

Goodleigh Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 7 March 2023 at 6:30pm at Goodleigh Village Hall

Present: Cllrs S Clarke, R Gulwell, Mrs C Karniewicz and N Thorne.

Cllrs A Seaford & Dr Ley joined the meeting via Teams

In the absence of the chairman, the meeting was chaired by Cllr Clarke

In Attendance: 3 members of the public, Cllr M Prowse (NDC), Parish Clerk.

153. Items from the public

It was reported that some parishioners had not received their Alternative Energy grant. It was noted that payments should be made by their electricity supplier.

154. Apologies

Apologies for absence were accepted from Cllr Mrs J Morris and Cllr Mrs A Davis (DCC)

155. Approval of Minutes of meeting held 7 February 2023

The Minutes of the last meeting were agreed and signed as a true record.

156. Matters Arising from the Minutes

None.

157. Reports

1. District Councillor

Plans under the Future High Street Funding was progressing well. The new toilets in the Pannier Market were almost complete.

It was hoped that the new access into the Bear St/Queen Street car park from Alexandra Road will help the town.

The improvements to the Pannier Market were progressing within budget. It was hoped to open ½ the market by the end of May, and be fully open by the end of July.

Five new, local, businesses had moved into Green Lanes, which was looking to make £750,000 profit. Doubling Council Tax on second homes would raise an additional £450,000.

The council had agreed to increase its share of the Council Tax by 2.99%, the maximum allowed.

The last full council meeting would take place the following week, the last before the election.

Cllr Prowse finished by stating that he had decided to stand gain at the May election.

2. County Councillor

New Chief Executive at Devon County Council

Donna Manson joins the County Council from her role as Chief Executive of The Highland Council, Scotland's largest rural authority.

There since 2018, Donna led the Highland Council in developing an ambitious, sustainable, and connected vision for the Highlands during a time of immense change and challenge. Prior to this, Donna was a Director of Children's Services and a Head Teacher.

Her top priority for Devon is to deliver significant improvement to Devon's Children's Services. But more broadly, Donna wants to re-energise Devon as a caring and inclusive place for young people and families, the elderly and vulnerable, and as a forward looking place to work and do business with opportunities for all to thrive and do well.

£2 Bus fare until June 2023

Please try and use the bus, even for a few journeys a month, encourage others to try it out. At only £2 a trip this is substantially cheaper than taking a car into Barnstaple and no car parking charges.

Bus passengers in Devon can take advantage of a cap on single bus fares as part of the Department for Transport's new fares initiative, through the Government's Help for Households campaign. Bus users will pay no more than £2 for a single journey when boarding the bus anytime in February, March, April, May and June.

A recent report by Stagecoach found that motorists replacing some journeys by bus and active travel could save consumers up to £6,000 a year. In addition, the report found that having the right measures in place to encourage people to make the switch, including cheaper fares, could help remove one billion miles of car journeys each week and cut CO2 by nearly 400,000 tonnes per week.

For more information on the £2 single fares scheme, terms and conditions and exclusions, visit the [Travel Devon website](#).

DCC Council tax 2023-2024

DCC council members have agreed a 4.99 per cent increase in council tax for the coming financial year.

It comprises 2.99 per cent for general services with an extra two per cent for adult care.

It means an extra £1.49 a week for the average Band D householder.

There will be increases of 18.4 per cent in spending on children's services and 8.8 per cent on adult services to keep up with a rocketing rise in demand.

Councillors also agreed an extra £2 million for roads and drainage since the target budget was set last month to tackle the increase in potholes caused by this winter's icy spells and torrential rainfall.

The revenue spending on services will increase from £629 million to £696 million in 2023/24. That's an overall rise of 10.5 per cent in spending. In addition, councillors approved a capital budget of £172.5 million for investment in infrastructure such as schools and roads.

The council tax for an average Band D home will rise by £77.67 to £1,634.13 – an extra £1.49 a week.

The budget includes savings, alternative funding and additional income of £47.5 million

Highways update

This winter has posed challenges for the Highways and Traffic Management Service. The mix of prolonged sub-zero temperatures and heavy rain led to a rapid deterioration in the condition of the network highlighting the fragility of the asset following decades of under investment. Since April 2022 highways inspection team have assessed over 27,000 reports of potholes from members of the public. Over 10,000 reports were assessed in January alone, we were receiving as many as 500 reports per day. The team have been working hard to get on top of the backlog with a focus on the safety of the travelling public. Milestone, our term maintenance contractor, has increased their resources which has seen weekend working and over forty gangs working across the county. At the beginning of the month there was 3,000 potholes waiting to be repaired, this has reduced to approximately 2,000.

