton Village Hall

With the village hall being a useful hub for the community for many years and still having meetings and community value. It has become increasingly obvious that the Drewe arms with its long room is now the community hub. With the committee concluding that they don't want to try to compete with the community asset for custom. This being said it leaves the committee in a position where they would like to surrender the lease back to the trustees. To do this a would need a committee meeting with 75% attendance from the trustees and a vote to be made in favour of the surrender. Voters must be aged 18 or over and resident of the parish. The future of the building then would be in the hands of the people that would be voting. This vote will take place in the village hall on the 24th of July. More information will be placed in the parish post.

Drewe arms

After 3 months of being open they have exceeded expectations in both visitor numbers and revenue. Wednesday and Fridays being the most popular nights. The BBQ has also proved to be a hit, while making the most of the outdoor space. Although it has been working well there has been some teething issues. With the kitchen, food hasn't always been as reliable as they had hoped and this is due to equipment and supplier issues. Also, the letting rooms have had to take a back seat during the opening. With the room for walkers upstairs still being unavailable. The long room as previously discussed needs a schedule of activities to be arrange with the ideas of yoga, food nights, film nights and much more planned for the future.

With the community interest at the heart of the Drewe arms plans. Discussions have been had about the future of the church cottage and where it can be used as an extra offer to sit alongside the pub as a community asset. With the church now using the facilities within the pub to extend there offer with prevision of toilets. Forming a synergy between the two groups.

The community ownership fund was of great importance to the Drewe, with the calling of the election this has been put on hold, like most government led grants. At this time no one know what will happen with this. But the Drewe has spent a lot of time and money trying to secure a grant that has now effective been pull out from under them.

The main structural issues with the building now are the render on the front of the building, which now looks like will need to be fixed with the Drewes own funds and the thatch on the building although it may look a little worse for wear, they have been informed by thatcher's with a little tlc and moss removal may still have 7 years of life still left in it.

The Drewe committee will look to secure other sources of grant revenue, with the national lottery being the next one that they will apply for.

The plan for a village store is still on the cards with the pub planning to have an area where you can buy fresh bread and produce that will be in keeping with what is being sold from the kitchen.

In conclusion the committee would like to look at better ways to take some of the community assets to be under one umbrella management and with the hope this would ease the burden on other committee members from other committees eg playing field. They also would like to ask the PC to look in the future at possibilities for the village carpark to discussion to be back on the agenda.

Whiddon Down Village Hall

Chair Jenny Turner apologies' that she was unable to attend, but sent her report to Cllr Rowe. The village hall has had 3 recent fund-raising events totalling in excess of £1500 for hall funds the biggest event to date was the ever-popular Xmas bingo. Raising a staggering £700, the hall was full to capacity which meant there was also a massive saving on heating.

The committee is due for a shakeup at this year's AGM with Alison Chapman stepping down as hall secretary and treasurer. Fortunately for the hall committee two members have already offered to take on the roles. Both ladies already put a lot of their time and effort into the hall. So, there will be a recruitment drive to fill the spaces and spread the workload more efficiently. This will be in the forms of a leaflet drop and a poster campaign. Refreshments will be on offer at the AGM on the 18th of June at 7.30 to encourage new members to volunteer.

There is an ongoing maintenance plan with the building with the roof and restoration of brickwork being a priority. We have updated the smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. So, they are now hardwired and the entrance flooring has now been made more manageable.

The hall is looking forward to another successful year.

Stone Lane Gardens

Stone lane gardens have successfully secured 3 new trustees recently and they are undergoing a revue of the business. Although it is a charity, they still need to run themselves like a business.

With the launch of their sculpture show which runs until September. They would like to welcome customers of art lovers to come and have a look at what is on offer.

On the weekend of the 8th of June, they held a traveling outdoor performance of "Sherlock and Watson a murder in the garden" which was a great success and enjoyed by all involved. Unfortunately, the weather hadn't been favourable on the run up to the event with colder than normal conditions for the time of year. Which made attendance a little below last year's number.

Visitors centre has now been updated. With special thanks to Cllr McInnes's locality fund.

Chairman of the council report

TBC