Following a quiet November, in which we saw very little in the way of gritting treatment, the extended cold snaps in December and January has seen us use over 15,000 tonnes of salt across 2,094 runs (the equivalent to 55 full, Countywide treatments on our Primary Salting Network). The average across the last four winters for the same period has been 8,919 tonnes and 1,597 runs. This additional work has a knock on effect with the planned improvement works. Gritter drivers are limited in how many hours they can work which often means planned improvement works have to be deferred. In addition, with the safety of the network taking priority, a number of the patching gangs have been redeployed on to pothole repairs. Again, this means planned improvements will have been deferred.

The resolution of drainage assets referred for additional maintenance has slowed in the last few months to support the corporate financial challenge. However, over 10,000 defects have been addressed so far this financial year which clearly demonstrates the benefits of funding a focused programme of drainage asset defect identification.

We still have over 14,000 outstanding drainage asset defects across the county and works are continuing to resolve them.

The Traffic Team are reviewing the requests for new 20mph speed limits. To help determine which schemes are prioritised and to ensure consistency they will consider the new requests by applying the same scoring matrix agreed at Cabinet. In addition to the speed limit requests the team are building an evidence base to support community consultation on the roll out of pay and display restrictions. The new Highways Infrastructure Asset Management Plan is nearing completion. This document is important as it sets the future approach to the maintenance standards and strategies the County adopts. Officers are planning to bring it to Cabinet in April for Member comments.

Reminder of how to report a Highway issue;

[Report a problem - Roads and transport \(devon.gov.uk\)](#)

[0345 155 1004](#)

Live chat is available on the Highways website Monday to Friday 9.30 am to 12 pm and 2 pm to 4.30 pm (4 pm on Fridays). To report a problem with road maintenance, traffic management and parking, streetlights and signs and public rights of way

158. Planning applications

None received

159. Coronation Celebration

It had been agreed to screen the Coronation, and to invite those attending to bring plates of food. Details would be placed on the village Facebook page.

It was planned to display posters and distribute flyers before Easter.

160. Community Speedwatch

There had been a response to the appeal for volunteers. Cllr Mrs Karniewicz was in contact with the police regarding the next steps.

161. Dog Bins

It was noted that the cost of emptying the bins cost £400 per year, and represented 10% of the council’s income. A small increase in the cost was expected this year.

As the bins appeared to be heavily used at the moment, it was agreed not to proceed with removing some at the present time.

If the council decided to retain all the 3 bins, it may be necessary to increase the Precept next year to cover the cost.

162. Correspondence Received

1. The Village Hall Committee had enquired if they could have the key to the filing cabinet, with a view to removing anything that was not needed, and disposing of it. The clerk had checked his keys, but did not include the one for the cabinet. The councillors agreed to check their keys, and if it could not be found, to purchase a new one.
2. DALC Newsletter. Noted.

163. Surface Water/Drains/Highways

It was noted that the potholes had been repaired.

164. Parish Council Election

The Clerk reported that nomination papers would be available on the North Devon Website from 19 March. Completed papers would need to be returned in person to NDC at Lynton House in Barnstaple by 4 April, which gave approximately 2 weeks to complete. Although one person could return papers for other councillors, this was not advised in case there should be a query.

The new council would take office on 9 May, with meetings being required to be held between 10 – 25 May.

165. Matters from the Chairman

It was noted that there appeared to be activity at Honey Hill again.

Cllr Prowse said that he would contact the planning department, and ask them to investigate.

166. Finance

Payments

Goodleigh Village Hall – hire	£ 30.00	Cheque No.983
North Devon Homes – rent for play area	£ 7.50	Cheque No.984
Clerk’s Salary & Expenses	£ 67.32	Cheque No.986
HMRC	£ 16.40	Cheque No.982

The four accounts were approved for payment.

167. Items for the next Agenda:

Coronation Celebrations; Community Speedwatch

168. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 4 April 2023

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.20pm.

Signed
Chairman

Date